

3.16 RECREATION AND WILDERNESS

This section describes the effects related to recreation and wilderness that would be caused by implementation of the Tule Wind Project. The following discussion describes the existing environmental conditions in the affected area, the existing laws and regulations relevant to recreation and wilderness, and provides an analysis of the potential environmental impacts that may result from the construction, operation and maintenance, and the decommissioning of the proposed project and alternatives.

3.16.1 Affected Environment/Environmental Setting

The project area is situated in the Mountain Empire Planning Area located in the eastern portion of San Diego County approximately 50 miles east of City of San Diego, 90 miles west of Arizona, and north of the community of Boulevard. The area is accessible via Interstate 8 (I-8), State Route 94 (SR-94) and Ribbonwood Road junction, and McCain Valley Road off Old Highway 80. The majority of the project area lies in the In-Ko-Pah Mountains adjacent to the Tecate Divide, south of the Cleveland National Forest. The topography of the area is gently-to-steeply sloping with an elevation ranging between about 3,600 and 5,600 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). The project vicinity is shown in Section 2.0, Project Action and Alternatives, **Figure 2.0-1**, Region and Vicinity.

The Mountain Empire Planning Area includes the community of Boulevard, a large portion of Anza-Borrego State Park, and other public lands. The subregion is characterized by its very low-density population and is totally dependent on groundwater. The area is limited to small-scale agriculture operation, typically dry land farming, or livestock grazing due to the area's steep, rocky terrain.

Bureau of Land Management Land

The project area is located in the California Desert District (CDD) of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and is managed by the BLM El Centro Field Office. The BLM has designated the project area as the McCain Valley Resource Management Zone (RMZ). The McCain Valley RMZ is managed for its historical, cultural and natural qualities while continuing to manage as a diverse recreational area supporting a developed recreational trail system for Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) day-use area, recreation facilities (e.g., campgrounds and other sites), and natural resource qualities. Target shooting is not allowed within this RMZ, although legal pursuit of game is allowed in accordance to the State of California permit requirements. The BLM El Centro Field Office issues special recreation permits for special events, including equestrian, trail, and organized group events.

The McCain Valley RMZ includes Lark Canyon, Cottonwood Campground, and developed recreational facilities. Lark Canyon Campground and the Lark Canyon OHV staging area are year-round facilities with 15 developed campsites. Amenities include fire rings, tables, water (not tested safe for drinking), and six vault toilets, with group camping sites available. Cottonwood Campground is a year-round facility with 25 developed campsites, fire rings, tables, and vault toilets, and is located 8 miles north of Old Highway 80 on McCain Valley Road. Horses are allowed only in the eastern loop of Cottonwood Campground, with no group camping sites available. OHV use is not permitted in Cottonwood Campground or on McCain Valley Road. **Figure 3.16-1** presents the Recreational Facilities and OHV Areas.

The McCain Valley RMZ has a developed recreational trail system for OHV day-use, as shown in the BLM Existing Routes of Travel (OHV), **Figure 3.16-2**. BLM-administered lands within the Eastern San

Diego County Planning Area are designated as open, closed, or limited to OHV use, and are further described as follows:

- **Open areas** are areas where all types of vehicle use is permitted at all times, anywhere in the area.
- **Limited areas** are restricted at certain times, in certain areas, and/or to certain vehicular use. These restrictions may be of any type, but can generally be accommodated within the following type of categories: numbers of vehicles; types and sizes of vehicles; time or season of vehicle use; permitted or licensed use only; use on existing roads and trails; use on designated roads and trails; limited to administrative use only; and other restrictions. The distance motorized vehicles may pull off from a designated route is 25 feet. This will be monitored on a continuing basis. If monitoring results show effects that exceed limits of acceptable change, the distance allowed for motorized vehicles to pull off from a designated route may be modified.
- **Closed areas** are areas where motorized vehicle use is prohibited. Use of OHVs in closed areas may be allowed for certain reasons; however, such use would be made only with the approval of the authorized officer. Congressionally designated areas are statutorily closed to motorized and mechanized use, except for purposes specifically provided for by law.

