

## 4.19 Utilities and Service Systems

### 4.19.1 Overview

This section describes the setting and potential impacts on utilities and service systems that could occur from the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives. Impacts to utilities and service systems under CEQA are generally related to increased demand for, or use of, utilities and service systems (e.g., water, wastewater, solid waste disposal, etc.), such as to require construction of new or expanded facilities. The CEQA Guidelines also have significance criteria for utilities and service systems related to non-compliance with existing solid waste laws and regulations.

### 4.19.2 Regulatory Setting

#### Federal Laws, Regulations and Policies

No federal laws, regulations, or policies are applicable to utilities and service systems in relation to the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives.

#### State Laws, Regulations and Policies

##### ***California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989***

The California Integrated Waste Management Act (CIWMA) of 1989 (PRC Division 30), enacted through AB 939 and modified by subsequent legislation, required all California cities and counties to implement programs to reduce, recycle, and compost at least 50 percent of wastes by 2000 (PRC Section 41780). A jurisdiction's diversion rate is the percentage of its total waste that a jurisdiction diverts from disposal through reduction, reuse, and recycling programs. The state, acting through the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), determines compliance with this mandate. Per capita disposal rates are used to determine if a jurisdiction's efforts are meeting the intent of the act.

In 2011, the Legislature implemented a new approach to the management of solid waste. California's Commercial Recycling Bill (AB 341) went into effect on July 1, 2012, and set a recycling goal of 75 percent diversion by 2020. The bill is intended to: (1) reduce GHG emissions by diverting recyclable materials, and (2) expand the opportunity for increased economic activity and green industry job creation. AB 341 is a statewide policy goal rather than a city or county jurisdictional mandate.

In recent years, San Luis Obispo County has not been meeting its target disposal rates under the CIWMA. In 2015, the latest year of record, San Luis Obispo County's annual per capita disposal rate per resident was 5.1, compared to its target of 7.4 (California Department of Resources Recovery and Recycling [CalRecycle] 2016). Its annual per capita disposal rate per employee was 12.5 in 2015, compared to its target rate of 18.7 (CalRecycle 2016).

***California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 1541: Excavations***

Section 1541 of the CCR requires excavators to determine the approximate locations of subsurface installations, such as sewer, telephone, fuel, electric, and water lines, before opening an excavation, and avoid impacts to subsurface installations.

**4.19.3 Environmental Setting****Wastewater Collection and Treatment Services**

The Proposed Project would be located in areas of unincorporated San Luis Obispo County (North County Planning Area) as well as within the city of Paso Robles. In general, the rural portion of the County's North County Planning Area (outside of urban areas such as the communities of San Miguel and Shandon) relies on individual septic systems for sewage disposal. The majority of the Proposed Project facilities (e.g., Estrella Substation and portions of the 70 kV power line), as well as the reasonably foreseeable distribution components and the alternatives would be located in this rural area.

Wastewater collection and treatment services in Paso Robles city limits are managed by the City of Paso Robles (City) Department of Public Works, Wastewater Division. The Wastewater Division owns and operates 136 miles of sewers and 14 lift stations to collect wastewater from all of Paso Robles and an area in east Templeton. The collection system provides service to approximately 31,000 customers within the city limits and also conveys an average of 6 million gallons per month from the Templeton Community Services District for treatment at the Paso Robles Wastewater Treatment Plant (PRWWTP). The PRWWTP has a capacity of 4.9 million gallons per day (mgd) and receives an average daily flow of approximately 2.9 mgd from the collection system (City of Paso Robles 2020a).

In 2019, the City completed construction of its tertiary treatment project which included the addition of flow equalization, cloth media filtration, and ultraviolet (UV) light disinfection facilities at PRWWTP. The PRWWTP was reclassified as a Class IV tertiary treatment wastewater treatment facility and operates under Order No. R3-2011-0002 issued by the Central Coast RWQCB (City of Paso Robles 2020b). In the near future, recycled water will be delivered to the east side of Paso Robles, where it will be used to irrigate golf courses, parks, and vineyards.

**Water Supply**

The Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and the majority of the alternatives overlie the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin, Paso Robles Area Subbasin. As described in Section 4.10, "Hydrology and Water Quality," the Paso Robles Area Subbasin has a surface area of 597,000 acres and supplies water for 29 percent of the county's population and an estimated 40 percent of the agricultural production of the county. Refer to Section 4.10 for discussion of the physical characteristics of the Paso Robles Area Subbasin, its estimated perennial yield, and water use within the subbasin area. Alternative SE-1A and illustrative FTM Site 6 lie within the Atascadero Subbasin, while Alternative SE-PLR-2 lies within both the Atascadero Subbasin and the Paso Robles Area Subbasin. Areas of the unincorporated county in the area of the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives generally rely on groundwater wells for water supply.

The City of Paso Robles provides municipal water supply service to customers within its jurisdiction. The City has historically relied on underflow from the Salinas River and groundwater pumped from the Paso Robles Area Subbasin for its municipal water supply. The City has eight river wells and currently pumps Salinas River water pursuant to appropriative surface water rights and a permit issued by the SWRCB. The City also pumps groundwater from 13 deep basin wells in the Paso Robles Area Subbasin. The City's supply has been supplemented in recent years with water from Lake Nacimiento. The City holds an entitlement with the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District for delivery of 6,488 afy of water from Lake Nacimiento. Water from Lake Nacimiento is conveyed to the City of Paso Robles through a pipeline system created by the Nacimiento Water Project, which was completed in 2010. The Nacimiento Water Project created approximately 45 miles of pipeline to deliver untreated water from Lake Nacimiento to Paso Robles and other communities in San Luis Obispo County (City of Paso Robles 2016).

