5.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This section describes the existing utilities and service systems in the vicinity of the project and analyzes potential utilities and service system impacts associated with the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the project. This section also describes environmental and regulatory settings. The project would not result in significant impacts to water, wastewater, telecommunications, electrical power, or solid waste capacity or infrastructure and would not increase the rate of corrosion of adjacent utilities lines.

5.19.1 Environmental Setting

5.19.1.1 Utility Providers

Utility providers serving the project area are summarized in each subsection below.

Electrical Power

Electrical power in Modoc and Lassen Counties is largely provided by Surprise Valley Electric (and energy co-op). In addition, Lassen Municipal Utility District provides electricity to Lassen County. Additionally, Pacific Power and Light, which is an Oregon-based company, serves portions of Modoc County, including the City of Alturas. Electricity within the portion of the project area within Sierra County is provided by Plus-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative (Lassen Municipal Utility District 2020).

Natural Gas

Natural gas in Modoc, Lassen, and Sierra Counties is provided by a variety of private and public sources. Natural gas in Modoc County is largely provided by Bethel's. Natural gas in Lassen County is provided by Lassen Plus Gas Service, Ferrellgas, Susanville Gas Department, West Coast Gas, and others. Natural gas in Sierra County is provided by High Sierra Gas, Southwest Gas Corporation, Suburban Propane, and others.

Wastewater

Much of the Modoc, Lassen, and Sierra County areas along the project consist of rural landscapes that do not have existing public wastewater collection systems but rather rely on septic systems to treat and discharge wastewater at individual residences. The more developed communities along the project have established wastewater and sewer collection and treatment services. The City of Alturas Public Works Sewer Department collects and treats water for approximately 3,000 people within the city with 22.9 miles of gravity pipelines that collects and the wastewater and ultimately treats it at the Alturas Wastewater Treatment Plant (City of Alturas 2019).

5.19.1.2 Utility Lines

A number of existing utilities and planned utility projects are located within the US 395 right-of-way. Table 7.1-1 in Section 7.1, Cumulative Impacts, summarizes these projects and utilities. The exact locations of existing, buried utilities, including GIS data and as-builts, could not be obtained because of privacy and security reasons. However, prior to mobilization, the construction contractor would call in a DigAlert in compliance with utility regulations to confirm the locations of existing utilities that may be within work areas. Prior to conduit installation, the contractor would locate existing utilities using a vacuum truck or via hand tools to safely expose their location. No utilities will be relocated or impacted by construction of the project.

5.19.1.3 Approved Utility Projects

As discussed further in Section 7.0, Cumulative and Other CEQA Considerations, there are several other current and future utility projects anticipated to occur within two miles of the project. Table 7.1-1 in Section 7.1, Cumulative Impacts, contains the full list of these projects as well as the descriptions of each project and the approximate locations and distance to the project. The majority of these projects are related to transportation infrastructure, with one development project. There are no other electrical power line or telecommunication projects anticipated in the project area.

5.19.1.4 Water Supplies

Water suppliers in Modoc, Lassen, and Sierra Counties vary based on location and number of people served. Most residences use private water wells, especially in more remote areas of each of these counties. Water systems and suppliers in each county is provided in further detail below.

Modoc County

According to the Modoc County General Plan, Modoc County has approximately 248 square miles of water area in the county, which is the second highest water coverage in California. There are six major lakes in the county and 31 reservoirs with a greater than 1,000-acre feet capacity (Modoc County 1988, as amended).

Water supplies to many residents in Modoc County is provided through private wells. Other organized water supplies in Modoc County include the following (Environmental Working Group 2020a):

- City of Alturas (serves 3,231 people)
- Cedarville County Water District (serves 800 people)
- California Pines (serves 450 people)
- Newell County Water District (serves 300 people)
- I'sot Well #3 and #15 (serves 135 people)
- Butte Creek Trailer Park (serves 25 people)
- Cedarville Trailer Park (serves 25 people)

Lassen County

According to the Lassen County General Plan, much of Lassen County is arid and receives and average of less than five inches or rain per year, thus water is a critical resource in the County (Lassen County 1999, as amended). Agricultural uses have further put a strain on water supplies in the county.

