4.1 Aesthetics

This section describes the environmental and regulatory settings and discusses impacts associated with construction and operation of the proposed Valley-Ivyglen 115-kilovolt (kV) Subtransmission Line Project (proposed Valley-Ivyglen Project, or VIG) and the proposed Alberhill System Project (proposed Alberhill Project, or ASP) with respect to aesthetic resources. The analysis of aesthetic resources presented in this section follows the methodology described in the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects (FHWA 1988).

During scoping, commenters expressed concerns about the visual character of their neighborhoods being affected by new subtransmission poles, particularly in rural neighborhoods and neighborhoods where utilities are currently undergrounded. Commenters also expressed concern about potential effects to the Scenic Highway eligibility of Interstate 15 (I-15). A commenter also expressed concern about new sources of light and glare. These comments informed the analysis in this section. Conflicts with land use policies, regulations, and plans related to aesthetic resources are discussed in Section 4.10, "Land Use."

4.1.1 Environmental Setting

4.1.1.1 Visual Character and Quality: Landscape Units

Landscape units are areas with generally distinct visual character distinguished by continuous, similar, or interrelated visual elements and that provide a context for describing and analyzing the landscape setting. The components of the proposed projects would primarily be located along I-15 in the Temescal Valley region, which is bounded by the Cleveland National Forest and Santa Ana Mountains to the west and the Gavilan Hills to the east (Figure 2-2). Part of the proposed Valley–Ivyglen Project also would traverse the Gavilan Hills and the Perris Valley to the east. Four distinct landscape units have been identified for the proposed projects and are shown on Figure 4.1-1. The general visual character of each landscape unit is described below, and context photos for each landscape unit are provided as Figures 4.1-2a through 4.1-2g. Figure 4.1-1 also shows the location of each context photo with respect to components of the proposed projects.

- **Temescal Canyon (Valley–Ivyglen Project and Alberhill Project):** Temescal Canyon is a northwest-trending, clearly defined valley. The visual character of this landscape unit is predominantly rural and natural. Defined slopes, Temescal Wash, riparian areas, and I-15 are the dominant visual features that define the visual character of the landscape unit. Hillsides on the east of the valley and the mountain backdrop to the south are visible. Context photos 1 through 8 (Figures 4.1-2a–b) depict views within the Temescal Canyon landscape unit and show middleground and background views of hillsides, mountain ranges, and other dominant visual features, including I-15, in typical views. Much of the land adjacent to I-15 contains wood power poles and associated power lines. Rolling hills covered in annual grasses and shrubs, as well as scattered oak woodland riparian areas, make up much of the visible landscape. The majority of development in the area consists of scattered rural residences and commercial areas.

- **Lake Elsinore (Valley–Ivyglen Project and Alberhill Project):** The landscape of the Lake Elsinore area generally consists of diverse rolling and foothill topography with a combination of southern oak woodland mixed with coastal sage scrub. The visual character of this landscape unit is predominantly suburban residential and natural with areas of commercial development; there are hill features in the background. The paved roadways, sidewalks, streetlights, traffic lights, and power lines are common elements in the landscape unit. Rolling hills with natural shrub and grass vegetation make up much of the background in this landscape unit.

Most views focus on the foreground with hills and mountains in the middleground and background. Context photos 9 through 17, and 24–28 (Figures 4.1-2c–e) depict the variety of views within the landscape unit. Lake Elsinore is visible in the middleground from a variety of vantage points, as shown in context photo 24 (Figure 4.1-2d). The City of Lake Elsinore has identified six vantage points in its General Plan, as described below in Section 4.1.1.4, "Scenic Vistas" (City of Lake Elsinore 2011). Context photo 24 (Figure 4.1-2d) shows the view from Vantage Point 1, located at I-15 just west of Railroad Canyon Road, where motorists can see Lake Elsinore.

Development is more dominant here than in the other landscape units, as shown in views from within the City of Lake Elsinore. Uniformly spaced rural residential development is intermixed with areas of undeveloped open space, as shown in context photo 26. Context photos 12 through 15 (Figure 4.1-2c and d) show the mixed commercial and industrial development that occurs in many views in the Lake Elsinore area and near the I-15 corridor. Context photos 16 and 17 (Figure 4.1-2d) show the industrial, residential, and open land that occurs along State Route 74 (SR-74).

- **Menifee** (**Valley–Ivyglen Project and Alberhill Project**)**:** The Menifee landscape unit consists of mostly flat land with low hills or varied topography in some areas. Natural vegetation in this unit consists of a mix of southern oak woodland, coastal sage scrub, and open grassland. Land uses within the cities of Menifee and Wildomar are a mixture of agricultural croplands, rural residential, and planned residential developments. The visual character of this landscape unit is predominantly residential and natural. Context photos 18 through 23 and 30 (Figures 4.1-2f–g) depict typical views within the Menifee landscape unit. This mixture of development can be seen in context photos 18 through 22. Context photos 21 and 22 depict areas of open, undeveloped land commonly seen in areas between established communities.

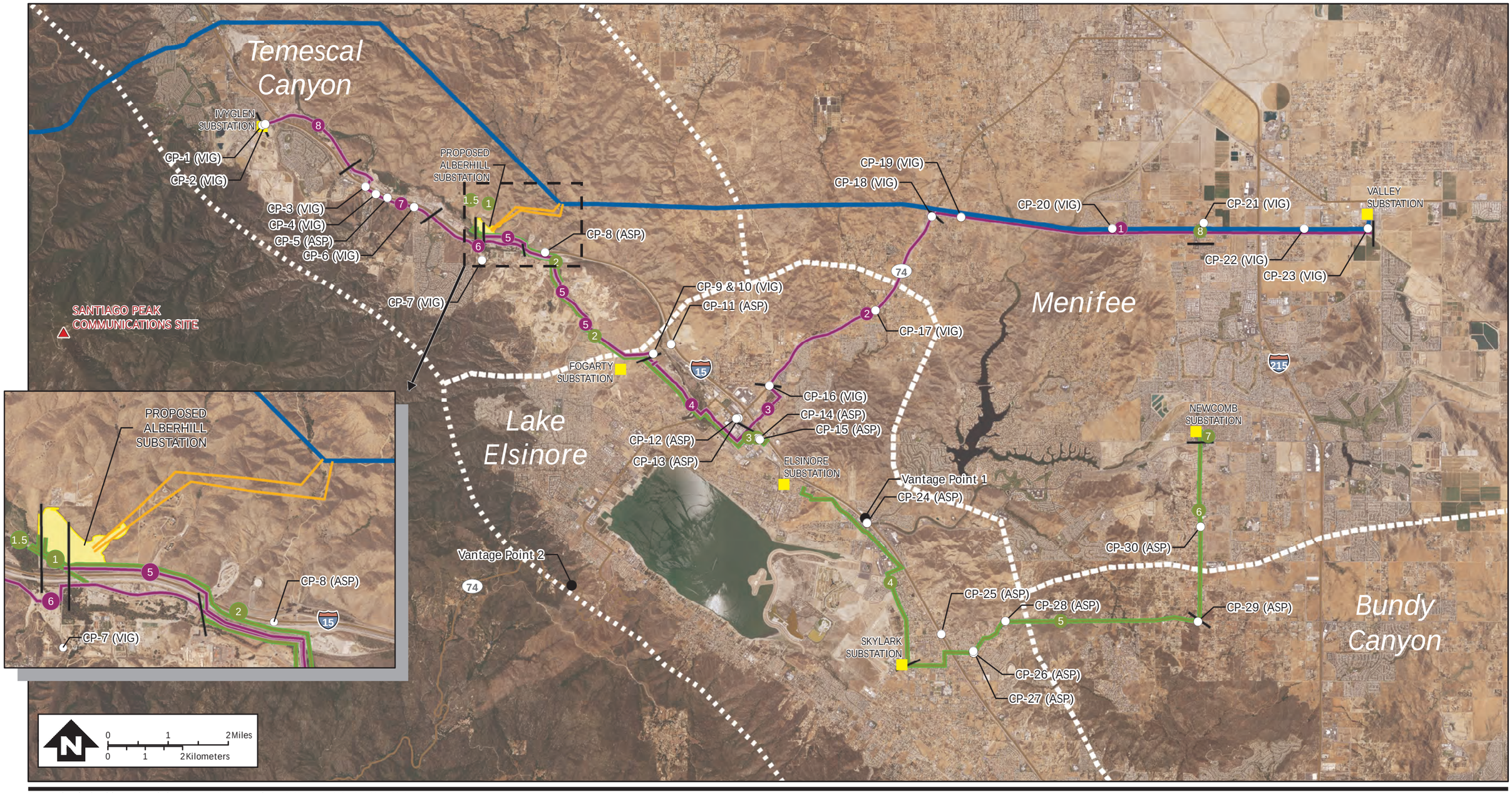
- **Bundy Canyon** (**Alberhill Project**)**:** The Bundy Canyon landscape unit consists of mostly rural areas with rolling hills and natural shrub and grass vegetation. There is very limited development here, which consists of some houses, roadways, and utility poles. The visual character of this landscape unit is predominantly rural and natural. Context photo 29 (Figure 4.1–2g) shows an area with utility poles and power lines visible in the middleground.

4.1.1.2 Visual Sensitivity

Visual sensitivity associated with views in a particular area is the combination of viewer sensitivity and viewer exposure. Viewer sensitivity is based on identification of general viewer groups in the project area and their anticipated awareness and concerns for aesthetics. Viewer sensitivity varies for individuals and groups depending on the activities viewers are engaged in, their values and expectations related to the appearance and character of the landscape, and their potential level of concern for changes to the landscape. Viewer exposure involves the visibility of resources in the landscape, proximity of viewers to visual resources, elevational position of viewers relative to visual resources, frequency and duration of views, and number of viewers.

Viewer sensitivity is high for views seen by people who are driving for pleasure; people engaging in recreational activities, such as hiking, biking, or camping; and homeowners. Viewer sensitivity tends to be lower for views seen by people driving to and from work, as part of their work, or engaged in personal business activities (USFS 1995; FHWA1988). Views from recreation trails and areas, scenic highways, scenic overlooks, and residential areas are generally assessed as having high viewer sensitivity.

Path: \\prtbhp1\GIS\SanFrancisco\CPUC\VIG_ASP\Maps\MXDs\Figure4_1_1_Context_Photographs.mxd



Source: City of Lake Elsinore General Plan 2011, BLM Geocommunicator 2009, RCHCA 2007, SCE 2011, 2013

115-kV
- 1 VIG-1
- 2 VIG-2
- 3 VIG-3
- 4 VIG-4
- 5 VIG-5
- 6 VIG-6
- 7 VIG-7
- 8 VIG-8

115-kV
- 1 ASP-1
- 1.5 ASP-1.5
- 2 ASP-2
- 3 ASP-3
- 4 ASP-4
- 5 ASP-5
- 6 ASP-6
- 7 ASP-7
- 8 ASP-8

- Existing Substations
- Proposed Alberhill Substation
- Proposed 500-kV transmission lines
- 500-kV Serrano Valley Transmission Line
- Segment break
- Context Photograph Location
- Vantage Points (from the City of Lake Elsinore General Plan 2011)
- Landscape Units

Figure 4.1-1

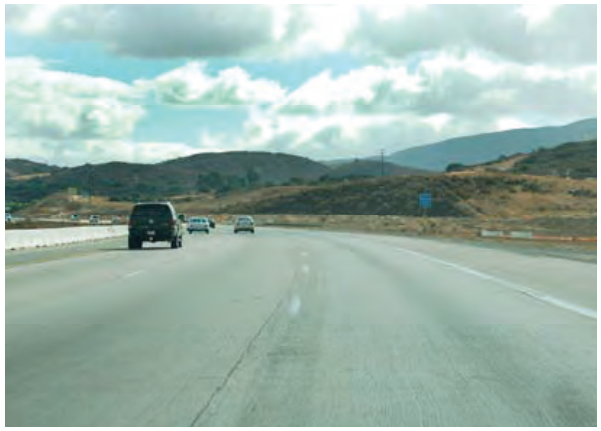
Landscape Units and Context Photograph Locations

Alberhill and Valley–Ivyglen Projects

Riverside County, California

CP-1 (VIG)
View south from Temescal Canyon Road toward Ivyglen Substation

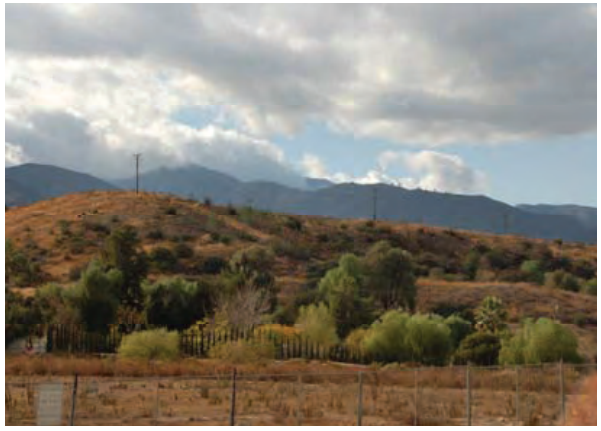
CP-2 (VIG)
View northeast along transmission line right-of-way from Temescal Canyon Road



CP-3 (VIG)
View southeast from I-15 (Corona Highway) along proposed right-of-way

CP-4 (VIG)
View southeast from De Palma Road of the proposed project route along Glen Eden Road

CP-5 (ASP)
View southwest from I-15



CP-6 (VIG)
View south from I-15 Frontage Road

Figure 4.1-2a

Context Photographs

Alberhill and Valley-Ivyglen Projects

CP-7 (VIG)
View north along proposed route from Hostetter Road

CP-8 (ASP)
View northwest from I-15 toward Horsethief Canyon

Figure 4.1-2b

Context Photographs

Alberhill and Valley-Ivyglen Projects

CP-9 (VIG)
View northwest from Nicols Road near Pierce Street intersection

CP-10 (VIG)
View northeast from Nicols Road near Pierce Street intersection

CP-11 (ASP)
Southbound I-15 freeway near Lake Elsinore. View east-southeast

CP-12 (ASP)
View northeast at Central Ave. and Collier Ave. intersection

CP-13 (ASP)
View southwest from Central Ave. near Collier Ave. cross street

CP-14 (ASP)
View southeast from Collier Ave. near Chaney St.