3.16.2 Regulatory Setting

Federal

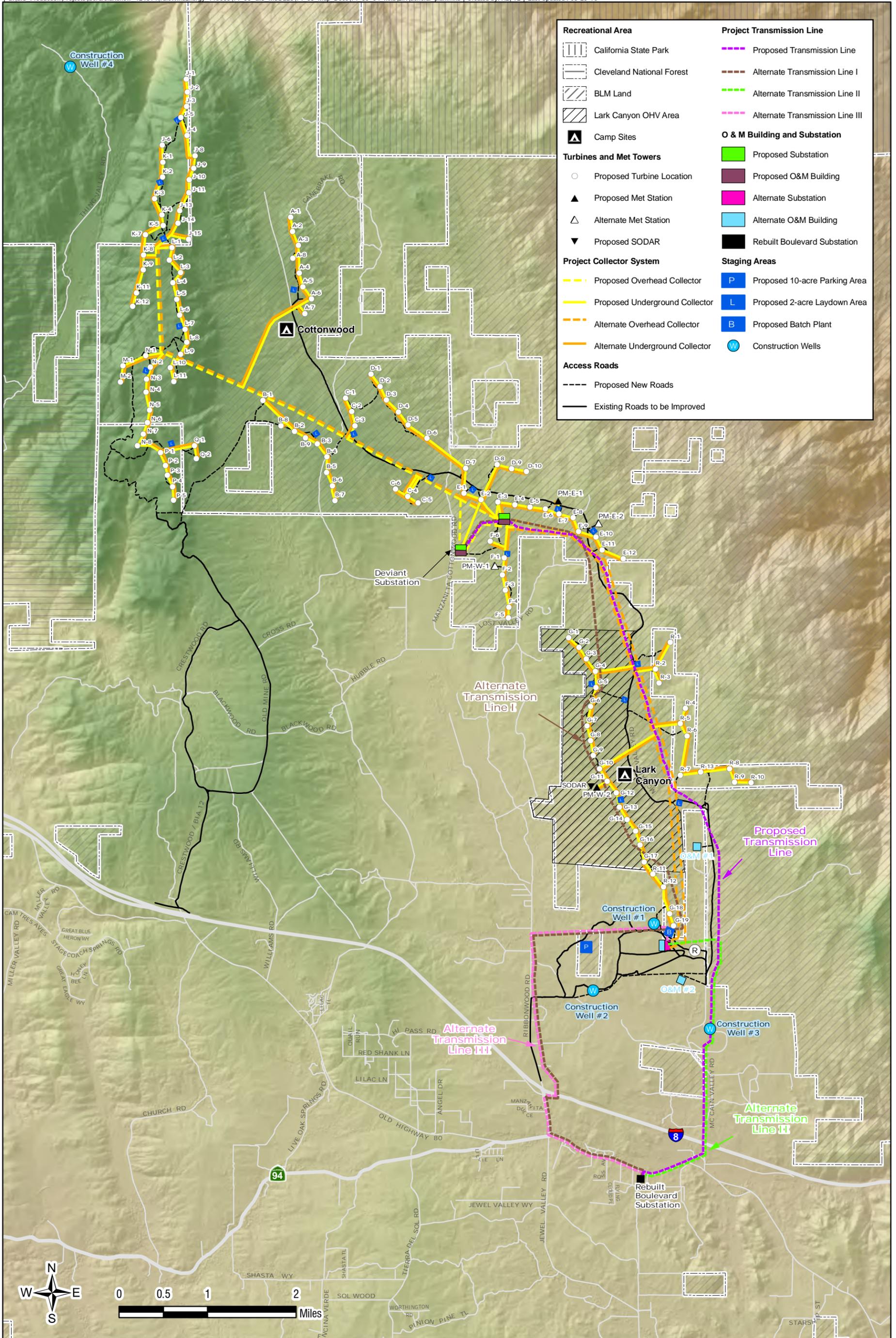
Federal Land Policy and Management Act

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 provides for the inventory and planning of the public lands to ensure that these lands are managed in accordance with the intent of Congress under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. The lands are to be managed in a manner that protects the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural conditions, provide food and habitat for fish, wildlife and domestic animals, and provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use by encouraging collaboration and public participation throughout the planning process. In addition, the public lands must be managed in a manner that recognizes the nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands. Several laws were consolidated under FLPMA.

