

5.11 Mineral Resources

This section describes the environmental and regulatory setting and discusses impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Sanger Substation Expansion Project (proposed project) proposed by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E, or the applicant) with respect to mineral resources.

As part of the proposed project, the applicant would mount two dishes, each measuring about 4 feet in diameter, on an existing tower at the Fence Meadow Repeater Station in the Sierra National Forest. The installations would have no impact on mineral resources because they would be installed on existing structures and would not require any ground disturbance. Therefore, the antenna system at the Fence Meadow Repeater Station is not discussed further in this section.

5.11.1 Environmental Setting

Extracted resources in Fresno County include aggregate products (i.e., sand and gravel), oil and coal, metals (i.e., chromite, copper, gold, mercury, and tungsten), and other minerals (i.e., asbestos, high-grade clay, diatomite, granite, gypsum, and limestone). Aggregate and petroleum are considered the county's most significant extractive mineral resources (Fresno County 2000a). There are no active oil wells or gravel mines within the project area. The Fresno County General Plan does not identify any known mineral resources on or adjacent to the proposed project site (Fresno County 2000a).

Under the California State Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975, Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) are defined by the State Geologist and used to classify areas by level of significance as a mineral resource. The following MRZ categories are used to classify land:

- MRZ-1: Areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence.
- MRZ-2: Areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence.
- MRZ-3: Areas containing mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data.
- MRZ-4: Areas where available information is inadequate for assignment to any other MRZ.

The proposed project area is designated as MRZ-3 (Young 1998).

5.11.2 Regulatory Setting

Federal and State

There are no relevant federal or state regulations related to mineral resources.

1 **Local**

2 **Fresno County General Plan**

3 The Fresno County General Plan was created to meet state general plan requirement and “is a
4 comprehensive, long-term framework for the protection of the county’s agriculture, natural, and cultural
5 resources and for development of the county” (Fresno County 2000b). The Open Space and Conservation
6 Element includes goals and policies to guide the management of the production of commodity resources.
7 Section C focuses on mineral resources and states:

- 8
- 9 • **Policy OS-C.2:** *The County shall not permit land uses incompatible with mineral resources*
10 *recovery within areas designated as Mineral Resources Zone 2 (MRZ-2).*
- 11 • **Policy OS-C.10:** *The County shall not permit land uses that threaten the future availability of*
12 *mineral resource or preclude future extraction of those resources.*

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14 **5.11.3 Environmental Impacts and Assessment**

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16 **Applicant Proposed Measures**

17 The applicant has not incorporated applicant proposed measures into the proposed project to specifically
18 minimize or avoid impacts on mineral resources. A list of all project APMs is included in Table 4-5.

19

20 **Impacts on Mineral Resources**

21 Table 5.11-1 includes the significance criteria from Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality
22 Act Guidelines’ mineral resources section to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed project.

23 Table 5.11-1 Mineral Resources Checklist

| Would the project: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

24

25 **a. *Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of***
26 ***value to the region and the residents of the State?***

27

28 **NO IMPACT**

29

30 No mining operations or oil and gas resources are known to be present on or adjacent to the project area.
31 The project area is not in an area classified as MRZ-2, such that no significant mineral deposits are known
32 in the project area. The proposed project would therefore result in no impact under this criterion.

1 *b. Would the project result in the loss or availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery*
2 *site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?*

3
4 *NO IMPACT*

5
6 Locally important mineral resources have not been identified in the project area in the Fresno County
7 General Plan. There would be no impact to locally important mineral resources.

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