CHAPTER 1 – PEA SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

This Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA) was prepared by San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) and is intended to support SDG&E's application for a Permit to Construct (PTC) the Salt Creek Substation Project and associated 69-kilovolt (kV) power tie-lines (TL) (Proposed Project). This PEA includes information required by the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) CEQA Information and Criteria List (State of California Public Utilities Commission Information and Criteria List, Appendix B, Section V), as well as the CPUC's requirements for a PTC pursuant to General Order 131-D (D.94-06-014, Appendix A, as modified by D.95-08- 038). Both PEA format and content are consistent with the CPUC guidance document titled Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA) Checklist.

Chapter 4 of this PEA provides an assessment of potential environmental impacts resulting from construction and operation of the Proposed Project. Potential environmental impacts associated with these components were evaluated, consistent with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA Guideline 15101 requires the agency responsible for approving a project to assess the completeness of the project proponent's application.

The CPUC must use the adopted CEQA "Information and Criteria List" to determine whether the application for a project is complete. The CPUC's CEQA Information and Criteria List specifies the information required from any applicant for a project subject to CEQA or for any development project subject to the Permit Streamlining Act (California Government Code section 65920 et seq.). CPUC's Energy Division developed the PEA Checklist as additional guidance for determining the adequacy of the PEA. For CPUC reference, SDG&E provided a table that identifies where each of the criteria within the CPUC's PEA Checklist may be found in this PEA. This information is provided in Appendix 1-A.

The CPUC's Information and Criteria List states that the independently reviewed and evaluated PEA can be adopted as the CPUC's CEQA document. This PEA was prepared in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and the CPUC's Information and Criteria List, and, as such, could serve as the CPUC's CEQA document.

1.2 Project Components

The Proposed Project includes both substation and power line components. Primary components of the Proposed Project are listed below:

- Salt Creek Substation: Construction and operation of a new 120-megavolt ampere (MVA) 69/12-kV substation, known as the Salt Creek Substation, including construction and operation of underground 12-kV distribution circuits on 11.64 acres of undeveloped land.

- TL 6965: Construction and operation of a 5-mile-long 69-kV power line (TL 6965) within the existing transmission corridor, from the Existing Miguel Substation (herein referred to as the Existing Substation) to the proposed Salt Creek Substation. The majority of TL 6965 would be located above ground; the final 1,000 linear feet in the vicinity of the Salt Creek Substation would be installed underground.
- TL 6910 Loop-In: Construction and operation of an underground 69-kV power line loop-in (TL 6910) to Salt Creek Substation. Trench installation would total approximately 1,000 linear feet from the cable pole to the substation terminal equipment.
- Existing Substation Modifications: Installation of a new 69-kV power line position at the Existing Substation to connect to TL 6965.

These components are described in greater detail in Section 3.4, Project Components, and are shown in Figure 3-3, Project Overview. Refer also to Chapter 3.0, Project Description, for additional detailed discussion of the components of the Proposed Project.

1.3 Project Location

The proposed Salt Creek Substation site, the TL 6910 loop-in, and the majority of the TL 6965 would be located in the eastern portion of the City of Chula Vista, California. A small segment (approximately 4,700 linear feet) of the northernmost portion of TL 6965 would be located in unincorporated San Diego County on SDG&E fee-owned land surrounding the Existing Substation. The Existing Substation is on SDG&E fee-owned land in unincorporated San Diego County.

The majority of the Proposed Project would be located east of State Route (SR) 125 in the southwesterly portion of San Diego County (refer to Figure 3-1, Regional Map; Figure 3-2, Vicinity Map; and Figure 3-3, Project Overview). A small segment of the proposed TL 6965 (approximately 6,100 linear feet) would be located on the west side of SR-125, with two overhead crossings over SR-125. The Proposed Project would be situated approximately 15 miles southeast of downtown San Diego and 5 miles north of the international border with Mexico.

1.4 Project Need and Alternatives

The Proposed Project would consist of construction of a new 69/12-kV substation and a new 69-kV power line from the Existing Substation to the proposed Salt Creek Substation (TL 6965), and the looping of TL 6910 into the proposed Salt Creek Substation. The Proposed Project would provide additional capacity to serve existing area load and future customer-driven electrical load growth. In addition, it would provide the necessary distribution and power network to prevent long-term outages or disruptions of service to existing customers in the southeastern portion of SDG&E's service territory.