The City treats raw water obtained from Lake Nacimiento through its Nacimiento Surface Water Treatment Plant, which has a capacity of 2.4 mgd. Operational since 2016, the City anticipates operating the Nacimiento Surface Water Treatment Plan approximately 5 to 9 months out of the year to serve peak summer demands, yielding approximately 1,120 afy to 2,017 afy; however, treatment plant operation could be increased to provide up to 2,688 afy (City of Paso Robles 2016). In 2015, the City produced 3,021 acre-feet of water from Salinas River wells, 2,045 acre-feet of water from groundwater wells, and 87 acre-feet of water from the Nacimiento Surface Water Treatment Plant (City of Paso Robles 2016).

As noted above, the City completed construction of tertiary treatment facilities at its PRWWTP to provide additional recycled water. The City is also in the process of planning an additional "purple line" distribution system to deliver tertiary treated water to agricultural areas north and east of the city limits. Consistent with the 2014 City of Paso Robles Recycled Water Master Plan, the proposed recycled water distribution system will deliver tertiary treated water from the PRWWTP to an elevated storage reservoir in the vicinity of Barney Schwartz Park for delivery to agricultural areas north and east of the city. In addition, the City is also assessing the feasibility of delivering recycled water to strategic locations along the Huer Huero Creek corridor for direct or passive groundwater recharge during periods of low demand for recycled irrigation water (i.e., the rainy season). The City's goal is to deliver at least 400 afy of recycled water to in-city customers by 2019, with usage gradually increasing, such that at least 1,750 acre-feet of recycled water per year is delivered to a combination of in-city customers and agricultural users outside of city limits by 2024 (City of Paso Robles 2016).

## **Stormwater Drainage**

There is no formal stormwater drainage infrastructure in rural, unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County, including the majority of the areas where the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives are located. The County currently uses the natural hydrology of the watershed to convey stormwater runoff to receiving waters. In areas lacking natural pathways for stormwater runoff, the County uses retention/detention basins to slow runoff and allow for infiltration. The County operates under the Phase II Municipal Storm Water Program under an MS4 General Permit, which requires implementation of a Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) to reduce and eliminate pollutants in stormwater and non-stormwater discharges in portions of the unincorporated county areas as well as the

Paso Robles urban fringe. Portions of the Proposed Project power line components are located within the MS4 and SWMP management areas (County of San Luis Obispo 2010).

Stormwater and drainage facilities within the City of Paso Robles are owned and maintained by the City's Department of Public Works. The City is also enrolled in the Phase II Municipal Storm Water Program under the City's MS4 General Permit, and implements an associated SWMP (City of Paso Robles 2020c). Stormwater within the City is discharged into the Salinas River.

## **Solid Waste Disposal**

Solid waste collection and disposal services in the area of the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives are provided by a variety of companies, including: Paso Robles Country Disposal, Paso Robles Roll-Off, Paso Robles Waste Disposal Company, San Miguel Garbage Company, San Miguel Roll-Off, and Mid-State Solid Waste and Recycling. Two primary solid waste disposal sites exist in the area: the Paso Robles Landfill, owned by the City of Paso Robles, and the Chicago Grade Landfill in Templeton, described below. The Camp Roberts Landfill is also described below, as this is the nearest landfill that accepts contaminated (petroleum) soils. The nearest Class I hazardous waste landfill to the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives is the Kettleman Hills Facility.

- The Paso Robles Landfill is located just north of SR 46 approximately 8.5 miles east of the city of Paso Robles. The Paso Robles Landfill is a Class III facility for solid waste, which has a total permitted maximum capacity of 6,495,000 cubic yards and a permitted maximum throughput capacity of 450 tons per day. The Paso Robles Landfill accepts drilling muds, treated wood waste, pesticide containers, and other hazardous waste, although it does not accept soils with petroleum (Central Coast RWQCB 2014). As of October 2012, the landfill had 5,190,000 cubic yards (or 80 percent) of permitted capacity remaining. The landfill is scheduled to close around 2051 (CalRecycle 2016).
- The Chicago Grade Landfill is located at 2290 Homestead Road in Templeton. The Chicago Grade Landfill is a Class III facility that receives solid wastes, including drilling muds, treated wood waste, pesticide containers, and other forms of hazardous materials (with the exception of soils with petroleum) (Central Coast RWQCB 2014), from Atascadero, Templeton, Santa Margarita, and the unincorporated area of San Luis Obispo County. The total permitted maximum capacity of the landfill is 8,950,220 cubic yards. In 2007, the landfill had 8,329,699 cubic yards (or 93 percent) of permitted capacity remaining. The current permitted maximum throughput capacity is 500 tons per day. The landfill is scheduled to close around 2042 (CalRecycle 2016).
- The Camp Roberts Landfill is located on Perimeter Road at Camp Roberts and is owned and operated by the California Army National Guard. This landfill is a Class III facility that receives solid waste, including drilling muds, treated wood waste, soils contaminated with petroleum, and pesticide containers (Central Coast RWQCB 2014). The Camp Roberts Landfill has a maximum permitted capacity of 1,004,579 cubic yards and a maximum permitted throughput of 618 tons per day (CalRecycle 2020). As of 2015, the Camp Roberts Landfill had 450,156 cubic yards (45 percent) of its permitted capacity remaining. The landfill is scheduled to close around 2045 (CalRecycle 2020).

