

4.14 Recreation

This section describes the environmental and regulatory setting and discusses impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Santa Barbara County Reliability Project (proposed project) with respect to recreation. Impacts from noise and aesthetics are discussed in Section 4.1, “Aesthetics” and Section 4.11, “Noise.”

4.14.1 Environmental Setting

The Los Padres National Forest is generally located north of the proposed project and features mountains, streams, rivers, and beaches, which provides opportunities for many recreation activities. ~~Two-Three~~ Segment 4 structures that would be replaced as part of the proposed project, as well as ~~several~~ access road improvements at four structures, are located in the Los Padres National Forest. Segment 4 traverses an area in the Los Padres National Forest designated for non-motorized, day-use recreation activities, including hiking, biking, horseback riding, rock climbing, and wildlife viewing (USFS 2005).

The City of Carpinteria Planning Commission approved a conditional use permit and coastal development permit for construction of the Franklin Trail on May 6, 2013, ~~and which~~ opened to the public in Fall 2013. The Franklin Trail begins south of Carpinteria High School and continues along the west side of the high school before climbing the western slope of the Santa Ynez Mountains. The multipurpose trail is used by hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians. Approximately 4 miles of the 7.5-mile-long trail is located on an easement shared with and maintained by Southern California Edison (SCE) as an access road (Santa Barbara County 2012) (Figure 4.14-1).

Table 4.14-1 identifies recreational facilities within 1 mile of the proposed project.