FLPMA provides authority for the disposal of appropriate public lands through sale or exchange and right-of-way granting procedures for both the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The regulations contained in 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1600 govern the BLM planning process.

Bureau of Land Management Eastern San Diego County Resource Management Plan

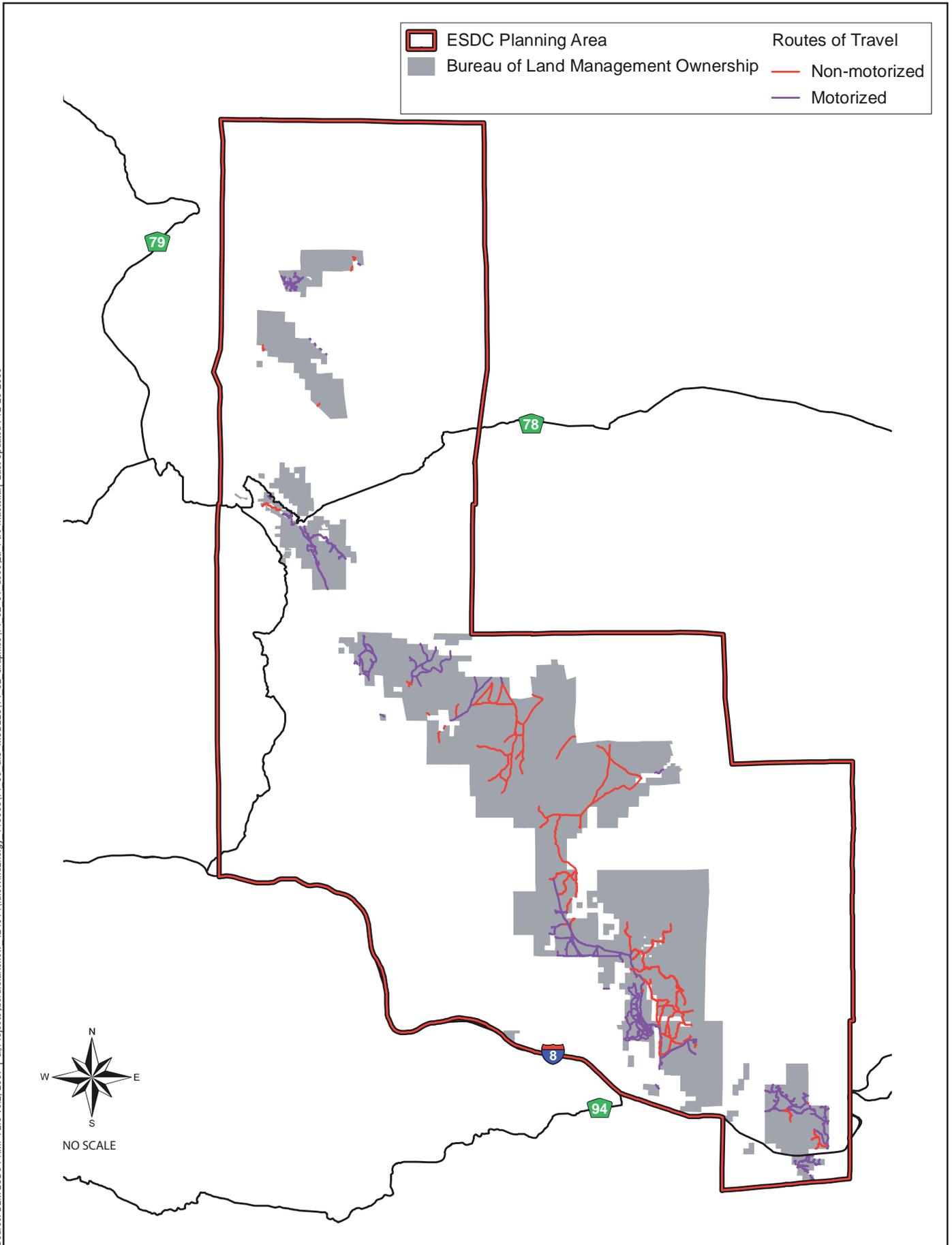
The San Diego County Resource Management Plan (RMP) was updated in 2008. The BLM has determined that wind energy development and recreation can effectively coexist in McCain Valley; and therefore, made recreation areas in McCain Valley "Available for Renewable Energy Development" consistent with Alternative D of the Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), including Lark Canyon Off-Highway Vehicle Area and the Lark Canyon Campground/Staging Area (1,300 acres) and Cottonwood Campground (16 acres). Section 3.11, **Figure 3.11-1** shows the BLM Areas Available for Wind Energy Development.