Figure 4.1-2c

Context Photographs

Alberhill and Valley-Ivyglen Projects

CP-15 (ASP)
View northeast from Collier Avenue and Chaney Street intersection

CP-16 (VIG)
View of proposed route looking northeast from Highway 74 at Conrad Avenue

CP-17 (VIG)
View northwest from Highway 74 after Hassan Canyon Road

Reference: City of Lake Elsinore General Plan, 2011

CP-24 (ASP)
View southwest to City of Lake Elsinore from public vantage point along I-15 freeway

CP-25 (ASP)
View southeast from Temecula Valley Freeway

CP-26 (ASP)
View northeast from Lemon Street near Citrus Grove

Figure 4.1-2d

Context Photographs

Alberhill and Valley-Ivyglen Projects

CP-27 (ASP)
View northwest near Lemon St. and Citrus Grove intersection

CP-28 (ASP)
View northeast from Lost Road

Figure 4.1-2e

Context Photographs

Alberhill and Valley-Ivyglen Projects

CP-18 (VIG)
Proposed route looking northeast from Highway 74 at Festus Circle

CP-19 (VIG)
Area near the proposed route looking west from a viewpoint near Theda Road

CP-20 (VIG)
View westward along proposed project route

CP-21 (VIG)
View west along proposed route fro Murrieta Road

CP-22 (VIG)
View westward along proposed route from Dawson Road

CP-23 (VIG)
View west at SCE's Valley Substation

Figure 4.1-2f

Context Photographs

Alberhill and Valley-Ivyglen Projects

LANDSCAPE UNIT 3 – MENIFEE

CP-30 (ASP)
View southwest along Murrieta Road north of the intersection with Craig Avenue

LANDSCAPE UNIT 4 – BUNDY CANYON

CP-29 (ASP)
View northeast at intersection of Bundy Canyon Road and Murrieta Road

Figure 4.1-2g

Context Photographs
Alberhill and Valley-Ivyglen Projects

Generally, visual sensitivity increases with an increase in elements of viewer exposure, including total numbers of viewers, the frequency of viewing (e.g., daily or seasonally), and the duration of views (i.e., how long a scene is viewed). The criteria for identifying importance of views are related in part to the viewer's position relative to the resource. An area of the landscape that is visible from a particular location (e.g., a park or overlook) or series of points (e.g., a road or trail) is defined as a viewshed. To identify the importance of views of resources, a viewshed may be broken into distance zones of foreground, middleground, and background. Generally, the closer a resource is to the viewer, the more dominant it is and the greater its importance to the viewer. Although distance zones in viewsheds may vary between different geographic regions or types of terrain, a commonly used set of criteria identifies the *foreground* distance zone as a quarter to a half mile from the viewer, the *middleground* distance zone as extending from the foreground zone to 3 to 5 miles from the viewer, and the *background* zone as extending from the middleground zone to infinity (USFS 1974; FHWA 2015). Also, resources that are higher in elevation than the viewer tend generally to take on greater visual importance than resources located at a lower elevation than the viewer.

Most of the proposed project components would be located within rugged terrain, which limits both the visibility and duration of views of the proposed projects in many areas experienced by sensitive viewers. However, some portions of the proposed projects would be visible from residences, scenic travel routes, and several recreation areas with high viewer sensitivity. Key viewpoints representative of these views have been identified for portions of the proposed projects that are visible (see Section 4.1.3.3), and the general sensitivity of the viewer groups in the vicinity of the projects is described below using criteria established by the FHWA (1988).

4.1.1.3 Viewer Groups

Viewer groups that would have views of the proposed projects are described in Table 4.1-1.

Table 4.1-1 Viewer Groups

Viewer Group	Description	Viewer Sensitivity
Motorists on I-15 (Eligible State Scenic Highway)	Motorists on I-15 would have views of the Alberhill Substation, the 500-kV transmission lines, 115-kV Segments ASP1 through ASP5, and 115-kV Segments VIG3 through VIG7. VIG8 would be located in an area visible from I-15; however, the 115 kV lines in this segment would be installed underground. The 115-kV segments of the proposed Alberhill Project would cross I-15 at four locations: near Bernard Street in unincorporated Riverside County, near Second Street in Lake Elsinore, along Lemon Street in Wildomar, and along Temescal Canyon Road in unincorporated Riverside County. The 115-kV segments of the proposed Valley–Ivyglen Project would cross I-15 at four locations: near Third Street in Lake Elsinore, and near Bernard Street, near North Glen Ellen Drive, and Temescal Canyon Road in unincorporated Riverside County. I-15 is a heavily used freeway, with high commuter usage and a posted speed limit of 70 miles per hour. More than 100,000 motorists travel sections of I-15 adjacent to the proposed Alberhill Substation site and other components of the proposed projects daily (Section 4.15, "Transportation and Traffic").	Motorists on an eligible state scenic highway are considered to have moderately high viewer sensitivity given that one element of the highway's scenic nature is "the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view" (Caltrans 2015). Motorists also include local area residents, who are considered sensitive.

Table 4.1-1 Viewer Groups

Viewer Group	Description	Viewer Sensitivity
Motorists on SR-74 (Eligible State Scenic Highway)	Motorists on SR-74 would have views of 115-kV Segments ASP2 and ASP3 and 115-kV Segments VIG1 through VIG4 would run adjacent to or cross SR-74. The 115-kV segments of the proposed Valley–Ivyglen Project would cross SR-74 several times along 115-kV Segment VIG2 and once each along 115-kV Segment VIG2 near Ethanac Road in unincorporated Riverside County and 115-kV Segment VIG4 and Pasadena Avenue in the City of Lake Elsinore. SR-74 is a heavily used commuter freeway with a posted speed limit of 55 miles per hour.	Motorists on an eligible state scenic highway are considered to have moderately high viewer sensitivity given that one element of the highway's scenic nature is "the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view" (Caltrans 2015). Motorists also include local residents, who are considered sensitive.
Motorists and other travelers (e.g., cyclists and pedestrians) on local roads	115-kV segments of the proposed projects would be routed alongside or cross numerous local roadways in the cities of Lake Elsinore, Menifee, Perris, and Wildomar, as well as in unincorporated Riverside County. These roadways are listed in Section 4.15, "Transportation and Traffic."	Motorists on local streets, particularly in residential areas, are of moderately high sensitivity because many are residents who experience higher frequency of views and travel at slower speeds.
Recreationists	Recreationists visiting the Cleveland National Forest at the Santiago Peak Communications site would have views of the Alberhill Project's microwave dish antennas. Recreationists at local parks and recreational facilities would have views of 115-kV Segments VIG1, VIG2, and VIG4 through VIG7. VIG8 would be located in an area visible from a regional trail; however, this segment would be underground. 115-kV Segments ASP2 and ASP4 would be visible from local parks and recreational facilities.	Typically, recreational users are considered to have high viewer sensitivity because their activities are often influenced by the visual setting and they tend to be more aware of and concerned about changes that may affect the visual character and quality of the landscape.

Key:
I-15 = Interstate 15
SR-74 = State Route 74
kV = kilovolt

4.1.1.4 Scenic Vistas

The City of Lake Elsinore General Plan identifies six scenic vistas (vantage points). All of the vantage points, except for Vantage Points 1 and 2, shown on Figure 4.1-1, are located west of the proposed projects and oriented west towards Lake Elsinore such that they would not have views of the proposed projects. Vantage Point 2 is located on the west side of Lake Elsinore and oriented east (City of Lake Elsinore 2011); however, the proposed projects would not be noticeable from this location due to the distance of nearly 4 miles and intervening terrain, vegetation, and structures. Vantage Point 1, on northbound I-15 just west of Railroad Canyon Road, affords motorists a view of Lake Elsinore in the middleground and rugged mountains in the background and would have views of a portion of the 115-kV Segment ASP4. The Riverside County General Plan does not identify any specific scenic vistas. Similarly, the City of Perris and the City of Menifee General Plans do not identify any scenic vistas. Therefore, Vantage Point 1, identified in the City of Lake Elsinore General Plan, is the only scenic vista with views of either of the proposed projects; the proposed projects would not be visible from any other scenic vistas identified in applicable plans.

4.1.2 Regulatory Setting

This section summarizes federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and standards that govern aesthetics in the area of the proposed projects.

4.1.2.1 Federal

United States Forest Service Cleveland National Forest Land Management Plan

The Cleveland National Forest Land Management Plan, Part 1, defines the vision for national forests in southern California (i.e., the Angeles, Cleveland, Los Padres, and San Bernardino national forests). It describes the goals for national forests, the roles and contributions that the national forests make, the desired conditions for the various landscapes within the national forests, and evaluation/monitoring indicators used to assess the progress made toward accomplishing desired conditions.

Part 2 of the plan defines and describes land use zones. Part 2 designates the location of the Santiago Peak Communications Site, where three microwave dish antennas would be installed as part of the proposed Alberhill Project, as a Two-way Radio/Non-Broadcast/Low Power communication site (USFS 2005). The western side of the communications site is located within Orange County, and the eastern side is located within Riverside County. Only the Orange County side of the communications site would be accessed during construction and operation of the proposed Alberhill Project.

Federal Aviation Administration

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulates airspace and flyways for air travel and can make determinations regarding potential airspace that may affect views and visual quality for the proposed projects via Mitigation Measure (MM) TT-3. The FAA requires preparation of a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration (Form 7460-1) describing the project's design and addressing compliance with FAA procedures. The notice must also include the final locations of structures, structure types, and structure heights. The FAA may then conduct its own study of a project and make recommendations to the proponent regarding possible airway marking (e.g., use of marker balls on conductors), lighting (e.g., red warning lights on tall structures), and/or other safety requirements. These airway markings have the potential to result in aesthetic impacts for some proposed projects in some locations.

4.1.2.2 State

State Scenic Highways

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) administers the State Scenic Highway Program of lands adjacent to highways (California Streets and Highways Code Sections 260 *et seq.*). The State Scenic Highway Program includes a list of highways that are either eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been so designated. The program entails the regulation of land use and density of development; attention to the design of sites and structures; attention to and control of signage, landscaping, and grading; and the undergrounding of utility lines within the view corridor of designated scenic roadways. A highway may be designated as scenic depending on how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the travelers' enjoyment of the view. The local jurisdiction is responsible for adopting and implementing the program's regulations. If a highway is listed as eligible for official designation, it is part of the State Scenic Highway Program and care must be taken to preserve its eligible status. Caltrans has designated I-15 and SR-74 as Eligible State Scenic Highways throughout western Riverside County (Caltrans 2011, 2013).

4.1.2.3 Regional and Local

Riverside County Ordinances

Riverside County Ordinance No. 859 requires that water-efficient landscaping be used for all commercial or industrial projects that require discretionary approval (County of Riverside 2009). Riverside County Ordinance No. 655 restricts the use of certain light fixtures emitting undesirable light rays into the night sky within a specific radius of the Mount Palomar Observatory to avoid a detrimental effect on astronomical observation and research. The proposed projects are entirely located within Zone B of Riverside County Ordinance 655 (located between a 15-mile and 45-mile circular radius of the Mount Palomar Observatory). Developments within Zone B are required to fully shield lighting, if feasible, and partially shield lighting in all other cases, as well as orient lighting fixtures to minimize light spillage (County of Riverside 1988).

Riverside County General Plan

The following policies established in the Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Safety elements of the County of Riverside General Plan related to aesthetic resources relevant to the project area (County of Riverside 2008):

- ***Policy LU 11.1:*** *Apply the following policies to areas where development is allowed and that contain natural slopes, canyons, or other significant elevation changes, regardless of land use designation:*
  - *a) Require that hillside development minimize alteration of the natural landforms and natural vegetation.*
  - *c) Require that areas with slope be developed in a manner to minimize the hazards from erosion and slope failures.*
  - *e) Require hillside adaptive construction techniques, such as post and beam construction, and special foundations.*
  - *f) Encourage the limitation of grading, cut, and fill to the amount necessary to provide stable areas for structural foundations, street rights-of-way, parking facilities, and other intended uses.*
- ***Policy LU 13.1:*** *Preserve and protect outstanding scenic vistas and visual features for the enjoyment of the traveling public.*
- ***Policy LU 13.3:*** *Ensure that the design and appearance of new landscaping, structures, equipment, signs, or grading within Designated and Eligible State and County scenic highway corridors are compatible with the surrounding scenic setting or environment.*
- ***Policy LU 13.4:*** *Maintain at least a 50-foot setback from the edge of the right-of-way for new development adjacent to Designated and Eligible State and County Scenic Highways.*
- ***Policy LU 13.5:*** *Require new or relocated electric or communication distribution lines, which would be visible from Designated and Eligible State and County Scenic Highways, to be placed underground.*
- ***Policy C 25.2:*** *Locate new and relocated utilities underground when possible. All remaining utilities shall be located or screened in a manner that minimizes their visibility by the public.*

At the time of preparation of this document, the figures that identify scenic roadway corridors in the Riverside County General Plan had not yet been published (County of Riverside 2014a). Accordingly, scenic corridors, in addition to those along I-15 and SR-74, that may be identified in future versions of the Riverside County General Plan are not considered part of the environmental baseline described herein.

Riverside County General Plan: Elsinore Area Plan

The Elsinore Area Plan identifies unique aesthetic resources within the plan area and policies to protect these resources. Temescal Wash, around Lee Lake and adjacent to I-15, is protected for its "scenic and natural resource values" (County of Riverside 2014b). Additionally, the Circulation Element of the Elsinore Area Plan identifies I-15 and SR-74 as eligible State Scenic Highways. The Elsinore Area Plan contains the following policy that is related to aesthetic resources and applicable to the project area:

- ***Policy ELAP 13.1:*** *Protect I-15 and SR-74 from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties through adherence to the Scenic Corridors sections of the General Plan Land Use and Circulation Elements.*

Riverside County General Plan: Temescal Canyon Area Plan

Similar to the Elsinore Area Plan, the Temescal Canyon Area Plan identifies additional policy guidance to address local land use issues unique to the area. The Temescal Canyon Area identifies unique aesthetic resources within the plan area, including Cleveland National Forest, Prado Basin/Santa Ana River, and Temescal Wash. The Temescal Canyon Area Plan contains the following policy that is related to the proposed Valley–Ivyglen Project (County of Riverside 2014c):

- ***Policy TCAP 14.1:*** *Protect the scenic highways in the Temescal Canyon Area Plan from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of adjacent properties in accordance with policies in the Scenic Corridors sections of the Land Use, Multipurpose Open Space, and Circulation Elements.*

City of Lake Elsinore

The City of Lake Elsinore General Plan Resource Protection and Preservation Element identifies scenic resources within and surrounding the City, including Lake Elsinore, the Cleveland National Forest, and the Santa Ana Mountains. Sensitive viewer groups in the planning area include local residents, tourists, and motorists on I-15 and SR-74. The following General Plan policies intended to protect aesthetic resources are applicable to the project area (City of Lake Elsinore 2011):

- ***Policy 11.1:*** *For new developments and redevelopment, encourage the maintenance and incorporation of existing mature trees and other substantial vegetation on the site, whether naturally occurring or planted, into the landscape design.*
- ***Policy 11.6:*** *Coordinate with agencies to screen, landscape, and otherwise obscure or integrate public utility facilities, including electric power substations, domestic water and irrigation wells, and switching and control facilities.*
- ***Policy 12.2:*** *Encourage the dedication of open space land in hillside development proposals to preserve and enhance view opportunities from transportation corridors and surrounding development.*
- ***Policy 13.3:*** *Require that grading plans for any hillside development include specifications for revegetation and new planting to minimize hillside scarring.*

In addition, the General Plan identifies six vantage points. The vantage points are discussed further under Impact AES-1, below.

City of Perris

The City of Perris General Plan Open Space Element identifies scenic highways, noting the regional significance of Highway 74 as it traverses an area of distinctive natural beauty. However, no specific objectives or policies are stated (City of Perris 2006).