- The Kettleman Hills Facility is located at 35251 Old Skyline Road in Kettleman City, which is in Kings County approximately 40 miles east-northeast of Paso Robles. The Kettleman Hills Facility is a 1,600-acre hazardous waste treatment, storage and disposal facility with 499 acres currently available and permitted for waste management activities (Waste Management 2020). The Kettleman Hills Facility is permitted to accept most types of hazardous wastes as defined by the USEPA and State of California (including PCBs) (Waste Management 2020).

## Electricity and Natural Gas

PG&E provides electrical power to San Luis Obispo County, including the city of Paso Robles. PG&E generates electricity from the following sources: (1) PG&E-owned generators; (2) non-PG&E-owned generators within California; and (3) out-of-state generators. About half of the electricity PG&E delivers is a clean energy power mix of renewable solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, and small-scale hydroelectric; large-scale hydroelectric; natural gas; and other clean energy sources. A network of high-voltage transmission lines carries electricity generated from power plants to substations, and the substations then use transformers to decrease the voltage of electricity to connect with the distribution system (NEET West and PG&E 2017). Both PG&E and Southern California Gas provide natural gas within San Luis Obispo County.

## Communications

AT&T provides local and long-distance telephone service within San Luis Obispo County and Paso Robles. A variety of wireless companies, including AT&T, Comcast, Verizon, Sprint, and T-Mobile, provide wireless phone service in the county. Cable television and internet services are provided by Dish Network, DirecTV, Charter Communications, and other providers (NEET West and PG&E 2017).

### 4.19.4 Impact Analysis

#### Methodology

Potential impacts on utilities and service systems were evaluated qualitatively by considering aspects of the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, and alternatives in light of the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G significance criteria (see below) and the existing regulatory and environmental settings.

#### Criteria for Determining Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the Proposed Project, reasonably foreseeable distribution components, or alternatives would result in a significant impact on utilities and service systems if they would:

- A. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects;

- B. Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years;
- C. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments;
- D. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals;  
or
- E. Fail to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

## Environmental Impacts

### *Proposed Project*

**Impact UTL-1: Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects – *Less than Significant***

### Construction

As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, construction of the proposed Estrella Substation and 70 kV power line would require approximately 10.3 million gallons (approximately 32 acre-feet) of water during the 18-month construction period. The amount of water needed on a daily basis would vary by construction phase and activity, but it is estimated that construction of the substation would require approximately 68,600 gallons per day on average. About 25 percent of the total water used would be for construction (concrete mixing), with the remaining 75 percent used for dust control during the construction period. No dewatering is anticipated at the substation location. Water would be obtained from one or more of the following sources: a private well located adjacent to the Estrella Substation site, delivery by water trucks, Lake Nacimiento, PRWWTP, and/or through the City's existing fire hydrants and connections at Barney Schwartz Park.

Regardless of the source(s) utilized, the construction water demand of the Proposed Project would be well within the existing capacities of water treatment and conveyance facilities in the area. The 32 acre-feet needed for Proposed Project construction would represent just 1.2 percent of the City's Nacimiento Water Treatment Plant capacity of 2,688 afy; or a smaller percentage of the City's surface water production capabilities. As a result, construction of the Proposed Project would not require the construction of any new or expanded water facilities. Similarly, construction of the Proposed Project components would generate minimal wastewater (primarily from construction workers using portable restrooms) and would not require construction of any new or expanded wastewater collection or treatment facilities. Construction power would be supplied by tapping into existing distribution lines adjacent to the Estrella Substation site and small generators may also be used.

Prior to any excavations, the Proposed Project would comply with CCR Section 1541, which requires excavators to determine the approximate locations of, and avoid impacts to, subsurface installations (e.g., sewer, telecommunications, fuel, electric, sewer and water lines). No subsurface utility installations are anticipated beneath the substation site, and given that the excavations for 70 kV pole installations would occur primarily outside of the roadbed, it is unlikely for power line construction activities to encounter buried existing utility lines. Nevertheless, compliance with CCR Section 11541 would minimize potential impacts on any existing utilities that may be temporarily impacted or relocated. Overall, this impact would be **less than significant**.

#### **Operation**

The Proposed Project would not require any substantial water supply or wastewater service during operation. The Proposed Project would be limited to the remotely-operated electric transmission and distribution facilities and no water-consuming uses or activities would be present on site. Following construction of the Estrella Substation, short-term irrigation water would be used to support revegetation efforts; however, this use would be temporary and would not require any new or expanded water or wastewater treatment facilities. The Proposed Project itself would be comprised of new electric power facilities, the construction of which is evaluated throughout this DEIR. The proposed Estrella Substation also would include on-site stormwater management features (e.g., concrete skimmer and weir device), but the substation would not be connected to any municipal stormwater system that may require expansion. Therefore, the impacts of the Proposed Project during operation would be **less than significant**.

**Impact UTL-2: Have insufficient water supplies to supply the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years – *Less than Significant***

#### **Construction**

As described in Impact UTL-1 above, the total Proposed Project construction water demand of 32 acre-feet would not exceed the capacities or entitlements of existing water suppliers in the area. A number of different water sources are potentially available to the Applicants and construction water demands would be modest compared to the various water sources and entitlements held by the City of Paso Robles, as well as the groundwater supply available (see Section 4.19.3). If construction of the Proposed Project components were to occur in a dry or multiple dry years, this could constrain the available supplies, but given that the City of Paso Robles has access to the supplemental supply at Lake Nacimiento and the drought-proof supply of recycled water produced at the PRWWTP, it is unlikely that construction water supplies would not be available. Regardless, since the construction water demands would be short-term and temporary, the City would not need to obtain additional entitlements to serve a new long-term water demand. As a result, this impact would be **less than significant**.