Recreational Facilities and OHV Areas

FIGURE 3.16-1

Source: BLM ESDC PRMP FEIS Vol2, 2007 | G:\Projects\IberdrolaRenew_424914\TuleWindEnergy_115965\14_00_GIS_MODELS\14_02_Graphics\14_02_01_docs\Ltr_Plrr_master.ai | Last Updated: 12-23-2009



BLM Existing Routes of Travel (OHV Trails)
FIGURE 3.16-2

The RMP designates the area of McCain Valley East and West as a Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class IV. The high-quality wind resources in McCain Valley and its proximity to the existing utility corridor make it a logical area to focus wind energy development. The RMP was subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that included public participation and the preparation of an EIS. Class IV areas, as defined in the BLM RMP, provide for management activities that require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high.

Recreation and Public Purposes Act

This act provides for the lease or disposal of public lands and certain withdrawn or reserved lands to state and local governments, and qualified non-profit organizations to be used for recreational or public purposes. Prices charged for the use or acquisitions are normally less than market value of the specific lands. Conditions are imposed in patents, and title may revert to the U.S. for cause.

National Trails System Act

This act provides for establishment of National Recreation, National Scenic, and National Historic Trails. National Recreation Trails may be established by the Secretary of the Interior or Agriculture on land wholly or partly within their jurisdiction with the consent of the involved state(s) and other land managing agencies, if any. National Scenic and National Historic Trails may only be designated by an Act of Congress.

Wilderness Act

This act established a National Wilderness System of areas to be designated by Congress. It directed the Secretary of the Interior, within 10 years, to review every roadless area of 5,000 or more acres and every roadless island (regardless of size) within National Wildlife Refuge and National Park Systems and to recommend to the President the suitability of each such area or island for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, with final decisions made by Congress. The Secretary of Agriculture was directed to study and recommend suitable areas in the National Forest System.

The act provides criteria for determining suitability and establishes restrictions on activities that can be undertaken on a designated area. Criteria set by Congress within this act states that wilderness areas have the following characteristics: (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and confined types of recreation; (3) has at least 5,000 acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value. The Wilderness Act also set the accepted uses of designated wilderness areas (WAs) and what uses are prohibited. The act sets special provisions for an agency's continuing management of existing or grandfathered rights such as mining and grazing and other agency mission related activities.

Local

County of San Diego General Plan (Existing)

The current existing County of San Diego General Plan was last updated in 1979, with substantial amendments made since that time. In 1998, the County embarked on a multi-year project to update the San Diego County General Plan. When the update is complete, the Board of Supervisors will adopt the

new plan, replacing the existing plan. Until that time, the current plan will remain as the governing General Plan. The Recreation Element of the existing General Plan was amended in January 2005 to relocate the County Trails Program and the Community Trails Master Plan from the Recreation Element to the Public Facilities Element. At the directive of County officials, it provides for the creation of a system of public parks and riding and hiking trails.

The San Diego County General Plan states: “An overall standard of 30 acres per 1,000 population is therefore recommended, of which half should be devoted to regional facilities as proposed in 1967 in the County General Plan, and half or 15 acres per 1,000 population, for local parks. The local park standard includes a combination of local parks, riding and hiking trails, school playgrounds, and other public facilities which meet part of the need for local recreational facilities. No housing is proposed as a part of the project; therefore, additional recreational services are not required to meet the County’s standards.