City of Menifee

The following City of Menifee's General Plan goal and policies are applicable to the project area (City of Menifee 2013a):

- ***Policy LU-3.5:*** *Facilitate the shared use of right-of-way, transmission corridors, and other appropriate measures to minimize the visual impact of utilities infrastructure throughout Menifee.*
- ***Policy C-6.1:*** *Design developments within designated scenic highway corridors to balance the objectives of maintaining scenic resources with accommodating compatible land uses.*
- ***Policy C-6.2:*** *Work with federal, state, and county agencies, and citizen groups, to ensure compatible development within scenic corridors.*
- ***Policy C-6.3:*** *Utilize design and land development strategies to gradually transition graded road slopes into a natural configuration consistent with the topography of the areas within scenic highway corridors.*
- ***Policy C-6.5:*** *Ensure that the design and appearance of new landscaping, structures, equipment, signs, or grading within eligible county scenic highway corridors are compatible with the surrounding scenic setting or environment.*

City of Wildomar

At the time of preparation of this document, the City of Wildomar had not adopted a general plan. The City of Wildomar was incorporated in 2008 and adopted the County of Riverside General Plan at that time. County ordinances remain in effect until the City enacts ordinances superseding them. Refer to Section 4.0, "Environmental Analysis," for further information.

4.1.3 Methodology and Significance Criteria

4.1.3.1 Aesthetic Impact Assessment Methodology

The FHWA Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects has been commonly used to assess the potential aesthetic impacts of various types of development projects on both public and private lands within a variety of different landscapes, including natural, rural, suburban, and urban settings (FHWA 1988). Other commonly used visual assessment methodologies, including those utilized in the United States Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) Visual Resource Management Program (BLM 1986) and the United States Forest Service's (USFS's) Scenery Management System (USFS 1995), contain some concepts and standards applicable to projects proposed on private land, but are generally more suited to lands managed by these federal agencies. The FHWA has recently revised its guidelines for visual impact assessment to allow different levels of documentation and be more readily understood and practical in its application (FHWA 2015). However, the new FHWA guidelines now focus more on transportation projects and no longer emphasize several key concepts from the earlier guidelines that are applicable to

various types of projects, such as transmission lines, substations, and similar industrial-type development projects, in rural, suburban, and urban landscapes. Although the new FHWA guidelines incorporate many elements from those issued in 1988, the earlier guidelines remain most applicable for assessing aesthetic impacts of proposed projects situated within diverse landscape types and on private lands. Due to the nature and setting of the proposed projects, the methodology for this aesthetic impact assessment relies primarily on the process, concepts, and terminology outlined in the FHWA's 1988 guidelines, while incorporating some elements of the BLM's and USFS's established visual assessment methodologies as applicable.

The methodology outlined in the FHWA 1998 guidelines consists of the following steps:

1. Establish a visual environment for the proposed project area by identifying "landscape unit(s)" in which the proposed projects are located.
2. Assess the visual resources of the proposed project area by describing the visual character of the area and assessing the visual quality. The FHWA describes visual character in terms of the four visual pattern elements: form, line, color, and texture. Visual quality is assessed based on the vividness, intactness, and unity of views (defined in Section 4.1.3.2, "Vividness, Intactness, and Unity").
3. Describe the potentially affected viewers and their visual sensitivity in terms of viewer sensitivity and viewer exposure to components of the proposed projects. Viewer sensitivity and viewer exposure are discussed in Section 4.1.1.2, "Visual Sensitivity."
4. Develop visual simulations to help predict the potential visual impacts of the proposed projects. Visual impact is a function of the projected visual resource change and anticipated viewer response.
5. Identify levels of significance of the visual impacts.
6. Identify mitigation to reduce significant visual impacts.

In accordance with this methodology, this document describes the baseline environmental setting, including context photos, organized by landscape unit, and potential viewers of components of the proposed projects (Section 4.1.1, "Environmental Setting"). Key viewpoints representative of typical views of the proposed projects were selected and used to estimate the level of contrast that would be introduced by components of the proposed projects, and visual simulations were developed (Section 4.1.3.3, "Key Viewpoints") and used as a basis for analysis of impacts (Section 4.1.4 "Environmental Impacts and Mitigation").

For analysis of impacts, each visual simulation is systematically compared against the baseline conditions to determine the nature and degree of impact on aesthetic resources. The impact assessment considers the level of change in contrast in form, line, color, and/or texture; the level of change in vividness, intactness, and/or unity; and effects on visual character. The impact assessment also takes into account visual sensitivity with regard to the number of viewers, the duration of views, viewer expectation, and likely viewer responses, as well as federal, state, and local regulations that protect aesthetic resources.

4.1.3.2 Vividness, Intactness, and Unity

The visual character and quality of the region and the proposed project area are described using criteria established by the FHWA for visual landscape relationships. The criteria for describing visual quality include vividness, intactness, and unity, as defined below (FHWA 1988):

- *Vividness* is the visual power or memorability of landscape components as they combine in striking or distinctive visual patterns.
- *Intactness* is the visual integrity of the natural and human-built landscape and its freedom from encroaching elements; this factor can be present in well-kept urban and rural landscapes, as well as in natural settings.
- *Unity* is the visual coherence and compositional harmony of the landscape considered as a whole; it frequently attests to the careful design of individual components in the landscape.

4.1.3.3 Key Viewpoints

The key viewpoints discussed in this section represent typical views from sensitive locations. As discussed in Section 4.1.1.2, "Visual Sensitivity," the distance zones used to discuss the viewpoints are *foreground*, *middleground*, and *background* (USFS 1974; FHWA 2015). The potential for components of the proposed projects to change the visible landscape and likely viewer responses to those changes were assessed by simulating visual impacts from project components at each key viewpoint. The location and direction of each key viewpoint with respect to components of the proposed projects are shown on Figure 4.1-3. The aesthetic qualities of key viewpoints are described in Table 4.1-2.

Path: \\prtbhp1\GIS\SanFrancisco\CPUC\VIG_ASP\Maps\MXDs\Figure4_1_3_Photo_Viewpoints.mxd

Source: BLM Geocommunicator 2009, RCHCA 2007, SCE 2011, 2013

115-kV
- 1 VIG-1
- 2 VIG-2
- 3 VIG-3
- 4 VIG-4
- 5 VIG-5
- 6 VIG-6
- 7 VIG-7
- 8 VIG-8

115-kV
- 1 ASP-1
- 1.5 ASP-1.5
- 2 ASP-2
- 3 ASP-3
- 4 ASP-4
- 5 ASP-5
- 6 ASP-6
- 7 ASP-7
- 8 ASP-8

- Existing Substations
- Proposed Alberhill Substation
- Proposed 500-kV transmission lines
- 500-kV Serrano Valley Transmission Line
- Segment break
- Key Viewpoint Photo Location

Figure 4.1-3

Key Viewpoints Near the Alberhill and Valley–Ivyglen Projects

Alberhill and Valley–Ivyglen Projects

Riverside County, California

Table 4.1-2 Key Viewpoint Aesthetic Qualities

Key Viewpoint and Figure Reference	Visual Character	Vividness	Intactness	Unity	Visual Sensitivity
Key Viewpoint 1 (VIG): View from I-15 at Indian Truck Trail (motorist's view traveling southbound on I-15) Figure 4.1-4a	The visual character of this view is somewhat rural and natural, although the foreground is developed and dominated by views of the highway and tall vertical structures. Rolling hills covered in grazed grasslands and shrublands visible in the middleground and background of views provide the area with a somewhat natural and rural character. The foreground is dominated by the strong horizontal and linear forms and lines of the highway and raised median. Patches of dark green and coarse-textured trees and shrubs in the middleground of the view provide some diversity and contrast in color and texture with the lighter colors and smooth textures associated with the highway.	***Moderately low*** due to relatively indistinctive visual patterns caused by the dominance of the roadway against natural elements in the middle ground and background.	***Moderately low*** due to dominance and number of encroaching elements and diversity of forms, lines, colors, and textures in foreground view.	***Moderately low*** due to low visual coherence in the overall landscape and the overlap of natural elements in the middleground and natural elements in the background.	***Moderately high*** because it is experienced on a regular basis by a large number and variety of viewers, including local residents, commuters, and tourists traveling along I-15 (an Eligible State Scenic Highway). Recreationists at Lee Lake also can see this area.
Key Viewpoint 2 (VIG): View of I-15 near Horsethief Canyon Road (motorist's view traveling southbound) Figure 4.1-4b	The visual character of this view is somewhat rural and natural, although the foreground is dominated by views of the freeway and tall vertical structures. Rolling hills covered in shrublands and grazed grass and are visible in the middleground and background views provide the area with a somewhat natural and rural character. The foreground is dominated by the strong horizontal and linear forms and lines of the highway and existing wood poles. Patches of dark green and coarse-textured trees and shrubs in the middleground of the view provide some diversity and contrast in color and texture with the lighter colors and smooth textures associated with the highway.	***Moderately low*** due to relatively indistinct visual patterns caused by the dominance of the roadway against natural elements in the middleground and background.	***Moderately low*** due to dominance and number of encroaching elements and diversity of forms, lines, colors, and textures in foreground view.	***Moderately low*** due to low visual coherence in the overall landscape and the overlap of natural elements in the middleground and natural elements in the background.	***Moderately high*** because it is experienced on a regular basis by a large number and variety of viewers, including local residents, commuters, and tourists traveling along I-15 (an Eligible State Scenic Highway).

Table 4.1-2 Key Viewpoint Aesthetic Qualities

Key Viewpoint and Figure Reference	Visual Character	Vividness	Intactness	Unity	Visual Sensitivity
Key Viewpoints 3 and 4 (ASP): Views from I-15 at proposed Alberhill Substation site (3 is northbound motorists' view north; 4 is northbound motorists' view northwest) Figures 4.1-4c and 4.1-4d	The visual character of the views is rural and natural with some equestrian-related infrastructure. The proposed Alberhill Substation site itself has an open, rural appearance. Rolling hills, which appear natural in character, are visible in the middleground and background. The proposed Alberhill Substation site is flat with a dense grouping of trees on the western section of the site and a sparse, more random distribution of trees on the eastern section of the site. The varied forms and lines of the hills and ridges in combination with those of the trees and shrubs in the flat valley provide these views with a strong natural character. The trees are varying shades of dark and forest greens, which break up the otherwise uniform browns and tans of the grasses on the substation site and surrounding hillsides. Concordia Ranch Road cuts through the foreground of the view from Key Viewpoint 4, with wooden power distribution poles running along the north side of the road. Shrubs along Concordia Ranch Road in foreground views are jagged and randomly spaced. I-15, which is elevated on a berm, is visible to the far left in Key Viewpoint 4 shown in Figure 4.1-4d.	***Moderate*** because undeveloped hills in the middleground and background are the only distinctive visual elements.	***High*** because the view is dominated by natural characteristics, with few encroaching human elements.	***Moderately high*** as the scale of the line of the roadway is consistent with the natural setting and the wooden poles are congruous with the rural character; however, dark greens of the trees contrast with the browns and tans of surrounding environment, reducing the visual coherence.	***Moderately high*** because it is experienced on a regular basis by a large number and variety of viewers, including local residents, commuters, and tourists traveling along I-15 (an Eligible State Scenic Highway). Recreationists using trails can also see this area.
Key Viewpoint 5 (Alberhill System Project): View from I-15 just east of Temescal Canyon Road (southbound motorists' view northeast) Figure 4.1-4e and 4f	The visual character of this view is rural and natural, although the foreground is dominated by views of the highway. Rolling hills covered in grazed grasslands visible in the middleground and background provide the area with a somewhat natural and rural character. The foreground is dominated by the horizontal and linear highway and raised median. The trees in the middleground and background views are dark forest green and dot the otherwise medium green hills. There are patches of browns and tan where there is no vegetative cover. In addition to the highway, some rural residences are visible in the middle of the view.	***Moderate*** as the undeveloped hills in the background are a somewhat distinctive visual element in the view.	***Moderately high*** because the view is dominated by natural elements, with the roadway in the foreground being a somewhat dominant encroaching element. The houses on the otherwise undeveloped hillside are consistent with the rural visual character.	***Moderate*** as the natural colors and lines in the middleground and background distance zones are consistent, but contrast with the flat greys of the highway, somewhat reducing the visual coherence.	***Moderately high*** because it is experienced on a regular basis by a large number and variety of viewers, including local residents, commuters, and tourists traveling along I-15 (an Eligible State Scenic Highway). Recreationists using trails can also see this area.

Table 4.1-2 Key Viewpoint Aesthetic Qualities

Key Viewpoint and Figure Reference	Visual Character	Vividness	Intactness	Unity	Visual Sensitivity
Key Viewpoint 6 (VIG): View from Lake Street near I-15 (traveler's view looking south) Figure 4.1-4g	The visual character of this view is an even mix of rural and natural. The paved roadway is a dominant element in the foreground of the view, while natural elements such as trees, shrubs, background mountains, and sky dominate much of the view. Some existing wood power poles and street lights are noticeable vertical elements that somewhat contrast with the natural forms in the view. The Lake Street I-15 underpass and I-15 itself are behind the viewer; this is the view a driver would see after exiting I-15 traveling northbound and turning south onto Lake Street to drive toward Lake Elsinore.	***Moderately low*** due to the lack of a striking or distinctive visual pattern created by the various elements in the view.	***Moderate*** due to dominance of natural-appearing vegetation, background mountains, and rural-character wood power poles; utility infrastructure silhouetted against the sky somewhat contrasts with the natural elements.	***Moderate*** due to dominance of vegetation and wood power poles creating moderate visual coherence consistent with rural and natural character.	***Moderately high*** because it is experienced on a regular basis by a moderate number of local residents and is considered a primary access (or gateway) from I-15 to a large developed area in northern Lake Elsinore.
Key Viewpoint 7 (Valley–Ivyglen): View of Lake Street near Temescal Canyon Road (motorists' view traveling northbound on Lake Street) Figure 4.1-4h	The visual character of this view is primarily rural, although the foreground is dominated by views of dark green trees, the roadway, and wood power poles. Existing vertical wood poles and overhead conductors are prominent linear features in the view. Additionally, streetlights and street signs are prominent elements in the middleground. Steep, rolling hills covered in even-textured, yellow grasses are natural features visible in the background.	***Moderate*** due to distinctiveness of the large undeveloped hills in the background and the dense trees in the middleground.	***Moderate*** due to dominance of natural elements in the view with the exception of the roadway in the foreground and vertical structures in the middleground.	***Moderate*** due to consistency of natural colors and lines in the middleground and background contrasting with the flat greys of Lake Street, somewhat reducing the visual coherence.	***Moderately high*** because it is experienced on a regular basis by a large number of local residents and is considered a primary access (or gateway) from I-15 to a large developed area in northern Lake Elsinore.
Key Viewpoint 8 (VIG): View from Pasadena Street toward Central Avenue (traveler's view looking northwest) Figure 4.1-4i	The visual character of this view is commercial. With the exception of landscape shrubbery, trees, and groundcover, commercial buildings and paving dominate the view. Out of view to the right is a vacant unpaved lot, but the surrounding area is largely built up. A small hill is visible in the distance on the right side of the view. Color in the lower half of the view is rather homogenous, with shades of cream and grey occasionally contrasting with the green vegetation.	***Moderately low*** because the building creates a pattern that is somewhat distinct in the view but the pattern consists of neutral colors.	***Moderately high*** due to well-maintained buildings and landscaping with minimal encroachment of other elements, such as wild vegetation and transmission infrastructure (visible to the right and in the background, respectively).	***Moderately high*** due to coherence in design of the buildings and orderly streetscaping and minimal presence of other elements.	***Moderately low*** because it is experience mostly by people working or traveling in the area for work or personal business; the area is not a main thoroughfare used to access residential or recreational areas.