Water supplies to many residents in Lassen County is provided through private wells, however, other organized water supplies in Lassen County include the following (Environmental Working Group 2020b):

- City of Susanville (serves 8,892 people)
- High Desert State Prison (serves 4,924 people)
- Lake Almanor County Club (serves 3,000 people)
- Westwood Community Services District (serves 2,000 people)
- Hamilton Branch Community Services District (serves 1,425 people)
- Leavitt Lake Community Services District (serves 950 people)
- Lake Forest Mutual Water Company (serves 850 people)
- Clear Creek Community Services District (serves 400 people)
- Lassen County Water District #1 (serves 350 people)
- Susan Hills Estates Water Company (serves 250 people)
- Spaulding Hills Estates Water Company (serves 120 people)
- Pineview Mobile Home Park (serves 100 people)
- Herlong Mobile Home Park (serves 100 people)
- Little Valley Community Services District (serves 50 people)
- Lassen Mobile Home Park (serves 30 people)
- Susan River Park Water Company (serves 26 people)

Sierra County

Due to the location and diversity of topography and landscape in Sierra County, water resources and supplies vary throughout the county with higher water supplies located in the mountainous and sierra environments and lower water supplies available in the foothill environments. Water supplies to many residents in Sierra County is provided through private wells; however, other organized water supplies in Sierra County include the following (Environmental Working Group 2020c):

- City of Loyalton (serves 930 people)
- Sierra Brooks Public Services District (serves 465 people)
- Sierraville Public utilities District (serves 350 people)
- Downieville Public Utilities District (serves 325 people)
- Sierra Company #1 (serves 200 people)
- R.R. Lewis Small Water Company (serves 200 people)
- Alleghany County Water District (serves 125 people)
- Sierra City Water Works Inc. (serves 60 people)
- Mountain View Mobile (serves 45 people)
- Greene Acres Prop (serves 35 people)

- Central Town Water System (serves 22 people)

5.19.1.5 Landfills and Recycling

Table 5.19-1 shows the active landfills near the project site (i.e., within 20 miles) that would be able to accept construction debris and materials. In addition to the below landfills there are also several transfer stations directly adjacent to US 395 in Modoc and Lassen Counties and one transfer station, the Loyalton Transfer Station, in Sierra County near the project.

Table 5.19-1: Active Landfills Near Project Area

Landfill Name	Distance to Project	Maximum Permitted Capacity (cy)	Capacity Remaining (cy)
Modoc County			
Alturas Sanitary Landfill	0.77-mile	1,600,000	176,931
Lassen County			
Bass Hill Landfill	600 feet	2,150,000	603,404
Westwood Landfill	20 miles	89,369	62,207
Sierra County			
None	-	-	-

Note:
cy = cubic yards
Sources: CalRecycle 2020a, b, c

In addition to the above landfills and transfer stations, there are also several recycling centers that occur adjacent to the project that could be used to dispose of certain construction debris. These recycling centers include the following:

- Holdorff's Recycling Center (Alturas, California)
- Bigfoot Recycling (Susanville, California)
- Bullseye Recycling (Susanville, California)

5.19.2 Regulatory Setting

5.19.2.1 Federal

There are no federal regulations pertaining to utilities and service systems that are relevant to the project.

5.19.2.2 State

California Government Code

California Government Code Sections 4216-4216.9 "Protection of Underground Infrastructure" requires an excavator to contact a regional notification center (e.g., Underground Services Alert or Dig Alert) at least 2 days prior to excavation of any subsurface installations. Anyone seeking to begin a project that could damage underground infrastructure can call Underground Service Alert, the regional notification center for Northern California. Underground Service Alert will notify the utilities that may have buried lines within 1,000 feet of the project. Representatives of the utilities are then notified and are required to mark the specific location of their facilities within the work area prior to the start of project activities in the area.