County of San Diego General Plan (Update, not yet adopted)

The Park Lands Dedication Ordinance (PLDO) provides funding for local park active recreation. The PLDO specifies that new subdivisions are required to dedicate active park land or pay a fee in-lieu of dedication, or a combination of both, at a level of three acres per 1,000 population. State law allows that up to five acres per 1,000 population can be required if the current active park acreage exceeds the three-acre level. These fees may also be used to provide for local serving active recreation in regional parks for local community residents.

3.16.3 Environmental Consequences/Impact Analysis

California Environmental Quality Act Significance Criteria

To satisfy the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements, conclusions are made regarding the significance of each identified impact that could result from the proposed project and the proposed alternatives. The following significance criteria for recreation and wilderness were derived from previous environmental impact assessments. The *CEQA Guidelines* (Appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form, Section IX) regarding impacts to park areas do not apply to this type of project. Impacts due to the proposed project or alternatives would be considered significant if:

- The project directly or indirectly disrupts or precludes activities in established federal, state, or local recreation areas or wilderness areas;
- The project substantially contributes to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas.

Significance conclusions for individual impacts are not required for compliance with NEPA. Therefore, conclusions presented in the following analysis regarding the significance of identified impacts are provided for the purposes of CEQA only.

Directly or indirectly disrupts or preclude activities in established federal, state, or local recreation areas or wilderness areas

Construction

Construction activities may cause the disruption or temporary closure of recreational facilities over a period of 18 to 24 months. Construction activity will include vehicles utilizing McCain Valley Road,

grading activities, construction of the proposed Operation and Maintenance (O&M) and Substation facility, and the construction of the wind turbines, collection lines and transmission lines. Lark Canyon and Cottonwood campgrounds and Lark Canyon OHV area could be subject to temporary closures and construction disturbances during workforce hours. Construction related impacts may adversely cause a reduction in utilization of the campgrounds due to the heavy equipment that will be necessary for turbine construction. Construction activity may also impact the OHV areas from the proposed roadway development needed to access the project area. The applicant will coordinate with the BLM to ensure proper signage is posted in advance for any anticipated closures so recreational users can plan accordingly. Although there may be a periodic disruption to recreational users during construction, the disruption would be temporary and subject to advance notice. A less than significant impact is identified.

Operation and Maintenance

Recreational and wilderness area activities would return to normal upon completion of construction. The project does not propose to alter the existing campgrounds or OHV use. The operation and maintenance of the project will not affect the recreational activities located in McCain Valley. As previously mentioned, the BLM determined that wind energy development and recreation can effectively coexist in McCain Valley and, therefore, the construction and operation of the project would not impact recreation or wilderness areas.

Decommissioning

A decommissioning plan will be prepared for the project and will include a site reclamation plan and monitoring program. The plan will be developed in compliance with the standards and requirements for closing a site at the time decommissioning occurs. All management plans, BMPs, and stipulations developed for the construction phase will be applied to similar activities during the decommissioning phase. When the project is decommissioned, the area would resume prior land uses according to the federal, state, and local regulations and designated land uses. Decommissioning impacts to recreation and wilderness areas would be similar to that of the construction phase and are considered temporary and less than significant.

Substantially contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas

Construction

The project is located within the McCain Valley RMZ which is managed by the BLM. The BLM has identified the McCain Valley area as a potential area for wind energy development, as shown in Section 3.11, **Figure 3.11-1**, BLM Areas Available for Wind Energy Development. The project would be consistent with the goals, policies, and land use as identified in the BLM RMP. The project does not propose any factors that would devalue the McCain Valley recreational areas. Construction activities will be temporary; therefore, impacts to the long-term loss or degradation of recreational facilities or wilderness areas are considered less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

The operation and maintenance of the proposed project will have little effect on the operation of the McCain Valley RMZ. Workers will utilize the area roadways to access the O&M facility and the turbines. O&M staff will be limited to twelve permanent full-time employees during normal business hours. All

BLM areas will remain accessible when the project is operational to allow recreation activities to continue as normal. No impacts due to the operation and maintenance of the proposed project are identified.

Decommissioning

When the project is decommissioned, the area would resume prior land uses according to the federal, state, and local regulations and land uses designations. No impacts to the degradation of recreation facilities or wilderness area are anticipated due to the decommissioning of the proposed project.