Table 4.1-2 Key Viewpoint Aesthetic Qualities

Key Viewpoint and Figure Reference	Visual Character	Vividness	Intactness	Unity	Visual Sensitivity
Key Viewpoint 9 (VIG): View of I-15 near Central Avenue (motorist's view traveling southbound on I-15) Figure 4.1-4j	The visual character of this view is primarily rural with some natural features. However, the foreground is dominated by views of the flat, linear highway and highway-related development, including a raised median, billboards, and light poles. Rolling hills, visible in the middleground, and coarse-textured, dark green trees in the foreground and middleground, are natural elements that provide some diversity and interest for views in this area.	***Moderately low*** due to relatively indistinct visual patterns caused by the dominance of the roadway against natural elements in the middleground and background	***Moderately low*** due to dominance and number of encroaching elements and diversity of forms, lines, colors, and textures in foreground view.	***Moderately low*** due to low visual coherence in the overall landscape and the overlap of natural elements in the middleground and natural elements in the background.	***Moderately high*** because it is experienced on a regular basis by a large number and variety of viewers, including local residents, commuters, and tourists traveling along I-15 (an Eligible State Scenic Highway).
Key Viewpoint 10 (VIG): View of SR-74 near Allan Street (motorist's view traveling eastbound on SR-74) Figure 4.1-4k	The visual character of this view is primarily rural with some natural features. The foreground is dominated by views of the flat, linear roadway, open land bordering the roadway, and landscaped development. Existing wood power poles, overhead conductors, and streetlights are prominent elements in the foreground. Rolling hills are visible in the background.	***Moderate*** due to somewhat distinct visual patterns of the rolling hills and natural elements in the middleground and background, somewhat reduced by the dominance of the roadway in the foreground	***Moderate*** due to presence of natural and rural elements in combination with encroaching elements in foreground	***Moderate*** due to moderate visual coherence in the overall landscape and the dominance of natural elements in the middleground and background	***Moderately high*** because it is experienced on a regular basis by a large number and variety of viewers, including local residents, commuters, and tourists traveling along SR-74 (an Eligible State Scenic Highway)
Key Viewpoint 11 (VIG): View of SR-74 near Ardenwood Way (motorist's view traveling westbound on SR-74) Figure 4.1-4l	The visual character of this view is largely suburban residential, with rural areas out of view to the right in the photograph. The foreground is dominated by views of the roadway and landscaped development. Existing wood power poles, overhead conductors, traffic lights, streetlights, and landscape trees are prominent elements in the foreground. In the middleground there are homes and other suburban elements. The mountains covered in dark green vegetation in the background are natural elements that add diversity and interest to views in this area.	***Moderate*** due to somewhat distinct visual patterns caused by ordered variation of visual elements in the area; the roadway is separated from housing by a manicured landscaped strip; the mountains provide a distinct visual background.	***Moderate*** due to the blend of suburban, rural, and natural elements dominating the view, with minimal encroaching elements.	***Moderate*** due to moderate contrast between structures and natural elements and compositional harmony maintained by their spatial separation and the dominance of vegetation which helps unify and blend these features in the view.	***Moderately high*** because it is experienced on a regular basis by a large number and variety of viewers, including local residents, commuters, and tourists traveling along SR-74 (an Eligible State Scenic Highway).

Table 4.1-2 Key Viewpoint Aesthetic Qualities

Key Viewpoint and Figure Reference	Visual Character	Vividness	Intactness	Unity	Visual Sensitivity
Key Viewpoint 12 (VIG): View from Monument Ranch Park near Caldera Street (looking south) Figure 4.1-4m	The visual character of this view is primarily suburban and park-like. A manicured lawn and surrounding landscaping dominates the lower half of the view, while natural sky and hills are visible in the background. The landscaping consists of small trees and neatly trimmed lawn and shrubs interspersed with bare areas. A sinuous pathway runs through the park flanked by light poles. Out of the view there is a gazebo with picnic tables and a playground. A horizontal band of housing and transmission structures bisects the view, separating the park and natural background. Only upper portions of the houses are clearly visible because a metal fence and landscaping screen the bottom portions of most of the houses. The existing transmission infrastructure includes a lattice steel tower, which dominates the skyline, and several smaller monopoles that also are silhouetted against the sky.	***Moderate*** due to striking visual pattern of the green vegetation and the blue sky, which is degraded somewhat by the presence of transmission structures in the middle of the view.	***Moderate*** due to well-kept landscape that dominates the view but is interrupted by encroaching transmission infrastructure in combination with houses and the metal fence.	***Moderate*** due to the compositional harmony between the park area and the sky that is reduced by transmission infrastructure in combination with houses and the metal fence that bisects the view	***Moderately High*** because the view is experienced on a regular basis by recreationists and local residents in their own neighborhood, but when at the park the viewers are focused mainly on the foreground and are not as sensitive to changes in the background and middleground
Key Viewpoint 13 (ASP): View of Auto Center Drive near Railroad Canyon Road in Lake Elsinore (motorist's or pedestrian's view traveling southbound) Figure 4.1-4n	The visual character of this view is primarily commercial development with some natural features represented by background hills. Auto Center Drive, sidewalks, streetlights, traffic lights, and a single-circuit 115-kV line are dominant elements in the view. Manicured landscaping on either side of the road is also noticeable. Commercial structures are evident in the foreground and middleground, and residential units are visible along the hillside in the middleground. The strong rectilinear forms and linear features of structures and infrastructure dominate the views of hills in the middleground.	***Low*** as the commercial and industrial development contrasts with the hilly terrain and there are no remarkable elements in the view.	***Low*** as the natural characteristics of the mountainous backdrop appear subordinate to the variety of commercial and industrial development in the foreground and middleground.	***Low*** due to unbalanced contrast of commercial and industrial development with mountainous backdrop, as the scale and density of the development dominates and contrasts with the more distant natural hills, reducing compositional harmony	***Moderately low*** because it is experienced on a regular basis by a moderate number of viewers consisting primarily of local residents, workers, commuters, and people engaged in shopping and business activities who would not have a high concern for visual changes. Some viewers are local residents.

Table 4.1-2 Key Viewpoint Aesthetic Qualities

Key Viewpoint and Figure Reference	Visual Character	Vividness	Intactness	Unity	Visual Sensitivity
Key Viewpoint 14 (ASP): View of Murrieta Road and Calder Ranch development (pedestrian's view traveling southbound) Figure 4.1-4o	The visual character to the south and west of Murrieta Road is primarily suburban. Murrieta Road bisects the view and is a strong linear element in the foreground. Utility lines are visible in the middleground on the left side of the view. Only the upper portions of the residences are visible because the structures are partially screened from view by a perimeter block wall, fencing, and landscaping. The landscaping consists of evenly spaced shrubs and trees in a variety of textures and green tones. Development in the foreground and middleground largely obstructs views of distant hills. Across the street from Calder Ranch, to the east (not shown in the view), is an open field where initial grading and earthmoving activities have established a rough roadway system and lot perimeters that indicate preparation is underway for further development. Areas further down Murrieta Road are semi-rural and contain development that is more spaced apart.	***Low*** as there are no distinctive visual elements or striking visual patterns.	***Moderate*** as the middleground includes a relatively homogenous line of suburban residences while the tops of low, rolling hills are visible in the background.	***Moderate*** as the roadway and development are somewhat intrusive, but the extensive landscaping helps unify and blend these features in the view. Colors, lines, and textures of development complement natural elements in the background, contributing to visual coherence.	***Moderately high*** because the view is experienced on a regular basis by a moderate number of local neighborhood residents engaged in various activities.
Key Viewpoint 15 (ASP): View of Murrieta Road north of Newport Road (pedestrian's view traveling southbound) Figure 4.1-4p	The visual character of this view is primarily commercial. In addition to the dominant retail commercial building, utility lines and infrastructure associated with transportation dominate the foreground with numerous vertical forms and linear elements, including the roadway, sidewalks, streetlights, traffic lights, and power lines. Undeveloped rolling terrain and low hills are visible in the middleground. The commercial building is surrounded by manicured landscaping and sidewalks, which contrast in color and texture with the somewhat rural and undeveloped land visible in the middleground. The strong rectilinear forms and linear elements of structures and infrastructure dominate the view.	***Low*** as the commercial development contrasts with the mountainous backdrop and the open space evident in middleground views along with a distinct geological feature visible in the middleground on the right side of the view.	***Low*** as the natural characteristics of the middleground, including a distinctive rock outcropping, are encroached on by commercial development in the foreground.	***Low*** due to unbalanced contrast of human and natural elements that draws attention from natural features and reduces the compositional harmony.	***Moderately low*** because the view is experienced on a regular basis by a moderate number of viewers consisting primarily of workers, commuters, and people engaged in shopping and business activities who would not have a high concern for visual changes. Some viewers are local residents.

Key:
ASP = Alberhill System Project
kV = kilovolts
I-15 = Interstate 15
SR-74 = State Route 75
VIG = Valley-Ivyglen Project

Existing Conditions

Simulated View

1002453.0006.04.m.ai 01/27/16

Figure 4.1-4a

Key Viewpoint 1 (Proposed Valley-Ivyglen Visual Simulation): View Southeast From I-15 Near Indian Truck Trail

Existing Conditions

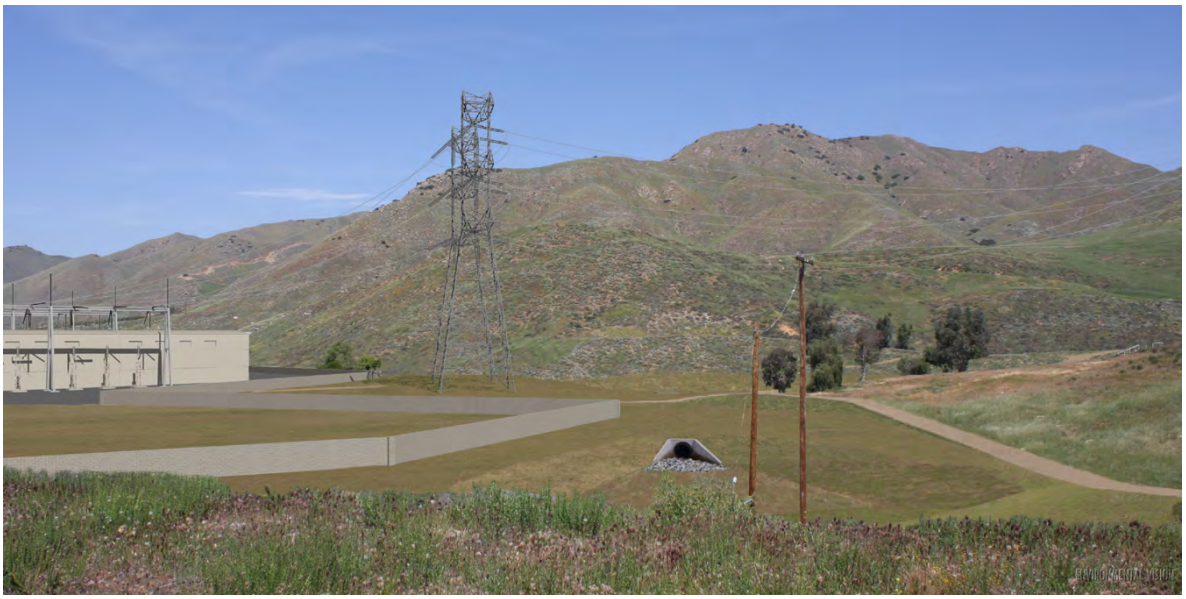
Simulated View

1002453.0006.04.l.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4b

Key Viewpoint 2 (Proposed Valley-Ivyglen Visual Simulation): View Southeast From I-15 Near Horsethief Canyon Road

Existing Conditions



Simulated View

Import Soil Source Area

1002453.0006.02.f.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4c

Key Viewpoint 3 Proposed Alberhill Project Visual SImulation: Northbound I-15 Looking Toward Alberhill Substation, View North

(500-kV Towers SA1 and VA1 Shown)

Existing Conditions

Simulated View

EE-002929-0012-04-00TTO.b.ai (Alberhill 2012 Archives) 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4d

Key Viewpoint 4 (Proposed Alberhill Project Visual Simulation): Northbound I-15 Looking Toward Alberhill Substation, View Northwest

(500-kV Towers SA1 and VA1 Shown)

Existing Conditions

Simulated View (with marker balls)

1002453.0006.02.h.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4e

Key Viewpoint 5a (Proposed Alberhill Project Visual Simulation): Northbound I-15 Looking Toward Proposed 500-kV Transmission Line

(500-kV Towers SA2/VA2 Through SA4/VA4 Shown)

Existing Conditions

Simulated View (no marker balls)

1002453.0006.02.g.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4f

Key Viewpoint 5b (Proposed Alberhill Project Visual Simulation): Northbound I-15 Looking Toward Proposed 500-kV Transmission Line

(500-kV Towers SA2/VA2 Through SA4/VA4 Shown)

Source: Environmental Vision, July 31, 2015

Existing Conditions

Visual Simulation

1002453.0006.04.w.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4g

Key Viewpoint 6 (Proposed Valley-Ivyglen Visual Simulation): View South from Lake Street near Highway 15 Entrance

Existing Conditions

Simulated View

1002453.0006.04.q.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4h

Key Viewpoint 7: (Proposed Valley-Ivyglen Visual Simulation)
View North from Lake Street near Temescal Canyon Road

Source: Environmental Vision, July 31, 2015

Existing Conditions

Visual Simulation

1002453.0006.04.v.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4i

Key Viewpoint 8 (Proposed Valley-Ivyglen Visual Simulation): View East from Pasadena Street and Central Avenue

Existing Conditions

Simulated View

1002453.0006.04.p.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4j

Key Viewpoint 9 (Proposed Valley-Ivyglen Visual Simulation): View Southeast Along I-15 Near Central Avenue

Existing Conditions

Simulated View

1002453.0006.04.o.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4k

Key Viewpoint 10 (Proposed Valley Ivyglen Visual Simulation): View North Along Highway 74 at Allan Street

Existing Conditions

Simulated View

1002453.0006.04.n.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4l

Key Viewpoint 11 (Proposed Valley-Ivyglen Visual Simulation): View Southward Along Highway 74 Near Ardenwood Way

Source: Environmental Vision, July 31, 2015

Existing Conditions

Visual Simulation

1002453.0006.04.u.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4m

Key Viewpoint 12 (Proposed Valley-Ivyglen Visual Simulation): View Looking Southward

Existing Conditions

Simulated View

1002453.0006.02.c2.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4n

Key Viewpoint 13 (Proposed Alberhill Project Visual Simulation): View Northward at Auto Center Drive and Casino Drive

Existing Conditions

Simulated View

1002453.0006.02.e.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4o

Key Viewpoint 14 (Proposed Alberhill Project Visual Simulation): View Southward Along Murrieta Road Near Beth Drive

Existing Conditions

Simulated View

1002453.0006.02.d2.ai 01/27/2016

Figure 4.1-4p

Key Viewpoint 15 (Proposed Alberhill Project):
View Southward Along Murrieta Road at Newport Road

4.1.3.4 Significance Criteria

Potential impacts on aesthetic resources were evaluated according to the following significance criteria. The criteria are based on the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G checklist. The proposed projects would cause a significant impact on aesthetic resources if they would:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway;

c) Substantially degrade the exiting visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings; or

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

To determine if a visual change results in a permanent significant impact for (b) and (c), the visual sensitivity and the change in visual quality are taken into account, as shown in Table 4.1-3.

