F. Other CEQA Considerations

F.1 Growth Inducing Effects

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires a discussion of the ways in which a project could be an inducement to growth. The CEQA Guidelines [Section 15126.2 (d)] identify a project to be growth-inducing if it fosters economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. New employees hired for proposed commercial and industrial development projects and population growth resulting from residential development projects represent direct forms of growth. Other examples of projects that are growth-inducing are the expansion of urban services into a previously unserved or under-served area or the creation or extension of transportation infrastructure.

Increases in population could tax community service facilities, creating a need for the additional construction and expansion of utilities and infrastructure, which could have potentially significant impacts on the environment. The growth-inducing potential of a project would be considered significant if it encourages growth or an increase in the concentration of population above what is assumed in local and regional land use plans or in projections made by regional planning authorities, which would therefore result in physical impacts on environmental resources. Significant growth impacts could also occur if a project provides infrastructure or service capacity to accommodate growth levels beyond those permitted by local or regional plans and policies.

F.1.1 Growth Caused by Direct and Indirect Employment

Construction of the Project would be performed either by the Applicant's construction crews or by local contractors. If the Applicant uses internal construction crews, they will likely be based out of the Alhambra facility and would require temporary, short term housing. If the Applicant employs contract construction crews, they will likely be based out of Riverside County and not require housing. The County has enough temporary housing facilities to accommodate the approximate 94 construction workers during the 18 month construction period. Maintenance and operation of the Project would be performed by the Applicant's current employees. The Project would not result in growth due to employment.

F.1.2 Growth Related to Provision of Additional Electric Power

Southern California (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties) is expected to grow by 6.26 million people from 2000 to 2030, resulting in the addition of 2.26 million households. Along with the increase in population, it is expected that a shift in employment opportunities from west to east will result in increased growth in the eastern counties of Riverside and San Bernardino (SCAG 2004). The eastward shift in employment has made Riverside County one of the fastest growing Counties in the nation with a growth rate of 3.4% as opposed to the regional average of 1.25%. This increased growth rate will add 1.6 million people to Riverside County, requiring the number of households to double (SCAG 2004).

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) forecasts that over the next 20 years, the City of Lake Elsinore, specifically, will have a population increase of 28,130 resulting in roughly 9,030 new residential units.

The Project would serve an area within Riverside County that is undergoing rapid growth and development. The Valley Substation is a source station that converts 500 kV to 115 kV before transmitting power to distribution stations, including Ivyglen and Dryden. Currently, the Valley Substation services these distribution stations via the 115 kV Valley-Elsinore-Ivyglen Subtransmission Line; should this power line be removed from service either due to maintenance or accident, there is no back up source. The Project would increase reliability to residents within the area. Additionally, the Valley-Elsinore-Ivyglen Subtransmission Line currently operates at or near capacity during peak periods and summer months. Construction of the Project would transfer a portion of the load from the Valley-Elsinore-Ivyglen Subtransmission Line, further increasing reliability and allowing the Applicant to meet the electricity demands of the projected growth in the region.

The Fogarty Substation Site would be located adjacent to the temporary Dryden Substation. The site would be located in the City of Lake Elsinore, an area expected to undergo rapid development. With the anticipated closure of the Dryden Substation, the new commercial and residential growth will be at a distance from power sources that exceeds the practical limit for efficient distribution lines. Construction of the Fogarty Substation would allow the Applicant to reliably meet the projected demand in the City of Lake Elsinore.

The projected growth and current energy supply systems described above demonstrate a need for a new subtransmission line linking the Valley and Ivyglen Substations and the construction of a permanent substation to replace the temporary Dryden Substation. As discussed in the Cumulative Scenario portion of Section B, Description of the Proposed Project, there are several large-scale development projects either recently completed, in the agency review process, or currently under construction. The Project did not cause this growth to occur; rather, the Applicant has proposed its construction in response to the population shift east. The Applicant is responding to growth that is occurring and planned and is increasing the reliability of the current system based on city and county planning documents.

F.2 Significant Irreversible Changes

CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.2(c)) require that an EIR identify significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the Project. Significant irreversible changes include the use of nonrenewable resources and roadway construction and improvements. These changes promote continued use.

Construction of the Project would require fossil fuels, a nonrenewable resource, to power construction vehicles. Additional resources that could be irretrievably lost could include soils (resulting from water and wind erosion in disturbed areas) and water (used for dust control). The Project would also require the construction of 16 miles of access and maintenance roads.

Other significant impacts as identified in Section D, Environmental Analysis, are summarized below. Some of these impacts are irreversible impacts and some are reversible as discussed below.

Air Quality

The Project would result in significant impacts due to emissions of NO_x, PM_{10} and Greenhouse Gases. Most of the emissions would occur during construction and would end during project operations. However, there would still be a significant impact from Greenhouse Gas emissions during project operations. These emissions would not be reversible, and this impact would be both significant and irreversible.

Land Use

The Project would have significant visual impacts from eligible State Scenic Highways SR-74 and I-15 and would therefore conflict with one policy in the Land Use Element of the Riverside County General Plan (LU 13.5). This is not an irreversible change as the subtransmission line could eventually be removed.

Mineral Resources

The Project would result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site as construction and operation would prohibit extraction of the clay deposits beneath and surrounding Segment W-1B. Impacts to mineral resource recovery sites would be significant and unavoidable.

Visual Resources

The Project would have significant visual impacts from eligible State Scenic Highways SR-74 and I-15 and would therefore conflict with one policy in the Land Use Element of the Riverside County General Plan (LU 13.5). This is not an irreversible change as the subtransmission line could eventually be removed.