#### **Operation**

The Proposed Project would have virtually no water demand during operation and maintenance. As noted above, the Proposed Project components would operate remotely and no staff would be on site. Generally, none of the electrical equipment or processes would consume water and only small amounts of water may be used during infrequent maintenance activities. As such,

existing water supplies would be sufficient to supply the Proposed Project during operation. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

**Impact UTL-3: Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments – *Less than Significant***

As discussed under Impact UTL-1 above, the Proposed Project would generate minimal wastewater during the construction phase. This wastewater would primarily be from construction workers using portable restrooms during the construction period. Given that there would be roughly 12 to 15 workers on site at the substation on a typical workday, and 10 to 15 workers working on the power line, the amount of wastewater that would be generated would be inconsequential to the PRWWTP's operations and capacity (should the wastewater be taken to the PRWWTP by the portable restroom servicing company). As described in Section 4.19.3, the PRWWTP has a capacity of 4.9 mgd, but only receives an average daily flow of approximately 2.9 mgd from the collection system; therefore, the PRWWTP has ample available capacity to serve additional needs.

During operation, the Proposed Project would generate minimal wastewater. As discussed above, the Proposed Project components would operate remotely and no staff would be permanently located on site. The Proposed Project components also would not be connected to the municipal wastewater collection and treatment system. Wastewater generated during Proposed Project operation would be limited to inspection and maintenance staff using the restroom during infrequent inspection activities. As such, the Proposed Project would not result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that it has inadequate capacity to serve the Proposed Project's demands. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

**Impact UTL-4: Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals – *Less than Significant***

As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, earthwork activities for construction of the Estrella Substation would result in up to 50,000 cubic yards (cy) of cut and fill material, which would be balanced on site to the maximum extent possible. Some of this material that cannot be balanced on site may need to be disposed of at regional landfills. Vegetation clearing for construction of the Proposed Project components also would generate vegetative debris that would require disposal at an approved organics processing facility. Drilling mud from any horizontal directional drilling during Proposed Project construction that cannot be reused would be disposed of in a landfill as well. Wood poles and one LST also may require disposal.

Following construction, during the operation phase, the Proposed Project would generate minimal solid waste. As noted above, the Proposed Project components would all be operated remotely and no staff would be permanently located on site (thus no routine domestic waste would be generated). Generally, the electrical equipment and processes at the substation would not generate solid waste, and neither would the 70 kV power line, other than periodic replacement of worn-out or deficient parts.

Most of the solid waste generated during construction and operation of the Proposed Project (e.g., drilling mud, treated wood poles, vegetative debris, and excess soil) would be disposable at either the Chicago Grade Landfill or Paso Robles Landfill. Both of these landfills have ample available capacity to accept solid waste, as the Chicago Grade Landfill has approximately 8,329,699 cubic yards (93 percent) of permitted capacity remaining and is expected to remain in operation until the year 2042, while the Paso Robles Landfill has approximately 5,190,000 cubic yards (80 percent) of permitted capacity remaining and is expected to remain in operation until the year 2051. If Proposed Project construction were to encounter soils contaminated with petroleum or other hazardous materials, this would require disposal in either the Camp Roberts Landfill or Kettleman Hills Facility, both of which have adequate capacity. These landfills would be able to accommodate the Proposed Project's solid waste disposal needs and the existing infrastructure capacity would not be exceeded. As a result, this impact would be **less than significant**.

**Impact UTL-5: Failure to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste – *Less than Significant***

Existing state laws related to solid waste include the CIWMA (see Section 4.19.3), which sets per capita disposal targets to encourage recycling/landfill diversion. The County of San Luis Obispo's Ordinance No. 2008-3 (see Appendix A) requires that certain types of facilities and land uses recycle recyclable materials, but this ordinance would not apply to utility infrastructure. While San Luis Obispo County is currently not meeting its per capita disposal rate targets under CIWMA, the Proposed Project's solid waste generation would be almost entirely construction-related and short-term. The Applicants would recycle waste materials from the Proposed Project to the extent feasible, but the disposal of construction wastes at the area landfills would not substantially affect the County's CIWMA disposal rates. Given that the Proposed Project would generate minimal solid waste material during operation, it would not violate existing laws and regulations related to solid waste over the long-term. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

***Reasonably Foreseeable Distribution Components and Ultimate Substation Buildout***

Given that the reasonably foreseeable distribution components would be installed primarily along existing rural roads and highways, they would be unlikely to encounter buried existing utilities during construction. The distribution poles would require relatively minimal excavation, as they would be direct-bury poles, and the additional 21/12 kV pad-mounted transformers also would require minimal excavation. Regardless, the Applicants would be required to comply with CCR Section 1541, which requires excavators to determine the approximate locations of subsurface installations prior to excavating and avoid impacts to subsurface installations, thereby reducing potential impacts to buried utilities that may occur within the disturbance area. No known above-ground utilities exist within the footprint of the reasonably foreseeable distribution components that would require relocation.

The reasonably foreseeable distribution components would require relatively minimal water use during construction, which could be accommodated by existing sources (see discussion under Impact UTL-1). Wastewater service demand would be negligible during construction, as it would be limited primarily to wastewater generated by construction workers using the restroom. Once constructed, the reasonably foreseeable distribution components would not require any water

or wastewater service. Therefore, the reasonably foreseeable distribution components would not require construction of new or expanded water or wastewater facilities, and water supplies and wastewater treatment capacity would be more than adequate. The reasonably foreseeable distribution components would not create substantial new impervious surfaces and would not be connected to any stormwater drainage system. The reasonably foreseeable distribution components also would not require construction of any new or expanded natural gas or telecommunications facilities (the reasonably foreseeable distribution components themselves are new electric power utilities, whose environmental impacts are evaluated throughout this DEIR).

Similarly, ultimate buildout of the Estrella Substation would be anticipated to require minimal water or wastewater service. Given that the ultimate buildout activities would take place primarily within or immediately adjacent to the already-constructed Estrella Substation, they would have limited potential to encounter buried utilities. Ultimate buildout of the substation would not create substantial new impervious surface areas, as the additional equipment would be added largely within the Estrella Substation footprint. As discussed in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, the routes of any additional distribution feeders or 70 kV power lines that could be established through the ultimate substation buildout are not known; thus, the effects of constructing and operating these facilities are speculative. Therefore, overall, impacts under significance criteria A, B, and C would be **less than significant**.

Construction of the reasonably foreseeable distribution components and ultimate buildout of Estrella Substation would generate small amounts of solid waste, including vegetation that may be cleared from pole work areas and soil unsuitable for pole installation areas. During operation, the reasonably foreseeable distribution components and ultimate substation buildout could generate small amounts of solid waste due to the need to periodically replace parts and clear vegetation for maintenance of clearances for fire safety. These amounts of solid waste would be less than what would be generated by the Proposed Project and existing landfills in the area have adequate remaining capacity to accommodate these needs (see discussion under Impact UTL-4). Due to the small and largely temporary volume of solid waste that may be generated, some of which may be composted or recycled, the reasonably foreseeable distribution components and ultimate substation buildout would not affect the County's ability to meet its CIWMA disposal rate targets, or otherwise fail to comply with statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria D and E would be **less than significant**.

## ***Alternatives***

### **No Project Alternative**

Under the No Project Alternative, no new substation or 70 kV power line would be constructed. Therefore, there would be no potential for direct impacts to buried existing utilities during construction, and there would be no demand for water, wastewater, or solid waste disposal service during construction or operation. Therefore, **no impact** would occur.

### **Alternative SS-1: Bonel Ranch Substation Site**

The Alternative SS-1 site is located in a rural area of San Luis Obispo County on an agricultural field, where it would be unlikely to encounter buried utilities during construction. Nevertheless,

the Applicants would be required to comply with CCR Section 1541, which requires excavators to determine the approximate locations of subsurface installations prior to excavating, and avoid impacts to subsurface installations, thereby reducing potential impacts to buried utilities that may occur within the disturbance area. No known above-ground utilities exist within the footprint of Alternative SS-1 that would require relocation.

The substation at the Alternative SS-1 site would require roughly the same amount of water as the proposed Estrella Substation (8.3 million gallons) during construction, which could be accommodated by existing sources (see discussion under Impact UTL-1). Wastewater service demand would be minimal during construction, as it would be limited primarily to wastewater generated by construction workers using the restroom. Once constructed, the substation would not require any water or wastewater service. Therefore, it would not require construction of new or expanded water or wastewater facilities, and water supplies and wastewater treatment capacity would be more than adequate. The substation under Alternative SS-1 would create the same amount of new impervious surface (2 acres) as the Estrella Substation and would include the same stormwater management features (i.e., weir and skimmer device). No existing stormwater drainage system serves this area and stormwater from the substation would be discharged to adjacent pervious ground surfaces. While the substation itself would constitute new electric power utility infrastructure, and would include telecommunication infrastructure, it would not require or result in construction of any additional utility infrastructure (e.g., natural gas). Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, B, and C would be **less than significant**.

Construction of the substation under Alternative SS-1 would generate similar or slightly greater quantities of solid waste (due to the potential for unsuitable soils to be present near the Estrella River) compared to the proposed Estrella Substation. During operation, the substation would generate minimal amounts of solid waste related to routine maintenance activities. As discussed in Impact UTL-4, existing landfills in the area have adequate capacity; therefore, they would be able to serve the solid waste disposal needs of Alternative SS-1. Due to the largely temporary solid waste disposal needs of Alternative SS-1 (primarily construction-related), and considering that some of the waste may be composted or recycled, the substation under Alternative SS-1 would not affect the County's ability to meet its CIWMA disposal rate targets, or otherwise fail to comply with statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria D and E would be **less than significant**.

#### **Alternative PLR-1A: Estrella Route to Estrella Substation**

The Alternative PLR-1A alignment would pass through primarily rural areas of San Luis Obispo County (e.g., agricultural areas north of Paso Robles Municipal Airport), where it would be unlikely to encounter buried utilities during construction. Nevertheless, the Applicants would be required to comply with CCR Section 1541, which requires excavators to determine the approximate locations of subsurface installations prior to excavating, and avoid impacts to subsurface installations, thereby reducing potential impacts to buried utilities that may occur within the disturbance area. No known above-ground utilities exist within the footprint of Alternative PLR-1A that would require relocation.

Due its longer length (approximately 6.5 miles longer), construction of the power line under Alternative PLR-1A would require slightly more water (2.8 million gallons) than the Proposed Project's 70 kV power line (2 million gallons). As discussed in Impact UTL-1, this water use could be accommodated by existing sources. Wastewater service demand would be minimal during

construction, as it would be limited primarily to wastewater generated by construction workers using the restroom. Once constructed, the power line under Alternative PLR-1A would not require any water or wastewater service. Therefore, it would not require construction of new or expanded water or wastewater facilities, and water supplies and wastewater treatment capacity would be more than adequate. The power line under PLR-1A would create minimal amounts of new impervious surface associated with new pole foundations and would not require stormwater collection service or otherwise result in the need to construct new or expanded stormwater facilities. The new power line itself would constitute new electric power utility infrastructure (whose environmental effects are evaluated throughout this DEIR), but it would not require or result in construction of any additional utility infrastructure (e.g., natural gas). Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, B, and C would be **less than significant**.