4.14.2 Regulatory Setting

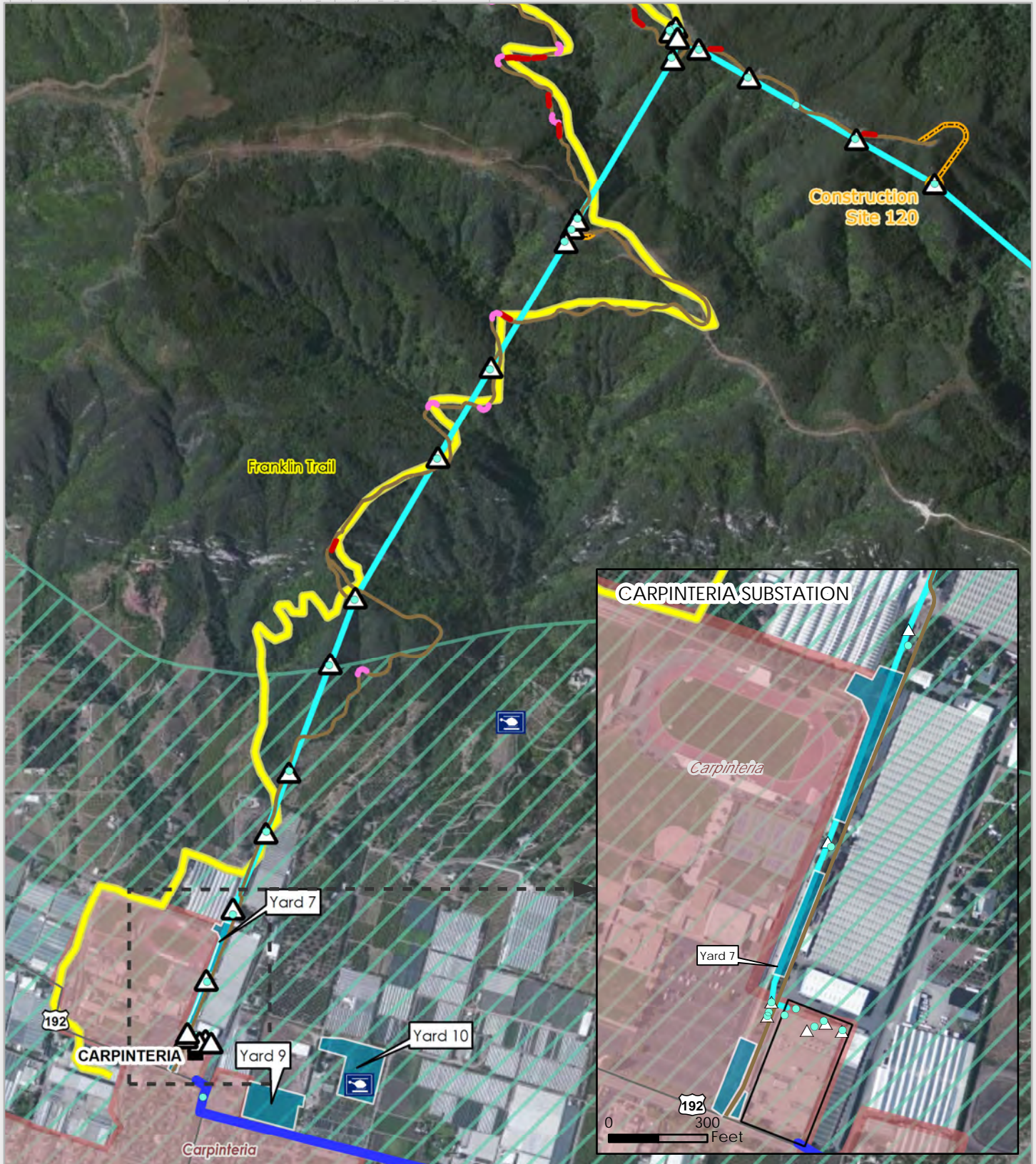
4.14.2.1 Federal

Los Padres National Forest

The Los Padres National Forest Land Management Plan utilizes the recreation opportunity spectrum to identify appropriate types of recreation activities. The forest is divided into five classifications: primitive, semi-primitive non-motorized, semi-primitive motorized, roaded natural, and rural. Segment 4 crosses the semi-primitive motorized designation, which generally allows limited forms motorized recreation and social interaction. In addition, the land use plan divides the national forest into land use zones that identify specific management strategies for each area. Segment 4 crosses the Back Country (Motorized Use Restricted) land use zone, which prohibits off-highway vehicle or motorized use. Motorized use is limited to administrative uses or authorized special uses within this zone. Recreation activities in this area focus on day-use, including hiking, biking, horseback riding, rock climbing, and wildlife viewing (USFS 2005).

4.14.2.2 State

There are no state plans that apply to the analysis of impacts on recreation in the proposed project area.



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|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Existing Electrical Subtransmission Lines | ● Poles to be Removed | ▨ Bio Preserve Areas Coastal Zone |
| ■ Segment 3A | △ Proposed Poles | — Major Roads |
| ■ Segment 4 | ■ Staging Yards | ■ City Limits |
| — Existing SubTrans 66-kV To Be Removed | — Existing Access/Spur Road | |
| ■ Existing Substation Locations | — Proposed Spur Road | |
| ■ Helicopter Landing Zone | — Curve Widening | |
| ● Construction Site | — Road Repair | |
| | — Trails | |

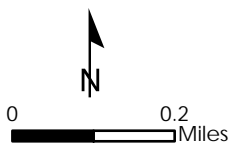


Figure 4.14-1
Franklin Trail Overlap
with SCE Components

Santa Barbara County
 Reliability Project
 Santa Barbara and
 Ventura Counties California

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Table 4.14-1 Recreation Facilities Within 1 Mile of the Proposed Project

Recreation Facility	Closest Component of the Proposed Project	Jurisdiction	Approximate Distance from Closest Component of the Proposed Project
Woodside Linear Park	Santa Clara Substation	City of Ventura	0.9 miles east
Foster Park	Segments 1,2 and Casitas Substation	Ventura County	0.3 miles south
Lake Casitas	Segment 2	Casitas Municipal Water District	< 0.1 mile north
Ojai Valley Trail	Segment 2	Ventura County	Project Overlaps
Lions Park	Segment 3A	Private	< 0.1 mile south
El Carro Park	Segment 3A	City of Carpinteria	< 0.1 mile south
Rincon Beach Park	Segment 3A	City of Carpinteria	1.0 miles south
Monte Vista Park	Segment 3A	City of Carpinteria	0.6 miles south
Carpinteria Bluffs Open Space	Segment 3A	City of Carpinteria	1.0 mile south
Carpinteria State Beach	Segment 3A	City of Carpinteria	0.9 miles south
Carpinteria Salt Marsh Reserve	Segment 3A	City of Carpinteria	0.9 miles southwest
Heath Ranch Park	Segment 3A	City of Carpinteria	0.4 miles west
Memorial Park	Segment 3A	City of Carpinteria	0.6 miles southwest
Salt Marsh Nature Park	Segment 3A	City of Carpinteria	0.9 miles southwest
Los Padres National Forest	Segment 4	US Forest Service	Project Overlaps
Franklin Trail	Segment 4	City of Carpinteria/ County of Santa Barbara	Project Overlaps