3.16.4 Cumulative Impacts

According to Section 2.0, **Table 2.0-8**, Cumulative Project List, projects in the area are not identified to have recreation and wilderness impacts; therefore, no cumulative impacts are identified for this issue area.

3.16.5 CEQA Levels of Significance Before Mitigation

Directly or indirectly disrupts or preclude activities in established federal, state, or local recreation areas or wilderness areas

Construction and Decommissioning

The construction and decommissioning of the project may result in minor temporary closure or disruption impacts to Lark and Cottonwood campgrounds and area OHV trails. Impacts are less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

Recreational activities will be able to continue during the operation of the proposed project; therefore, no impacts are identified.

Substantially contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas.

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

The proposed project may cause temporary disruption or closures to portions of two campgrounds and OHV trails during construction and decommissioning. However, upon completion of construction and the onset of operation, these recreational facilities will be restored to pre-construction conditions and will not result in any long-term loss or degradation of the recreation or wilderness area. The BLM maintains that wind energy development and recreation can effectively coexist in McCain Valley and identified this area areas having potential for wind energy development. The project is consistent with goals, policies, and land uses as identified in the BLM RMP. A less than significant impact is identified.

3.16.6 Mitigation Measures

The proposed project does not have any permanent or significant impact on recreation and wilderness resources, thus impacts are less than significant and mitigation measures are not necessary.

3.16.7 CEQA Levels of Significance After Mitigation

The proposed project does not have any permanent or significant impact on recreation and wilderness resources, and mitigation measures are not necessary.

3.16.8 Comparison of Alternatives

In developing the alternatives to be addressed in this environmental document, the potential alternatives were evaluated in terms of their ability to meet the basic objectives of the project, while avoiding or reducing the environmental impacts of the project. The alternatives will contain all of the same components and construction corridor as the proposed project except they may vary in number of components and location.

No Project/No Action Alternative

Under the No Project/No Action Alternative, the proposed project would not be implemented and the temporary impacts associated with construction and decommissioning of the project would not occur. Temporary closures of two BLM campgrounds and OHV trails due to project construction would not occur. The project area would continue to serve recreationists as in its present state.

Alternate Transmission Line Alternative #1

The Alternate Transmission Line Alternative #1 (T-line Alternative #1) would include all of the same components as the proposed project except for an alternate overhead 138 kV transmission line (T-line Alternative #1), as shown in **Figure 2.0-12**. The T-line Alternative #1 would be located parallel to, but in lieu of, the proposed transmission line. T-line Alternative #1 would be located further west and run from either the proposed or deviant collector substation approximately 5.5 miles south to the Rough Acres Ranch (south of turbine G-19). From Rough Acres Ranch, the line would continue west to Ribbonwood Road. The line would continue south on Ribbonwood Road to Old Highway 80, and east along Old Highway 80 to the San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) proposed Rebuilt Boulevard Substation.

This alternative would increase the land disturbance by approximately 7.6 acres, from 772.7 acres to 780.3 acres, utilizing the deviant collector substation. The 138 kV transmission line would increase in distance from 9.7 miles to 11.7 miles and would increase the amount of transmission line poles from 116 poles to 152 poles, utilizing the deviant collector substation. The 34.5 kV overhead collector lines would remain the same distance of 9.4 miles, and would require the same amount of collector line poles (250), and the underground collector lines would also remain the same distance of 29.3 miles, utilizing the deviant collector substation.

Directly or indirectly disrupts or preclude activities in established federal, state, or local recreation areas or wilderness areas

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

Temporary closures of two BLM campgrounds and OHV trails would occur as a result of this alternative. This alternative would have the same temporary impacts (disruptions) as described in the proposed project. Permanent impacts resulting from this alternative and associated activities related to recreation and wilderness are not anticipated. Impacts to recreational areas or wilderness areas are less than significant.

Substantially contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

This alternative will not contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas. Access roads to portions of the recreational areas would be temporarily restricted or closed due to project construction. Impacts to recreational and wilderness areas are temporary and less than significant.