Basic objectives of the Proposed Project are the following:

1. Meet the area's projected long-term electric distribution capacity needs by constructing the proposed Salt Creek Substation near planned load growth to maximize system efficiency.
2. Provide three 69-kV circuits into the Salt Creek Substation to serve load growth in the region and meet the regulatory requirements of the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), Western Electric Coordinating Council (WECC), and California Independent System Operator (CAISO).
3. Provide substation and circuit tie capacity that would provide additional reliability for existing and future system needs.
4. Reduce loading on area substations to optimum operating conditions, providing greater operational flexibility to transfer load between substations within the proposed Salt Creek Substation service territory.
5. Comply with and respect the outcome of the extensive community-based public process to select a site for a new substation in the Otay Ranch area, as evidenced by City of Chula Vista City Council Resolution 2011-073.
6. Meet Proposed Project needs while minimizing environmental impacts by siting the substation on property designated for future development that is located outside of the City of Chula Vista's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Preserve.
7. Locate proposed new power facilities, as appropriate and as needed, within existing utility rights-of-ways (ROWs), access roads, and utility-owned property.

Refer also to Chapter 2.0, Project Purpose and Need, for additional discussion of the Proposed Project's various components and objectives.

Proposed Project components, their locations, preliminary configurations, and the existing and proposed system configuration are presented in Chapter 3.0, Project Description.

Although various substation site alternatives, power route alternatives, and system alternatives were considered during development of the Proposed Project, the Proposed Project was ultimately selected because it best meets all of the objectives and is more cost effective than the alternatives. A discussion of the alternatives to the Proposed Project is located in Chapter 5.0, Alternatives.

1.5 Agency Coordination and Public Outreach

1.5.1 City of Chula Vista

SDG&E coordinated with the City of Chula Vista during the 10-year planning of this Proposed Project. Activities associated with the City of Chula Vista planning interactions are summarized below:

- Approximately one decade ago, SDG&E initially identified the need to construct a new substation within the Otay Ranch area. SDG&E spent approximately 10 years on the site selection process for the new substation.

- In 2002, SDG&E began working with the City of Chula Vista and the University Framework Committee to identify a suitable location for a new substation as part of the early planning efforts for a proposed university within Chula Vista's Otay Ranch area.

- In early 2007, after extensive discussion and consideration of several substation site alternatives, consensus was reached by SDG&E, the City of Chula Vista, and members of the University Framework Committee on Hunte West (the Proposed Project location) as the preferred substation location.

- SDG&E spent approximately 2 years working on the substation design with the City of Chula Vista. The site acquisition process was suspended in 2008, when the City entered into a Land Offer Agreement with the adjacent property owner, and the Hunte West property was no longer available for development of a substation.

- This resulted in the need to re-analyze alternative site locations for the Salt Creek Substation. SDG&E worked with the City of Chula Vista to analyze three alternative site locations. Based on changes in circumstances in early 2011, Hunte West became available again as a viable location for the proposed Salt Creek Substation.

- In June 2011, SDG&E purchased the 11.64-acre Hunte West site for future development of the Salt Creek Substation to service existing and future development in the surrounding area.

- SDG&E continued meeting with the City of Chula Vista in 2011 and 2012 to discuss development plans for the proposed Salt Creek Substation.

1.5.2 San Diego County Water Authority

The San Diego County Water Authority owns and operates underground facilities in proximity to SDG&E's proposed construction site. SDG&E has been working with the San Diego County Water Authority to coordinate construction between the two groups to minimize disruption for both utilities. This includes discussion on where SDG&E's electric lines are to show where excavation must occur.

1.5.3 Community Outreach

Between 2002 and 2011, SDG&E worked with major stakeholders, including the City of Chula Vista, the University Framework Committee, Baldwin Company, and Brookfield Homes, to identify and select a suitable site for the Salt Creek Substation. As a result of coordination and discussions with the City of Chula Vista, in 2011, the City Council approved a land exchange agreement for the proposed substation site. See the City of Chula Vista Council Resolution 2011-073 included in Appendix 1-B.

SDG&E met with the Winding Walk Home Owners Association (HOA) (residences located north of Hunte Parkway and the Salt Creek Substation) in June 2012. SDG&E will continue to work with the City of Chula Vista and the nearby HOAs to keep them apprised of the evolution of the Proposed Project and to address their concerns and questions. SDG&E will work with the City of Chula Vista to coordinate on land use and permitting issues, such as grading and other ministerial permits, required for construction of the proposed Salt Creek Substation. SDG&E may conduct future community workshops, as appropriate.

1.5.4 Letters of Support

The City of Chula Vista provided a letter of support of the Proposed Project. A copy of this letter is included in Appendix 1-B.

1.6 PEA Contents

In accordance with the PEA Checklist for Transmission Line and Substation Projects prepared by the CPUC on November 24, 2008, the Salt Creek Substation PEA was written to include the following main areas of discussion:

- Chapter 1.0 – *PEA Summary*. This chapter provides a summary of the Proposed Project components, agency coordination, PEA contents, major conclusions, major issues to be resolved, and public outreach efforts.