Construction of the power line under Alternative PLR-1A would likely generate greater quantities of solid waste (due to the additional length of the power line and associated increased excavation for pole foundations and vegetation clearing for pole work areas) compared to the Proposed Project's 70 kV power line. During operation, the power line would generate minimal amounts of solid waste related to routine maintenance activities. As discussed in Impact UTL-4, existing landfills in the area have adequate capacity; therefore, these landfills would be able to serve the solid waste disposal needs of Alternative PLR-1A. Due to the largely temporary solid waste disposal needs of Alternative PLR-1A (primarily construction-related), and considering that some of the waste may be composted or recycled, the power line under Alternative PLR-1A would not affect the County's ability to meet its CIWMA disposal rate targets, or otherwise fail to comply with statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria D and E would be **less than significant**.

#### **Alternative PLR-1C: Estrella Route to Bonel Ranch, Option 1**

Like Alternative PLR-1A, the Alternative PLR-1C alignment would pass through primarily rural areas of San Luis Obispo County (e.g., agricultural areas north of Paso Robles Municipal Airport), where it would be unlikely to encounter buried utilities during construction. Nevertheless, the Applicants would be required to comply with CCR Section 1541, which requires excavators to determine the approximate locations of subsurface installations prior to excavating, and avoid impacts to subsurface installations, thereby reducing potential impacts to buried utilities that may occur within the disturbance area. No known above-ground utilities exist within the footprint of Alternative PLR-1C that would require relocation.

Due its longer length (approximately 6 miles longer), construction of the power line under Alternative PLR-1C would require slightly more water (2.7 million gallons) than the Proposed Project's 70 kV power line (2 million gallons). As discussed in Impact UTL-1, this water use could be accommodated by existing sources. Wastewater service demand would be minimal during construction, as it would be limited primarily to wastewater generated by construction workers using the restroom. Once constructed, the power line under Alternative PLR-1C would not require any water or wastewater service. Therefore, it would not require construction of new or expanded water or wastewater facilities, and water supplies and wastewater treatment capacity would be more than adequate. The power line under PLR-1C would create minimal amounts of new impervious surface associated with new pole foundations and would not require stormwater collection service or otherwise result in the need to construct new or expanded stormwater facilities. The new power line itself would constitute new electric power utility infrastructure (whose environmental effects are evaluated throughout this DEIR), but it would

not require or result in construction of any additional utility infrastructure (e.g., natural gas). Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, B, and C would be **less than significant**.

Construction of the power line under Alternative PLR-1C would likely generate greater quantities of solid waste (due to the additional length of the power line and associated increased excavation for pole foundations and vegetation clearing for pole work areas) compared to the Proposed Project's 70 kV power line. During operation, the power line would generate minimal amounts of solid waste related to routine maintenance activities. As discussed in Impact UTL-4, existing landfills in the area have adequate capacity; therefore, these landfills would be able to serve the solid waste disposal needs of Alternative PLR-1C. Due to the largely temporary solid waste disposal needs of Alternative PLR-1C (primarily construction-related), and considering that some of the waste may be composted or recycled, the power line under Alternative PLR-1C would not affect the County's ability to meet its CIWMA disposal rate targets, or otherwise fail to comply with statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria D and E would be **less than significant**.

### **Alternatives PLR-3: Strategic Undergrounding (Both Options)**

The 1.2-mile undergrounding segment under Alternative PLR-3 would be installed within existing roads and adjacent areas within the Golden Hill Industrial Park area of Paso Robles. Both undergrounding options (Option 1 and 2) would involve trenching within Germaine Way and Golden Hill Road, but Option 1 would also follow Wisteria Lane, while Option 2 would follow the Proposed Project 70 kV alignment. As such, both options would have potential to encounter buried utilities (e.g., sewer, water, natural gas, etc.) within these existing roadways, although Option 1 would have increased potential. Nevertheless, PG&E's preliminary design for Alternative PLR-3, which considered potential buried utilities along the alignments, indicated that it is feasible and that existing utilities should be able to be avoided (or possibly relocated as part of the alternative). As discussed in previous impact discussions, the Applicants would be required to comply with CCR Section 1541, which requires excavators to determine the approximate locations of subsurface installations prior to excavating, and avoid impacts to subsurface installations, thereby reducing potential impacts to buried utilities that may occur within the disturbance area. It is possible that existing stormwater drainage facilities adjacent to Golden Hill Road (see description in Section 4.10, "Hydrology and Water Quality") could be temporarily impacted during construction of Alternative PLR-3, but these utilities would be restored following construction.

Construction of Alternative PLR-3 would require more water (1,702,600 gallons) during construction than the same segment of the Proposed Project's 70 kV power line (2,000,000 gallons for whole alignment). As discussed in Impact UTL-1, however, this amount of water use could be accommodated by existing sources. Wastewater service demand would be minimal during construction, as it would be limited primarily to wastewater generated by construction workers using the restroom. Once constructed, the power line under Alternative PLR-3 would not require any water or wastewater service. Therefore, it would not require construction of new or expanded water or wastewater facilities, and water supplies and wastewater treatment capacity would be more than adequate. The power line under Alternative PLR-3 would be largely underground (except for the transition stations) and thus would not generate stormwater. The transition stations at either end of the Alternative PLR-3 alignment would create approximately 1 acre of total new impervious surface and would not be connected to the municipal stormwater system. The new power line itself would constitute new electric power

utility infrastructure (whose environmental effects are evaluated throughout this DEIR), but it would not require or result in construction of any additional utility infrastructure (e.g., natural gas). Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, B, and C would be **less than significant**.