California Constitution, Article X

Article X (10), Section 2, of the California Constitution recognizes the need to put the state's water resources to maximum beneficial use:

> *It is hereby declared that because of the conditions prevailing in this State the general welfare requires that the water resources of the State be put to beneficial use to the fullest extent of which they are capable, and that the waste or unreasonable use or unreasonable method of use of water be prevented, and that the conservation of such waters is to be exercised with a view to the reasonable and beneficial use thereof in the interest of the people and for the public welfare.*

California Integrated Waste Management Act

To minimize the amount of solid waste that must be disposed of by transformation (i.e., recycling) and land disposal, the State Legislature passed the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939), effective January 1990. According to AB 939, all cities and counties are required to divert 25 percent of all solid waste from landfill facilities by January 1, 1995, and 50-percent by January 1, 2000. Solid waste plans are required to explain how each city's AB 939 plan will be integrated within the respective county plan. They must promote source reduction, recycling and composting, and environmentally safe transformation and land disposal. Cities and counties that do not meet this mandate are subject to $10,000 per day fines.

5.19.2.3 Local

Because CPUC has exclusive jurisdiction over project siting, design, and construction, the project is not subject to local utilities and service system regulations or discretionary permits. This section identifies local utilities regulations for informational purposes and to assist with CEQA review.

Modoc County General Plan

The Modoc County General Plan was adopted in September 1988; however, it does not contain any utilities and services system goals or policies that are relevant to the project (Modoc County 1988, as amended).

Lassen County General Plan

The Lassen County General Plan was adopted in September of 1999 and includes the following goals related to utilities and service systems that are relevant to the project (Lassen County 1999, as amended):

- **Goal N-3**: Water Supplies of sufficient quality and quantity to serve the needs of Lassen County, now and in the future.
    - **Policy NR-13:** The County recognizes the critical importance and future value of its water resources and shall support the conservation of water supplies and protection of water quality.

Sierra County General Plan

The Sierra County General Plan was first adopted in 1996 and includes the following goals and policies related to utilities and service systems that are relevant to the project (Sierra County 1996, as amended):

- **Goal 1:** It is the County's goal to protect and maintain its water resources for the benefit of County residents and natural habitats and to assure protection of its watersheds as a primary land use constraint.

City of Alturas

The City of Alturas General Plan was first adopted in June 1987 (City of Alturas 1987, as amended). There are no utilities or service systems goals or policies in the City of Alturas General Plan that are relevant to the project.

5.19.3 Impact Questions

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the Provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Would the project increase the rate of corrosion of adjacent utility lines as a result of alternating current impacts?	☐	☐	☐	☒

5.19.4 Impact Analysis

a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less Than Significant Impact. Implementation of the project would result in the construction and operation of a new fiber optic line to improve the quality of rural broadband in underserved communities. The project would not require the construction of new or expanded water, stormwater drainage, electrical power, or natural gas facilities. Although project construction would require the use of water and wastewater facilities by construction workers, this use would be temporary and short-term. The project would not require relocation or construction of new or expanded electric utility facilities. Zayo would implement APM UTL-1, which would require Zayo to notify other utility companies to locate and mark existing underground structures at proposed work areas prior to any excavation activities. Therefore, implementation of the project would result in a less than significant impact.

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

Less Than Significant Impact. Construction of the project would require water for dust control, clean-up, and soil compaction along the running line. As discussed in Section 3.0, Proposed Project Description, approximately ~~18~~12,000 gallons of water would be used each day during construction for dust control and fire response, with the assumption of three construction crews working concurrently along the project

