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CHAPTER 4 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.12 PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Measures	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities (the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts), in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4.12.0 Introduction

This section describes local public services in the vicinity of the San Diego Gas & Electric Company East County (ECO) Substation Project (Proposed Project) site. Existing conditions for fire and emergency services, police and protective services, hospitals, schools, and other public services are presented, and potential impacts from the construction, operation, and maintenance of Proposed Project components on these public facilities and services are assessed. As described in this section, the Proposed Project will have no impacts on public services.

4.12.1 Methodology

Information regarding local public services was primarily gathered from an Internet search of local planning agencies. Specifically, information regarding fire and emergency services was obtained from the San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission and individual websites for fire agencies and departments. Information regarding local area schools was obtained from the Mountain Empire Unified School District and the California Department of Education websites. Information regarding police services was obtained from the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and the California Border Patrol websites. Internet searches were conducted in order

to obtain information regarding hospitals and libraries. Geographic information system (GIS) data was obtained from the San Diego GIS (SanGIS) website and used to confirm data collected.

4.12.2 Existing Conditions

Fire and Emergency Services

Fire and emergency services for the Proposed Project vicinity are limited. In eastern San Diego County, many local stations are staffed entirely by volunteers and only operate seasonally. The Boulevard Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department, located at 39223 Highway 94 in Boulevard, serves approximately 99 square miles around the community of Boulevard and has six volunteer members. The San Diego Rural Fire Protection District (SDRFPD) serves approximately 720 square miles of rural and suburban San Diego County, including the ECO Substation, the Southwest Powerlink (SWPL) loop-in, and portions of the 138 kilovolt (kV) transmission line. The SDRFPD has fire stations in Jacumba, located at 1255 Jacumba Street, and Lake Morena, located at 29690 Oak Drive. Both stations are staffed seasonally by volunteer firefighters. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), which generally fights wildfires throughout the state, also serves the entire Proposed Project area. CAL FIRE has a station located adjacent to the White Star Communication Facility on Tierra del Sol Road in Boulevard.

Police and Protection Services

The San Diego County Sheriff's Department serves the Proposed Project area, including the communities of Boulevard and Jacumba. This department has approximately 4,000 employees and covers approximately 4,200 square miles of San Diego County, including many incorporated cities in addition to the unincorporated areas. Two sheriff's department facilities—the Boulevard/Jacumba Substation and the Jacumba Office—are located near the Proposed Project area. The Boulevard/Jacumba Substation, located in Boulevard, is managed by the Pine Valley Station in Pine Valley. The Boulevard/Jacumba Substation oversees the communities of Boulevard, Jacumba, and Live Oak Springs. It patrols approximately 367 square miles.

The United States (U.S.) Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) also has a strong presence in the area with a station located in Campo, approximately 20 miles west of Jacumba. The station has more than 300 agents and patrols the U.S./Mexico border from Tecate, Mexico, to the San Diego County/Imperial County border east of Jacumba. The Campo Station also manages a CBP substation in Boulevard.

Hospitals

No major hospitals or emergency health service facilities exist in eastern San Diego County near the Proposed Project area. The two closest major medical facilities are located in La Mesa and El Centro. The Sharp Grossmont Hospital is located in La Mesa (in San Diego County), approximately 45 miles west of Boulevard. The El Centro Regional Medical Center (in Imperial County) is approximately 50 miles east of Jacumba. One small medical facility, High Desert Family Medicine, is located in Jacumba, and offers non-emergency medical care.

Schools

The Proposed Project area, including the communities of Jacumba and Boulevard, lies within the Mountain Empire Unified School District. This school district encompasses six elementary schools, one middle school, one senior high school, one charter school, and one alternative education school. There are two schools within five miles of the project area—Clover Flat Elementary in Boulevard, approximately 1.3 miles northwest of the Boulevard Substation, and Jacumba Elementary in Jacumba, approximately 0.9 mile south of the SWPL. These two schools abide by the Clover Flat/Jacumba Compact, an agreement to divide the limited number of students in the area between the two schools, based on grade level. Currently, students in kindergarten through second grade attend Jacumba Elementary and students in third through sixth grade attend Clover Flat Elementary. In 2007, Jacumba Elementary had an enrollment of 58 students, and Clover Flat Elementary had 85 students. The middle school and high school closest to the Proposed Project area are located approximately 21.6 miles west of Clover Flat Elementary, in Pine Valley.