This alternative has the same level of impacts to recreation and wilderness as the proposed project.

Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative

The Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative would include the alternate O&M/Substation facility co-located on Rough Acres Ranch (T17S R7E Sec9), the Alternate Transmission Line #2 (138 kV), as well as an alternate overhead collector system, as shown in **Figure 2.0-13**. This alternative would consist of two 34.5 kV lines connecting the turbines to the alternate collector substation location. All other elements of the project including the turbine locations, parking and laydown areas, roadway upgrades, and batch plant would remain as described in the proposed project. The Alternate Transmission Line #2 would run from the alternate collector substation south along McCain Valley Road, and then west along Old Highway 80 until reaching the SDG&E proposed Rebuilt Boulevard Substation.

This alternative would increase the land disturbance by 1.9 acres, from 772.7 acres to 774.6 acres. The 138 kV transmission line would decrease in distance as a result of this alternative from 9.7 miles to 3.8 miles and would decrease the amount of transmission line poles from 116 poles to 44 poles. The 34.5 kV overhead collector lines would increase in distance from 9.4 miles to 17 miles, and would increase the amount of collector line poles from 250 to 452 poles. The underground collector lines would decrease in distance from 29.3 miles to 28.9 miles.

Directly or indirectly disrupts or preclude activities in established federal, state, or local recreation areas or wilderness areas

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

Temporary closures of two BLM campgrounds and OHV trails would occur as a result of this alternative. This alternative will have the same temporary impacts (disruptions) as described in the proposed project and Alternative #1. Permanent impacts resulting from this alternative and associated activities related to recreation and wilderness are not anticipated. Impacts to recreational and wilderness areas are less than significant.

Substantially contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

This alternative will not contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas. Portions of access roads

to recreational areas would be temporarily restricted or closed due to project construction. However, these impacts will be temporary and are less than significant.

This alternative has the same level of impacts to recreation and wilderness as the proposed project.

Alternate Transmission Line #3 and Collector Substation Alternative

The Alternate Transmission Line #3 and Collector Substation Alternative would include the alternate O&M/Substation facility co-located on Rough Acres Ranch (T17S R7E Sec9), the Alternate Transmission Line #3 (138 kV), as well as an alternate overhead collector system as shown in **Figure 2.0-14**. This alternative would consist of two 34.5 kV lines connecting the turbines to the alternate collector substation. All other elements including the turbine locations, parking and laydown areas, roadway upgrades, and batch plant would remain as described in the proposed project. The Alternate Transmission Line #3 would run from the alternate collector substation west to Ribbonwood Road, continue south along Ribbonwood Road, and then east along Old Highway 80 until reaching the SDG&E proposed Rebuilt Boulevard Substation.

This alternative would increase the land disturbance by 7.3 acres, from 772.7 acres to 780.0 acres. The 138 kV transmission line would decrease in distance as a result of this alternative from 9.7 miles to 5.4 miles and would decrease the amount of transmission line poles from 116 poles to 60 poles. The 34.5 kV overhead collector lines would increase in distance from 9.4 miles to 17 miles, and would increase the amount of collector line poles from 250 to 452 poles. The underground collector lines would decrease in distance from 29.3 miles to 28.9 miles.

Directly or indirectly disrupts or preclude activities in established federal, state, or local recreation areas or wilderness areas

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

Temporary closures of two BLM campgrounds and OHV trails would occur as a result of this alternative. This alternative will have the same temporary impacts (disruptions) as described in the proposed project and other alternatives. Permanent impacts resulting from this alternative and associated activities related to recreation and wilderness are not anticipated. Impacts are less than significant.

Substantially contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

This alternative would change the route of the transmission line. This alternative will not contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local, or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas. Portions of access roads to recreational areas would be temporarily restricted or closed due to project construction. However, these impacts will be temporary and less than significant.

This alternative has the same level of impacts to recreation and wilderness as the proposed project.