Table 4.1-3 Significance Determination Guidelines[1]

Step Down in Visual Quality[2]	Visual Sensitivity (multiplier)				
	High (2)	Moderately High (1.5)	Moderate (1)	Moderately Low (.5)	Low (0)
1	S	S	S	LTS	LTS
0.5	S	LTS	LTS	LTS	LTS
0	LTS/NI	LTS/NI	LTS/NI	LTS/NI	LTS/NI

Notes
[1] If the visual sensitivity multiplier times the step down in visual quality (as measured in unity, vividness, or intactness) is 1 or greater, the impact is considered significant. A change from moderately low to low visual quality is not considered significant due to the existing degraded aesthetic conditions, regardless of visual sensitivity.
[2] A step down of 1 in visual quality (measured by vividness, intactness, or unity) would, for example, be a reduction of high to moderate or moderate to low. A reduction of moderate to moderately low would be a reduction of 0.5. A value of 0 indicates no appreciable change in visual quality.
Key:
LTS = less than significant impact
NI = no impact
S = significant impact

4.1.4 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures (Valley–Ivyglen Project)

4.1.4.1 Project Commitments (Valley–Ivyglen Project)

The applicant has committed to the following measures as part of the design of the proposed Valley–Ivyglen Project. See Section 2.6, "Project Commitments," for a complete description of each project commitment.

- **Project Commitment D: Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan:** With input from the appropriate resource agencies, the applicant would develop and implement a Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan to restore areas where construction of the proposed project would be unable to avoid impacts on native vegetation and sensitive resources, such as wetlands, wetland buffer areas, riparian habitat, and other sensitive natural communities. The applicant would restore all areas disturbed during construction of the proposed project, including staging areas and pull, tension, and splicing sites, to as close to pre-construction conditions as possible, or to the conditions agreed upon between the applicant and landowner. Replanting and reseeding would be conducted under the direction of the applicant or contract biologists. If revegetation would occur on private

property, revegetation conditions would be part of the agreement between the applicant and the landowner.

4.1.4.2 Impacts Analysis (Valley–Ivyglen Project)

Impact AES-1 (VIG): Substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
NO IMPACT

No elements of the Valley–Ivyglen Project would be visible or noticeable in any scenic vistas, which are identified in Section 4.1.1.4. The Valley–Ivyglen Project would not impact scenic vistas.

Impact AES-2 (VIG): Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway.
LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION

For the purpose of this document, all Eligible State Scenic Highways are treated the same as Designated State Scenic Highways in order to preserve their eligibility for official designation, as indicated in Section 4.1.2.2, "State." SR-74 and I-15 are identified as Eligible State Scenic Highways (Caltrans 2012).

Construction

Construction activities would be visible from SR-74 and from I-15 in certain locations. Construction activities visible from SR-74 and I-15 are detailed in Table 4.1-4. Project elements are shown in Figures 2-2a through 2-2i in Chapter 2, "Project Description."

Table 4.1-4 Construction Activities Visible From Eligible State Scenic Highways

Activity Type	Visible Elements		Visible Activity
	SR-74	I-15	
Subtransmission construction	115-kV Segments VIG1 through VIG4	115-kV Segments VIG3 through VIG9	Removal of existing poles, installation of new poles, temporary construction site fencing and signage, soil and vegetation removal, vehicles and equipment used for excavation and grading activities, transporting and lifting, watering to control dust, worker transport, and other construction activities, spraying of embankment slopes with an erosion control mixture, line stringing.
Materials staging	Staging Areas VIG4, VIG5, VIG8, and VIG12	Staging Area VIG9	Storage of equipment and materials (construction trailers, construction equipment, steel, conductor, wire reels, cable, hardware, insulators, signage, fuel, joint compound, and other consumable materials), vehicle parking, and stockpiling of spoils from excavation

Key:
I-15 = Interstate 15
kV = kilovolt
SR-74 = State Route 74

I-15

Construction activities would be visible in views from I-15, including the views shown in Key Viewpoints 1, 2, and 9. Activities visible from these key viewpoints are described in Table 4.1-4. Motorists on I-15, who are of moderately high visual sensitivity, would see these activities.

Construction of the subtransmission lines, as described in Table 4.1-4, would detract from the existing views for motorists on I-15 by adding more non-natural elements to the middleground and foreground that

would contrast with the natural elements in the background. Construction activities would add more encroaching elements to the landscape. Due to the intermittent and temporary (i.e., less than about one week) nature of the construction activities at any one location, visual impacts from construction activities would be less than significant. The areas of disturbance created by construction activities, if untreated, may be present for a long period of time and therefore seen by a substantial number of viewers from I-15, who are of moderately high visual sensitivity. This would result in a significant impact on views from I-15. Project Commitment D would ensure that temporarily disturbed areas would be revegetated, which would shorten the duration that disturbed areas would be viewed by motorists. While construction would be visible to viewers of moderately high visual sensitivity, the temporary and short construction duration as well as the application of Project Commitment D, would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Construction activities at the staging area would be visible over the long term. Staging areas would be used for up to the 27-month construction period. This long-term condition would expose a substantial number of viewers to the degraded visual quality of the staging area. This would result in a significant impact. Project Commitment D would ensure that disturbed areas would be revegetated after construction, which would shorten the duration that disturbed areas would be viewed by motorists. Given that the staging area would be in use for the entire duration of construction, Project Commitment D would not reduce impacts to less than significant. MM AES-1 would require that the staging area be screened with material that is visually consistent with the surrounding area. With implementation of Project Commitment D & MM AES-1, visual impacts at the staging area would be reduced to less than significant.

SR-74

Construction activities would be visible in views from SR-74, including the views shown in Key Viewpoints 10 and 11. The activities that would be visible from these key viewpoints are described in Table 4.1-4. Motorists on SR-74, who are of moderately high visual sensitivity, would see these activities.

Construction of the subtransmission lines, as described in Table 4.1-4, would detract from the existing views for motorists on SR-74 by adding more non-natural elements to the middleground and foreground that would contrast with the natural elements in the background. Construction activities would add more encroaching elements to the landscape. Due to the intermittent and temporary (i.e., less than about one week) nature of the construction activities at any one location, visual impacts from construction activities would be less than significant. The areas of disturbance created by construction activities, if untreated, may be present for a long period of time and therefore seen by a substantial number of viewers from SR-74 who are of moderately high visual sensitivity. This would result in a significant impact on views from SR-74. Project Commitment D would ensure that temporarily disturbed areas would be revegetated, which would shorten the duration that disturbed areas would be viewed by motorists. While construction activities would be visible to viewers of moderately high visual sensitivity, the temporary and short construction duration, as well as the application of Project Commitment D, would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Construction activities at the staging areas would be visible for up to the 27-month duration of the construction period. This long-term condition would expose a substantial number of viewers to the degraded visual quality of the active staging areas. Project Commitment D would ensure that disturbed areas would be revegetated after construction, which would shorten the duration that they would be viewed by motorists. Given that the staging areas would be in use for the entire duration of construction, Project Commitment D would not reduce impacts to less than significant. MM AES-1 would require that the staging areas be screened with material that is visually consistent with the surrounding area. With implementation of Project Commitment D & MM AES-1, visual impacts at the staging areas would be reduced to less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

Overview of Impacts

Table 4.1-5 summarizes the changes to aesthetic quality of Key Viewpoints on I-15 and SR-74 resulting from the proposed project's operation and maintenance activities, prior to implementation of any mitigation.

Table 4.1-5 Key Viewpoint Impact Summary–Scenic Highways (Visual Character and Quality)

Key Viewpoint	Visual Sensitivity	Vividness		Intactness		Unity	
		Existing	With Project	Existing	With Project	Existing	With Project
I-15							
Key Viewpoint 1	MH	ML	L	ML	L	ML	L
Key Viewpoint 2	MH	ML	ML	ML	L	ML	L
Key Viewpoint 9	MH	ML	L	ML	L	ML	L
SR-74							
Key Viewpoint 10	MH	M	**L**	M	**L**	M	**L**
Key Viewpoint 11	MH	M	**L**	M	**L**	M	**L**

Key
Bold Underlined = Results in Significant Impact
L = Low
M = Moderate
MH = Moderately High
ML = Moderately Low

I-15

Key Viewpoints 1, 9, and 2 are representative of views from I-15. As shown in the visual simulations for Key Viewpoints 1, 9, and 2 (Figures 4.1-4a, 4.1-4j, 4.1-4b), the proposed Valley–Ivyglen Project would introduce new tubular steel poles (TSPs) and lightweight steel (LWS) poles along I-15. Key Viewpoint 1 shows 115-kV Segment VIG7, which would require new TSPs for spanning I-15 and new LWS poles for the portions of the line adjacent to I-15. Key Viewpoint 9 shows new TSPs on 115-kV Segment VIG3. Key Viewpoint 2 shows 115-kV Segment VIG6, which would require removal of existing wood poles and replacement with new LWS poles and TSPs.

At Key Viewpoints 1 and 9, the new poles would decrease the vividness, intactness, and unity of the view from moderately low to low. Key Viewpoint 1 contains existing transmission infrastructure, numerous vertical utility poles, and a wide maintained shoulder. Key Viewpoint 9 contains other utility poles, billboards, and visible development. These segments would be visible for a very short amount of time to motorists traveling at high speed, making the change in height minimally noticeable to viewers. The LWS poles would increase visual dominance of human infrastructure in the viewshed because the poles and conductor would further obstruct views of the natural hillside in the background. Additionally, the contrast in color, vertical poles, and conductor silhouetted against the sky and vegetation on hillsides would cause the transmission infrastructure to stand out in the viewshed. Vividness would decrease because the roadway and human elements would become more dominant compared to the natural elements. Intactness and unity would be reduced because the additional poles would encroach upon the natural background. The proposed project would therefore decrease vividness, intactness, and unity from moderately low to low. Visual sensitivity at Key Viewpoints 1 and 9 is moderately high. As explained in Table 4.1-3, a change from moderately low to low visual quality is not considered significant due to the existing degraded aesthetic conditions, regardless of visual sensitivity. Visual impacts would therefore be less than significant.

At Key Viewpoint 2, the new poles would decrease the intactness and unity of the view from moderately low to low; vividness would remain moderately low. Key Viewpoint 2 contains existing transmission infrastructure that already encroaches on the skyline. LWS poles and TSPs would introduce more contrast

in comparison to the wood poles that are currently in these locations, as shown in the visual simulation. The new subtransmission line would not obstruct any elements in the background, but the LWS poles and conductor would encroach on the skyline and would also contrast with the skyline in color and line. The proposed infrastructure is similar in line and form to the existing infrastructure. The roadway, disturbed shoulder, and berm currently dominate Key Viewpoint 2; with the proposed project, the roadway, disturbed shoulder, and the berm would continue to dominate views from Key Viewpoint 2. Vividness would remain the same, as the pattern of the transmission poles would remain the same after project implementation. Intactness and unity would be reduced to low because the taller poles would make the natural element of the area less dominant. Visual sensitivity at Key Viewpoint 2 is moderately high. Visual impacts would therefore be less than significant.

SR-74

Key Viewpoints 10 and 11 (Figures 4.1-4k and 4.1-4l) are representative of views along the portion of SR-74 in Lake Elsinore. The left portion of the view from Key Viewpoint 10 has a more natural and less developed visual character and is representative of the northern part of SR-74 along which 115-kV Segment VIG2 would be located. As shown in the visual simulations for Key Viewpoints 10 and 11, the proposed Valley–Ivyglen Project would replace the existing wood poles with LWS poles along SR-74 (115-kV Segment VIG2) in Lake Elsinore. The visual simulation for Key Viewpoint 10 shows a series of LWS poles. The visual simulation for Key Viewpoint 11 shows an LWS pole on the right and a guy pole on the left.

At Key Viewpoints 10 and 11, the new poles would decrease the vividness, intactness, and unity of the views from moderate to low. The LWS poles shown in both key viewpoints, and the guy pole as shown in Key Viewpoint 11, would introduce more contrast in comparison to the wood poles that are currently in these locations, as shown in the visual simulations. The wood poles are a natural color and shorter and therefore blend in well with the natural elements in the vicinity. The new LWS poles and guy poles would reduce vividness from moderate to low due to their visual dominance, which interrupts existing patterns. The new poles would reduce intactness from moderate to low, as the poles would more substantially encroach on natural elements in the background and on the suburban character of the middleground. The poles would also reduce unity from moderate to low because they would be more dominant in the view due to their industrial grey color and substantially taller height that encroaches higher into the sky. Visual sensitivity at Key Viewpoints 10 and 11 is moderately high. Visual impacts on SR-74 along the entire extent of 115-kV Segment VIG2 would therefore be significant. MM AES-2 would require undergrounding of 115-kV Segment VIG2. With implementation of MM AES-2, visual impacts would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM AES-1: Staging Area Screening. Staging areas will be screened with perimeter screening fences at least 8 feet tall. Perimeter screening fences will be dark in color and covered with a dark-colored (e.g., dark green, brown, or black) fabric or other material that provides at least 50 percent screening.

MM AES-2: Segment VIG2 Undergrounding. 115-kV Segment VIG2 shall be placed underground.

Impact AES -3 (VIG): Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION

Impacts on aesthetic resources along I-15 and SR-74 from construction of the proposed Valley–Ivyglen Project are discussed under Impact AES -2 (VIG). The aesthetic impacts on I-15 and SR-74 would be less

than significant with mitigation during construction and operation, as previously described. This section discusses impacts on aesthetic resources other than for areas along I-15 and SR-74.

Construction

Construction activities would be visible in public views along the proposed project alignment, including the views shown in Key Viewpoints 6, 7, 8, and 12 Figures 4.1-4g, 4.1-4h, 4.1-4i, and 4.1-4m. Construction activities visible from these key viewpoints and other locations along the Valley–Ivyglen alignment are identified in Table 4.1-6. Staging areas would also be visible in certain public views; activities at staging areas are also identified in Table 4.1-6. Viewers of these activities would include motorists, pedestrians, and recreationists. Some of these viewers would be local area residents. Construction activities would detract from the existing views at Key Viewpoints 6, 7, 8, and 12.