Sources: Santa Barbara County 2009, 2011; City of Carpinteria 2003; USFS 2005; City of Ventura 2005; Ventura County 2011

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4.14.2.3 Regional and Local

This section summarizes the goals and policies of each jurisdiction crossed by the proposed project. Policies regarding the preservation of natural features and open space are addressed in Section 4.1, “Aesthetics” and Section 4.10, “Land Use and Planning.” Policies regarding pedestrian and bicycle trails are addressed in Section 4.15, “Traffic and Transportation.”

The Ventura County General Plan (2011), Ojai Valley Area Plan (Ventura County 2008), Santa Barbara County Coastal Land Use Plan (2009), and City of Ventura General Plan (2005) include goals and policies pertaining to recreation; however, none of these goals or policies would apply to the proposed project. These plans have, therefore, been eliminated from this discussion.

Santa Barbara County General Plan

The Santa Barbara County General Plan includes the following policy pertaining to recreation that would apply to the proposed project (Santa Barbara County 2011):

- *Opportunities for hiking and equestrian trails should be preserved, improved, and expanded wherever compatible with surrounding uses.*

City of Carpinteria General Plan and Local Coastal Program

The City of Carpinteria General Plan and Local Coastal Program includes goals and policies pertaining to recreation that would be applicable to the project. The following policy would apply to the proposed project (City of Carpinteria 2003):

***OSC-15b.** Support enhancement of access trails along creekways designated as open space up to the foothills of the Santa Ynez mountain range. This should include exploring trail development for public use along the Edison easement behind Carpinteria High School, ending on the first ridge above the city. This should be linked to the old Franklin trail, leading to the ridge up to East Camino Cielo. Trail restoration and enhancement of easement areas should be pursued to restore the natural beauty along these trails by negotiating with property owners, the school district, and the National Forest, to redesign trails and adopt protective fencing methods.*

4.14.3 Impact Analysis

4.14.3.1 Methodology and Significance Criteria

To assess impacts on recreation, the proposed construction schedule and number of construction workers (Chapter 2, "Project Description") was reviewed to determine if the proposed project would increase population in the propose project area that could lead to increased use of recreation facilities. The significance criteria were defined based on the checklist items in Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. An impact is considered significant if the project would:

- a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.

Additionally, the following criterion was added to assess the impact from disruption of existing recreation activities:

- b) Would the project disrupt access to existing recreation opportunities?

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines also includes the following checklist item. The proposed project would cause a significant impact on recreation if it would:

- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

The proposed project would not involve the construction or expansion of recreational facilities and would not pose a substantial demand on existing recreational facilities. Therefore, this item is not applied as a criterion in the analysis of environmental impacts presented in this section.

1 **4.14.3.2 Applicant Proposed Measures**

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3 There are no Applicant Proposed Measures associated with recreation for the proposed project.

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5 **4.14.3.3 Environmental Impacts**

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7 **Impact RE-1: Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other**
8 **recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur**
9 **or be accelerated.**

10 LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT

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12 The applicant would use a local work force or construction contractor to construct the proposed
13 project. Up to 105 workers would be working throughout the multi-county construction area on
14 any given day. In the event that a non-local contractor is hired for construction of the proposed
15 project, it is possible that some workers could temporarily relocate to the proposed project area for
16 the duration of construction. However, it is unlikely that 105 people would relocate, and even if up
17 to 105 construction workers were to relocate to the project area, a major increase in the use of
18 existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities would not be expected.
19 The number and variety of recreational facilities within the proposed project area, some of which
20 are shown in Figure 4.10-1, would be adequate to accommodate the potential temporary and minor
21 increase in use of local recreational areas and facilities by construction workers, particularly
22 because workers could relocate to anywhere within the greater project vicinity, such as the Santa
23 Barbara area or the cities of Carpinteria, Ojai, or Ventura, among other communities.