Other Services

One library can be found within five miles of the Proposed Project area—the Jacumba Branch of the San Diego County Library—which is located at 44605 Old Highway 80. It serves the communities of Boulevard and Jacumba. No other public buildings are located in the Proposed Project vicinity.

Several regional, county, and state parks can be found near the Proposed Project area. These include the McCain Wilderness, located approximately two miles northeast of Boulevard, and Anza Borrego Desert State Park, located approximately four miles north of the proposed ECO Substation site. More information regarding nearby parks and recreation areas is included in Section 4.13 Recreation.

4.12.3 Impacts

Significance Criteria

Determination of impacts was derived from Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines. Impacts to public services are considered potentially significant if they result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives. These public services include police services, fire protection, emergency services, hospitals, schools, and public facilities.

Construction – No Impact

The Proposed Project components will be constructed in remote areas. Construction is not likely to affect the use of any nearby public services or facilities, including schools, fire protection services, police services, emergency services, hospitals, or other services. The Proposed Project will not result in the need for additional government or public services, such as schools or parks, because it will not induce population growth (see Chapter 5 – Significant Impacts for more information regarding growth-inducing impacts).

Fire and Police Protection

Several emergency providers are located in the vicinity of the Proposed Project component sites, but none are immediately adjacent to or within 0.25 mile of any of them. Therefore, no fire protection, police, and/or emergency service providers will be directly affected by construction. The Proposed Project will neither increase the temporary demand for nor alter the level of local public services required because it will not perceptibly increase local population or housing demands. An emergency could arise as a result of Proposed Project construction, but such an incident is of low probability and would not tax the existing emergency services beyond their current capabilities if it were to occur. Construction is not anticipated to affect response times because no road closures will be required for construction activities. As a result, no impacts to fire and police protective services are anticipated.

Schools

The Proposed Project will not increase the temporary demand for school enrollment because it will not perceptibly increase local population during the short duration of construction. The majority of the construction crew members are likely to be hired from the local operators union and local electrical workers union, which can provide a large pool of potential workers from the greater San Diego area. Because of the probable limited number of qualified workers within the local populace, most workers likely to be hired will reside outside the immediate Proposed Project area and will commute to the work site for the short construction duration. Family relocation will not be necessary. No new hires will be required for operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project. Therefore, school enrollment will not be affected and no new schools will be necessary as a result of the Proposed Project. As a result, no impacts to schools are expected.

Parks

Only two recreational facilities are found within 0.25 mile of the Proposed Project, both of them being near the proposed 138 kV transmission line, as described in Section 4.13 Recreation. Furthermore, the 138 kV transmission line will cross land managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Section 4.13 Recreation provides more information regarding potential impacts to these recreational facilities. Construction will not significantly increase the local population, nor will it reduce the number of park facilities, so no new parks will be needed. Therefore, no impacts to parks or other recreational facilities will result.

Other Public Facilities

No other public facilities are located in close proximity to any of the Proposed Project components. The Proposed Project will not increase the local population or otherwise result in a change that will necessitate alteration or expansion of existing public services. As a result, no impacts are anticipated.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

After construction, the substations associated with this Proposed Project will be unmanned. Operation and maintenance of the 138 kV transmission line will be conducted in a manner similar to the existing transmission lines in the area. These activities will not impede the use of existing public services or result in a need for new services because they will be limited to

periodic visits to the 138 kV transmission line and the SWPL loop-in once a year and for no more than a few days on each occasion. An operator will visit the proposed substation several times a week to monitor its operation. Maintenance of substations occurs only a few times a year and for no more than a few days on each occasion. As a result, there will be no impacts to public services from the operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project.

4.12.4 Applicant-Proposed Measures

Because the Proposed Project will have no impacts on public services, no avoidance or minimization measures are proposed.

4.12.5 References

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