alignment. Each construction spread would have a 2,000-gallon water truck that would be refilled one to two times per day. ~~Therefore, the total water needed over the approximately 6-month construction period would equate to approximately 2.7 million gallons of water.~~ Additionally, approximately 500 gallons of water per day would be used for each drill during boring ~~per drill~~, of which 200 gallons would be recovered as liquid waste. Since up to four bore crews are anticipated to be mobilized during construction, it is estimated that a maximum of 2,000 gallons of water per day would be used for boring activities, of which up to 800 gallons would be recovered as waste. Therefore, the total water needed over the approximately 6-month construction period would ~~equate to~~be approximately 1.8 million gallons ~~of water~~. Water would be obtained from local municipal sources via existing water rights and would be trucked to the project sites. As discussed in Section 5.19.1, Environmental Setting, there are ~~a number of~~several public water systems and suppliers in Modoc, Lassen, and Sierra Counties from which water could be purchased and used onsite during construction activities. The chosen contractor would likely choose the closest water supplier that has adequate capacity and availability of water to serve the project's needs, depending on the location along the running line. Water requirements for construction would be temporary, lasting approximately 6 months, and would result in a total of 1.8~~2.7~~ million gallons of water (i.e., roughly the size of ~~four~~ three Olympic sized swimming pools). Therefore, construction activities would purchase water from water suppliers with adequate capacity, and use of water would be temporary and finite, resulting in a less than significant impact related to water supplies during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.

Once constructed, the project would not require any operational water use and would not result in any long-term impacts related to water consumption. Therefore, there would be no operational impact related to water supplies during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.

c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the Provider's existing commitments?

Less Than Significant Impact. Wastewater produced as a result of the project would be limited to construction activities associated with the placement or the new fiber optic cable. As discussed in Section 5.19.1, Environmental Setting, there are limited wastewater treatment providers in the project area because of the rural nature of most of the project area. Most of the liquid waste associated with construction of the project would occur in the form of bentonite (clay-based) drilling fluid, which is not considered a hazardous material and would not require special disposal procedures. At each bore location, any excess drilling fluid that seeps from the bore hole would be captured in exit pits and siphoned into a holding tank to be reused or properly disposed of. Approximately 500 gallons of water per day would be used for each drill during boring ~~per drill~~, of which 200 gallons would be recovered as liquid waste. Since up to four bore crews are anticipated to be mobilized during construction, it is estimated that a maximum of 2,000 gallons of water per day would be used for boring activities, of which up to 800 gallons would be recovered as waste. ~~-~~Unanticipated discharges would be controlled through the implementation of a SWPPP (APM HYDRO-1). See Section 5.10, Hydrology and Water Quality, for further detail. It is anticipated that the majority of this wastewater could be reused onsite; if not, it could be

disposed of at one of the landfill locations listed in Table 5.19-1. Additionally, portable toilets would be provided for construction workers during construction. All sanitary waste from these portable toilets would be disposed of at appropriately licensed facilities that contract these portable toilets and would not result in noticeable capacity increases at any wastewater facility. Therefore, construction of the project would result in a less than significant impact related to wastewater treatment capacity.

Once constructed, the project would largely be located underground and would not include uses that could generate wastewater. Therefore, operation of the project would result in no impact to wastewater treatment capacity.

d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Less Than Significant Impact. Construction activities related to the project would generate 20 pounds per day of non-hazardous solid waste related to cable trimmings, package materials, and construction debris. -Waste materials would be properly disposed of in one of the landfills or recycling centers along the project route. ~~generate a certain amount of waste, including environmentally non-hazardous materials. Items such as cable trimmings, package materials, etc. would necessitate proper handling and disposal methods.~~ It is assumed that construction would result in up to 400 cubic yards of spoils related to the displacement of soil for installation of the vaults; however, soil would be balanced onsite wherever possible. Additionally, the project would also generate solid waste from the food, glass, paper, plastic, and packing materials consumed by the up to ~~48~~ 66 construction workers (approximately ~~eight~~ eleven crews of six people) who would be onsite during periods of peak construction activity. The volume of waste generated is expected to be minimal for the project due to the type of construction activities and the linear nature of the project.