Operation and Maintenance Facility Location #1 Alternative

The O&M Facility Location #1 Alternative would be located on private property (T17S R7E Sec4), north of the alternate collector substation and located west of McCain Valley Road, as shown in **Figure 2.0-13**. This alternative would consist of separating the 5-acre O&M building site from the collector substation; however, both would remain on Rough Acres Ranch property. Alternate Transmission Line #2 would be utilized under this alternative as well as the Alternate Overhead Collector System consisting of two 34.5 kV lines connecting the turbines to the alternate collector substation. All other elements of the project including the turbine locations, parking and laydown areas, and batch plant would remain as described in the proposed project.

This alternative is estimated to have the same land disturbance impacts as the Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative. However, by relocating the O&M building site to the northern portion of Rough Acres Ranch, this alternative would require an approximate 650-foot new access road to be constructed on the west side of McCain Valley Road, thus necessitating an approximate 0.07 acres of permanently impacted area and a temporary impact of 0.55 acres. In comparison to the proposed project, this alternative would decrease the land disturbance by approximately 2.5 acres, from 772.7 acres to 775.2 acres. The 138 kV transmission line would decrease in distance as a result of this alternative from 9.7 miles to 3.8 miles and would decrease the amount of transmission line poles from 116 poles to 44 poles. The 34.5 kV overhead collector lines would increase in distance from 9.4 miles to 17 miles, and would increase the amount of collector line poles from 250 to 452 poles. The underground collector lines would decrease in distance from 29.3 miles to 28.9 miles.

Directly or indirectly disrupts or preclude activities in established federal, state, or local recreation areas or wilderness areas.

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

Temporary closures of two BLM campgrounds and OHV trails would occur as a result of this alternative. This alternative will have the same temporary impacts (disruptions) as described in the proposed project and other alternatives. Permanent impacts resulting from this alternative and associated activities related to recreation and wilderness are not anticipated. Impacts are less than significant.

Substantially contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas.

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

This alternative will not contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local, or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas. Portions of access roads to recreational areas would be temporarily restricted or closed due to project construction. However these impacts will be temporary and less than significant.

This alternative has the same level of impacts to recreation and wilderness as the proposed project.

Operation and Maintenance Facility Location #2 Alternative

The O&M Facility Location #2 Alternative would be located on private property (T17S R7E Sec 16), south of the alternate collector substation and located west of McCain Valley Road, as illustrated in

Figure 2.0-13. This alternative would consist of separating the 5-acre O&M building site from the collector substation; however, both would remain on Rough Acres Ranch property. Alternate Transmission Line #2 would be utilized under this alternative as well as the Alternate Overhead Collector System consisting of two 34.5 kV lines connecting the turbines to the alternate collector substation. All other elements of the project including the turbine locations, parking and laydown areas, and batch plant would remain as described in the proposed project.

This alternative is estimated to have the same land disturbance impacts as the Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative. However, by relocating the O&M building site to the southern portion of Rough Acres Ranch, this alternative would result in a very slight difference of 1.0 acre of permanent impacts and 0.08 acre of temporary impacts resulting from the construction of new access roads than those described in **Table 2.0-10**. In comparison to the proposed project, this alternative would increase the land disturbance by approximately 2.0 acres; from 772.7 acres to 774.7 acres. The 138 kV transmission line would decrease in distance as a result of this alternative from 9.7 miles to 3.8 miles and would decrease the amount of transmission line poles from 116 poles to 44 poles. The 34.5 kV overhead collector lines would increase in distance from 9.4 miles to 17 miles, and would increase the amount of collector line poles from 250 to 452 poles. The underground collector lines would decrease in distance from 29.3 miles to 28.9 miles.

Directly or indirectly disrupts or preclude activities in established federal, state, or local recreation areas or wilderness areas

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

Temporary closures of two BLM campgrounds and OHV trails would occur as a result of this alternative. This alternative will have the same temporary impacts (disruptions) as described in the proposed project and other alternatives. Permanent impacts resulting from this alternative and associated activities related to recreation and wilderness are not anticipated. Impacts are less than significant.

Substantially contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

This alternative will not contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the factors that contribute to the value of federal, state, local or private recreational facilities or wilderness areas. Portions of access roads to recreational areas would be temporarily restricted or closed due to project construction. However, these impacts will be temporary and less than significant.

This alternative has the same level of impacts to recreation and wilderness as the proposed project.

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