Construction of the power line under Alternative PLR-3 would likely generate greater quantities of solid waste (due to the additional excavation/trenching activities) compared to the same segment of the Proposed Project's 70 kV power line. During operation, the power line would generate minimal amounts of solid waste related to routine maintenance activities. As discussed in Impact UTL-4, existing landfills in the area have adequate capacity; therefore, these landfills would be able to serve the solid waste disposal needs of Alternative PLR-3. Due to the largely temporary solid waste disposal needs of Alternative PLR-3 (primarily construction-related), and considering that some of the waste may be composted or recycled, the power line under Alternative PLR-3 would not affect the County's ability to meet its CIWMA disposal rate targets, or otherwise fail to comply with statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria D and E would be **less than significant**.

#### **Alternative SE-1A: Templeton Substation Expansion – 230/70 kV Substation**

The Alternative SE-1A site is located in a rural area of San Luis Obispo County on an agricultural field, where it would be unlikely to encounter buried utilities during construction. Nevertheless, the Applicants would be required to comply with CCR Section 1541, which requires excavators to determine the approximate locations of subsurface installations prior to excavating, and avoid impacts to subsurface installations, thereby reducing potential impacts to buried utilities that may occur within the disturbance area. No known above-ground utilities exist within the footprint of Alternative SE-1A that would require relocation.

Construction of the substation at the Alternative SE-1A site would require roughly the same amount of water as the proposed Estrella Substation (8.3 million gallons), which could be accommodated by existing sources (see discussion under Impact UTL-1). Wastewater service demand would be minimal during construction, as it would be limited primarily to wastewater generated by construction workers using the restroom. Once constructed, the substation would not require any water or wastewater service. Therefore, it would not require construction of new or expanded water or wastewater facilities, and water supplies and wastewater treatment capacity would be more than adequate. The substation under Alternative SE-1A would create the same amount of new impervious surface (2 acres) as the Estrella Substation and would include the same stormwater management features (i.e., weir and skimmer device). Stormwater from the substation would be discharged to adjacent pervious ground surfaces or potentially to a roadside ditch that is apparent along El Pomar Drive. While the substation itself would constitute new electric power utility infrastructure, and would include telecommunication infrastructure, it would not require or result in construction of any additional utility infrastructure (e.g., natural gas). Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, B, and C would be **less than significant**.

Construction of the substation under Alternative SE-1A would likely generate similar quantities of solid waste as the proposed Estrella Substation (given that it would involve similar excavation and vegetation clearing activities). During operation, the substation would generate minimal amounts of solid waste related to routine maintenance activities. As discussed in Impact UTL-4, existing landfills in the area have adequate capacity; therefore, they would be able to serve the solid waste disposal needs of Alternative SE-1A. Due to the largely temporary solid waste

disposal needs of Alternative SE-1A (primarily construction-related), and considering that some of the waste may be composted or recycled, the substation under Alternative SE-1A would not affect the County's ability to meet its CIWMA disposal rate targets, or otherwise fail to comply with statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria D and E would be **less than significant**.

### **Alternative SE-PLR-2: Templeton-Paso South River Road Route**

The Alternative SE-PLR-2 alignment would pass through primarily rural areas of San Luis Obispo County, where it would be unlikely to encounter buried utilities during construction, although the portion of the alignment north of Charolais Road would traverse urban areas of Paso Robles, where construction activities may be more likely to encounter buried utilities. As discussed previously, the Applicants would comply with CCR Section 1541, which requires excavators to determine the approximate locations of subsurface installations prior to excavating, and avoid impacts to subsurface installations, thereby reducing potential impacts to buried utilities that may occur within the disturbance area. No known above-ground utilities exist within the footprint of Alternative SE-PLR-2 that would require relocation.

Given its shorter length (approximately 4.8 miles shorter), construction of the power line under Alternative SE-PLR-2 would require less water (715,000 gallons) than the Proposed Project's 70 kV power line (2,000,000 gallons). As discussed in Impact UTL-1, this water use could be accommodated by existing sources. Wastewater service demand would be minimal during construction, as it would be limited primarily to wastewater generated by construction workers using the restroom. Once constructed, the power line under Alternative SE-PLR-2 would not require any water or wastewater service. Therefore, it would not require construction of new or expanded water or wastewater facilities, and water supplies and wastewater treatment capacity would be more than adequate. The power line under Alternative SE-PLR-2 would create minimal amounts of new impervious surface associated with new pole foundations and would not require stormwater collection service or otherwise result in the need to construct new or expanded stormwater facilities. The new power line itself would constitute new electric power utility infrastructure (whose environmental effects are evaluated throughout this DEIR), but it would not require or result in construction of any additional utility infrastructure (e.g., natural gas). Therefore, impacts under significance criteria A, B, and C would be **less than significant**.