All construction-related waste materials would be properly disposed of in one of the landfills or recycling centers nearby the project, and dumpsters for construction waste would be provided at materials storage yards for temporary storage prior to transport to a licensed local waste management or recycling facility. Table 5.19-1 lists the currently active landfills in close proximity (i.e., within 20 miles) of the project site. These landfills have adequate capacity remaining to serve the minimal construction waste anticipated for the project. Due to the linear nature of the project, the construction crews would likely choose the closest landfill to construction activities to limit travel time and consumption of other resources, such as gasoline and diesel fuel. However, to be in compliance with state solid waste reduction goals, specifically AB 939, 25-percent of all solid waste ~~should~~ ~~shall~~would be diverted from landfill facilities. Therefore, to ensure that the project is consistent with this state waste reduction goal, APM UTL-2 would be required to divert recyclable construction waste from local landfills to recycling facilities, where possible. APM UTL-2 would require specific bins be placed within each construction work area and would require signage for workers to identify where recyclable materials ~~should~~ ~~shall~~ would be placed. Therefore, with the implementation of APM UTL-2, impacts associated with short-term waste disposal during construction would be reduced to a less than significant level.

Once constructed, the project would in involve the operation of the fiber optic line and would not involve any ongoing waste producing activities. Therefore, there would be no operational impact related to generation of solid waste in excess of standards or capacities of local landfills.

e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed under impact criterion 'd,' the project would result in minor amounts of waste from construction activities. Construction debris could possibly include glass, metal, wood and cardboard packaging, and HDPE conduit remnants. Once in operation, potential solid waste generated may consist of replaced parts and equipment and plants and planting materials cleared during routine maintenance, which would be removed and taken offsite for disposal. Waste from construction activities is expected to be minimal due to the type of project; however, to be in compliance with state reduction goals such as AB 939, 25 percent of all waste ~~should~~ ~~shall~~would be diverted from landfills. The project would comply with this reduction goal through implementation of APM UTL-2, which would require collecting recycling onsite and disposing of it at a recycling facility rather than at the landfills. Therefore, with implementation of APM UTL-2, the Applicant and chosen contractor would comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste, and the impact would be considered less than significant.

Once constructed, the project would involve the operation of the fiber optic line and would not involve any ongoing waste-producing activities. Therefore, there would be no operational impacts related to compliance with federal. state, and local solid waste management and reduction regulations.

f) Would the project increase the rate of corrosion of adjacent utility lines as a result of alternating current impacts?

No Impact. Since the project itself includes the placement of a fiber optic line underground within existing roadway right-of-way, it would not provide a source of alternating current. The placement of the fiber optic line would be located away from any utility lines, if present, and would not cause corrosion. Additionally, the fiber optic line would be shielded with three 3.2-centimeter-diameter HDPE, which would prevent the cable from interacting with any nearby metallic objects. Therefore, the project would result in no impact related to corrosion of adjacent utility lines.

5.19.5 Draft Environmental Measures

Applicant Proposed Measures

APM UTL-1: Utility Company Coordination

The applicant shall notify all utility companies with utilities located within or crossing the project right-of-way to locate and mark existing underground utilities along the entire length of the project at least ~~14~~ 30 days prior to construction. No subsurface work shall be conducted that would conflict with (i.e., directly impact or compromise the integrity of) a buried utility. In the event of a conflict, areas of subsurface

excavation or pole installation shall be realigned vertically and/or horizontally, as appropriate, to avoid other utilities and provide adequate operational and safety buffering. In instances where separation between third-party utilities and underground excavations is less than 5 feet, the applicant shall submit the intended construction methodology to the owner of the third-party utility for review and approval at least 30 days prior to construction. Construction methods shall be adjusted as necessary to assure that the integrity of existing utility lines is not compromised.

APM UTL-2: Recycling of Construction Materials

During construction activities, the contractor shall use recycling centers for materials that can be recycled, rather than hauling all materials to landfills. Materials that could be recycled may include plastics, paper, and cans and bottles. At each construction site, a designated container or vessel shall be set up at the beginning of construction activities with appropriate signage indicating where construction workers ~~should~~ shall place recyclable materials.

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