

APPENDIX D: SAMPLING APPROACH FOR THE TULE WIND CLASS III AND CLASS II SURVEYS

The Tule Wind project includes a Class III cultural resources inventory for the entire project footprint, and a Class II sample survey of 10-percent of the overall right-of-way (ROW) outside of the project footprint. In an effort to better define a level of effort for cultural surveys related to wind energy projects, the BLM revised the guidelines governing cultural resources inventories such that only the project footprint requires a 100-percent Class III survey, while the remaining ROW must be sampled with a Class II inventory to document the presence and character of cultural resources in the overall ROW (see Appendix C). This is different than more land intensive solar energy projects on BLM land, for which 100-percent of the project ROW must be inventoried.

The Tule Wind project footprint is defined by survey corridors of various sizes surrounding planned project facilities, including all collector lines, transmission lines, turbine strings, access roads, turbine strings, staging areas, substations, and other related facilities. A 400-ft corridor will surround all turbine strings, with the ability to expand the corridor to 800-ft during the Class III survey to achieve avoidance of impacts to cultural resources. All access roads, transmission lines and collector lines will have a 150-ft corridor, and all staging areas, substations, and other facilities will have a 100-ft buffer. A departure from these survey buffers is on lands administered by the County of San Diego, on which all transmission lines will be surveyed with a 1000-ft corridor to allow for flexibility in transmission line sighting. Altogether, these survey corridors and buffers amount to approximately 3,570 acres for the project footprint, based on a minimum 400-ft buffer around turbine strings.

For the Tule Wind project, the BLM has agreed that a 10-percent sample of the overall non-footprint ROW is a sufficient level of effort for the Class II sample inventory. Much of McCain Valley is considered to have high potential for archaeological sites, not including high, narrow ridges surrounded by steep slopes. This is confirmed in the results from a records search and a recent survey for the San Diego Gas & Electric (SDGE) Sunrise-Powerlink survey that intersects the Tule Wind project area that document dozens of archaeological sites within and near the Tule Wind project footprint. Given that much of the project ROW consists of either low hills and valleys, or high ridges with steep slopes, the 10-percent sample of the non-footprint ROW is likely to generate a representative sample of archaeological sites. A 10-percent sample of the ROW amounts to approximately 2,000 acres. Together with the Class III inventory, the total survey coverage will amount to approximately 5,570 acres.

To facilitate the completion of an EIS/EIR for the Tule Wind project in conjunction with other related undertakings, it has been determined that, of the 5,570 acres covered by the Class III and Class II inventories, approximately 25-percent shall be initially surveyed to establish a baseline of cultural resources in the project vicinity to help guide the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) process of analyzing impacts to resources, with the remaining 75-

percent to be subsequently inventoried. This 25-percent sample will include pedestrian survey of approximately 1,500 acres (approximately 25-percent of 5,570 acres).

Allocation of the 1,500-acre 25-percent inventory across both the project footprint and the ROW sample area was based on the results of a records search and the SDGE Sunrise-Powerlink survey that intersects the southern, eastern, and western aspects of the Tule Wind project ROW. Both the records search and Sunrise-Powerlink survey documented numerous archaeological sites in low valleys and among rolling hills. Very few archaeological sites have been recorded on high ridges, and none are known to exist on the steep slopes. Based on these results, approximately 1,100 acres have been allocated to the project footprint, covering areas that have high potential for archaeological sites or have a higher density of previously recorded archaeological sites (Figure D-1). Another 400 acres have been allocated to areas of high potential within the ROW but outside of the project footprint.