Table 4.1-6 Construction Activities Visible From Areas other Than Scenic Highways

Activity Type	Visible Activity
Subtransmission construction	Removal of existing poles, installation of new poles, temporary construction site fencing and signage, soil and vegetation removal, vehicles and equipment used for excavation and grading activities, transporting and lifting, watering to control dust, worker transport, spraying of embankment slopes with an erosion control mixture, line stringing, and other construction activities.
Materials staging	Storage of equipment and materials (construction trailers, construction equipment, steel, conductor, wire reels, cable, hardware, insulators, signage, fuel, joint compound, and other consumable materials), vehicle parking, and stockpiling of spoils from excavation.

The construction activities described in Table 4.1-6 would decrease the visual quality of the views at Key Viewpoints 6 and 7 by adding more non-natural elements to the middleground and foreground that would contrast with the natural elements in the background. Construction activities would add more encroaching elements to the landscape. However, due to the intermittent and temporary (i.e., less than about a week) nature of construction activities at any one location, visual impacts related to construction activities would be less than significant. The areas of disturbance created by construction, if untreated, may be present for a long period of time and therefore seen by a substantial number of viewers with moderately high visual sensitivity. This would have a significant visual impact on views from Lake Street. Project Commitment D would ensure that temporarily disturbed areas would be revegetated, which would shorten the duration that disturbed areas would be viewed by motorists and others. While construction would be visible to viewers with moderately high visual sensitivity, the temporary, intermittent, and short construction duration, as well as the application of Project Commitment D, would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Construction activities described in Table 4.1-6 would somewhat decrease the visual quality at Key Viewpoint 12 by adding non-natural elements to the middleground and foreground that would contrast with the natural and built elements. Construction activities would add more encroaching elements to the landscape that would somewhat reduce the intactness of the views. However, construction activities would be intermittent and temporary (i.e., less than about a week) at any one location, and viewers at Key Viewpoint 12 would see only limited construction activities from ground level due to screening by terrain and houses. Accordingly, visual impacts related to visible construction would be less than significant. The areas of disturbance created by construction, if untreated, may be present for a long period of time and therefore seen by a substantial number of viewers with moderately high visual sensitivity. This would have a significant impact on views from the park and surrounding neighborhood. Project Commitment D would ensure that temporarily disturbed areas would be revegetated, which would shorten the duration that disturbed areas would be viewed by recreationists and residents. While construction would be visible to viewers with moderately high visual sensitivity, the temporary and short construction duration, as well as the application of Project Commitment D, would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Construction activities described in Table 4.1-6 would decrease the visual quality of Key Viewpoint 8, which has a view of commercial development, by adding non-natural construction-related elements to the middleground and foreground that would contrast with the cohesive design of the commercial development. Construction activities would add more encroaching elements to the landscape, thus reducing the unity for this view. However, construction activities would be intermittent and temporary (i.e., less than about a week) at any one location, and impacts related to visible construction would be less than significant. The areas of disturbance created by construction, if untreated, may be present for a long period of time and therefore seen by a substantial number of viewers. However, visual sensitivity is moderately low, and this impact would not be significant for views of the commercial area. Implementation of Project Commitment D would further reduce impacts by ensuring that temporarily disturbed areas would be returned to their pre-construction condition, which would shorten the duration that disturbed areas would be viewed and further reduce the impact. Because construction would be visible to viewers with moderately low visual sensitivity, the construction duration would be temporary and short, and this impact would be less than significant.

Construction activities at staging areas would be visible for the 27-month construction period. This long-term impact would expose a substantial number of viewers to the degraded visual quality resulting from active use of staging areas. This would result in a significant impact. Project Commitment D would ensure that disturbed areas would be revegetated, which would shorten the duration that disturbed areas would be viewed by motorists and others. Given that the staging areas would be in use for the entire duration of construction, Project Commitment D would not reduce impacts to less than significant. MM AES-1 would require that the staging areas be screened with material that is visually consistent with the surrounding area. With implementation of MM AES-1, visual impacts at the staging areas would be less than significant with mitigation.

Operations and Maintenance

Table 4.1-7 summarizes the changes to the aesthetic qualities of representative Key Viewpoints due to project operation and maintenance activities, prior to implementation of any mitigation.

Table 4.1-7 Key Viewpoint Impact Summary (Visual Character and Quality)

Key Viewpoint	Visual Sensitivity	Vividness		Intactness		Unity	
		Existing	With Project	Existing	With Project	Existing	With Project
Key Viewpoint 6	MH	ML	L	M	**L**	M	**L**
Key Viewpoint 7	MH	M	**L**	M	**L**	M	**L**
Key Viewpoint 8	ML	ML	L	MH	M	MH	M
Key Viewpoint 12	MH	M	ML	M	ML	M	ML

Key:
Bold Underlined = Results in Significant Impact
L = Low
M = Moderate
MH = Moderately High
ML = Moderately Low

As shown in the visual simulation for Key Viewpoint 6 (Figure 4.1-4g), new TSPs (one shown at far left of simulation) and LWS poles (remainder of poles shown in simulation) would replace existing wood poles along this portion of Lake Street. Structures along sections of the existing Valley–Elsinore–Fogarty–Ivyglen 115-kV line would also be replaced and, in some cases, relocated along the existing right-of-way (ROW) to allow for installation of the proposed Valley–Ivyglen 115-kV line. These activities would result in two alignments, as shown in the visual simulation. The upper portions of the new poles would be visibly silhouetted against the sky, whereas lower portions of some of the new poles would be partially screened by existing vegetation. The new poles would be substantially taller than the existing wood poles in the view. There would be a substantial increase in the number of utility structures in views along Lake Street.

Vividness would be reduced from moderately low to low. The addition of the new TSPs would increase contrast in form, color, and texture due to their taller heights, lighter colors, and greater numbers of tall, vertical elements and would result in a reduction of intactness and unity from moderate to low for views from Key Viewpoint 6 and similar views in this area. Viewer groups in this area include local residents and commuters, and visual sensitivity is moderately high. Therefore, this impact would be significant. MM AES-3 would require use of non-specular material for poles. MM AES-4 would require that poles along Lake Street be set back from the roadway and that landscaping be placed between the poles and the roadway to lessen the dominance of the poles in the viewshed. With mitigation, plants would shield most of the lower portions of the poles, and the most visible portions of the poles would be higher than viewers' lines of sight. This would reduce the visual dominance of the poles on Lake Street. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

As shown in the visual simulation for Key Viewpoint 7 (Figure 4.1-4h), new LWS poles would replace existing wood poles along this portion of Lake Street. The upper portions of the new poles would be visibly silhouetted against the sky, whereas lower portions of the new poles would be seen against the steep rolling hills in the backdrop. Existing trees along Lake Street block views of the lower portions of some of the poles on the Fogarty–Ivyglen 115-kV Subtransmission Line, shown to the far right in this simulation. The new poles would increase the number of utility structures along Lake Street, but the proposed realignment would also eliminate the current crossing over Lake Street in this area, which would somewhat reduce contrast and improve the vividness, intactness, and unity of views. Even so, the addition of the double line of new TSPs (shown) and LWS poles (not shown) would substantially increase contrast in form, line, and color due to their larger sizes and diameters, lighter colors, and greater numbers of vertical linear elements and result in a substantial reduction of vividness, intactness, and unity from moderate to low for views from Key Viewpoint 7 and similar views in this area. Therefore, the visual character and quality of views from Key Viewpoint 7 and similar views in this area would be substantially degraded. Viewer groups in this area include local residents and commuters, and visual sensitivity is moderately high. Visual impacts would be significant. Mitigation Measure AES-3 would require use of non-specular material for poles. Mitigation Measure AES-4 would require that poles along Lake Street be set back from the roadway and that landscaping be placed between the poles and the roadway to lessen the dominance of the poles in the viewshed. With mitigation, plants would shield most of the lower portions of the poles, and the most visible portions of the poles would be higher than viewers' lines of sight. This would reduce the visual dominance of the poles on Lake Street. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

As shown in the visual simulation for Key Viewpoint 8 (Figure 4.1-4i), new LWS poles would be placed along this portion of roadway in a commercially developed area. The new poles would be taller than the existing vertical light poles and buildings, and the new poles would be visibly silhouetted against the sky. The addition of the new LWS poles would increase contrast in form, line, color, and texture due to their tall heights, vertical forms and lines, and dark gray color silhouetted against the light blue sky. The new poles would be dominant elements, but the form, line, color, and texture would be consistent with the existing visual character of the area. The project would therefore only reduce intactness and unity from moderately high to moderate and would only reduce vividness from moderately low to low for views from Key Viewpoint 8 and similar views in this area. Viewer groups in this commercial area consist largely of workers, commuters, and people engaged in personal business, and visual sensitivity is moderately low. Visual impacts would therefore be less than significant.

As shown in the visual simulation for Key Viewpoint 12 (Figure 4.1-4m), new LWS poles would be placed in an existing utility ROW, which currently contains a 500-kV transmission line on lattice steel towers (LST) and a lower-voltage line on monopoles. The upper portions of the new poles would be visibly silhouetted against the sky, whereas lower portions of the new poles would be mostly screened by vegetation and low structures. The new poles would be substantially taller than the existing monopoles, but similar in height to the existing lattice tower in the view. The new poles would increase the number of

utility structures in the view. The addition of the new LWS poles would somewhat increase contrast in form due to their taller heights and greater numbers. However, the new poles would be codominant with the existing transmission structures due to the presence of other taller vertical structures silhouetted against the sky and other vertical structures in the foreground. The associated reduction of vividness, intactness, and unity for views from Key Viewpoint 12 and similar views in this area would be from moderate to moderately low. Viewer groups in this area include local residents and recreationists, and visual sensitivity is moderately high. Although the new LWS poles would be somewhat noticeable, the visual character and quality of views from Key Viewpoint 12 and similar views in this area would not be substantially degraded for viewers of moderately high visual sensitivity. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM AES-1: Staging Area Screening.

MM AES-3: Glare Reduction. To reduce glare from components of the project, reduce color contrast between the project components and the surrounding landscape, and visually unify the project components with the surrounding landscape, the applicant shall:

> Use non-specular conductor and guy wire for all powerlines installed as part of the projectsl
> Only use lightweight steel, hybrid, guy, and TSPs and LSTs with a galvanized steel that has been treated to create a dulled finish or non-toxic, long-lasting darkening agents that bond with metal or other surfaces and create a darkened finish (unless otherwise required by MM AES-8).
> As applicable, use steel for the switchrack enclosures and dead-end structures installed as part of Alberhill Substation with a flat finish that will weather to be dull and non-reflective.

MM AES-4: Lake Street Pole Placement and Landscaping. Poles installed along Lake Street for 115-kV Segment VIG5 and for the Fogarty–Ivyglen 115-kV Subtransmission line shall adhere to the following requirements:

- Poles shall be set back a minimum of 20 feet from Lake Street's edge of pavement.
- SCE shall plant trees with a maximum height and spread of 25 feet at maturity and a minimum height of 10 feet at planting, large shrubs, and other plants within the setback area between the subtransmission alignment and the Lake Street edge of pavement along the segment. Plantings shall be placed at intervals and in locations to maximize screening of lower portions of the transmission structures in views from the road. Plantings shall be drought tolerant. SCE shall be responsible for ensuring maintenance of the landscaping for five years.

Impact AES -4 (VIG): Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.
LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION

Construction

Construction of the proposed project would usually occur during daylight hours. There is a possibility that construction would occur at night, in which case temporary lighting would be required. For example, the California Independent System Operator or California Department of Transportation may require that conductor stringing over highways occurs at night. Night lighting could adversely affect nighttime views in the area, which would be a significant impact. MM AES-5 would require that nighttime lighting for construction activities be the minimum necessary for safety and security and shielded or directed downward to eliminate off-site light spill, and motion-activated or use timers. With implementation of MM AES-5, impacts of construction activities for this criterion would be less than significant.

Safety and security lighting at staging areas and other areas established for long-duration construction activities, such as laydown areas, may introduce new sources of substantial nighttime lighting, which would adversely affect nighttime views in their vicinity. In locations where this lighting would be visible to sensitive viewers, this impact would be significant. MM AES-5 would require that nighttime lighting for construction staging areas and other areas established for long-duration construction activities be the minimum necessary for safety and security, shielded or directed downward to eliminate off-site light spill, and motion-activated or use timers. With implementation of MM AES-5, impacts of nighttime lighting for construction staging areas and other areas established for long-duration construction activities would be less than significant for this criterion.

Operation and Maintenance

No permanent lighting would be associated with the proposed project. Some lighting may be needed if emergency repairs are required at night. Such lighting would be infrequent and short term due to the short duration of emergency repairs. Impacts would therefore be less than significant.

The proposed project also includes the installation of metallic hybrid poles, LWS poles, TSPs, conductor, guy poles, and guy wires. These elements would create substantial glare if their surfaces are reflective. Given the height of the elements aboveground, this would adversely affect daytime views in the project area. In locations where this glare would be visible to sensitive viewers, this impact would be significant. MM AES-3 would require that these components have a flat, dull finish and use non-specular conductors. With implementation MM AES-3, visual impacts from the proposed Valley–Ivyglen Project on daytime views due to increased glare would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM AES-3: Glare Reduction.

MM AES-5: Night Lighting during Construction. To minimize the effect on any nearby sensitive receptors, lighting for construction activities, staging areas, and maintenance activities will be the minimum necessary to ensure safety and security for nighttime activities. All lighting used for nighttime construction activities will be oriented downward and shielded to eliminate off-site light spill at times when the lighting is in use. Safety and security lighting at staging areas or other areas established for long-duration construction activities, such as laydown areas, will be motion-activated or use timers to reduce impacts of nighttime lighting.

4.1.5 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures (Alberhill Project)

4.1.5.1 Project Commitments (Alberhill Project)

The applicant has committed to the following as part of the design of the proposed project. See Section 2.6, "Project Commitments," for a complete description of each project commitment.

- **Project Commitment A: Landscaping and Irrigation Plan:** For the Alberhill Project, prior to the start of construction, the applicant would develop a Landscaping and Irrigation Plan for Alberhill Substation that is consistent with surrounding community standards. The applicant would consult with Riverside County about the plan and incorporate applicable County recommendations to the extent possible. Landscaping would be designed to filter views from the surrounding community and other potential sensitive receptors near the proposed substation and be consistent with the surrounding community. The landscape plan would include a plant species list and installation and construction requirements. The applicant would contract a landscape architect to complete the

landscaping plan during final engineering for the Alberhill Project. Irrigation and landscaping installation would occur after construction of the substation perimeter wall and water service has been established. During operations, the applicant would maintain the substation site pursuant to the Landscaping and Irrigation Plan and be responsible for upkeep as long as the applicant owns the property.

- **Project Commitment D: Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan:** With input from the appropriate resource agencies, the applicant would develop and implement a Habitat Restoration and Revegetation Plan to restore areas where construction of the projects would be unable to avoid impacts on native vegetation and sensitive resources, such as wetlands, wetland buffer areas, riparian habitat, and other sensitive natural communities. The applicant would restore all areas disturbed during construction of the projects, including staging areas and pull, tension, and splicing sites, to as close to pre-construction conditions as possible, or to the conditions agreed upon between the applicant and landowner. Replanting and reseeding would be conducted under the direction the applicant or contract biologists. If revegetation would occur on private property, revegetation conditions would be part of the agreement between the applicant and the landowner.