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25 Maintenance activities at each substation and segment of the proposed project would not require
26 staff beyond the existing SCE staff that already conducts periodic inspections and maintenance of
27 these facilities. There would be no long-term increase in the use of existing neighborhood and
28 regional parks or other recreational facilities. A less than significant impact would result under this
29 criterion.

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31 **Impact RE-2: Would the project disrupt access to existing recreation opportunities.**

32 LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION

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34 The proposed project would occur within one mile of 16 recreational facilities. The proposed
35 project would have no impact on access to 13 of the 16 recreational facilities throughout
36 construction and restoration. The remaining three facilities are overlapped by the proposed
37 project and include the Los Padres National Forest, Ojai Valley Trail, and Franklin Trail.

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39 | ~~Four~~ Three structures, including structure pads, as well as access roads at four structures would be
40 located on lands administered by the Los Padres National Forest. Construction activities on Forest
41 Service-administered lands would require temporary closures of portions of Los Padres National
42 Forest. The proposed project would be located on Forest Service-administered land parcels that
43 are intermixed with private land or located immediately adjacent to private land. Due to access
44 restrictions from surrounding private land, the proposed project wouldn't be located on Forest
45 Service-administered lands that are widely used for recreation by the public. Therefore, the
46 proposed project would not create a significant impact on access to existing recreation
47 opportunities within the Los Padres National Forest.

1 The Ojai Valley Trail is a multipurpose trail and bike path. The Ojai Valley Trail would be crossed by
2 Segment 2 immediately west of the Casitas Substation. ~~Conductor~~ Telecommunication cable
3 stringing along Segment 2 would require temporary closures of a portion of the Ojai Valley Trail
4 near the Casitas Substation.

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6 The first phase of the Franklin Trail, which is a 2.25 mile long pedestrian and equestrian trail, was
7 recently completed and is open to the public. The northern terminus of the first phase of the trail
8 overlaps with an existing SCE access road along Segment 4 approximately 0.80 miles north of the
9 Carpinteria Substation. Construction along Segment 4 would require temporary closures of the
10 northern portion of the Franklin Trail, which overlaps with the proposed project. Portions of the
11 Franklin Trail that are adjacent to, but not overlapping with, the proposed project would require
12 temporary closures during conductor stringing activities between the Carpinteria Substation and
13 approximately one mile north of the Carpinteria Substation. Figure 4-14.1 shows the pole locations
14 and construction areas near the Franklin Trail.

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16 Unannounced temporary closures or detours along the Ojai Valley Trail and Franklin Trail would
17 impact members of the public that use the trails. MM RE-1 would require the applicant to provide
18 the public with at least one week notice of potential closures. Impacts on access to existing
19 recreation opportunities would be reduced to less than significant with the implementation of
20 mitigation.

21 22 **4.14.4 Mitigation Measures**

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24 **MM RE-1: Notification of Trail Closure.** The applicant shall provide users of the Ojai Valley Trail
25 and the Franklin Trail with at least one week notice of expected trail closures and/or detours. The
26 applicant shall coordinate with the City of Carpinteria Parks and Recreation Department, ~~and the~~
27 County of Ventura Parks Department, the Santa Barbara County Parks Department, and the Land
28 Trust for Santa Barbara County for their respective parks, to determine appropriate locations to
29 post notifications, such as trailhead kiosks, access points, or the departments' websites.
30 Notifications that are posted outside shall be protected from general weather conditions.
31 Notifications shall include the following minimum information:

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- 34 • The date the notification is posted;
 - 35 • General description of activities that are causing the closure;
 - 36 • Description (or map) of areas that will be affected by the closure;
 - 37 • The date (or date range) and time range that temporary closures will occur;
 - 38 • Approximate length of closure (i.e., will it be a series of 30 minute closures, or one 8-hour
39 closure); and
 - 40 • Description (or map) of detour directions, if applicable.

41 The applicant shall provide a copy of the trail closure notification to the City of Carpinteria Parks
42 and Recreation Department and the County of Ventura Parks Department, for their respective
43 parks, and the CPUC on the same day that the notice is posted. The applicant shall regularly confirm
44 that notifications remain posted and in good condition throughout the affected timeline.