Construction of the power line under Alternative SE-PLR-2 would likely generate lesser quantities of solid waste (due to the shorter length of the power line and associated reduced excavation for pole foundations and vegetation clearing for pole work areas) compared to the Proposed Project's 70 kV power line. During operation, the power line would generate minimal amounts of solid waste related to routine maintenance activities. As discussed in Impact UTL-4, existing landfills in the area have adequate capacity; therefore, these landfills would be able to serve the solid waste disposal needs of Alternative SE-PLR-2. Due to the largely temporary solid waste disposal needs of Alternative SE-PLR-2 (primarily construction-related), and considering that some of the waste may be composted or recycled, the power line under Alternative SE-PLR-2 would not affect the County's ability to meet its CIWMA disposal rate targets, or otherwise fail to comply with statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, impacts under significance criteria D and E would be **less than significant**.

### **Alternative BS-2: Battery Storage to Address the Distribution Objective**

Illustrative FTM sites examined for purposes of this analysis are vacant parcels within the city of Paso Robles and rural areas of San Luis Obispo County. FTM Sites 1-4 are located within developed areas of the city, while FTM Sites 5-8 are located in more rural areas adjacent to the CAL FIRE Air Attack Base and adjacent to area substations. Given that illustrative sites are vacant and the FTM BESS construction activities would likely not involve work within the sidewalk or roadway, it is unlikely that buried utilities would be encountered during excavation (several buried utility lines are known to occur on the western portion of FTM Site 1, but these should be able to be avoided through BESS design and placement). Nevertheless, the Applicants would comply with CCR Section 1541, which requires excavators to determine the approximate locations of subsurface installations prior to excavating, and avoid impacts to subsurface installations, thereby reducing potential impacts to buried utilities that may occur within the disturbance area.

Construction water use for the FTM BESSs under Alternative BS-2 is not currently known, but is anticipated to be less than the Proposed Project's construction water demand of 10.3 million gallons. Even if the construction water demand were to exceed this amount, the discussion under Impact UTL-1 indicates that water supplies are not substantially constrained in the Paso Robles area. Thus, construction water use of Alternative BS-2 should be accommodated by existing sources. Wastewater service demand would be minimal during construction of the FTM BESSs, as it would be limited primarily to wastewater generated by construction workers using the restroom. Once constructed, the BESSs would not require any water or wastewater service (they would be operated remotely, with no staff permanently on site). Therefore, Alternative BS-2 would not require construction of new or expanded water or wastewater facilities, and water supplies and wastewater treatment capacity would be adequate.

The FTM BESSs under Alternative BS-2 would create some amount of new impervious surface (this would be based on the ultimate size of the BESSs, which would be determined by future load growth). Of those example FTM sites examined in the DEIR, FTM Sites 5, 6, and 8 would not be served by stormwater drainage systems, while FTM Sites 1-4 and 7 could discharge stormwater to municipal systems. Given the size of the example FTM sites and the likely sizes of BESSs needed to address the Distribution Objective, the stormwater generated would not be sufficient to require construction of new or expanded municipal facilities. While the BESSs themselves would constitute new electric power utility infrastructure, they would not require or result in construction of any additional utility infrastructure (e.g., natural gas). The third-party DER provider selected via the DIDF would be required to follow all local design, siting, and permitting requirements.

Construction of the FTM BESSs under Alternative BS-2 would likely generate reduced quantities of solid waste compared to the proposed Estrella Substation. Although sizes of FTM BESSs are unknown and would depend on future load conditions, FTM BESSs would likely be smaller than the substation and involve less excavation and vegetation clearing. During operation, the FTM BESSs would generate minimal amounts of solid waste related to routine maintenance activities. As discussed in Impact UTL-4, existing landfills in the area have adequate capacity; therefore, they should be able to serve the solid waste disposal needs of Alternative BS-2. Due to the largely temporary solid waste disposal needs of Alternative BS-2 (primarily construction-related), and considering that some of the waste may be composted or recycled, the FTM BESSs

under Alternative BS-2 would not affect the County's ability to meet its CIWMA disposal rate targets, or otherwise fail to comply with statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Overall, FTM BESS sites were selected for illustrative purposes only, BESS installations have not been designed and technologies have not been selected, and the specifics of Alternative BS-2 are unknown. Thus, project-level determinations cannot be made as impacts are speculative. Therefore, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15145, no significance conclusion is provided for any of the significance criteria.

### **Alternative BS-3: Third Party, Behind-the-Meter Solar and Battery Storage**

Given that individual BTM solar and battery storage facilities would be installed primarily within or on existing buildings, they would have little potential to adversely affect existing utilities. These construction projects would each be relatively minor and, even when considered in the aggregate, would not be expected to use large amounts of water or generate substantial quantities of solid waste. In certain instances, where individual BTM facilities may be installed in areas of existing parcels that are currently undeveloped, this may require some grading and other earthmoving activities that could generate materials requiring disposal at a landfill, but the quantities of material generated during individual BTM facility construction would likely not be substantial. Once operational, BTM solar and BESS facilities would not require water, wastewater, or solid waste disposal services and no staff would be located permanently on site.

Given the relatively minimal quantities of water that would likely be required for BTM facility construction, water sources in the region would be adequate to provide the needed supplies. Landfills in the area also would have available capacity to accept solid waste generated from construction and operation of individual BTM facilities under Alternative BS-3 (expected to be minimal). For any BTM facilities that would require grading and excavation in areas that could have underground utilities, the construction contractor would need to comply with CCR Section 1541 to determine the approximate locations of subsurface installations and minimize impacts and avoid impacts to subsurface installations.

Overall, due to the fact that specific locations and characteristics of BTM resources procured under Alternative BS-3 are unknown at this time, project-level impact determinations are not possible as the impacts are speculative. Therefore, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15145, no significance conclusion is reached under any of the significance criteria.

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