4.1.5.2 Impacts Analysis (Alberhill Project)

Impact AES -1 (ASP): Substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT

The only designated scenic vista in the proposed project area that would be visible or noticeable is City of Lake Elsinore General Plan Vantage Point 1. Part of 115-kV Segment ASP4 would be visible from Vantage Point 1. Due to distance and intervening terrain and structures, the proposed project would not be noticeable from Vantage Point 2. As previously described in Section 4.1.1.4, none of the other Vantage Points are oriented toward components of the Alberhill Project.

Construction

The City of Lake Elsinore General Plan Vantage Point 1 (shown in Figure 4.1-2d, context photo 24), on northbound I-15 just west of Railroad Canyon Road, affords motorists a view of Lake Elsinore in the middleground and rugged mountains in the background. Construction activities on 115-kV Segment ASP4 would occur approximately 600 feet west of I-15 along Casino Drive and would be visible to motorists at Vantage Point 1. Construction activities related to removal of three poles and addition of three poles would be visible in the foreground in this area. Visual changes would include additional bare ground and presence of construction equipment. The Lake Elsinore General Plan recognizes that viewers on I-15 see the lake area for a short amount of time and are focused on driving rather than aesthetic quality of the area (City of Lake Elsinore 2011). Though out of view of the context photo, the foreground of Vantage Point 1 also contains several elements that break up the continuity of the natural lake and mountains in the background, including a billboard, a large parking lot, a road, existing transmission lines, and buildings. Construction activities would incrementally add to the non-natural elements present at Vantage Point 1 for a short period (up to three weeks). However, motorists traveling at freeway speeds would see this area for several seconds, and construction activities would be short term. Further, there are abundant more visually intrusive elements already present in the foreground of Vantage Point 1. Visual impacts on Vantage Point 1 would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

Once constructed, upgraded poles on 115-kV Segment ASP4 would be located approximately 600 feet west of I-15 along Casino Drive/Auto Center Drive and would be visible to motorists at Vantage Point 1. Modifications to 115-kV Segment ASP4 would replace the existing single-circuit structures with TSPs

capable of supporting a second circuit. The new TSPs would be constructed of steel and would be 70 to 115 feet tall. The existing poles are constructed of wood and range in height from 65 to 90 feet. Up to three of the proposed TSPs would be visible from City of Lake Elsinore General Plan Vantage Point 1 shown in context photo 24 (Figure 4.1-2d). The TSPs would be larger and more industrial in appearance than the existing wooden poles. The Lake Elsinore General Plan recognizes that viewers on I-15 see the lake area for a short amount of time and are focused on driving rather than aesthetic quality of the area (City of Lake Elsinore 2011). The foreground of Vantage Point 1 also contains several elements that break up the continuity of the natural lake and mountains in the background, including a billboard, a large parking lot, a road, transmission lines, and buildings. The three TSPs would only incrementally add to the non-natural elements already present in the foreground of the view. Traveling at freeway speeds, motorists on I-15 would see the area for several seconds and are unlikely to notice the incremental change given the other non-natural elements and the brevity of the view. Further, there are abundantly more visually intrusive elements already present in the foreground of Vantage Point 1. Visual impacts on Vantage Point 1 would be less than significant.

Impact AES -2 (ASP): Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway. *SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION*

For the purpose of this document, all Eligible State Scenic Highways are treated the same as Designated State Scenic Highways, in order to preserve their eligibility for official designation, as indicated in section 4.1.2.2. 115-kV Segments ASP6 through ASP8, the microwave dish antennas installed at the Santiago Peak Communication site, and the applicant's Serrano Substation would not be visible from I-15; there would be no visual impacts related to scenic highways for these proposed project components.

Construction

Construction activities would be visible from SR-74 and from I-15 in certain locations. Construction activities visible from SR-74 and I-15 are detailed in Table 4.1-8. Project components are shown in Figures 2-2a through 2-2i in Chapter 2, "Project Description."

Table 4.1-8 Construction Activities Visible From Eligible Scenic Highways

Activity Type	Visible Elements		Visible Activity
	SR-74	I-15	
115-kV Subtransmission construction	N/A	ASP1, ASP1.5, ASP3, ASP4, ASP5	Removal of existing poles, installation of new poles, temporary construction site fencing and signage, soil and vegetation removal, vehicles and equipment used for excavation and grading activities, transporting and lifting, watering to control dust, worker transport, spraying of embankment slopes with an erosion control mixture, line stringing, and other construction activities.
115-kV Subtransmission construction	ASP2	ASP2	Line stringing, addition of crossarms, anchors, and insulators to existing poles.
Materials staging	N/A	Staging areas ASP1, ASP2	Storage of materials, vehicle parking, and stockpiling of spoils from excavation.

Table 4.1-8 Construction Activities Visible From Eligible Scenic Highways

Activity Type	Visible Elements		Visible Activity
	SR-74	I-15	
Substation construction	N/A	Substation area	Construction of substation, temporary construction site fencing and signage, soil and vegetation removal, vehicles and equipment used for excavation and grading activities, transporting and lifting, watering to control dust, worker transport, spraying of embankment slopes with an erosion control mixture, and other construction activities.
500-kV Transmission construction	N/A	500-kV transmission line	Temporary construction site fencing and signage; soil and vegetation removal; vehicles and equipment used for excavation and grading activities; transporting and lifting (more helicopter use would occur if helicopter construction is implemented than if the conventional method is implemented for 500-kV construction; helicopter pads used under the helicopter construction option would not be visible to sensitive receptors); watering to control dust; worker transport; spraying of embankment slopes with an erosion control mixture; line stringing; LST assembly and installation; and other construction activities.

Key:
I-15 = Interstate 15
kV = kilovolt
LST = lattice steel tower
N/A = not applicable
SR-74 = State Route 74

I-15

Construction activities would be visible to motorists in views from I-15, including Key Viewpoints 3, 4, 5a, and 5b. Activities visible from these key viewpoints are described in Table 4.1-8.

Construction of the 500-kV transmission lines and the 115-kV subtransmission lines, as described in Table 4.1-8, would detract from the existing views for motorists on I-15 by adding non-natural elements to the middleground and foreground that would contrast with the natural elements in the background. Vividness would be temporarily reduced, as construction equipment and activities would detract from the moderate level of distinctive visual patterns as seen in the background from I-15. Construction activities would add more encroaching elements to the landscape and would temporarily reduce the intactness and unity of the views. Due to the intermittent and temporary (i.e., less than about one week) nature of construction activities at any one location, visual impacts related to construction activities would be less than significant. Further, 115-kV Segments ASP3 and ASP5 would cross I-15 such that construction activities would only be visible for several seconds to motorists traveling at freeway speeds. The areas of disturbance created by construction, if untreated, may be present for a long period of time and therefore seen by a substantial number of viewers from I-15 who are of moderately high visual sensitivity. This would be a significant impact on views from I-15. Project Commitment D would ensure that temporarily disturbed areas would be revegetated, which would shorten the duration that disturbed areas would be viewed by motorists. While construction would be visible to viewers with moderately high visual sensitivity, the temporary and short construction duration as well as the application of Project Commitment D, would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Construction activities in the Alberhill substation area, which is shown in Key Viewpoint 3 and Key Viewpoint 4, would last 21 months. A substantial number of viewers with moderately high visual sensitivity would be exposed to the degraded visual quality during construction at the substation site. Even though the impact would be temporary, it would be significant given the extent of site disturbance and large number of

viewers with moderately high visual sensitivity who would see this in foreground views. Impacts would be even greater should the applicant obtain soil from on site (Import Soil Option 1) by excavating from a 5.2-acre area. Project Commitment D would ensure that disturbed areas would be revegetated, which would shorten the duration that disturbed areas would be viewed by motorists. Project Commitment D would not reduce construction impacts at the substation to less than significant because of the scale and extent of disturbance and the duration of construction. MM AES-6 would limit grading to only that necessary to construct the proposed project, thus limiting the amount of grading necessary. Extensive construction activities would still be visible, however, and some level of grading would be required. Even with implementation of MM AES-6, visual impacts at the substation site would remain significant.

Construction activities at the staging area would be visible over the long term. Staging areas would be used for up to 28 months (the duration of construction). This long-term impact would expose a substantial number of viewers to the degraded visual quality of the staging area. This would be a significant impact. Project Commitment D would ensure that disturbed areas would be revegetated, which would shorten the duration that they would be viewed by motorists. Given that the staging area would be in use for the entire duration of construction, Project Commitment D would not reduce impacts to less than significant. MM AES-1 would require that the staging area be screened with material that is visually consistent with the surrounding area. With implementation of MM AES-1, visual impacts at the staging area would be reduced to less than significant.

SR-74

The 115-kV Segment ASP 2 alignment runs parallel to SR-74 for about 500 feet. This area, which is partially flanked by dense trees and has a rural feel, is comparable to Key Viewpoint 7 and has moderate vividness, intactness, and unity. Activities along 115-kV Segment ASP2 would involve only line stringing and adding crossarms, anchors, and insulators to existing poles. At a stringing rate of 0.35 miles per day, stringing activities along SR-74 would take less than one day. Given the very short temporary nature of the activity, visual impacts on SR-74 during construction would be less than significant.

Operations and Maintenance

I-15

The Alberhill Substation, portions of the 500-kV transmission lines, and portions of 115-kV Segments ASP1 through ASP5 would be visible from I-15. Table 4.1-9 summarizes the changes to the aesthetic qualities of representative key viewpoints for I-15 due to project operation and maintenance activities, prior to implementation of any mitigation.

Table 4.1-9 Key Viewpoint Impact Summary - Scenic Highways (Visual Character and Quality)

Key Viewpoint	Visual Sensitivity	Vividness		Intactness		Unity	
		Existing	With Project	Existing	With Project	Existing	With Project
Key Viewpoint 3	MH	M	**L**	H	**ML**	MH	**L**
Key Viewpoint 4	MH	M	**L**	H	**ML**	MH	**L**
Key Viewpoint 5a	MH	M	**L**	MH	**ML**	M	**L**
Key Viewpoint 5b	MH	M	**L**	MH	**ML**	M	**L**

Key
Bold Underlined= Results in Significant Impact
L = Low
M = Moderate
MH = Moderately High
ML = Moderately Low

At Key Viewpoints 3 and 4, the proposed new Alberhill Substation, 500-kV transmission lines, and 115-kV Segments ASP1 and ASP1.5 would be permanently visible to motorists on I-15 within a viewshed with natural and rural visual character, moderate vividness, high intactness, and moderately high unity. Visual sensitivity in this area is considered moderately high. Simulated views of the proposed substation are shown for Key Viewpoints 3 and 4 (Figures 4.1-4c and 4.1-4d). Components of the proposed Alberhill Substation, 500-kV transmission lines, and 115-kV subtransmission lines that would be visible from I-15 in these locations include:

- Alberhill Substation
  - Control building (20 feet tall, 7,040 square feet)
  - Concrete or concrete block substation perimeter wall (8 feet tall)
  - Microwave antenna tower (120 feet tall)
  - 500-kV gas-insulated switchrack (49 feet tall)
  - 115-kV switchrack and dead-end structures (60 feet tall)
  - 500/115-kV transformers (37 feet tall)
  - Parking area and driveways (7,600 square feet)
  - Import Soil Source Area (5.2 acres) if Import Soil Option 1 is selected (refer to Chapter 2, "Project Description")
  - Buffer area maintained around the substation's perimeter wall to be brushed of vegetation and structures during operations (10 feet wide)
- 500-kV transmission lines
  - 500-kV LSTs (95 to 190 feet tall)
  - 500-kV transmission conductor cables
  - Sections of the new access roads to the proposed 500-kV transmission towers
- 115-kV subtransmission lines
  - 115-kV structures (70 to 115 feet tall)
  - 115-kV subtransmission conductor cables

As shown in the simulated views for Key Viewpoints 3 and 4 (Figures 4.1-4c and 4.1-4d), and summarized in Table 4.1-9, components of the proposed Alberhill Project would substantially degrade the vividness, intactness, and unity of these views. Vividness would be reduced from moderate to low because the size and scale of the components of the proposed Alberhill Project would draw the viewers' attention from the undeveloped hills in the middleground. Intactness would be reduced from high to moderately low, and unity would be reduced from moderately high to low due to the introduction of new, large, human-made, industrial structures into foreground views in an area where there are currently few human-made elements. Components of the proposed Alberhill Project would introduce substantial contrast in form, line, color, and texture to views, thus substantially damaging scenic resources within the scenic highway corridor. Viewers in this area are of moderately high visual sensitivity. Visual impacts in the area of the proposed substation would therefore be significant.

Under Project Commitment A, the applicant would develop and implement a Landscaping and Irrigation Plan for the substation site and, pursuant to this plan, maintain the substation site and be responsible for its upkeep as long as the applicant owns the property. This may reduce aesthetic impacts by softening the

contrast of the substation with the surrounding natural environment. However, landscaping is unlikely to substantially screen views or reduce the contrast of the substation in views from I-15 given the massive scale of the substation structures and given that viewers from I-15 are elevated above the substation. Furthermore, a majority of the substation, transmission structures, and distribution structures would be visible. Therefore, there would still be a substantial decrease in vividness, intactness, and unity and impacts on views from I-15 in this area would remain significant even after implementation of Project Commitment A. Several mitigation measures would be implemented. MM AES-6 would require limiting cut and fill to that necessary to reduce the amount of visual change in topography. MM AES-7 would require the applicant to utilize colors and finishes for the aboveground structures at the Alberhill Substation to reduce its visual impact. Even after mitigation, a majority of the substation, transmission structures, and distribution structures would remain visible, and there would still be a marked decrease in vividness, intactness, and unity. Even with implementation of AES-6 and AES-7, visual impacts in the Alberhill Substation area would remain significant.

Key Viewpoints 5a (with marker balls) and 5b (without marker balls) depict the 500-kV transmission lines as they would appear in views from I-15 if the proposed Alberhill Project is constructed (Figure 4.1-4e and 4f). The 500-kV transmission lines would reduce the vividness of the view by introducing development to an undeveloped hillside. Vividness would be reduced from moderate to low. The 500-kV transmission lines would detract from the intactness and unity of the view by introducing large, industrial structures to an existing view characterized by natural and rural visual elements. Intactness and unity would be reduced from moderately high to moderately low and from moderate to low, respectively. Further, the large scale of the transmission line structures silhouetted against the sky, the natural background, and their location parallel to I-15 would also encroach on the natural appearance of the middleground and background. Viewers are of moderately high visual sensitivity. This impact would therefore be significant. Due to the size of the structures and location of the proposed substation, screening would not reduce impacts, and rerouting to reduce visual impacts would not be feasible. MM AES-8 would require treatment of the structures closest to I-15 with a dark finish. This would help reduce impacts, but the structures would still be silhouetted against the sky above the ridgeline and introduce a new industrial element in a relatively non-industrial area. Even with implementation of AES-8, visual impacts would remain significant.

115-kV Segment ASP3 and ASP5 would perpendicularly cross I-15. 115-kV Segments ASP3 and ASP5 would involve replacing existing wood poles with new, taller TSPs. The TSPs would increase the visual dominance of human infrastructure in the viewsheds at their I-15 crossings because the poles and conductor would further obstruct views of the natural hillside in the background. Additionally, the contrast in color, vertical poles, and conductor silhouetted against the sky and vegetation on hillsides would cause the transmission infrastructure to stand out in the views. Vividness would decrease because the roadway and human elements would become more dominant compared to the natural elements. Intactness and unity would be reduced because the additional poles would encroach upon the natural background. The crossing locations already have existing signs of development, including housing, transmission infrastructure, and/or billboards. The proposed project would therefore not substantially decrease vividness, intactness, or unity. These segments would be visible for a very short amount of time to motorists traveling at high speed, making the increase in height not very noticeable to viewers of moderately high visual sensitivity. Visual impacts of 115-kV Segments ASP3 and ASP5 for views from I-15 would be less than significant.

115-kV Segment ASP4 would run parallel to I-15 and would be visible along approximately 0.75 miles of I-15. 115-kV Segment ASP4 would involve replacing existing wood poles with new, taller TSPs and LWS poles. The new subtransmission line would not obstruct any elements in the background, but the LWS poles, TSPs, and conductor would encroach on the skyline and would also contrast with the skyline in color and line. The area where ASP4 is visible contains existing transmission infrastructure that already encroaches on the skyline. The proposed infrastructure is similar in line and form to the existing infrastructure, although somewhat more noticeable and dominant. However, the roadway and disturbed

shoulder currently dominate the viewshed in the area; with the proposed project, the roadway and disturbed shoulder would continue to dominate the viewshed. Vividness would remain the same, as the pattern of the transmission poles would remain similar after project implementation. Intactness and unity would be somewhat reduced because the taller poles would be more noticeable and dominant. Viewers would be of moderately high visual sensitivity. Visual impacts of 115-kV Segment ASP4 for views from I-15 would therefore be less than significant.

115-kV Segment ASP2 would be visible from some locations on I-15. ASP2 would involve placing conductor, crossarms, anchors, and insulators on existing poles that would be installed as part of the Valley–Ivyglen Project. Addition of these components to existing poles would result in a negligible visual change to viewers traveling at high speeds on I-15. Visual impacts of 115-kV Segment ASP2 for views from I-15 would be less than significant.

SR-74

115-kV Segment ASP2 would cross and run parallel to SR-74 for about 500 feet. ASP2 would involve placing conductor, crossarms, anchors, and insulators on existing poles installed as part of the Valley–Ivyglen Project. Additional conductors and support structures placed on existing poles are unlikely to be noticeable to viewers traveling at high speeds on SR-74 and would result in a negligible visual change. Visual impacts of 115-kV Segment ASP2 on views from SR-74 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM AES-1: Staging Area Screening.

MM AES-6: Hillside and Natural Slope Preservation. The applicant will limit grading, cut, and fill to the minimum necessary to provide stable areas for drainage, structural foundations, parking facilities, access roads, poles, and other intended uses.

MM AES-7: Alberhill Substation Visual Treatments. The applicant will consult with a professional landscape architect licensed to work in California to determine what colors to use for the control building and perimeter wall and other aboveground infrastructure associated with the Alberhill Substation. Colors will be selected according to their ability to reduce the aesthetic impact of the substation and ancillary infrastructure. The applicant will also consult with the landscape architect regarding visual treatments, in addition to color, that would reduce aesthetic impacts. The applicant will obtain approval of the selected colors and visual treatments from the California Public Utilities Commission prior to start of construction. All color finishes will be flat and non-reflective. TSPs, LWS poles, and LSTs within the SCE substation parcel must have color finishes that are dark in color or otherwise colored to help blend the structures with their surroundings. An acceptable treatment is a long-lasting darkening agent that bonds with metal or other surfaces to create a darkened finish.

MM AES-8: Treatment of 500-kV Transmission Towers. 500-kV Towers SA2/R4, VA2/R5, SA3/R7, VA3/R8, SA4/R12, and VA4/R11 will have color finishes that are dark in color or otherwise colored to help blend the structures with their natural surroundings. An acceptable treatment is a long-lasting darkening agent that bonds with metal or other surfaces to create a darkened finish.

Impact AES -3 (ASP): Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION

Impacts on aesthetic resources within a State Scenic Highway along Eligible State Scenic Highways I-15 and SR-74 from construction and operation of the Alberhill Project are discussed under Impact AES -2 (ASP). The construction-related aesthetic impacts on I-15 would be significant, and the aesthetic impacts on SR-74 would be less than significant, as previously described. The operational impacts would be significant on I-15 and less than significant on SR-74, as previously described. This section discusses impacts on aesthetic resources other than those along I-15 and SR-74.

Construction

Construction activities would be visible in public viewsheds along the proposed project alignment, including the viewsheds shown in Key Viewpoints 13, 14, and 15. Activities visible from these Key Viewpoints and other locations along the project alignment could include those listed in Table 4.1-8 for 115-kV subtransmission line construction. Staging areas would also be visible in public viewsheds. Activities at staging areas could include materials storage, vehicle parking, and stockpiling of spoils from excavation. Viewers of these activities would include motorists, pedestrians, and recreationists, many of whom are likely to be local residents.

Construction would detract from the existing views. Construction activities in these key viewsheds would involve pole removal and replacement. Construction activities would somewhat reduce the vividness and intactness of views by adding more noticeable and encroaching elements to the landscape. Construction activities would also decrease the unity of the key viewsheds by adding more non-natural elements to the middleground and background. Impacts from construction activities, however, would be temporary and short term (i.e., less than one week) at any one location, reducing exposure of viewers to visual impacts. Accordingly, visual impacts would be less than significant.

Use of Staging Areas ASP3 through ASP7, as shown in Figures 2.2c through 2.2h (Chapter 2, "Project Description" would occur for the 27-month construction period. A substantial number of viewers would be exposed to the degraded visual quality at staging areas caused by presence of materials, equipment, and construction-related activities for an extended period of time. This visual impact would be significant. Project Commitment D would ensure that disturbed areas would be revegetated, which would shorten the duration that disturbed areas would be viewed after use of staging areas is over, but would not shorten the use of the staging areas. Given that the staging area would be in use for the entire duration of construction, Project Commitment D would not reduce impacts to less than significant. MM AES-1 would require that the staging area be screened with material that is visually consistent with the surrounding area. With implementation of Project Commitment D and AES-1, visual impacts at the staging areas would be reduced to less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

The proposed Alberhill Project has the potential to affect visual resources at Key Viewpoints 13, 14, and 15 and several other locations. Table 4.1-10 summarizes the changes to the aesthetic qualities of these representative Key Viewpoints due to project operation and maintenance activities, prior to implementation of any mitigation.

Table 4.1-10 Key Viewpoint Impact Summary (Visual Character and Quality)

Key Viewpoint	Visual Sensitivity	Vividness		Intactness		Unity	
		Existing	With Project	Existing	With Project	Existing	With Project
Key Viewpoint 13	ML	L	L	L	L	L	L
Key Viewpoint 14	MH	L	L	M	**L**	M	**L**
Key Viewpoint 15	ML	L	L	L	L	L	L

Key
Bold Underlined = Results in Significant Impact
L = Low
M = Moderate
MH = Moderately High
ML = Moderately Low

Some segments of the Alberhill Project would span areas with existing electric infrastructure and an urbanized visual character, as represented in Key Viewpoints 13 and 15, which show 115-kV Segments ASP3 and ASP6, respectively. Some parts of the Alberhill Project would be located in more rural and suburban areas, as represented by Key Viewpoint 14.

At Key Viewpoint 13, as shown in the visual simulation (Figure 4.1-4n), ASP3 would involve removal of existing wood poles that carry one 115-kV circuit and distribution conductor and replacement with larger TSPs to hold a second 115-kV circuit. The TSPs would be larger and more industrial in appearance than the existing wooden poles. While the poles would be larger and additional conductor would be installed, these incremental changes would not result in a substantial effect on the existing low vividness, intactness, or unity of the view. Visual impacts would therefore be less than significant.

At Key Viewpoint 14, as shown in the visual simulation (Figure 4.1-4o), a new, single-circuit 115-kV subtransmission line would be installed on new TSPs where there currently are no TSPs. Wood poles in the background in the left of the viewpoint would be replaced with TSPs to accommodate the second 115-kV circuit. The proposed TSPs in the left of the view would be comparable in line. The TSPs would differ in form due to their taller heights. They would also be a different color from existing wood poles. Galvanized steel poles would contrast more with the darker colors in the landscape than the current wood poles. The character of the galvanized steel poles would also not comport with the somewhat rural visual character of the area. No changes to vividness would result because there would be no change to distinctive visual elements or striking visual patterns due to a replacement of wood poles with TSPs in a similar linear pattern. Intactness would be reduced from moderate to low because the galvanized steel would contrast greatly with the vegetation and darker colored elements low to the ground. Unity would also decrease from moderate to low due to this greater contrast and reduction in compositional harmony. Viewers in the area are of moderately high visual sensitivity. The following project components would result in a significant impact due to location in an area where the setting is more rural and there is no or limited existing galvanized steel infrastructure and fewer modifications to natural elements:

- 115-kV Segment ASP4
  - From the intersection of Murrieta Road and La Piedra Road to the intersection of Murrieta Road and Craig Avenue.
  - From the intersection of Murrieta Road and Beth Avenue to the intersection of Murrieta Road and Scott Road/Bundy Canyon Road.
- 115-kV Segment ASP5
  - From the intersection of Murrieta Road and Scott Road/Bundy Canyon Road to 520 feet northeast of the intersection of Citrus Grove and Lemon Street.

- From the intersection of Almond Street and Lemon Street to the intersection of Waite Street and Jo Ann Court.

MM AES-9 would require utilizing poles in these areas that are made of self-weathering steel, which would result in less contrast with vegetation and development and would result in less of a visual change in quality and character from current wood poles. With implementation of MM AES-9, visual impacts would be less than significant.

As shown in the visual simulation for Key Viewpoint 14, the installation of the TSPs where there currently are none in front of the Calder Ranch development would somewhat reduce the vividness; however, this reduction would not be substantial because the vividness of views in this area have been identified as generally low. Intactness and unity of the view would also be reduced from moderate to low due to the additional linear elements being placed in an area that does not feature many strong linear patterns. Given the moderately high visual sensitivity of viewers in this area, these impacts would be significant. MM AES-10 would require undergrounding of the alignment in the area where there are no aboveground utility structures along Murrieta Road. With implementation of MM AES-10, visual impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

At Key Viewpoint 15, as shown in the visual simulation (Figure 4.1-4p), a new, single-circuit 115-kV subtransmission line would be installed on new TSPs, replacing the existing wooden poles that support distribution lines. The TSPs would be larger and more industrial in appearance than the existing wooden poles. These poles would not affect the intactness and unity of the existing view, both of which are currently low, and the poles would only slightly diminish the vividness of the view; vividness would remain low. The size and scale of the poles would somewhat detract from the less developed area visible in background views and would draw attention from the geologic features visible in Figure 4.1-4n. Visual impacts would therefore be less than significant.

No key viewpoints were developed for the microwave dish antennas to be installed at the applicant's Serrano Substation and the Santiago Peak Communications Site. The antennas would be installed on existing structures. Viewer groups at the Santiago Peak Communications Site would primarily include United States Forest Service staff and occasional recreational users. The new antennas would be consistent with the existing character of the proposed sites, given the existing communications infrastructure at these locations. Impacts from the installation of the new microwave dish antennas would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM AES-1: Staging Area Screening.

MM AES-9. Use self-weathering steel poles. Self-weathering steel poles shall be used on all of 115-kV Segment ASP6 (except where undergrounding is required per MM AES-10) and 115-kV Segments ASP4 and ASP5 in the following locations:

- 115-kV Segment ASP4
  - From the intersection of Murrieta Road and La Piedra Road to the intersection of Murrieta Road and Craig Avenue.
  - From the intersection of Murrieta Road and Beth Avenue to the intersection of Murrieta Road and Scott Road/Bundy Canyon Road.
- 115-kV Segment ASP5
  - From the intersection of Murrieta Road and Scott Road/Bundy Canyon Road to 520 feet northeast of the intersection of Citrus Grove and Lemon Street.

- From the intersection of Almond Street and Lemon Street to the intersection of Waite Street and Jo Ann Court.

MM AES-10. Undergrounding on Murrieta Road: 115-kV Segment ASP6 shall be undergrounded between Craig Avenue and Beth Drive along Murrieta Road.

Impact AES -4 (ASP): Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.
LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION

Construction

Construction of the proposed project would usually occur during daylight hours. There is a possibility that some construction activities would occur at night, requiring temporary lighting. For example, the California Independent System Operator or California Department of Transportation may require that conductor stringing over highways occurs at night. Night lighting could adversely affect night time views in the area, which would be a significant impact. MM AES-5 would reduce effects of night time lighting. With mitigation, impacts would be less than significant. Safety and security lighting at staging areas and other areas established for long-duration construction activities, such as laydown areas, may introduce new sources of substantial nighttime lighting, which would adversely affect nighttime views in their vicinity. In locations where this lighting would be visible to sensitive viewers, this impact would be significant. MM AES-5 would reduce effects of night time lighting for safety and security at staging areas and other areas established for long-duration construction activities. With mitigation, impacts would be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance

New sources of nighttime lighting would be introduced at the proposed Alberhill Substation. The applicant would use low-pressure sodium lighting at the proposed Alberhill Substation. Lighting installed at the proposed substation would conform to Riverside County Ordinance 655, which regulates and specifies criteria for light pollution. Access lighting at the proposed Alberhill Substation would be controlled by a photo sensor. Each entrance gate would have a beacon light installed for safety and security purposes. The beacon lights would be illuminated only while the gates are open or in motion. The applicant typically uses double-flash strobe lights as beacon lights on substation gates. Maintenance lights would be controlled by a manual switch that would normally be in the "off" position. Maintenance lights would be directed downward and shielded. Maintenance lights would be used only when required for maintenance or emergency repairs that occur at night. Impacts related to night lighting at the Substation would be less than significant.

The proposed Alberhill Project could introduce new sources of glare because of the installation of components with reflective surfaces. The applicant has stated that non-specular 500-kV conductor cables would be installed. Other elements of the project include metallic LWS poles, TSPs, the Alberhill Substation, and conductor. These elements would create substantial glare if their surfaces are reflective. Given the height of the elements aboveground, this would adversely affect daytime views in the project area. MM AES-3 would require that these elements have a flat, galvanized steel finish that will weather to be dull and non-reflective. MM AES-7 would require that all color finishes at the Alberhill Substation will be flat and non-reflective. MM AES-7 and MM AES-8 would require that certain utility structures on the 500-kV transmission line and in and near the substation have a darker color and dull finish, which would reduce the potential for glare. MM AES-9 would require steel poles to be self-weathering steel on portions of 115-kV Segments ASP4, ASP5, and ASP6, reducing the potential of glare. With implementation of MMs AES-3, AES-7, AES-8, and AES-9, visual impacts from the proposed Alberhill Project on daytime views due to increased glare and lighting would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM AES-3: Glare Reduction.

MM AES-5: Night Lighting during Construction

MM AES-7: Alberhill Substation Visual Treatments.

MM AES-8: Treatment of 500-kV Transmission Towers.

MM AES-9. Use self-weathering steel poles.

4.1.6 References

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