- Chapter 2.0 – *Project Purpose, Need, and Objectives*. This chapter provides a brief system overview and explains the objectives of the Proposed Project, analyzing why attainment of these objectives is necessary.

- Chapter 3.0 – *Project Description*. This chapter contains the anticipated location and boundaries of the Proposed Project, and a general description of the Proposed Project's technical, economic, and environmental characteristics. This chapter also provides a detailed description of the Proposed Project components and the specific construction activities for installation of the facilities. Additionally, a description of the anticipated construction schedule, anticipated operations and maintenance activities, federal, state, and local permits required, Proposed Project design features and ordinary construction/operations restrictions, and a summary of the Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) to be implemented as part of the Proposed Project are provided.

- Chapter 4.0 – *Environmental Impact Assessment Summary*. This chapter includes an environmental impact assessment summary and a discussion of the existing environmental setting and potential impacts of the Proposed Project. The chapter discusses Proposed Project design features and ordinary construction/operations restrictions relevant to each impact area. It also introduces APMs that reduce impacts from the Proposed Project to less than significant.

  The following resource areas are addressed in Chapter 4.0:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Paleontological Resources
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

- Chapter 5.0 – *Alternatives*. This chapter describes alternatives to the Proposed Project that were identified, evaluates those alternatives in relation to Proposed Project objectives and environmental impacts, and explains why those alternatives were rejected.

- Chapter 6.0 – *Other CEQA Considerations*. This chapter includes a cumulative impacts analysis, which discusses past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects within the Proposed Project area, and the potential for the Proposed Project to contribute a significant cumulative effect. Additionally, this chapter identifies the potential growth-inducing impacts of the Proposed Project.

- Chapter 7.0 – *List of Preparers*. This chapter identifies the preparers of various chapters of the PEA document.

- The PEA also includes technical appendices in support of Chapters 1 through 6, as well as other items required by General Order 131-D and identified in the CPUC PEA Checklist. Specifically, the PEA includes the following appendices:

  - Appendix 1-A CPUC Checklist Reference Table
  - Appendix 1-B City of Chula Vista Council Resolution 2011-073 and Letter of Support
  - Appendix 1-C Affected Property Owners: Parcel and Mailing Information and Figure for Properties within 300 Feet of the Proposed Project
  - Appendix 1-D Existing Power Line Map
  - Appendix 3-A Technical Figures

- Appendix 3-B Detailed Route Maps
- Appendix 4.1-A Aesthetic Technical Analysis
- Appendix 4.3-A Air Quality Methodology
- Appendix 4.3-B Air Quality Construction Emissions
- Appendix 4.4-A Biological Resources Technical Report
- Appendix 4.5-A Paleontological Resource Assessment
- Appendix 4.6-A Geotechnical Investigation 2008
- Appendix 4.6-B Geotechnical Investigation 2012
- Appendix 4.7-A Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Appendix 4.8-A EDR Data Map Area Study
- Appendix 4.8-B Salt Creek Project Fire Plan
- Appendix 4.12-A Noise Monitoring Datasheets

1.7 PEA Major Conclusions

1.7.1 Resource Areas with No Impact or Less Than Significant Impact

The PEA analyzes the potential environmental impacts resulting from construction and operation/maintenance of the Proposed Project. Fifteen of the 17 resource areas would not have environmental impacts or would result in less-than-significant impacts. In certain instances, the impacts resulting from the Proposed Project would be less than significant in light of compliance with polices/standards/regulations and Proposed Project design features. These resource areas are as follows:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Material
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

1.7.2 Resource Areas Requiring Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs)

Potential impacts were identified for biological resources and cultural and paleontological resources. However, through implementation of APMs, such impacts would remain less than significant. The proposed APMs are discussed within Chapter 4, Environmental Impact Assessment, and are summarized in Table 3-6, Applicant Proposed Measures. In the event that the CPUC determines that further consideration of mitigation measures and alternatives to the Proposed Project are required, the CPUC may review the estimated costs of the Proposed Project (among other factors) to determine whether such mitigation measures or alternatives are "feasible" as defined by CEQA. The estimated costs of the Proposed Project is approximately $62.5 million.

1.8 Areas of Controversy and Major Issues to be Resolved

The CPUC's PEA Checklist for Transmission and Substation Projects calls for a discussion of "any areas of controversy" and "any major issues that must be resolved including the choice among reasonably feasible alternatives and mitigation measures, if any." There are no known areas of controversy or major issues that must be resolved.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK