4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section presents the environmental setting and impact analysis for biological resources in the vicinity of the Revised Project components and the alternatives. This section focuses on the effects the Revised Project would have on sensitive vegetation communities/habitats, federal and state waters and wetlands, and special-status species. Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR presents supporting information for this section, including:

- Tables presenting the vegetation communities, other land cover types, and potentially occurring special-status species in the Revised Project area
- Map book figures depicting vegetation communities and rare plant locations in the Revised Project area
- Map book figures depicting aquatic habitats and jurisdictional waters of the U.S. and the State in the Revised Project area

4.4.1 Consideration of Scoping Comments

The public expressed concerns regarding biological resource impacts during public scoping for this Subsequent EIR. Table 4.4-1 summarizes the scoping comments received regarding biological resource impacts and identifies how and/or where these comments are addressed.

Table 4.4-1 Scoping Comments Related to Biological Resource Impacts

Summary of Comment	Location Comment is Addressed
The project will impact habitats and wildlife in the Hidden Valley Wildlife Preserve and Santa Ana River.	This Subsequent EIR biological resources analysis considers habitat and wildlife impacts of the Revised Project components along the Santa Ana River and within the Hidden Valley Wildlife Preserve. Refer to Section 4.4.9, Impacts Biology-a, Biology-b, Biology-e, and Biology-f.
The project will impact wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas.	This Subsequent EIR biological resources analysis considers wetland and environmentally sensitive area impacts of the Revised Project components. Refer to Section 4.4.9, Impacts Biology-b, Biology-c, Biology-e, and Biology-f.
The project will impact migratory birds.	This Subsequent EIR biological resources analysis considers migratory bird impacts of the Revised Project components. Refer to Section 4.4.9, Impact Biology-a.
The CPUC should consult state and federal agencies.	The CPUC has consulted with the wildlife agencies and the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) in the preparation of this Subsequent EIR biological resources analysis.
The analysis should include a complete assessment of flora and fauna within and adjacent to the project footprint, with emphasis on identifying rare, threatened, endangered, and other sensitive species and their habitats.	An assessment of the flora and fauna within and adjacent to the Revised Project components, including special-status species, has been completed and is presented in this Subsequent EIR biological resources analysis. Refer to Section 4.4.9, Impact Biology-a.

Summary of Comment	Location Comment is Addressed
Provide a thorough discussion of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts expected to affect biological resources, including both temporary and permanent impacts.	Direct and indirect impacts on biological resources resulting from construction, operation, and maintenance of the Revised Project is provided in this Subsequent EIR. Refer to Section 4.4.9 below. Cumulative impacts on biological resources are addressed in Chapter 5: Cumulative Impacts of this Subsequent EIR.
The analysis should Include appropriate and adequate avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures for all direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts.	Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures for direct and indirect impacts on biological resources resulting from construction, operation, and maintenance of the Revised Project are provided in this Subsequent EIR. Refer to Section 4.4.9 below. Mitigation for cumulative impacts on biological resources is addressed in Chapter 5: Cumulative Impacts of this Subsequent EIR.

4.4.2 Definitions

Sensitive Vegetation Communities/Habitats

Sensitive vegetation communities/habitats are those identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS. CDFW's Rarity Ranking follows NatureServe's Heritage Methodology (Faber-Langendoen, et al., 2012) in which communities are given a G (global) and S (State) rank based on their degree of imperilment (as measured by rarity, trends, and threats). Communities with a Rarity Ranking of S1 (critically imperiled), S2 (imperiled), or S3 (vulnerable) are considered sensitive by CDFW.

Sensitive habitats include but are not limited to:

1. Areas that provide habitat for locally unique biotic species/communities (e.g., oak woodlands, coastal scrub, maritime chaparral, and indigenous and ancient forests)
2. Habitat that contains or supports rare, endangered, or threatened wildlife or plant species as defined by CDFW and USFWS
3. Habitat that supports CDFW Species of Special Concern
4. Areas that provide habitat for rare or endangered species, and that meet the definition of Section 15380 of CEQA Guidelines
5. Coastal tidelands and marshes
6. Coastal and off-shore areas containing breeding or nesting sites and coastal areas used by migratory and resident birds for resting and feeding
7. Dune plant habitats
8. Existing game and wildlife refuges and reserves
9. Lakes, wetlands, estuaries, lagoons, streams, and rivers
10. Riparian corridors

Special-Status Species

Species are considered to be special-status if they meet any of the following criteria:

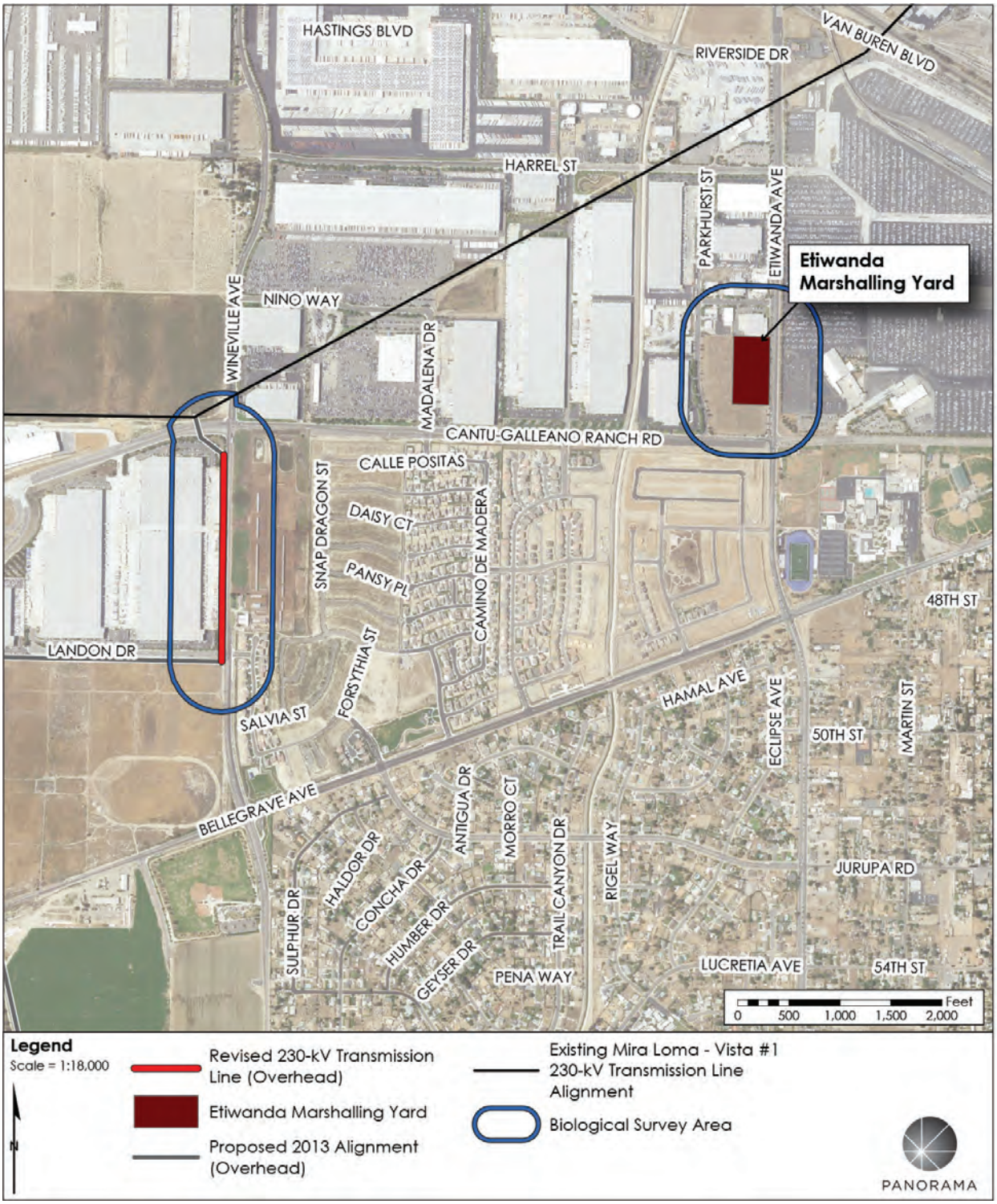
1. Plant and wildlife species listed as endangered, threatened, or candidates for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)

2. Plant species listed as endangered, threatened, rare, or candidates for listing under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA)
3. Wildlife species listed as endangered, threatened, or candidates for listing under CESA
4. Wildlife species designated as Fully Protected, as defined in California Fish and Game Code §§ 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515
5. Wildlife species designated as Species of Special Concern by CDFW
6. Birds species on the CDFW watch list
7. Plant species with a California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 1A, which are species that are presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere
8. Plant species with a CRPR 1B, which are species that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
9. Plant species with a CRPR 2A, which are species that are presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere
10. Plant species with a CRPR 2B, which are species that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere
11. Plant species with a CRPR 3, which are species for which information is lacking to assign them to one of the other lists
12. Plant species with a CRPR 4, which are species that have limited distribution and their vulnerability or susceptibility to threat appears low at the time
13. Plant species listed as rare under the Native Plant Protection Act
14. Species covered under the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) (refer to MSHCP § 2.1.4)
15. Species which meet the CEQA criteria for endangered, rare, or threatened under CEQA Guidelines Section 15380

Biological Survey Area

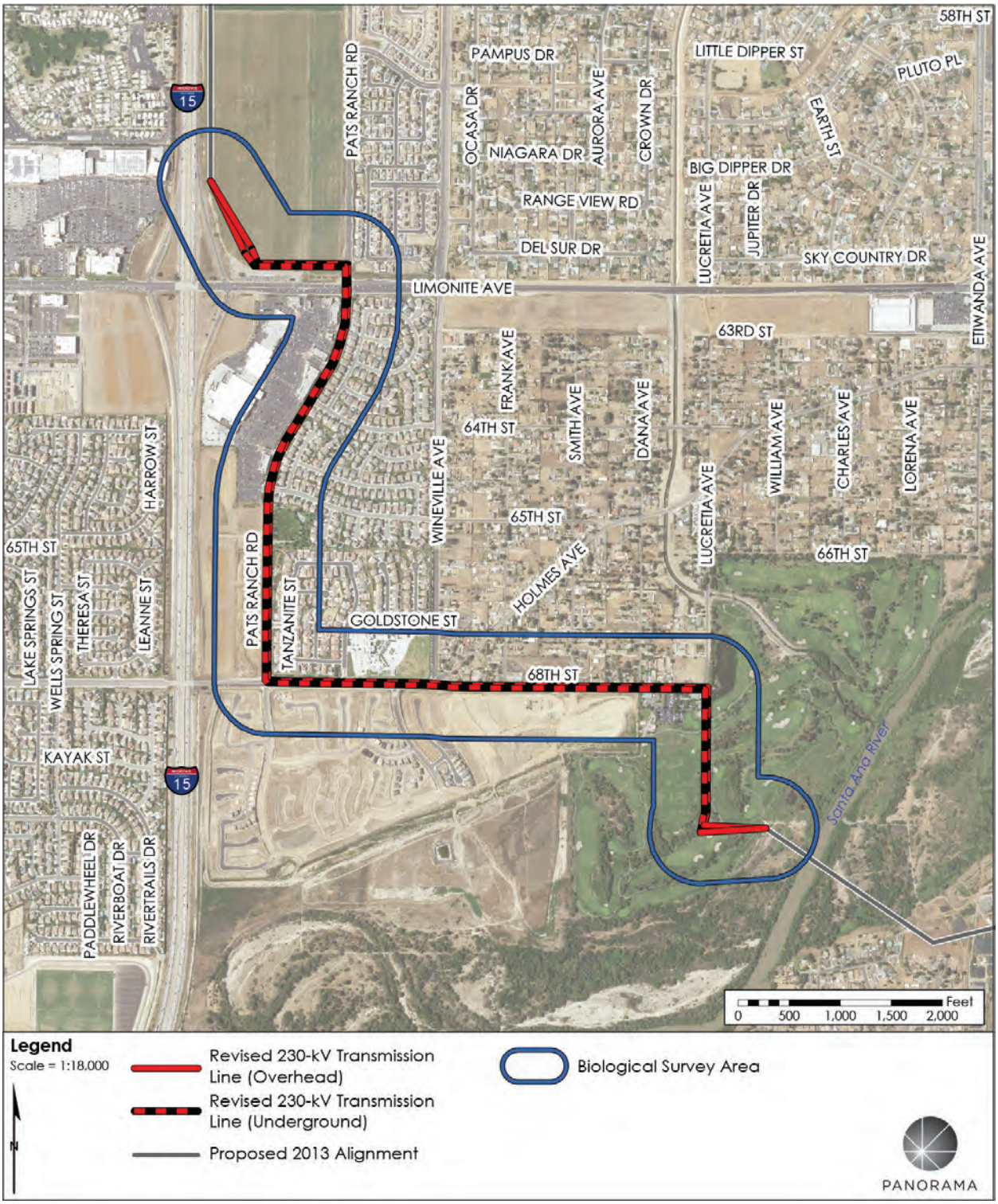
The physical area surveyed for biological resources is referred to as the biological survey area (BSA) in this section. The BSA covers the Revised Project area (i.e., the physical limits of all proposed work areas), as well as a 500-foot-wide survey buffer around the Revised Project elements in order to cover areas where potential indirect effects on biological resources could occur. The BSA for the Revised Project covers approximately 514 acres. Figure 4.4-1 through Figure 4.4-4 show the BSA for the Revised Project. The surveys that occurred in the BSA are detailed below in Section 4.4.3: Approach to Data Collection.

Figure 4.4-1 Biological Survey Area: Relocated Overhead Transmission Alignment and Marshalling Yard



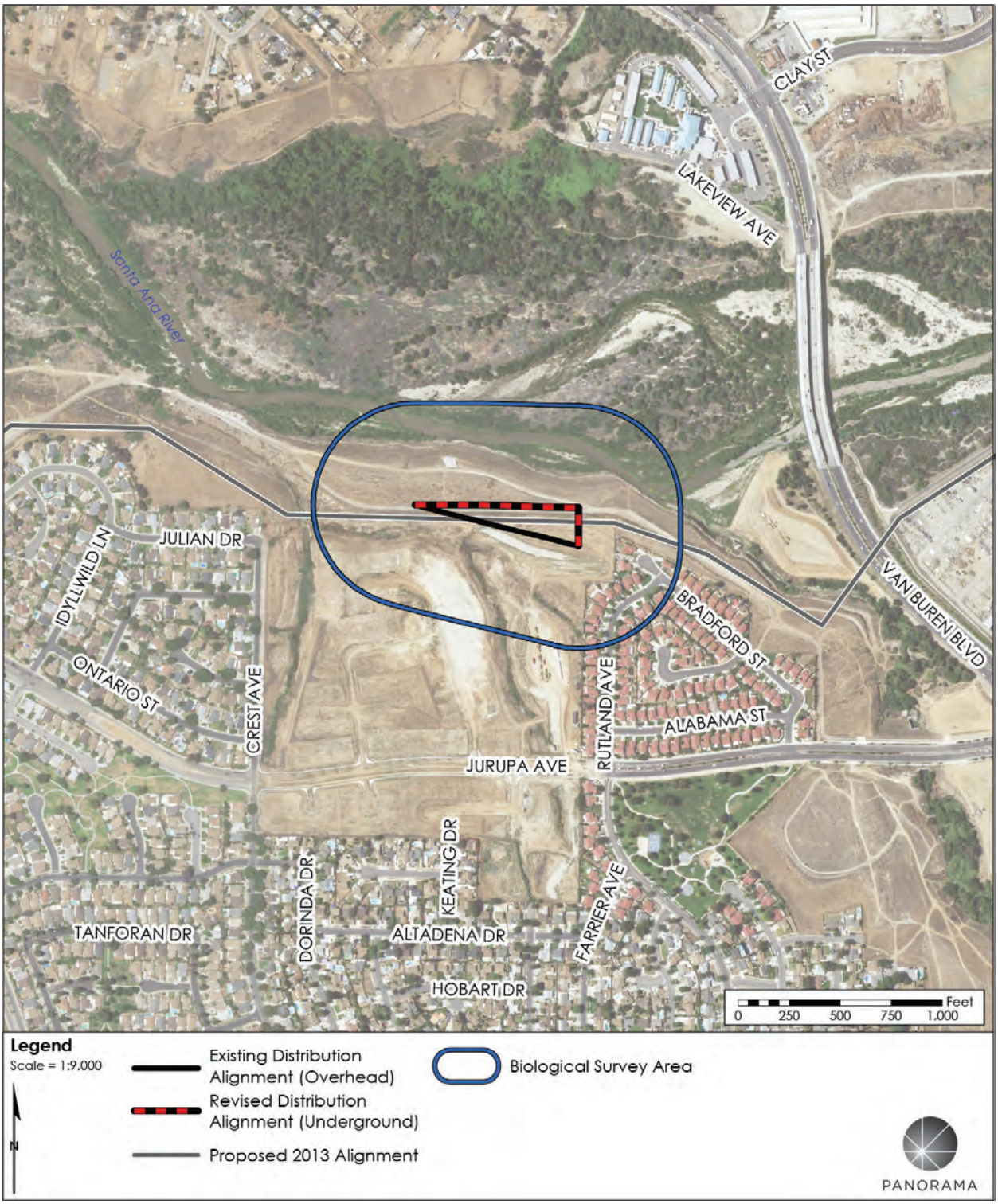
Sources: (Esri, 2017; SCE, 2017; CDFW, 2016; AECOM, 2016a)

Figure 4.4-2 Biological Survey Area: Underground Transmission Alignment



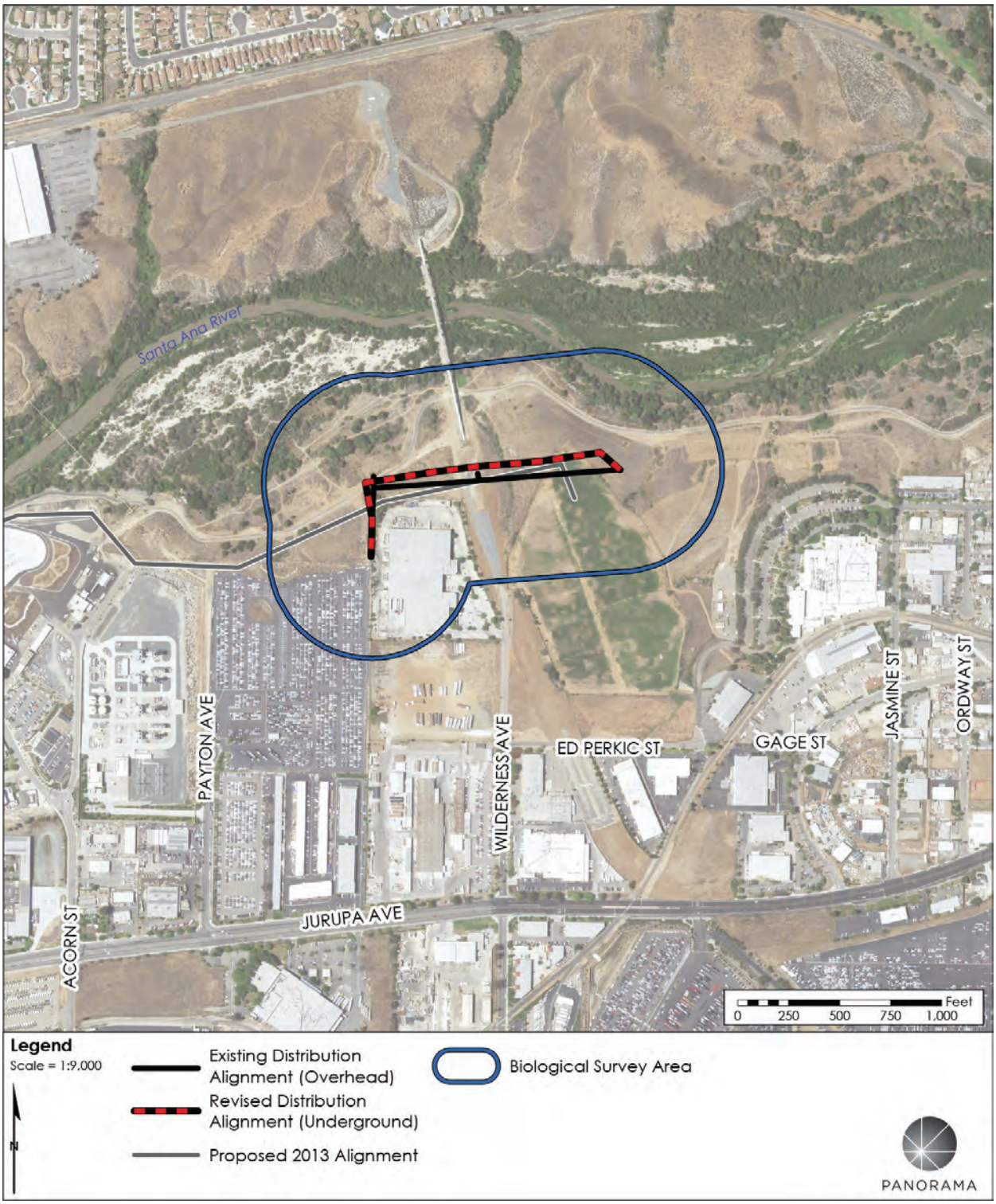
Sources: (Esri, 2017; SCE, 2017; CDFW, 2016; AECOM, 2016a)

Figure 4.4-3 Biological Survey Area: Distribution Line Relocation #7



Sources: (Esri, 2017; SCE, 2017; CDFW, 2016; AECOM, 2016a)

Figure 4.4-4 Biological Survey Area: Distribution Line Relocation #8



Sources: (Esri, 2017; SCE, 2017; CDFW, 2016; AECOM, 2016a)

Ground Disturbance Area Data

SCE establishes its own buffer area around Revised Project work spaces known as ground disturbance area data or GDAD. The GDAD represents a physical area for the purpose of analyzing potential environmental impacts within which the specific siting of permanent features (electrical infrastructure such as TSPs and LSTs) and temporary construction work spaces can be defined and adjusted in response to engineering design refinements and changed conditions. The BSA incorporates SCE's GDAD buffer areas.

4.4.3 Approach to Data Collection

The biological resources analysis was conducted using a variety of methods, including:

- Literature review
- Database queries
- Field surveys (reconnaissance surveys, habitat assessments, and focused surveys for special-status species)
- Delineation of potential jurisdictional waters of the U.S. and State
- Peer review of reports and the judgment of qualified professionals

A master list of potentially occurring special-status species was developed and can be found in Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR. The special-status species list was narrowed down to those with moderate or high potential to occur in the BSA based on the vegetation communities/habitats present within the BSA, as well as the results of the focused plant and wildlife surveys in the BSA.

Literature and Database Review

Special-status species with potential to occur within the BSA were identified through a search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) (CDFW, 2007 - 2017), the Western Riverside County MSHCP, and the USFWS species database (AECOM, 2016b; AECOM, 2016c; AECOM, 2016d). A data records search was conducted on a 5-mile radius of the Revised Project areas, which included the following U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangles: Fontana, Guasti, Ontario, Riverside West, Corona North, and Prado Dam. This distance is determined satisfactory based on the level of urbanization in the Revised Project area. Resource data were then mapped utilizing GIS, to which the results of reconnaissance/ focused wildlife, and focused rare and endemic plant surveys were added.

Surveys

Baseline habitat assessments and focused species surveys were conducted between 2006 and 2017. Table 4.4-2 summarizes the surveys that were conducted for the 2013 RTRP EIR and this Subsequent EIR.

Table 4.4-2 Biological Surveys Conducted for the RTRP

Surveys	Dates	Reports
Habitat Assessments		
Riparian Bird Habitat Assessment	RTRP: May 9, 2016 Gap Areas: no date	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project – Habitat Assessment Results* *Riverside Transmission Reliability Project – Underground Alignment Habitat Assessment Results*
Small Mammal Habitat Assessment	RTRP: June 2 and 4, 2016 Gap Areas: no date	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project – Habitat Assessment Results* *Riverside Transmission Reliability Project – Underground Alignment Habitat Assessment Results*
Delhi Sands Flower-loving Fly Habitat Assessment	RTRP: June 8, 2016 Gap Areas: no date	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project – Habitat Assessment Results* *Riverside Transmission Reliability Project – Underground Alignment Habitat Assessment Results*
Rare Plant Habitat Assessment	RTRP: Late June 2016 Gap Areas: Early October 2016	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project – Habitat Assessment Results* *Riverside Transmission Reliability Project – Underground Alignment Habitat Assessment Results*
Jurisdictional Waters and Wetland Delineation	May 10, 11, 18 and July 19, 2017	*Jurisdictional Delineation Report Riverside Transmission Reliability Project*
Focused Species Surveys		
Western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*)	Phase I: April 4-8, 2016 Phase II: April 13-15, May 3-5, and June 21-23, 2016	*Burrowing Owl Survey Report for the Riverside Transmission Reliability Project*
San Diego Ambrosia (*Ambrosia pumila*)	June 2016	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project – Habitat Assessment Results*

Surveys	Dates	Reports
Delhi sands flower-loving fly (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*)	July 3-September 20, 2016 and December 1, 2017	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project Focused/Protocol Survey*
Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)	24 days between May 8 and July 31, 2016	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project Focused/Protocol Survey*
Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*)	May 15-31, June 1-24, and June 25-July 17, 2016	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project Focused/Protocol Survey*
Western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*)	June 15-July 1, July 1-31, July 31-August 15, 2016	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project Focused/Protocol Survey*
Los Angeles pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris brevinasus*)	Trapping sessions commenced on July 10, July 25, and August 28, 2016	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project Focused/Protocol Survey*
Northwestern San Diego pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus fallax fallax*)	Trapping sessions commenced on July 10, July 25, and August 28, 2016	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project Focused/Protocol Survey*
San Bernardino kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*)	Trapping sessions commenced on July 10, July 25, and August 28, 2016	*Riverside Transmission Reliability Project Focused/Protocol Survey*
Rare Plants (San Diego ambrosia [*Ambrosia pumila*], Brand's phacelia [*Phacelia stellaris*], and San Miguel savory [*Satureja chandleri*])	March 30 and May 22, 2017	*2017 Rare Plant Memo Report for the Southern California Edison Riverside Transmission Reliability Project*

Sources: (AECOM, 2016b; AECOM, 2016c; AECOM, 2016d; AECOM, 2017; Parus Consulting, 2016; ICF, 2017; Osborne, 2017)

Methodologies

Vegetation Mapping

Vegetation mapping was conducted in the field using aerial photographs and topographic maps (AECOM, 2016b; AECOM, 2016c; AECOM, 2016d). Habitat definitions followed those utilized in the MSHCP but also included other references as noted. Vegetation community classifications followed *Preliminary Descriptions of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California* (Holland, 1986) and *A Manual of California Vegetation* (Sawyer and Keeler-Wolf, 1995). Vegetation classifications were cross-referenced with other sources, including USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle maps, GIS data, the California Gap-Analysis Program, and review of reports of prior surveys conducted in the general area. Vegetation communities and cover types observed in the BSA are described in the environmental setting below.

Special-status Species Surveys

Special-status species surveys were conducted following protocols approved by USFWS for each species. The protocols for each survey are detailed in the survey reports, which are included in Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR.

4.4.4 Environmental Setting

Regional Setting

Lands within and surrounding the BSA are characterized by urban and suburban development intermixed with agriculture and undeveloped lands. The surrounding region was primarily rural with agricultural land use during most of the 20th century, after which urbanization with extensive residential, commercial, and light industrial land conversion has occurred. The only remaining large areas of native habitats within the vicinity of the Revised Project occur along the Santa Ana River and in the Jurupa Mountains.

Revised Project Setting

Vegetation Communities

Two vegetation communities were mapped within the GDAD[1]. Table 4.4-3 provides the acreage of the vegetation community and cover types occurring within the GDAD. Descriptions of these vegetation communities are provided below. Refer to Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR for map books depicting vegetation communities in the GDAD.

[1] Some surveys were conducted only within the GDAD, limiting the data available for presentation in the table.

Table 4.4-3 Acreage of Vegetation Communities and Cover Types in the GDAD

Community	Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line (acres)	Underground 230-kV Transmission Line (acres)	Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8 (acres)	Total (acres)
Fremont Cottonwood Forest (Sensitive Riparian)	---	3.25	0.05	3.30
Riparian	---	1.28	---	1.28
Annual Brome Grasslands	6.24	0.51	2.20	8.95
Developed	11.35	28.42	0.64	40.41
Active Agriculture	0.01	8.16	0.42	8.59
Barren-Not Developed	---	0.04	0.37	0.41

Sources: (AECOM, 2016b; AECOM, 2016c; ICF, 2017)

Fremont Cottonwood Forest
(*Populus fremontii* Alliance)

Fremont cottonwood forest is recognized by its relative dominance of Fremont cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*) within the vegetation stand; however, numerous other riparian tree species are also represented within this habitat, including western sycamore (*Platanus racemose*), red willow (*Salix laevigata*), and several other willow species. California wild grape (*Vitis californica*) is common in the understory, as is the nonnative golden crownbeard (*Verbesina encelioides*). These riparian habitats are complex and dynamic with species dominance shifting based on seasonal flooding and scouring. Localized within this mapping unit are recognizable small areas supporting other *Manual of California Vegetation* classifications, such as narrowleaf willow (*Salix exigua*) Alliance, mulefat (*Baccharis salicifolia*) Alliance, poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*) Alliance, and broadleaf cattail (*Typha latifolia*) Alliance, as well as areas recently cleared through management actions that supported giant reed (*Arundo donax*) Semi-Natural Herbaceous Stands. These areas have been mapped in aggregate as part of the *Populus fremontii* Alliance as they are smaller than the minimum mapping unit of 1 acre.

Annual Brome Grasslands
(*Bromus [diandrus, hordeaceus]-Brachypodium distachyon* Semi-Natural Herbaceous Stands)

Annual brome grasslands are dominated by a suite of nonnative grass and forb species, including ripgut brome (*Bromus diandrus*), soft brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*), purple false brome (*Brachypodium distachyon*), foxtail barley (*Hordeum murinum*), Indian hedgemustard (*Sisymbrium orientale*), prickly Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), and goosefoots (*Chenopodium* spp.). This highly disturbed habitat also supports scattered nonnative trees and shrubs, including Peruvian pepper tree (*Schinus molle*), and tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*). Occasional fragments of *Artemisia californica-Eriogonum fasciculatum* Alliance may occur locally but are smaller than the minimum mapping unit. Collectively, these habitats have been mapped as *Bromus* (*diandrus*, *hordeaceus*)-*Brachypodium distachyon* Semi-Natural Herbaceous Stands.

Developed
Developed cover type includes roadways, homes, businesses, parks, cemeteries, and similar developed lands.

Active Agriculture
Active agriculture cover type includes dairies and livestock feed yards, or areas that have been tilled and used as croplands or groves/orchards.

Barren – Not Developed
Barren – not developed cover type includes areas devoid of vegetation due to clearing, grading, or other human activity.

Special-Status Plants
The potential for special-status plant species to occur in the BSA was initially evaluated by performing a query of the CNDDB. Special-status plant species reported to the CNDDB and their potential for occurrence in the BSA are presented in Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR. The probability of occurrence within the BSA was determined for each of these species using the following criteria:

- **Present.** Species detected during recent surveys within the BSA.
- **High Potential.** Species with known, recent (i.e., last 25 years) recorded occurrences/populations in the BSA or nearby, and for which highly suitable habitat occurs within or adjacent to the BSA. Suitable habitat includes all necessary elements to support the species (e.g., hydrology, soils).
- **Moderate Potential.** Species with known, recent (i.e., last 25 years) recorded occurrences/populations in the BSA or nearby; however, suitable habitat in or adjacent to the BSA is marginal to low quality. Suitable habitat could be fragmented or small in size. A "moderate potential" assessment was also made for species with no or few known recent recorded occurrences/populations but that have highly suitable habitat within or adjacent to the BSA.
- **Low Potential.** Species with few known, recent (i.e., last 25 years) recorded occurrences/ populations nearby, and suitable habitat within the BSA is of marginal or low quality.
- **Absent.** Species with no suitable habitat in the BSA.

A total of 57 special-status plant species have potential to occur within the nine USGS quadrangles reviewed for the BSA during the literature review and database queries (AECOM, 2016b). Of these 57 species, none are present in the BSA (based on the field surveys), 8 have moderate or high potential to occur, and 49 are either absent or have low potential to occur in the BSA. Special-status plant species present or with moderate or high potential to occur in the BSA are identified in Table 4.4-4. Refer to Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR for mapped special-status plant species locations.

Table 4.4-4 Special-Status Plants with Moderate or High Potential to Occur in the Biological Survey Area

Species	Sensitivity Status [a]	Description	Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line	Underground 230-kV Transmission Line	Distribution Line Relocations #7 & #8	Etiwanda Marshalling Yard
San Diego ambrosia (*Ambrosia pumila*)	FE, 1B.1, S1	A perennial rhizomatous herb native to Riverside County and southern San Diego County (Lake Hodges to the border). Inhabits coastal scrub, grasslands, open floodplains and low valley bottoms below 500 feet. Persists where disturbance has been superficial.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in uplands.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in uplands.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in uplands.	Low Potential
Smooth tarplant (*Centromadia pungens* ssp. *laevis*)	1B.1, S2	An annual herb native to the interior South Coast region and Peninsular Ranges of southern California. Inhabits open, poorly drained flats, depressions, waterway banks and beds, as well as grasslands and disturbed sites. Its elevation ranges from 300 to 1640 feet.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas.	Low Potential
Long-spined spineflower (*Chorizanthe polygonoides* var. *longispina*)	1B.2, S3	An annual herb native to Santa Barbara, Orange, Riverside, and San Diego Counties. Inhabits chaparral, coastal scrub, meadows and seeps, valley and foothill grasslands, and vernal pools with a preference for clay soils.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in areas of Altamont and Porterville clay soils.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in areas of Altamont and Porterville clay soils.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in areas of Altamont and Porterville clay soils.	Low Potential
Paniculate tarplant (*Deinandra paniculata*)	4.2, S4	An annual herb native to central and southern California. Usually inhabits vernally mesic, and sometimes sandy soils within coastal scrub, valley and foothill grasslands, and vernal pools.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in areas of Altamont and Porterville clay soils.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in areas of Altamont and Porterville clay soils.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in areas of Altamont and Porterville clay soils.	Low Potential

Species	Sensitivity Status [a]	Description	Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line	Underground 230-kV Transmission Line	Distribution Line Relocations #7 & #8	Etiwanda Marshalling Yard
Many-stemmed dudleya (*Dudleya multicaulis*)	1B.2, S2	A perennial herb endemic to the coastal plains of southern California. It inhabits heavy clay soils in barren, dry stony places, or thinly vegetated openings within coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and valley and foothill grassland communities. Occurs in habitats 0 to 2600 feet in elevation.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in areas of Altamont and Porterville clay soils.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in areas of Altamont and Porterville clay soils.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present in areas of Altamont and Porterville clay soils.	Low Potential
Santa Ana River woollystar (*Eriastrum densifolium* ssp. *sanctorum*)	FE, SE, 1B.1, S1	A perennial herb endemic to the Santa Ana River drainage of San Bernardino, Riverside, and Orange Counties. Inhabits chaparral and coastal scrub 500 to 2000 feet in elevation.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present within riparian areas and alluvial margins-notably in areas of recent *Arundo donax* removal.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present within riparian areas and alluvial margins-notably in areas of recent *Arundo donax* removal.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present within riparian areas and alluvial margins-notably in areas of recent *Arundo donax* removal.	Low Potential
Southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica* var. *californica*)	4.2, S3	A perennial deciduous tree endemic to southern California walnut forests, a fragmented, rare, and declining vegetation community. Inhabits alluvial soils within chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and riparian woodland.	Present. Located adjacent to AX21.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present.	Moderate Potential. Suitable habitat is present.	Absent
Brand's star phacelia (*Phacelia stellaris*)	1B.1, S1	An annual herb native to multiple counties in southern California. Seriously endangered in California; known from approximately ten occurrences. Inhabits coastal dunes and coastal scrub.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present along alluvial margins of the Santa Ana River.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present along alluvial margins of the Santa Ana River.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present along alluvial margins of the Santa Ana River.	Low Potential

Species	Sensitivity Status [a]	Description	Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line	Underground 230-kV Transmission Line	Distribution Line Relocations #7 & #8	Etiwanda Marshalling Yard

Notes:

[a] Sensitivity Status Designations:

Federal Status Designations:

FE – Federally-Listed Endangered

FT – Federally-Listed Threatened

FC – Federal Candidate Species for Listing

FD – Federally-Delisted

BCC – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Birds of Conservation Concern

California Rare Plant Rank:

1A – Plants Presumed Extinct in California

1B – Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere

2 – Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, But More Common Elsewhere

3 – Plants About Which More Information is Needed

4 - Plants of Limited Distribution - A Watch List

CNPS Threat Rank (extension to California Rare Plant Rank)

0.1 - Seriously threatened in California

0.2 - Fairly threatened in California

0.3 - Not very threatened in California

State Status Designations:

SE – State-listed as Endangered

ST – State-listed as Threatened

SC – State Candidate Species for Listing

SD – State-Delisted

SSC – California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern

FP – California Department of Fish and Wildlife Fully Protected Species

WL – California Department of Fish and Wildlife Watch List Species

California Natural Diversity Database Element Ranking:

SX – All California sites are extirpated

S1 – Critically Imperiled

S2 – Imperiled

S3 – Vulnerable

S4 – Apparently Secure

S5 – Secure

Sources: (California Native Plant Society, 2017; USFWS, n.d.; AECOM, 2016b; AECOM, 2016d)

Focused Special-Status Plant Surveys

Focused surveys for rare plants were performed for the Revised Project on March 30 and May 22, 2017 during optimal growing and identification periods (AECOM, 2017). Several individuals of paniculate tarplant were located within the BSA during surveys. While this plant species is a CNPS Watch List species of limited distribution, it is not considered a special-status plant as it is not federally listed nor listed within CCR Title 14 § 670.2 or 670.5 (Section 15380 of CEQA). CEQA does consider plants not listed on CRPR List 1B or 2B if they are considered rare within the region or location they are found. In this case, paniculate tarplant is not considered rare or threatened by any regional authority. Paniculate tarplant is plentiful within Riverside County and is not threatened with significant population decline. No other listed or sensitive plant species were identified during focused surveys of the BSA.

Special-Status Wildlife

The potential for special-status wildlife species to occur in the BSA was initially evaluated by performing a query of the CNDDB. Special-status wildlife species reported to the CNDDB and their potential for occurrence in the BSA are presented in Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR.

The probability of occurrence within the BSA was determined for each of these species using the following criteria:

- **Present.** Species detected during recent surveys within the BSA.
- **High Potential.** Species with known recent (i.e., last 25 years) recorded occurrences/populations in the BSA or nearby, and for which highly suitable habitat occurs within or adjacent to the BSA. Suitable habitat includes all necessary elements to support the species (e.g., vegetation composition and structure).
- **Moderate Potential.** Species with known recent (i.e., last 25 years) recorded occurrences/populations in the BSA or nearby; however, suitable habitat in or adjacent to the BSA is marginal to low quality. Suitable habitat could be fragmented or small in size. A "moderate potential" assessment was also made for species with no or few known recent recorded occurrences/populations but that have highly suitable habitat within or adjacent to the BSA.
- **Low Potential.** Species with few known recent (i.e., last 25 years) recorded occurrences/populations nearby, and suitable habitat within the BSA is of marginal or low quality.
- **Absent.** Species with no suitable habitat in the BSA.

A total of 82 special-status wildlife species have potential to occur within in the vicinity of the Revised Project area (AECOM, 2016d). Of these 82 species, four species are confirmed present in the BSA, 46 species have moderate or high potential to occur, and 33 species are either absent or have low potential to occur (or are migratory only or winter visitors that do not breed in the BSA). Special-status wildlife species present, or with moderate or high potential to occur in the BSA are identified in Table 4.4-5. Refer to Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR for map books depicting special-status wildlife species' locations.

Table 4.4-5 Special-Status Wildlife with Moderate or High Potential to Occur in the Biological Survey Area

Species	Sensitivity Status [a]	Description	Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line	Underground 230-kV Transmission Line	Distribution Line Relocations #7 & #8	Etiwanda Marshalling Yard
Delhi sands flower-loving fly (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*)	FE	A large fly known from a very small range in southern California, southwestern San Bernardino and northwestern Riverside Counties. Its habitat is restricted to fine, sandy soils, often with wholly or partly consolidated dunes, and a particular soil type classified as the "Delhi" formation.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in the vicinity of pole locations JD22 and JD21.[2]	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in the vicinity of vaults V1 and V2.	No suitable habitat is present.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present throughout Etiwanda Marshalling yard.
Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)	FE, SE	A small, rare to locally uncommon songbird which breeds in southern California during the summer (late March to early September). Prefers willow riparian communities, which may be in the vicinity of water or along dry river bottoms.	No suitable habitat is present.	Present. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas in Goose Creek Golf Club. Observed during focused surveys.	Present. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas along the banks of the Santa Ana River in vicinity to Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8. Observed during focused surveys.	No suitable habitat is present.

[2] See Appendix H for exact locations of poles and vaults referenced.

Species	Sensitivity Status [a]	Description	Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line	Underground 230-kV Transmission Line	Distribution Line Relocations #7 & #8	Etiwanda Marshalling Yard
Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*)	FE, SE	A small, very rare, localized, and declining bird which breeds in southern California during the summer (mid-May to late August) Restricted to moist riparian communities, with breeding documented from sea level to over 5,000 feet. Nesting habitat typically is dominated by willows but may also be dominated by alders and (very locally) salt cedar and coast live oak.	No suitable habitat is present.	Present. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas in Goose Creek Golf Club. Observed during focused surveys.	Present. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas along the banks of the Santa Ana River in vicinity to Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8. Observed during focused surveys.	No suitable habitat is present.
Western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*)	FT, BCC, SE	An extremely rare and localized bird which occurs in southern California during the summer (mid-May to late August) Its breeding is now restricted to only a few southern California sites. It requires relatively expansive tracts of mature floodplain riparian forest, generally consisting of dense cottonwoods and willows, with a well-developed understory component.	No suitable habitat is present.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas in Goose Creek Golf Club.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas along the banks of the Santa Ana River in vicinity to Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8.	No suitable habitat is present.
Los Angeles pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris brevinasus*)	SSC	A small mouse which ranges historically from Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties south to portions of western Riverside County. Occurs in relatively arid, lower elevations with fine, sandy soils, typically in grassland or coastal sage scrub habitats.	No suitable habitat is present.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in sandy areas along the Santa Ana River.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in sandy areas along the Santa Ana River.	No suitable habitat is present.

Species	Sensitivity Status [a]	Description	Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line	Underground 230-kV Transmission Line	Distribution Line Relocations #7 & #8	Etiwanda Marshalling Yard
Northwestern San Diego pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus fallax fallax*)	SSC	A small mouse which occurs on the coast slope of southern California from Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties south to San Diego County. It inhabits coastal sage scrub, scrub/grassland ecotones, and chaparral communities, often in rocky areas.	No suitable habitat is present.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas along the Santa Ana River.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas along the Santa Ana River.	No suitable habitat is present.
San Bernardino kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*)	FE, SSC	A large-headed rodent native to the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Valleys, with the largest remaining populations along the Santa Ana River, Lytle and Cajon washes, and the San Jacinto River. Its habitat includes alluvial sage scrub on alluvial fans, flood plains, washes, adjacent upland areas, and areas with historic braided stream channels.	No suitable habitat is present.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in sandy areas along the Santa Ana River.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in sandy areas along the Santa Ana River.	No suitable habitat is present.

Species	Sensitivity Status [a]	Description	Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line	Underground 230-kV Transmission Line	Distribution Line Relocations #7 & #8	Etiwanda Marshalling Yard
Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia)*	SSC	A small, ground-dwelling owl with long legs, white chin stripe, round head, and stubby tail; adults are boldly spotted and barred with brown and white; juveniles' chests are buff colored. Habitat includes open grasslands, especially prairie, plains, and savanna; sometimes other open areas such as vacant lots near human habitation or airports. This owl spends much time on the ground or on low perches such as fence posts or dirt mounds. Nests are in abandoned burrows, such as those dug by prairie dogs, ground squirrels, and foxes.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in agricultural areas and grassland habitats within the BSA.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in agricultural areas and grassland habitats within the BSA.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in agricultural areas and grassland habitats within the BSA.	High Potential. Suitable habitat is present in agricultural areas and grassland habitats within the BSA.
Yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*)	SSC	A small bird which occurs in southern California during the summer (April to August). It inhabits willow riparian thickets and other brushy tangles near water courses. It typically nests in riparian-associated understory vegetation, and generally forages and nests within 10 feet of the ground.	No suitable habitat is present.	Present. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas along the Santa Ana River. Observed during focused surveys.	Present. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas along the Santa Ana River. Observed during focused surveys.	No suitable habitat is present.
Yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia*)	BCC, SSC	A common spring and fall transient throughout southern California; an uncommon, though increasing, summer visitor (April to August); and breeder, primarily along the coastal slope. For breeding, requires mature riparian woodland, primarily consisting of tall cottonwoods, willows, or alders.	No suitable habitat is present.	Present. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas along the Santa Ana River. Observed during focused surveys.	Present. Suitable habitat is present in riparian areas along the Santa Ana River. Observed during focused surveys.	No suitable habitat is present.

Species	Sensitivity Status [a]	Description	Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line	Underground 230-kV Transmission Line	Distribution Line Relocations #7 & #8	Etiwanda Marshalling Yard

Notes:

[a] Sensitivity Status Designations:

Federal Status Designations:

FE – Federally-Listed Endangered

FT – Federally-Listed Threatened

FC – Federal Candidate Species for Listing

FD – Federally-Delisted

BCC – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Birds of Conservation Concern

State Status Designations:

SE – State-listed as Endangered

ST – State-listed as Threatened

SC – State Candidate Species for Listing

SD – State-Delisted

SSC – California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern

FP – California Department of Fish and Wildlife Fully Protected Species

WL – California Department of Fish and Wildlife Watch List Species

Sources: (Natureserve Explorer, 2016; USFWS, n.d.)

Focused Special-status Wildlife Surveys

The results of focused special-status wildlife surveys are summarized below. Additional details regarding focused wildlife surveys are provided in Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR.

Delhi Sand Flower-loving Fly. The Delhi sands flower-loving fly (DSFLF) (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*) is a federally-listed endangered species and is covered by the Western Riverside County MSHCP. The subsequent habitat assessment performed on the underground portion of the Revised Project identified potentially suitable habitat in several locations within the BSA for the DSFLF (AECOM, 2016b; AECOM, 2016c). Focused surveys for DSFLF were completed in 2016 and 2017 according to USFWS protocol (AECOM, 2016d) and did not find the presence of adult or larval DSFLF, or associated insect species in the areas of suitable habitat.

Least Bell's Vireo. Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) is a federal and state endangered species and is covered by the Western Riverside County MSHCP. Focused surveys were completed for least Bell's vireo in riparian habitat within the BSA. Survey results noted the presence of approximately 308 individuals across several surveys. Least Bell's vireo was found foraging and exhibiting nesting behavior in portions of the Goose Creek Golf Club adjacent to the underground alignment as well as along the southern bank of the Santa Ana River in the vicinity of Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8. Several fledglings were observed within the Goose Creek Golf Club.

Southwestern Willow Flycatcher. The southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) is a federally- and state-listed endangered species and is covered by the Western Riverside County MSHCP. Focused surveys detected the presence of southwestern willow flycatcher in riparian habitat within the Goose Creek Golf Club and along the southern bank of the Santa Ana River in the vicinity of Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8. No nesting or breeding behavior was observed, but the species does use the Santa Ana River as part of its migratory corridor. Focused surveys did not identify individuals to the sub species level; therefore, observed willow flycatchers have not been confirmed as the federally-listed species. The observed willow flycatcher is state-listed as endangered.

Yellow-Billed Cuckoo. The western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*) is a federal candidate for listing, a state-listed endangered species, and is covered by the Western Riverside County MSHCP. No yellow-billed cuckoo individuals were detected during focused surveys; however, there is suitable habitat and a high potential for the species to occur within the Revised Project area, including the transmission line ROW and at Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8.

Burrowing Owl. The western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*) is a state species of concern and is covered by the Western Riverside County MSHCP. Focused surveys were performed for burrowing owl in the BSA in 2016 (Parus Consulting, 2016). The presence of suitable habitat, along with recent occurrences in the CNDDB record, point to a high potential for occurrence within the BSA; however, no individuals were identified in focused surveys.

Los Angeles Pocket Mouse, Northwestern San Diego Pocket Mouse, and San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat. The Los Angeles pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris brevinasus*) and the northwestern San Diego pocket mouse (*Chaetodipus fallax fallax*) are state species of concern. The San Bernardino kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*) is federal-endangered species and a state species of special concern. All three species are covered by the Western Riverside County MSHCP. Focused surveys (trapping) were performed for these small mammal species in all identified suitable habitat within 500 feet of each project component and 100 feet on either side of project-related access roads. Trapping was conducted from July to September 2016. No special-status small mammals were recovered during trapping and no evidence of these species was observed in the field (AECOM, 2016d).

Sensitive Habitat

Two vegetation communities and land cover types were identified in the BSA. One, Fremont cottonwood forest, is classified as sensitive habitat in the MSHCP, which considers all riparian habitat types as sensitive habitat. The mapped locations of Fremont cottonwood forest are included in Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR.

Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands

Jurisdictional Delineation

Aquatic resources under the regulation of the USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB were identified within the GDAD. A total of 17 features were delineated as part of studies performed for the Proposed Project, three of which occur within the GDAD for the Revised Project (ICF, 2017). Twelve of the 17 features are classified as earthen bottom channels and are generally located along the Santa Ana River. The acreages of potentially jurisdictional waters and wetlands occurring in the GDAD are listed in Table 4.4-6. Potentially jurisdictional features in the GDAD include riparian vegetation and a vegetated ephemeral drainage. Refer to Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR for map books depicting potential jurisdictional waters and wetlands in the GDAD.

Table 4.4-6 Potential Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands in the GDAD

Feature Type	Acres
Riparian Vegetation	1.28
Streambed (Vegetated)	0.012
Streambed (Unvegetated)	1.46

Source: (ICF, 2017)

Critical Habitat

Critical habitat under the federal ESA generally consists of (1) the specific areas within the geographic area, occupied by the federally threatened or endangered species at the time of listing, that contain the physical or biological features that are essential to the conservation of the listed species and that may require special management consideration or protection, and (2) specific areas outside the geographic area occupied by a federally threatened or

endangered species at the time of listing that are essential for the conservation of the listed species (USFWS, 2014).

Critical habitat within a 5-mile buffer of the Revised Project components were considered. Table 4.4-7 summarizes the closest proximities of critical habitat to the Revised Project components within the 5-mile buffer. Critical habitat within the BSA and potentially impacted by the Revised Project are shown on Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR.

Table 4.4-7 Proximity of Critical Habitat within 5 miles of Revised Project Components

Species	Distance to Revised Project
Southwestern willow flycatcher	1.90 miles southwest of the underground alignment
Santa Ana sucker	Intersects the underground alignment
Least Bell's vireo	Intersects the underground alignment
Coastal California gnatcatcher	3.60 miles northeast of the overhead alignment
Yellow-billed cuckoo	1.6 miles southwest of the underground alignment

Preserve Areas

The Western Riverside County MSHCP has designated several criteria cells that contain components of the Revised Project. Criteria cells are the units that compose the MSHCP's Criteria Areas, which are areas that adjoin the MSHCP's Core Areas, Linkages, and Non-contiguous Habitat Blocks. Core Areas are areas with the right resources to provide live-in habitat and support the life history requirements of one or more species covered by the MSHCP. Linkages connect core areas but may not themselves provide enough living space for covered species. Non-contiguous Habitat Blocks are areas that were previously set aside for conservation due to the presence of specific species or past conservation efforts. Covered species either live in Criteria Areas or travel through them when moving from one area of conserved habitat to another. In addition, the Santa Ana River Wildlife Area and Hidden Valley Wildlife Area are considered Public/Quasi-Public Land and are conserved by the MSHCP. These areas function as habitat preserves. Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8 are located within the Hidden Valley Wildlife Area and the Santa Ana River Wildlife Area.

4.4.5 Regulatory Setting

Federal

Endangered Species Act

The federal ESA provides protection for plants and animals listed as threatened or endangered by USFWS and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Fisheries Service. Section 9 of the ESA (50 CFR 17.3) prohibits the take, possession, sale, or transport of any federal ESA-listed species. Take is defined as "to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct" (16 U.S. Code [USC] § 1532[19]). Federal regulation 50 CFR 17.3 further defines the term harm in the take definition to mean any act that actually kills or injures a federally-listed species, including significant habitat

modification or degradation. For plants, the federal ESA prohibits removing, possessing, maliciously damaging, or destroying any listed plant on areas under federal jurisdiction, and removing, cutting, digging up, damaging, or destroying any listed plant on non-federal land in knowing violation of state law (16 USC § 1538[a][2][B]).

The federal ESA requires the federal government to designate critical habitat for any species listed under the federal ESA, but also allows areas to be excluded from critical habitat (16 USC § 1533[b][2]). Critical habitat is a specific area(s) that is essential for the conservation of a threatened or endangered species and that may require special management and protection. Critical habitat may also include specific areas outside the geographical area occupied by the species if the agency determines that the area itself is essential for conservation.

Section 7 of the federal ESA requires federal agencies to consult with USFWS and/or NOAA Marine Fisheries Service for any federal activity that may affect any federally-listed species or its critical habitat. Informal consultation may precede and obviate the need for formal consultation if USFWS and/or NOAA Marine Fisheries Service concur that the proposed agency action is not likely to adversely affect listed species. In the formal consultation process, USFWS and/or NOAA Marine Fisheries Service must issue a Biological Opinion as to the potential for effect on listed species. USFWS and/or NOAA Marine Fisheries Service may issue an incidental take permit, allowing take of the species that is incidental to an authorized activity, provided that the action will not jeopardize the continued existence of the species.

Section 10(a) of the ESA provides for issuance of incidental take permits for private actions that have no federal involvement, through the development of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The process for obtaining an incidental take permit has three primary phases: (1) the HCP development phase; (2) the formal permit processing phase; and (3) the post-issuance phase. During the HCP development phase, the project applicant prepares a plan that integrates the Proposed Project or activity with the protection of listed species. An HCP submitted in support of an incidental take permit application must include the following information:

- Impacts likely to result from the proposed taking of the species for which permit coverage is requested
- Measures that will be implemented to monitor, minimize, and mitigate impacts
- Funding that will be made available to undertake such measures and procedures to deal with unforeseen circumstances
- Alternative actions considered that would not result in take
- Additional measures USFWS may require as necessary or appropriate for purposes of the plan

Effects to federally-listed species with no lead federal agency require preparation of an HCP, a management agreement, and an analysis prepared in compliance with NEPA.

Revised Project effects to federally-listed species may be covered by the Western Riverside County MSHCP, which is described further below.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) provides protection for migratory birds. Conditions for permits to "take" migratory birds (as defined in the MBTA) are set forth in 50 CFR Part 13 (General Permit Procedures) and 50 CFR Part 21 (Migratory Bird Permits). Unless expressly authorized in the regulations or by permit, activities such as hunting, pursuing, capturing, killing, selling, and shipping migratory birds are prohibited. The MBTA allows USFWS to issue permits to qualified applicants for the following types of activities:

- Falconry
- Raptor propagation
- Scientific collecting
- Special purposes (rehabilitation, education, migratory game bird propagation, and salvage)
- Take of predatory birds, taxidermy, and waterfowl sale and disposal

This protection extends to all migratory birds, parts, nests, and eggs. The full list of species protected under this act is found in 50 CFR 10.13.

Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Protection Act

The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 USC 668-668c), prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior, from "taking" bald eagles, including their parts, nests, or eggs. The Act provides criminal penalties for persons who "take, possess, sell, purchase, barter, offer to sell, purchase or barter, transport, export or import, at any time or any manner, any bald eagle ... [or any golden eagle], alive or dead, or any part, nest, or egg thereof." The Act defines "take" as "pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb."

"Disturb" means: "to agitate or bother a bald or golden eagle to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available, 1) injury to an eagle, 2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or 3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior."

In addition to immediate impacts, this definition also covers impacts that result from human-induced alterations initiated around a previously used nest site during a time when eagles are not present, if, upon the eagle's return, such alterations agitate or bother an eagle to a degree that interferes with or interrupts normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering habits, and causes injury, death or nest abandonment.

Clean Water Act of 1977

The Clean Water Act (CWA) is intended to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters (33 CFR 1251). The regulations implementing the CWA protect "Waters of the United States," including streams and wetlands (33 CFR 328.3). USACE and USEPA have jurisdiction over waters of the U.S. Waters of the U.S. include areas classified as Wetlands, Navigable Water, or Other Waters, and include marine waters, tidal areas, stream channels, and associated wetlands. Under federal regulations, wetlands are defined as "those

areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions" (33 CFR 328.3[b]).

Section 404 of the CWA requires an Individual Permit for significant impacts on waters of the U.S., and the USACE has issued 52 separate Nationwide Permits for different types of projects with minor impacts on waters of the U.S. It is anticipated that the Revised Project would qualify for use of one or more Nationwide Permits.

State

California Endangered Species Act

CESA provides protection for candidate plants and animal species as well as those listed as threatened or endangered by CDFW. The Act prohibits the take of any such species unless authorized; however, California case law has not interpreted habitat destruction, alone, as included in the state's definition of take. Take is defined in the Fish and Game Code § 86 as "hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill" (California Fish and Game Code § 86). CDFW administers the act and authorizes take through § 2081 agreements, § 2080.1 consistency determinations (for species that are also listed under the federal ESA), or Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP).

Revised Project effects on state-listed species may be covered by the Western Riverside County MSHCP, which is an NCCP as described further below.

California Fish and Game Code

California Fish and Game Code requires State agencies to comply with regulations that promote the protection and conservation of threatened and endangered species. Regulations in place include:

- **California Species Preservation Act.** Provides for the protection and enhancement of listed species in California
- **Raptor Protection.** Prohibits killing of raptor species and destruction of raptor nests
- **Protection for Birds.** Sections 3503 and 3503.5 make it unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird; it is also unlawful to take possess or destroy of birds of prey or their nests or eggs
- **Native Plant Protection Act.** Prohibits the take of rare, threatened, or endangered plants
- **Protection for Wetland and Riparian Habitats.** Requires a lake or streambed alteration agreement for activities that impact these habitats
- **Take of Rare Plants.** CDFW may issue permits, plans, or programs that authorize rare plant impacts
- **Fully Protected Species.** Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515 of the California Fish and Game Code provide guidelines to protect wildlife species that are designated as "fully protected" by the CDFW. Before the implementation of CESA and ESA, the State of California designated species as "fully protected" to provide protection for

species that were rare or threatened with possible extinction/extirpation. Many of these "fully protected" species have since been listed under CESA as threatened or endangered species. Most "fully protected" species cannot be harmed, taken, or possessed at any time, because the designation as "fully protected" provides the same level of protection as a listed species. CDFW may permit the incidental take of "fully protected" species pursuant to a NCCP plan approved by CDFW, as long as the plan's conservation and management guidelines adequately protect these species, and the species is covered under the plan.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act and Clean Water Act Section 401

The State Water Resources Control Board administers the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act and § 401 of the CWA, typically through its RWQCBs. The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, Water Code § 13260, requires that, "any person discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, within any region that could affect the 'waters of the state' to file a report of discharge" with the RWQCB. Waters of the state as defined in the Porter-Cologne Act (Water Code § 13050 [e]) are "any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state."

Local

Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

The Western Riverside County MSHCP (2003) is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional program focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in Western Riverside County. The MSHCP is designed to provide protection and conservation efforts for threatened and endangered species through a multi-species habitat-based long-term approach that covers approximately 1.26 million acres in western Riverside County. The ultimate goal is to protect multiple species by preserving a variety of habitat and providing linkages between different habitat areas. In 2004, USFWS issued a Section 10 Incidental Take Permit for covered species.

The MSHCP serves as an HCP pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the federal ESA, as well as a NCCP under the NCCP Act of 2001. The MSHCP promotes the biological viability and recovery of Western Riverside County's ecosystems, habitats, and species within the area, with the ultimate goal of reducing the need to list additional species in the future. USFWS and CDFW have authority to regulate the take of threatened and endangered species. Consistent with the terms and conditions of approval of the MSHCP, USFWS and CDFW have granted "Take Authorization" to participating jurisdictions (Permittees), such as the City of Riverside, in exchange for the assembly and management of coordinated MSHCP Conservation Areas for 146 covered species. Incidental take authorization may also be granted to participating special entities (PSEs). PSEs include any regional public facility provider, such as a utility company or a public district or agency. PSEs also include any other individual or entity that does not require discretionary permits from any of the Permittees, that operates and/or owns land within the MSHCP Area, and that applies for take authorization pursuant to the MSHCP Implementing Agreement.

The Revised Project is located in northwestern Riverside County in private, quasi-public lands, and public lands and within the MSHCP boundaries.

Regional Conservation Authority

The RCA was created in 2004 to implement and manage the MSHCP. The RCA is a Joint Powers Authority, which is an entity permitted under the laws of some U.S. states whereby two or more public authorities (e.g., local governments, or utility or transport districts), not necessarily located in the same state, may jointly exercise any power common to all of them. One of the RCA's obligations under the MSHCP is to assist the Permittees and PSEs with MSHCP implementation. The RCA provides guidance documents and staff support to assist Permittees and PSEs with the interpretation and clarification of key components and concepts of the MSHCP related to public facility projects and local land use planning. The RCA acquires and manages MSHCP conservation lands and reviews all individual projects proposed in the MSCHP area for consistency with MSHCP requirements. Projects that are consistent with the MSHCP (determined by the RCA with concurrence by CDFW and USFWS) are eligible for ESA and CESA take authorization under the MSHCP, with the process entirely administered through the RCA.

For Permittee projects that would be located in Criteria Areas, and for all PSE projects, the RCA completes a consistency review (called Joint Project Review) to determine whether each project is consistent with the MSHCP, and therefore eligible for ESA and CESA take authorization of covered species, under the terms of the permits issued by CDFW and USFWS. The Joint Project Review process may result in project-specific conditions to ensure consistency with the MSHCP.

RPU, as a Permittee under the MSHCP, would ensure MSHCP compliance on behalf of SCE for the Revised Project in coordination with the RCA. SCE would not seek separate PSE status under the MSHCP. The Revised Project would cross or require construction work within portions of Criteria Cells 610, 700, and 617 (See Figure 4.4-5 and Figure 4.4-6). RPU would mitigate potential impacts of the Revised Project on covered species under the MSHCP through payment of mitigation fees and compliance with other requirements of the MSHCP as applicable. These requirements provide full mitigation under CEQA, ESA, and CESA for impacts on the MSHCP-covered species and habitats.

MSCP Compliance and Mitigation Requirements

The MSHCP identifies requirements to mitigate for unavoidable impacts on covered species and their habitat. The MSHCP also identifies requirements for narrow endemic plant surveys and surveys for other covered species as part of management of conservation requirements. The MSHCP requires Permittees to adhere to a set of construction guidelines and BMPs as well as pay the appropriate fees based on the type of project and impacts. Requirements applicable to the Revised Project are listed in Appendix H.

Figure 4.4-5 MSHCP Criteria Cells within the Revised Project Area

Sources: (Esri, 2017; SCE, 2017; Dudek and Associates, Inc., 2002; Riverside Conservation Authority, 2016)

Figure 4.4-6 MSHCP Criteria Cells in the Revised Project Area

Sources: (Esri, 2017; SCE, 2017; Dudek and Associates, Inc., 2002; Riverside Conservation Authority, 2016)

Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan

The Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan (SKRHCP) was adopted in 1996. The City of Riverside is a permittee under the SKRHCP, and although the Revised Project is not expected to have any impact on Stephens' kangaroo rat, the City of Riverside will comply with its requirements. No Stephens' kangaroo rat conservation habitat preidentified by the SKRHCP would be affected by the Revised Project. Based on the MSHCP and the USFWS incidental take authorization for the MSHCP, this species is adequately conserved, and no additional surveys are required for the Revised Project.

County of Riverside

Tree Removal Ordinance

The County of Riverside Planning Department issues permits for the removal of living native trees pursuant to Chapter 12.24 of the Riverside County Code of Ordinances. Tree removal that occurs for the purpose of constructing, operating, or maintaining public utilities are exempt under Exemption C, which reads, "Any activities conducted by a public utility, subject to the jurisdiction of the public utilities commission or any other constituted public agency, where, to construct and maintain safe operation of facilities under their jurisdiction, trees are removed, pruned, topped or braced." This ordinance also applies to the City of Jurupa Valley, which has adopted all ordinances of Riverside County that are not specifically identified in their list of City ordinances (City of Jurupa Valley, 2017a).

City of Jurupa Valley

2017 Draft General Plan

The City of Jurupa Valley adopted the 2017 Draft General Plan on August 17, 2017. The Conservation and Open Space Element identifies goals and policies related to biological resources. The following goals and policies are relevant to the Revised Project (City of Jurupa Valley, 2017b):

Goal COS 1	Protect, preserve, and create the conditions that will promote the preservation of significant trees and other vegetation, particularly native California species.
Policy COS 1.1	**Habitat Conservation.** Conserve key habitats, including existing wetlands and California native plant communities, with a focus on protecting and restoring the following endangered species habitats: A. Conserve alluvial fan sage scrub associated with the Santa Ana River to support key populations of Santa Ana River woolly-star (*Eriastrum densifolium sanctorum*). B. Conserve clay soils to support key populations of many-stemmed liveforever plants (*Dudleya multicaulis*) known to occur along the Jurupa Valley portion of the Santa Ana River. C. Conserve known populations of least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) and southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) along the Santa Ana River.

D. Conserve large intact habitat areas consisting of coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and grasslands to support known locations of coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica*).
E. Conserve grassland and coastal sage scrub supporting known populations of San Bernardino kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*) in the Jurupa Mountains.
F. Conserve grasslands adjacent to sage scrub for foraging habitat for raptors.

Policy COS 1.2 **Protection of Significant Trees.** Protect and preserve significant trees, as determined by the City Council upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission. Significant trees are those trees that make substantial contributions to natural habitat or to the urban landscape due to their species, size, or rarity. In particular, California native trees should be protected.

Policy COS 1.3 **Other Significant Vegetation.** Maintain and conserve superior examples of vegetation, including: agricultural wind screen plantings, street trees, stands of mature native and non-native trees, and other features of ecological, aesthetic, and conservation value.

Policy COS 2.1 **MSHCP Implementation.** Implement provisions of the MSHCP when conducting review of development applications, General Plan amendments/zoning changes, transportation, or other infrastructure projects that are covered activities in the MSHCP.

Policy COS 3.21 **Ecotones.** Identify and, to the maximum extent possible, conserve remaining upland habitat areas, or "ecotones" adjacent to wetland and riparian areas that are critical to the feeding, hibernation, or nesting of wildlife species.

City of Riverside

General Plan 2025

The City of Riverside has prepared the 2025 General Plan, which was adopted in November 2007. The following policies outlined in the Open Space and Conservation Element are applicable to the Revised Project (City of Riverside, 2012):

Policy OS-1.1 Protect and preserve open space and natural habitat wherever possible.

Policy OS-1.3 Work with Riverside County and adjacent cities, landowners and conservation organizations to preserve, protect and enhance open space and natural resources.

Objective OS-5 Protect biotic communities and critical habitats for endangered species throughout the General Plan Area.

Policy OS-5.1	Preserve significant habitat and environmentally sensitive areas, including hillsides, rock outcroppings, creeks, streams, viewsheds and arroyos through application of the RC Zone standards and the Hillside/Arroyo standards of the City's Grading Code.
Policy OS-5.2	Continue to participate in the MSHCP Program and ensure all projects comply with applicable requirements.
Policy OS-5.3	Continue to participate in the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) Habitat Conservation Plan including collection of mitigation fees.
Policy OS-5.4	Protect native plant communities in the General Plan Area, including sage scrub, riparian areas and vernal pools, consistent with the MSHCP.
Policy OS-6.3	Preserve the integrity of Riverside's arroyos and riparian habitat areas through the preservation of native plants.
Policy OS-7.3	Preserve and expand open space along the Santa Ana River to protect water quality, riparian habit and recreational uses.

4.4.6 Applicant's Environmental Protection Elements

SCE has proposed EPEs to reduce environmental impacts. EPEs that avoid or reduce potentially significant impacts of the Revised Project will be incorporated as part of any CPUC project approval, and SCE will be required to adhere to the EPEs as well as any identified mitigation measures. The EPEs are included in the MMRP for the Revised Project (refer to Chapter 10: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan of this Subsequent EIR), and the implementation of the EPEs will be monitored and documented in the same manner as mitigation measures. No EPEs for the biological resources were included in the 2013 EIR. The EPEs from other resource areas that are applicable to the biological resources analysis are provided in Table 4.4-8.

Table 4.4-8 Environmental Protection Elements for Biological Resources

Environmental Protection Element	Requirements
EPE GEO-02: Implement soil erosion protection measures	Implement soil erosion protection measures. Transmission line, substation construction and upgrades, access roads, distribution line relocation and fiber optic line construction would be performed in accordance with the soil erosion and water quality protection measures specified in the Construction SWPPP.

Environmental Protection Element	Requirements
EPE HAZ-01: Health and Safety Plan, Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste Handling, and Emergency Release Response Procedures	Health and Safety Plan. A health and safety plan to address site-specific health and safety issues would be prepared and implemented. The plan would address emergency medical services and procedures, including specific emergency response and evacuation measures for project personnel. Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste Handling. A project-specific Hazardous Materials Management and Hazardous Waste Management Program would be developed prior to initiation of the project. Material Safety Data Sheets would be made available to all project workers. • Transport of Hazardous Materials: Transport of hazardous materials would be in compliance with U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Caltrans and California Highway Patrol (CHP) regulations (Title 22 CCR, Division 4.5 and 49 CFR 261-263). Transporters of hazardous materials and waste are responsible for complying with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, including the acquisition of required shipping papers, package marking, labeling, transport vehicle placarding, training, and registrations. • Refueling stations would be located in designated areas where absorbent pads and trays would be available. The fuel tanks would also contain a lined area to ensure that accidental spillage does not occur. Hazardous materials, such as paints, solvents, and penetrants, would be kept in an approved locker or storage cabinet. Emergency Release Response Procedures. An Emergency Response Plan detailing responses to releases of hazardous materials would be developed prior to construction activities. All construction personnel, including environmental monitors, would be aware of state and federal emergency response reporting guidelines.
EPE HYDRO-01: Avoidance of Jurisdictional Waters	Jurisdictional Waters. Infrastructure associated with the Proposed Project would be situated outside jurisdictional waters, as defined by the Clean Water Act (e.g., wetlands, stream channels and banks). The Proposed Project has been designed to span and avoid wetlands and riparian areas. Work limits for tower construction, tower footprints, and pull and tension sites would be in upland locations. There is no dredge or fill action expected from construction of the Proposed Project. If jurisdictional waters cannot be avoided, a Section 404 Nationwide 12 Permit will be obtained from the USACE and impacts to jurisdictional waters will be restricted to a total area of no more than 0.5 acre, as mandated by Permit requirements. All permit conditions will be followed to ensure that impacts remain less than significant.
EPE HYDRO-03: Groundwater Dewatering	Dewatering Operations. If groundwater is encountered during construction as indicated by geologic borings, dewatering operations, as described in the construction SWPPP, shall be implemented. Groundwater shall not be discharged to storm drains or to Waters of the U.S., and shall be contained within the work area, using standard stormwater BMPs (e.g., straw wattles) and allowed to percolate back to the ground.
EPE HYDRO-04: Maintaining Natural Drainage Patterns	Maintaining Natural Drainage Patterns. The substations and poles shall be designed and engineered to facilitate natural drainage patterns to minimize or avoid any potential impacts to erosion and siltation.

4.4.7 CEQA Significance Criteria

Appendix G of CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 *et seq.*) provides guidance on assessing whether a project would have significant impacts on the environment. Changes to the Proposed Project or

changes in baseline conditions that were not analyzed in the 2013 RTRP EIR require additional analysis to fully disclose potential impacts of the Revised Project. The CPUC prepared an Initial Study Checklist (refer to Appendix B of this Subsequent EIR) to identify the new potentially significant or increased impacts that may occur as a result of the Revised Project components or changes in baseline conditions. The Initial Study Checklist indicated that the project has the potential for new or increased impacts under the significance criteria included below. Note that the Initial Study Checklist found Impact-c to have no new significant impact. This analysis will analyze the impact again, since the CPUC has identified a substantial increase in ground disturbance within the area of a wetland. The remaining Appendix G significance criterion that was determined to not have a greater impact as described in the 2013 RTRP EIR is not addressed in this section. CEQA significance criteria are lettered below to match the criteria lettering in the 2013 RTRP EIR. Consistent with Appendix G, the Revised Project would have significant impacts on biological resources if it would:

a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by CDFW or USFWS
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by CWA § 404 (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan

4.4.8 Revised Project Impact Analysis

Approach to Impact Analysis

This impact analysis considers whether implementation of the Revised Project would result in significant impacts on biological resources and focuses on reasonably foreseeable effects of the Revised Project as compared with baseline conditions. The analysis uses significance criteria based on the CEQA Appendix G Guidelines. These criteria may be modified to address project impacts. The potential direct and indirect effects of the Revised Project are addressed below, and the cumulative effects are addressed in Chapter 5: Cumulative Impacts. Refer to the 2013 RTRP EIR for analysis of other elements of the Proposed Project.

Impact categories are defined as follows:

- **Direct.** Direct impacts are caused by the project and occur at the same time and place as the project. Any alteration, disturbance, or destruction of environmental

resources that would result from project-related activities is considered a direct impact.

- **Indirect.** As a result of project-related activities, environmental resources may also be affected in a manner that is not direct. Indirect impacts may occur later in time or at a place that is farther removed in distance from the project than direct impacts, but indirect impacts are still reasonably foreseeable and attributable to project-related activities.
- **Permanent.** All impacts that result in the irreversible removal of environmental resources or cause impacts that endure beyond 2 years are considered permanent.
- **Temporary.** Any impacts considered to have reversible effects on environmental resources, where the impact is 2 years or less in duration, are considered temporary.

Applicable EPEs are identified and mitigation is defined to avoid or reduce significant impacts on biological resources. The significance of the impact is first considered prior to application of EPEs and a significance determination is made. The implementation of EPEs is then considered when determining whether impacts would be significant and thus would require mitigation. Mitigation measures included in the 2013 RTRP, with modifications when appropriate, and/or additional new mitigation measures are identified to reduce significant impacts of the Revised Project.

Species Take Authorization

SCE proposes to comply with the protocols and requirements of the Western Riverside County MSHCP through the City of Riverside (an MSHCP Permittee). The MSHCP provides take authorization under the federal and state endangered species acts and provides SCE a means of fully mitigating impacts on MSHCP-covered Species and habitats that would result from the Revised Project. Additional mitigation measures are included in this analysis only when compliance with the MSHCP would not completely reduce a significant impact to less than significant.

The CPUC coordinated with the RCA regarding Revised Project impacts and received comments on the draft biological resources analysis in November 2017 regarding consistency with the MSHCP.

Summary of Impacts

Table 4.4-9 presents a summary of the CEQA significance criteria and impacts on biological resources that would occur during construction, operation, and maintenance of the Revised Project.

Table 4.4-9 Summary of Revised Project Impacts on Biological Resources

Significance Criterion	Project Phase	Significance before EPEs	Significance after EPEs and before Mitigation	Significance after Mitigation
Impact Biology-a: Would the Revised Project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS?	Construction	Significant	Significant EPE GEO-02 EPE HAZ-01	Less than Significant MM BIO-01 MM BIO-01A MM BIO-09 MM BIO-09A MM BIO-14
	Operation and Maintenance	Significant	Significant	Less than Significant MM BIO-02
Impact Biology-b: Would the Revised Project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by CDFW or USFWS?	Construction	Significant	Significant	Less than Significant MM BIO-01 MM BIO-01A MM BIO-15
	Operation and Maintenance	Less than Significant	---	---
Impact Biology-c: Would the Revised Project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	Construction	Significant	Significant EPE HYDRO-01	Less than Significant MM BIO-01 MM BIO-01A
	Operation and Maintenance	Less than Significant	---	---
Impact Biology-e: Would the Revised Project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	Construction	Significant	Significant	Less than Significant MM REC-04
	Operation and Maintenance	No Impact	---	---
Impact Biology-f: Would the Revised Project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	Construction	No Impact	---	---
	Operation and Maintenance	No Impact	---	---

Impact Discussion

Impact Biology-a: Would the Revised Project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS?	Significance Determination
	Construction: ***Less than Significant with Mitigation***
	Operation & Maintenance: ***Less than Significant with Mitigation***

Construction

Direct Impacts

Overview

Construction of the Revised Project would entail ground-disturbing activities and potential vegetation removal to install (1) poles and towers for the overhead segment and (2) underground duct banks and vaults for portions of the underground segment located outside of paved roadways. Permanent habitat loss would result from pole and tower foundations, access manholes for underground vault structures, and new access roads. Vegetation community impacts are shown below in Table 4.4-10. Vegetation communities, wetland and waterbody features, and special-status species sightings are included in Appendix H of this Subsequent EIR.

Potentially significant direct impacts on special-status plant species could occur from damage or removal during construction of the Revised Project. Significant direct impacts on special-status wildlife species would occur if Revised Project construction activities resulted in injury or mortality. Potentially significant impacts on special-status species are discussed in more detail below.

Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line. Construction of the overhead 230-kV transmission line would result in the disturbance of habitat where pole foundations are installed. Temporary disturbance would occur as a result of access road and workspace construction. Permanent impacts would occur where pole and tower foundations are installed. The overhead segment is primarily located in disturbed areas, or areas of active or recent agricultural usage. These lands represent limited suitable habitat for special-status species identified as potentially occurring in the Revised Project area. However, temporary and permanent habitat impacts would occur within Fremont cottonwood forest habitat, which has been shown to support special-status avian species (AECOM, 2016b).

Underground 230-kV Transmission Line. Construction of the underground 230-kV transmission line would require trenching and excavation for installation of duct banks and vaults, which would result in the disturbance of habitat. The underground transmission line would be installed largely in developed roadways and in a limited amount of habitat that is considered disturbed or is used for agriculture; however, construction of the underground alignment in the Goose Creek Golf Club would impact riparian and wetland habitat. Construction staging and excavation would require both temporary and permanent removal of riparian habitat trees. The presence of open trenches during construction of the underground transmission line also presents a potential for entrapment of terrestrial animals such as reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals that may be in the project area.

Table 4.4-10 Impacts on Vegetation Communities and Cover Types within the Revised Project Area [a]

Vegetation Community or Cover Type [b]	Overhead 230-kV Transmission Line (acres)		Underground 230-kV Transmission Line (acres)		Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8 (acres)		Total (acres)	
	Temporary	Permanent	Temporary	Permanent	Temporary	Permanent	Temporary	Permanent
Fremont Cottonwood Forest	0	0	0	0	0.01	0	0.01	0
Riparian Habitat	0	0	0.41 - 1.28 [c]	0.09	0	0	0.41 - 1.28 [c]	0.09
Annual Brome Grasslands	1.08	0.48	0.07	0	1.47	0	2.62	0.48
Developed	3.47	1.88	15.37	0.42	0.26	0	19.10	2.30
Active Agriculture	0.02	0.87	2.22	0.06	0.11	0	2.35	0.93
Barren-Not Developed	0	0	0.07	0	0.12	0	0.19	0
Total Disturbance	4.57	3.23	18.14 – 19.01	0.57	1.97	0	24.68 – 25.55	3.80

Notes:

[a] Temporary disturbance acreage values do not account for puller and tensioner stringing set-up locations, which will be located during final design.

[b] No impact on wetland features would occur.

[c] Impact acreage considers potential extent of stringing set-up location within riparian habitat.

Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8. Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8 would require ground disturbance to remove existing poles, install new distribution riser poles, and excavate for a new underground duct bank. These activities would result in impacts on annual brome grassland and disturbed land. Distribution Line Relocation #7 is adjacent to riparian habitat present on the southern bank of the Santa Ana River. Distribution Line Relocation #8 would cross a drainage supporting non-native grassland species.

Etiwanda Marshalling Yard. The Etiwanda Marshalling Yard is located in undeveloped agricultural habitat that supports Delhi sands soils, which is suitable habitat for DSFLF as well as burrowing owl. Potentially significant impacts would occur if construction activities related to yard construction and operation resulted in mortality of DSFLF or burrowing owl. These activities would include grading, excavation, operation and storage of heavy equipment, and material storage.

Special-Status Plants

No special-status plant species were observed within the Revised Project area during focused surveys for special-status plants as required by the MSHCP (AECOM, 2017). ***The Revised Project would not impact special-status plants because no special-status plants occur in the Revised Project area.***

Delhi Sands Flower-Loving Fly

Portions of the Revised Project area including the riser poles at Limonite Avenue and adjacent work space and Etiwanda Marshalling Yard are located in suitable habitat for DSFLF. Protocol surveys performed in 2016 and 2017 did not locate any DSFLF individuals or associated insect communities within the Revised Project area (AECOM, 2016d). The DSFLF suitable habitat areas at the riser pole and within the Etiwanda Marshalling Yard are not occupied; however, several years will pass before the start of construction in this area and the habitat could become occupied during that time. Potentially significant impacts would occur if construction of the Revised Project resulted in significant loss of habitat for DSFLF, or the direct mortality of DSFLF individuals.

MM BIO-14 requires a pre-construction survey at the appropriate time of year and in accordance with USFWS protocols to verify absence of the species. Should the habitat become occupied prior to construction, mitigation would be completed in accordance with the MSHCP, which requires offsite habitat compensation at a 3:1 ratio. ***Impacts on DSFLF as a result of Revised Project construction would be less than significant with mitigation***.

Special Status Avian Species

Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, Least Bell's Vireo, Yellow-Breasted Chat, and Yellow Warbler. Least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, yellow warbler, and yellow-breasted chat were detected during surveys in the Revised Project area. The Revised Project would remove Fremont cottonwood habitat, which provides suitable nesting habitat for least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, yellow warbler, and yellow-breasted chat. Permanent impacts would result from the need to maintain clearance of approximately 10 feet

between deeply-rooted vegetation and trees, and both sides of the underground duct bank. Least Bell's vireo also has critical habitat that is present within the Revised Project area within Goose Creek Golf Club. The permanent loss of approximately 0.1 acre of suitable riparian habitat would not significantly impact any special-status bird species due to the abundance of surrounding suitable habitat along the Santa Ana River. Riparian vegetation removal could result in destruction of southwestern willow flycatcher, least Bell's vireo, yellow-breasted chat, and yellow warbler nests, or injury and potential mortality to individuals if any special-status birds were nesting in the vegetation at the time of construction. The loss of a nest or mortality of individuals would significantly impact the species due to the low population numbers in the region.

MM BIO-01 requires compliance with the MSHCP, which would reduce the potential for direct impacts by requiring MSHCP-compliant focused breeding season and pre-construction surveys, and seasonal restrictions on construction. The presence of least Bell's vireo within the project area requires that 90 percent of the occupied habitat that is consistent with the long-term conservation of least Bell's vireo be conserved under the MSHCP. The MSHCP also requires that impacts on riparian habitat be avoided, where possible, and mitigated when impacts are not avoidable or permanent. Impacts on riparian habitat would be mitigated through restoration of temporary impacts on preconstruction conditions. Permanent impacts would be mitigated through conservation of biologically equivalent or superior habitat, as defined in the MSHCP. Permanent impacts would result from the need to maintain clearance of approximately 10 feet between deeply-rooted vegetation and trees, and both sides of the underground duct bank. In addition, MM BIO-01A requires SCE to provide the CPUC with any plans and submittals provided to the RCA by RPU (the Permittee) as part of the permittee compliance process. MM BIO-01A also requires any conditions of approval be provided to the CPUC and incorporated into the project's Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Program. ***Impacts on special-status avian species associated with riparian habitat would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Western Burrowing Owl. Construction of the Revised Project would include the removal of vegetation and excavation of soil in suitable habitat for western burrowing owl, including grassland and agricultural areas. A significant impact would occur if ground-disturbing activities resulted in destruction of an inhabited burrow, or injury or mortality of an individual burrowing owl due to the low numbers of burrowing owl in the region. Western burrowing owl is a covered species under the MSHCP.

MM BIO-01 requires compliance with the MSHCP, which in turn requires preconstruction surveys for western burrowing owl in any suitable habitat within 30 days prior to disturbance as well as additional surveys following CDFW protocol (CDFW, 2012). Should active burrows be located during surveys, take will be avoided during the nesting season. Burrows may be passively relocated when owls are present outside of the nesting season. MM BIO-01A requires SCE to provide the CPUC with any plans and submittals provided to the RCA by RPU (the Permittee) as part of the permittee compliance process. In addition, MM BIO-01A requires any conditions of approval be provided to the CPUC and incorporated into the project's Mitigation

Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Program. ***Impacts on western burrowing owl as a result of the Revised Project would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Special-Status Mammal Species

The Revised Project would temporarily and permanently impact suitable sandy soils within or adjacent to riparian habitat areas for Los Angeles pocket mouse, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, and San Bernardino kangaroo rat. Focused surveys did not locate any nests, burrows, or individual Los Angeles pocket mouse, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, or San Bernardino kangaroo rat in the Revised Project area (AECOM, 2016d). Individual special-status mice or rats could move into the project area prior to construction even though none were observed during project planning surveys. Ground disturbance and vegetation removal could result in nest destruction, injury, or mortality of individual special-status mice or rats if they occupy the Revised Project area during construction. The loss of nests or mortality of individual special-status mice or rats would significantly impact the species due to the low species abundance in the region.

MM BIO-01 requires compliance with the MSHCP, which in turn requires focused surveys for these species in order to evaluate and further inform conservation efforts. Should these species be located during surveys, SCE will be required to develop a site-specific conservation plan in collaboration with the RCA and relevant wildlife agencies. MM BIO-01A requires SCE to provide the CPUC with any plans and submittals provided to the RCA by RPU (the Permittee) as part of the permittee compliance process. In addition, MM BIO-01A requires any conditions of approval be provided to the CPUC and incorporated into the project's Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Program. ***Impacts on special-status mammals due to construction of the Revised Project would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Indirect Impacts

Invasive Species Introduction

Special-status plant and wildlife species may be impacted by the introduction and/or spread of invasive non-native plant species from construction activities, use of vehicles and equipment exposed to weed seed, or the introduction of weed seed during restoration. Invasive species can out-compete the special-status, native species and result in future loss of native species' range. Invasive species can also result in the loss of suitable habitat areas for special-status wildlife, which would be a significant impact. Suitable riparian habitat for special-status avian species could be significantly impacted by introduction of weeds or other invasive vegetation species.

MM BIO-01 requires compliance with the MSHCP. The MSHCP requires active removal and management of exotic species located in project areas. However, it does not address exotic species and invasive species that may be brought in on project equipment or materials. MM BIO-01A requires SCE to provide the CPUC with any plans and submittals provided to the RCA by RPU (the Permittee) as part of the permittee compliance process. MM BIO-01A requires any conditions of approval be provided to the CPUC and incorporated into the project's Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Program. MM BIO-09 requires invasive weed control and monitoring to reduce the introduction and spread of invasive weeds. MM

BIO-09A requires preparation and implementation of a weed control plan, including monitoring of disturbed areas for 2 years following construction. ***Indirect impacts on special-status species populations from introduction of invasive weeds would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Dust, Erosion, and Sedimentation

Dust, erosion, and sedimentation from construction of the Revised Project could indirectly impact special-status species. Dust can adversely affect photosynthesis, resulting in reduced plant vitality. Erosion can expose plant roots or remove plants, resulting in plant damage or mortality. Erosion can also result in burrow destruction. Sedimentation can bury small plants and seedlings. SCE would implement EPE GEO-02, which would minimize the impact of sedimentation and erosion through implementation of BMPs specified in the SWPPP. The SWPPP would be prepared consistent with the NPDES Construction General Permit (NPDES No. CAS000002). ***Indirect impacts from dust, erosion, and sedimentation on special-status species would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.***

Hazardous Material Spills

Spills or release of hazardous materials in proximity to a wetland or waterbody could result in habitat degradation in aquatic ecosystems and riparian habitats. A hazardous material spill would have a significant impact if it resulted in (1) the degradation of habitat to a point where the habitat would no longer support special-status species or (2) diminished foraging or nesting suitability for a special-status species. SCE would implement EPE HAZ-01, which includes preparation of a project-specific program for the handling of hazardous materials and hazardous waste, and procedures for emergency release response. The focus of EPE HAZ-01 is on public safety and not habitat degradation; therefore, there would remain a potentially significant indirect impact on species if habitat degradation occurred from a hazardous material spill or release.

MM BIO-01 requires compliance with the MSHCP, which contains several BMPs that would be required to be incorporated by the permittee (RPU) and SCE. These include avoiding refueling within riparian or other sensitive habitats, including wetlands and waterbodies. MM BIO-01A requires SCE to provide the CPUC with any plans and submittals provided to the RCA as part of the permittee compliance process. In addition, MM BIO-01A requires any conditions of approval be provided to the CPUC and incorporated into the project's Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Program. ***Indirect impacts from spills or release of hazardous materials would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Operation and Maintenance

The Revised Project would not require any SCE personnel to be present during operation of the new transmission facilities. Maintenance of the Revised Project overhead alignment would involve periodic inspections by SCE personnel as described in the 2013 RTRP EIR. The underground vaults would be routinely inspected to ensure structural integrity. Qualified electricians would periodically perform routine testing and check on the condition of the

voltage-limiting arresters, grounding connection, splices, terminations, lightning arrestors, and conductor.

In most instances, these inspection and maintenance events would not require ground disturbance. Maintenance clearing and trimming of vegetation would be required where vegetation is close to Revised Project components in order to ensure safe and reliable operation of all infrastructure.

The Revised Project would introduce new overhead transmission lines into habitat for special-status avian species. The transmission line could cause special-status bird species electrocution or collision, which would be a significant impact. MM BIO-02 requires incorporation of best practices to reduce the potential for injury or mortality of raptors and other avian species by the newly constructed overhead lines. ***Impacts on special-status avian species as a result of Revised Project operation and maintenance would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Mitigation Measures: MM BIO-01, MM BIO-01A, MM BIO-02, MM BIO-09, MM BIO-09A, MM BIO-14
Significance after Mitigation: Less than Significant.

	Significance Determination
Impact Biology-b: Would the Revised Project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by CDFW or USFWS?	**Construction:** ***Less than Significant with Mitigation***
	Operation & Maintenance: ***Less than Significant***

Construction

Riparian Habitat

The Revised Project would result in the temporary and permanent loss of Fremont cottonwood forest, a riparian habitat type, in the Goose Creek Golf Club during installation of the underground transmission line and riser poles. Riparian habitat and natural community impacts are quantified in Table 4.4-10, above. Temporary impacts on Fremont cottonwood forest could become permanent impacts if the riparian habitat is not adequately restored. Permanent impacts on Fremont cottonwood forest would result from the establishment of an approximately 20-foot-wide vegetation setback (10 feet on either side of the duct bank) where deeply rooted vegetation and trees would be permanently removed. The loss of Fremont cottonwood forest would be a significant impact.

MM BIO-01 requires compliance with the MSHCP, which requires that any impacts on riparian habitat be avoided where possible. The Revised Project would require clearing of vegetation in order to create temporary workspace and to install underground duct bank and the southern riser poles. It would not be possible to avoid impacts on riparian habitat. The MSHCP requires that any unavoidable impacts be mitigated through restoration and the conservation of biologically equivalent or superior habitat that provides similar services to covered species. Because the impacts on riparian habitat are new impacts of the Revised Project, RPU may not have adequately addressed the loss of riparian impacts in the MSHCP permit compliance

process. The impact from the loss of riparian habitat would be potentially significant. MM BIO-15 requires SCE to complete a Determination of a Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) for riparian habitat impacts. Temporary impacts would be restored, and permanent impacts would be mitigated by conservation of biologically equivalent or superior habitat. ***Impacts resulting from the permanent loss of riparian habitat would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Critical Habitat

Least Bell's Vireo

Temporary and permanent loss of riparian habitat overlaps with critical habitat for least Bell's vireo. The loss of riparian habitat in areas of least Bell's vireo critical habitat would be new impacts from construction of the Revised Project. As such, RPU may not have adequately addressed the loss of riparian impacts in the MSHCP permit compliance process. The impact from the loss of least Bell's vireo critical habitat would be potentially significant.

MM BIO-15 requires SCE to complete a DBESP for riparian habitat impacts, including least Bell's vireo critical habitat. ***Impacts from construction of the Revised Project on least Bell's vireo critical habitat would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Santa Ana Sucker

Construction activities would occur in the vicinity of Santa Ana sucker critical habitat. No direct impacts would occur on Santa Ana sucker critical habitat as there is no in-water work occurring during construction of the Revised Project. Erosion and sedimentation, along with the risk of spills from refueling or other project activities within Santa Ana sucker critical habitat, may indirectly affect the Santa Ana sucker's aquatic habitat. This would be significant, as it would diminish habitat quality and potentially lead to injury or mortality to the rare Santa Ana sucker.

Adherence to the MSHCP construction guidelines and BMPs under MM BIO-01 would require SCE to avoid causing erosion or sedimentation and ensure that all refueling or hazardous materials storage occurs in upland habitat and is properly contained to avoid unintended release into the surrounding environment. MM BIO-01A requires any conditions of approval be provided to the CPUC and incorporated into the project's Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Program. ***Impacts from construction of the Revised Project on Santa Ana Sucker critical habitat would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Operation and Maintenance

The Revised Project would not require any SCE personnel to be present during operation of the new transmission facilities. Maintenance of the Revised Project overhead alignment would involve periodic inspections by SCE personnel as described in the 2013 RTRP EIR. The underground vaults would be routinely inspected to ensure structural integrity. Qualified electricians would periodically perform routine testing and check on the condition of the voltage-limiting arresters, grounding connection, splices, terminations, lightning arrestors, and conductor.

Riparian vegetation in proximity to the underground duct banks would need to be managed so that vegetation with deep root systems and trees do not grow over the top of underground transmission line duct banks. SCE would maintain an approximately 20-foot-wide vegetation setback (10 feet on either side of the duct bank) where deeply rooted vegetation and trees would be permanently removed during construction. Vegetation setbacks would be maintained over the useful life of the transmission line but would not result in additional riparian habitat impacts beyond those incurred during initial clearing for project construction. All permanent impacts, including infrastructure setbacks, would be mitigated in compliance with the MSHCP as described above under construction. ***Impacts on riparian habitat resulting from operation and maintenance would be less than significant.***

Mitigation Measures: MM BIO-01, MM BIO-01A, and MM BIO-15

Significance after Mitigation: Less than Significant

Impact Biology-c: Would the Revised Project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	**Significance Determination**
	Construction: ***Less than Significant with Mitigation***
	Operation & Maintenance: ***Less than Significant***

Construction

The Revised Project would result in temporary and permanent impacts on potential federal or state jurisdictional waters as shown in Table 4.4-11.

Table 4.4-11 Revised Project Impacts on Potential Jurisdictional Waters and Wetlands

	Underground 230-kV Transmission Line (acres)		Distribution Line Relocation #8 (acres)	
Feature Type [a]	Temporary	Permanent	Temporary	Permanent
Riparian Vegetation [b]	0.41 – 1.28 [c]	0.09	0.01	0.0
Unvegetated Streambed	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vegetated Streambed	0.0	0.0	0.008	0.0

Notes:

[a] No impacts on wetland features would occur.

[b] Includes areas where riparian vegetation and Fremont Cottonwood Forest was identified.

[c] Impact acreage considers potential extent of stringing set-up location within riparian habitat, which may be federal or state jurisdictional waters.

Source: (ICF, 2017)

One area of riparian vegetation with some limited wetland features located within Goose Creek Golf Club would be temporarily impacted by trenching, vegetation removal, and grading during installation of the underground transmission line duct bank and riser poles. The hydrology in this area is dominated by irrigation water as part of golf course operations. Construction of the underground alignment in this location would result in the relocation or

alteration of the manmade drainage and water delivery systems, which would likely alter the hydrological patterns within this riparian vegetation. Distribution Line Relocation #8 would temporarily impact a jurisdictional earthen-bottomed drainage channel supporting non-native vegetation by excavating an open trench across the channel for installation of an underground distribution line. Permanent impacts on the riparian vegetation and associated wetland features would occur along the underground transmission line in the golf course within an approximately 20-foot-wide vegetation setback (10 feet on either side of the duct bank) where deeply rooted vegetation and trees would be permanently removed during construction (refer to Figure 4.4-7). The temporary and permanent loss of wetlands and water resources would be significant because these resources provide essential biological and water quality functions. SCE would implement EPE HYDRO-01, which avoids impacts on jurisdictional features through project design; however, the Revised Project underground transmission line and underground distribution line would pass through wetland features. Impacts on wetlands would not be fully avoided and would remain significant.

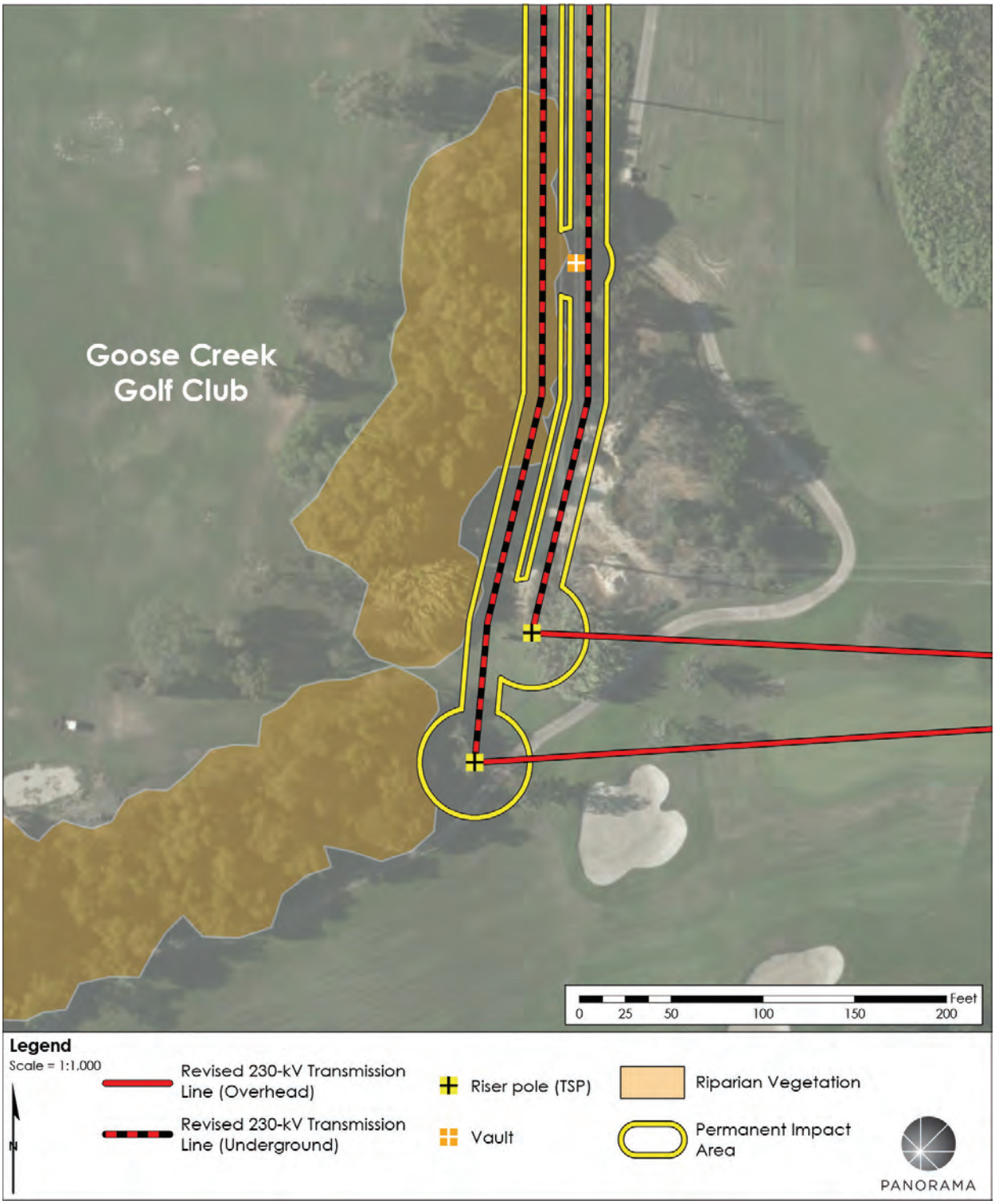
MM BIO-01 requires compliance with the MSHCP. The MSHCP also requires avoidance where possible. In the event that avoidance is not feasible, the MSHCP would require SCE to restore temporary impacts and to develop a plan to conserve a biologically equivalent or superior habitat that would replace lost functions and values to covered species of the habitat being permanently impacted. MM BIO-01A requires SCE to provide the CPUC with any plans and submittals provided to the RCA by RPU (the Permittee) as part of the permittee compliance process, including Determination of a Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation Report for riparian vegetation impacts. In addition, MM BIO-01A requires any conditions of approval be provided to the CPUC and incorporated into the project's Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Program. ***Impacts on riparian wetlands as a result of Revised Project construction would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Operation and Maintenance

The Revised Project would not require any SCE personnel to be present during operation of the new transmission facilities. Maintenance of the Revised Project overhead alignment would involve periodic inspections by SCE personnel as described in the 2013 RTRP EIR. The underground vaults and duct banks would be routinely inspected to ensure structural integrity. Qualified electricians would periodically perform routine testing and check on the condition of the voltage-limiting arresters, grounding connection, splices, terminations, lightning arrestors, and conductor.

Riparian wetland vegetation in proximity to the underground duct banks would need to be managed so that vegetation with deep root systems and trees do not grow over the top of underground transmission line duct banks. SCE would maintain an approximately 20-foot-wide vegetation setback (10 feet on either side of the duct bank) where deeply rooted vegetation and trees would be permanently removed during construction. Vegetation setbacks would be maintained over the useful life of the transmission line but would not result in additional wetland habitat impacts beyond those incurred during initial clearing for project construction.

Figure 4.4-7 Permanent Wetland Impact Area in Goose Creek Golf Club: Underground Transmission Alignment



Sources: (Esri, 2017; SCE, 2017; ICF, 2017)

All permanent impacts, including infrastructure setbacks, would be mitigated in compliance with the MSHCP as described above under construction. ***Impacts on riparian wetlands resulting from operation and maintenance would be less than significant.***

Mitigation Measures: MM BIO-01 and MM BIO-01A
Significance after Mitigation: Less than Significant

	Significance Determination
Impact Biology-e: Would the Revised Project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	**Construction: Less than Significant with Mitigation**
	Operation & Maintenance: No Impact

Construction

County of Riverside
The Revised Project is located within the City of Jurupa Valley, which has adopted the County of Riverside's tree removal ordinance. The Revised Project is exempt from this ordinance per Exemption C which reads, "Any activities conducted by a public utility, subject to the jurisdiction of the public utilities commission or any other constituted public agency, where, to construct and maintain safe operation of facilities under their jurisdiction, trees are removed, pruned, topped or braced." ***The Revised Project would have no impact on the County of Riverside tree removal ordinance.***

Land and Water Conservation Fund
Revised Project construction, specifically Distribution Line Relocations #7 and #8, would cause temporary ground disturbance and vegetation removal within the Hidden Valley Wildlife Preserve and Santa Ana River Wildlife Area. These areas are covered under the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Impacts on land covered under the LWCF are analyzed in Section 4.12: Recreation under Impact Recreation-a. The Revised Project would not result in a LWCF land use conversion with the implementation of MM REC-04. ***The impacts of the Revised Project construction on LWCF areas would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Operation and Maintenance

Operation and maintenance of the Revised Project would require periodic access to the transmission line, but it would not require any additional ground disturbance. Vegetation management, if required, would be limited in scope (i.e., around vault structure manholes) and would not convert LWCF lands. ***No impact would occur.***

Mitigation Measures: MM REC-04 (refer to Section 4.12: Recreation)
Significance after Mitigation: Less than Significant

	Significance Determination
Impact Biology-f: Would the Revised Project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	**Construction: *No Impact***
	Operation & Maintenance: *No Impact*

Construction, Operation, and Maintenance

The Revised Project would be located within the Western Riverside County MSHCP area. The MSHCP, biological opinion, and NCCP require conservation measures to avoid and minimize the take of species covered in the MSHCP. Significant impacts would occur if project activities prevented or otherwise conflicted with implementation of conservation objectives detailed in the MSHCP. RPU, as a Permittee under the MSHCP, would ensure compliance with the MSHCP on behalf of SCE for the Revised Project. SCE would not seek separate PSE status under the MSHCP. The Revised Project would cross or require construction work within portions of Criteria Cells 610, 700, and 617 (See Figure 4.4-5 and Figure 4.4-6). RPU would mitigate for potential impacts of the Revised Project in compliance with all applicable requirements of the MSHCP. No conflict with the MSHCP would occur because the project would be covered under the MSHCP and comply with MSHCP requirements. ***No impact would occur.***

Mitigation Measures: None

4.4.9 Revised Project Mitigation Measures

MM BIO-01: Habitat Conservation and MSHCP Compliance (from 2013 RTRP EIR)
The Project Proponent (RPU) shall pay the MSHCP fees in compliance with the MSHCP. Fees will be based on design footprint and confirmed by as-built data as available and applicable to confirm mitigation compliance and as negotiated with RCA for the public facility. The Proposed Project (responsibility of RPU and SCE) shall also comply with all other applicable MSHCP and SKRHCP requirements. The Proposed Project shall also implement the urban/wildlands interface requirements of the MSHCP for all areas adjacent to conservation areas.
Applicable Locations: All Proposed Project locations
Performance Standard and Timing: • **Prior to Construction:** Engage the RCA to secure a consistency determination to obtain coverage for take under the MSHCP • **During Construction:** Comply with conditions and requirements of the MSHCP • **Following Construction:** Comply with conditions and requirements of the MSHCP

MM BIO-01A: Verification of MSHCP Compliance
SCE shall provide the CPUC with all documentation, studies, and plans submitted to the RCA by RPU (the MSHCP Permittee) as part of the permitting process to obtain coverage under the MSHCP. Such documentation shall include Development of a Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation Report for all riparian habitat impacts. Upon completion of the permitting process, SCE shall provide the CPUC with any conditions of approval or other requirements provided by the RCA. These conditions and requirements will be incorporated into the project Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan.
Applicable Locations: All Revised Project locations

Performance Standard and Timing:

- **Prior to Construction:** Provide CPUC with any documentation, studies, and plans submitted to the RCA
- **During Construction:** Comply with conditions and requirements of the MSHCP
- **Following Construction:** Comply with conditions and requirements of the MSHCP

MM BIO-02: Avian Protection on Power Lines (from 2013 RTRP EIR)

All transmission structures (TSPs and LSTs) would be designed to be avian-safe in accordance with "Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Power Lines: the State of the Art in 2006" (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee, 2006). This will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Conductors will be spaced to an acceptable distance of raptors such as red-tailed hawk and golden eagle to avoid potential electrocution risk;
- Bus bars or other points of electrocution shall be covered with non-conductive caps;
- Aerial span of the Santa Ana River will be marked with best available UV reflectors (bird diverters) every 100 feet and staggered along the conductors; and
- Nest deterrents will be implemented.

The Proposed Project shall implement APLIC guidelines (current guidelines as of 2011). Designs for APLIC compliance will be reviewed and approved by SCE, RPU and the Project Biologist (69-kV section will not include SCE approval).

Applicable Locations: All TSPs and LSTs erected as part of Proposed Project

Performance Standard and Timing:

- **Prior to Construction:** Design structures to be compliant with guidelines
- **During Construction:** Construct project elements according to design
- **Following Construction:** N/A

MM BIO-09: Invasive Species Management (from 2013 RTRP EIR)

The project biologist would prepare measures to avoid or minimize the introduction of invasive plant, invertebrate, and vertebrate species into the project area during construction activities. Construction equipment being brought to the Project limits will be free of accumulated mud and debris. Equipment will be washed prior to project delivery to remove dirt from tracks, body, and attachments. Equipment with accumulated mud or debris will not be allowed to work within the project right-of-way until it is sufficiently clean (cleaning can be completed in a wash station at the laydown yard or offsite at another location not associated with the Project). Areas disturbed by construction will be maintained to control non-native invasive weed species and areas not designed to be bare for fire safety or have other soil stabilization (e.g., gravel, asphalt) will be revegetated and established to be less than 10-percent coverage by non-native weed species (goal will be to establish native cover equal or exceeding adjacent habitat) or have coverage of density and diversity equal to or exceeding 70 percent of adjacent native habitat. (It is expected that adjacent habitat may include non-native grassland. In these areas, the goal will be to establish cover consistent with adjacent areas, with an equal to or less than cover and density as found adjacent).

Applicable Locations: All Proposed Project locations

Performance Standard and Timing:

- **Prior to Construction:** Ensure all equipment and materials used in project construction are weed-free and free of eggs or adults of invasive species
- **During Construction:** Maintain all equipment and project areas free of weeds and invasive pest species

- **Following Construction:** Monitor disturbed areas to ensure that invasive weeds do not establish themselves

MM BIO-09A: Weed Control Plan

To support invasive species management, SCE shall prepare and implement a comprehensive Weed Control Plan for invasive, non-native species abatement. Developed land shall be excluded from weed control. The Weed Control Plan shall include specific weed abatement methods, practices, and treatment timing developed specifically for the Revised Project area by qualified individuals with at least 5 years of weed control experience within Riverside County. The Weed Control Plan shall address control methods and issues controlling invasive non-native species within all vegetation communities and land cover types found along the Revised Project alignment in consultation with the Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner's Office and the California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC). The Weed Control Plan shall be submitted to the CPUC for review and approval at least 30 days prior to construction.

The Weed Control Plan shall include the following:

- A pre-construction weed inventory shall be conducted by surveying Revised Project work areas and areas immediately adjacent to Revised Project work areas for weed populations that are (1) considered by the Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner, the City of Riverside, or the City of Jurupa Valley as being a priority for control, and (2) weed populations that are rated High or Moderate for negative ecological impact in the California Invasive Plant Inventory (online) Database (Cal-IPC 2006 [and 2007 update]; http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/inventory/index.php). These populations shall be mapped and described according to density and area covered. These plant species shall be treated prior to construction or at a time when treatments would be most effective based on phenology according to control methods and practices for invasive weed populations included in the Weed Control Plan designed in consultation with the Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner's Office and Cal-IPC, as appropriate.
- Weed control treatments shall include all legally permitted methods to be used in the following prioritized order: preventative, manual, mechanical, and chemical. The application of herbicides shall be in compliance with all state and federal laws and regulations under the prescription of a Pest Control Advisor (PCA) and implemented by a Licensed Qualified Applicator. Where manual and/or mechanical methods are used, disposal of the plant debris shall be within an approved landfill area within Riverside County. The timing of the weed control treatment shall be determined for each plant species in consultation with the PCA for the project, with the goal of controlling populations before they start producing seeds.
- From the time construction begins until 2 years after construction is complete, annual surveying for new invasive weed populations and the monitoring of identified and treated populations shall be required in the survey areas described above. The treatment of weeds shall occur on a minimum annual basis during this timeframe or until appropriate vegetative cover consistent with adjacent areas has been established.
- During project construction and operation/maintenance, all seeds and straw materials shall be certified weed free, and all gravel and fill material shall also be certified weed free by the Riverside County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

Applicable Locations: All Revised Project locations

Performance Standard and Timing:

- **Prior to Construction:** SCE submits the Weed Control Plan to CPUC for review and approval at least 30 days prior to construction
- **During Construction:** (1) SCE treats all weeds in accordance with the approved Weed Control Plan, (2) SCE prepares an annual weed inventory and monitoring report for submittal to CPUC
- **Following Construction:** (1) SCE submits annual monitoring reports for 2 years after construction is complete, (2) SCE continues to treat all weeds in accordance with the approved Weed Control Plan, as necessary

MM BIO-14: Delhi Sands Flower Loving Fly Surveys and Mitigation
SCE shall conduct Delhi sands flower loving fly (DSFLF) surveys in accordance with USFWS *Interim General Survey Guidelines for the Delhi Sands Flower-Loving Fly* (USFWS, 1996) within 12 months prior to construction within DSFLF suitable habitat. If the DSFLF habitat within the project site is determined to be occupied, 75 percent of the mapped Delhi Soils on site will be conserved. If it is determined that 75 percent conservation on the occupied site is infeasible or USFWS concurs that such conservation would not contribute to the long-term conservation of the species, conservation may occur within the conservation areas identified in Objective 1A at a ratio of three times (3:1) the mapped Delhi soils or, subject to USFWS concurrence, the habitat of the species as identified by survey biologist on the identified occupied site.
Applicable location: Within DSFLF mapped suitable habitat
Performance Standard and Timing: • **Prior to Construction:** Conduct DSFLF survey within 12 months prior to construction. If habitat is occupied, preserve soils on site or conduct off-site mitigation.

MM BIO-15: Determination of a Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation
SCE shall prepare a Determination of a Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) at least 90 days prior to construction within riparian habitat areas. The Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation will include quantification of unavoidable impacts to riparian/riverine areas associated with the project, including direct and indirect effects; a written description of project design features and mitigation measures that reduce indirect effects, such as edge treatments, landscaping, elevation difference, minimization and/or compensation through restoration or enhancement; and a finding demonstrating that although the Proposed Project would not avoid impacts, with proposed design and compensation measures, the project would be biologically equivalent or superior to that which would occur under an avoidance alternative without these measures. In addition, prior to approval of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation Determinations, the Wildlife Agencies will be notified and be provided a 60-day review and response period.
Applicable location: Temporary and permanent impacts on riparian habitat
Performance Standard and Timing: • **Prior to Construction:** SCE submits the DBESP to agencies at least 90 days prior to construction in riparian areas; documentation of a DBESP approval must be received prior to impacts in riparian areas • **During Construction:** SCE implements the measures in the DBESP • **Following Construction:** SCE conducts annual monitoring and reporting as required in the approved DBESP

4.4.10 Alternatives Setting

Environmental Setting

The biological resource setting for Alternatives 1 through 4 is included within the study area covered for the Revised Project (refer to Section 4.4.4: Environmental Setting and the 2013 RTRP EIR). No biological resources are located within the roadways where Alternatives 1, 2, and 4 would be located.

Regulatory Setting

The regulatory settings for biological resources under Alternatives 1 through 4 would include the federal, State, and Jurupa Valley policies and regulations identified for the Revised Project

(refer to Section 4.4.5: Regulatory Setting). Regulations that pertain to the City or County of Riverside are not applicable because none of the alternatives considered in this analysis occur in the City or unincorporated County Riverside.

4.4.11 Alternatives Impact Analysis

Alternatives Analysis Scope

The following analysis considers only the environmental impacts resulting from construction and operation of each alternative alignment segment. Any specific alternative replaces only a portion of the Revised Project and would require combination with the remaining unaffected segments of the Revised Project to form a complete alternative route through Jurupa Valley. Impacts resulting from construction and operation of the additional Revised Project elements necessary to form a complete alternative route are not considered in this section. A discussion of the environmental impacts resulting from construction and operation of the complete alternative route, comprised of each alternative alignment plus the unaffected Revised Project elements, is provided in Chapter 6: Comparison of Alternatives.

Impacts Avoided by the Alternatives

Alternatives 1, 2, and 4 would be constructed in the same general project area as the revised project and would have no impact on three CEQA Appendix G significance criteria:

b. Have substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by CDFW or USFWS
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites
e. Conflict with any local policies of ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance

Alternatives 1, 2, and 4 would occur within city streets or land used for active agricultural operations. Only a small segment of Alternatives 1 and 2, and approximately half of Alternative 4, would traverse annual brome grasslands. None of the alternatives would impact a riparian habitat, wetland, or other waterbody. The alternatives would be constructed predominantly underground within the developed city of Jurupa Valley and would have no impact on wildlife migration patterns or corridors. Biological surveys did not indicate native wildlife nursery sites in the vicinity of alternatives. Similar to the revised project, Alternatives 1, 2, and 4 would be exempt from local policies and ordinances regarding trees that are removed, pruned, topped or braced. Biological resource impacts associated with these significance criteria are not discussed further.

Alternative 3 would be constructed within active agriculture land. Alternative 3 would have no impact on any of the Appendix G biological resources significance criteria because Alternative 3 would not impact special-status species or habitat, sensitive habitat, wetland or waterbodies; nor would it impact habitat or species covered by the MSHCP. As a utility project, the project is exempt from local policies and ordinances regarding impacts to trees and other biological resources. Biological resource impacts associated with Alternative 3 are not discussed further.

Alternative 1, 2, and 4 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 involve construction of two riser poles at the northwest corner of Wineville Avenue and Cantu-Galleano Ranch Road. The Alternative 1 underground transmission line would be located within Wineville Avenue, Bellegrave Avenue, and Pats Ranch Road. The Alternative 2 underground transmission line would be located within Wineville Avenue and Limonite Avenue. Both Alternative 1 and Alternative 2 would meet the Revised Project underground alignment at the intersection of Limonite Avenue and Pats Ranch Road. Alternative 4 involves construction of a segment of underground transmission line that follows Wineville Avenue and Landon Drive. Two riser poles would be constructed at either end of the underground segment.

	Significance Determination
Impact Biology-a: Would Alternative 1, 2, or 4 have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS?	**Construction:** ***Less than Significant with Mitigation***
	Operation & Maintenance: ***No Impact***

Construction

Alternative 1, Alternative 2, and Alternative 4 would require ground disturbance to install underground duct banks, vaults, and riser poles. Construction of the underground duct banks and vaults within roads would have no impacts on habitat or special-status species. Ground disturbance from construction of the Alternatives 1, 2, and 4 riser poles and underground transmission line north of Cantu-Galleano Ranch Road would result in up to 0.8 acre of disturbance to habitat suitable for DSFLF. Focused surveys were conducted for DSFLF in the suitable habitat area and the habitat is not currently occupied (refer to Section 4.4.4 for further information on the DSFLF survey and results). The impact would be significant if it occurred in occupied DSFLF habitat. MM BIO-14 requires a pre-construction survey at the appropriate time of year and in accordance with USFWS protocols to verify presence or absence of the species. If the habitat is occupied by DSFLF, mitigation would be completed in accordance with the MSHCP, which requires offsite habitat compensation at a 3:1 ratio. ***Impacts as a result of construction of Alternatives 1, 2, or 4 would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Operations and Maintenance

Alternatives 1, 2, and 4 permanent impacts would occur at the riser poles and extending for a 25-foot radius from the riser poles for purposes of vegetation management, similar to the Revised Project. Vegetation management would occur in locations that were disturbed during

construction and would not result in any new or increased impact on DSFLF habitat. ***Operation and maintenance of Alternatives 1, 2 or 4 would have no impact on special-status species.***

Mitigation Measures: MM BIO-14 (refer to Section 4.4.9: Revised Project Mitigation Measures)
Significance after Mitigation: Less than Significant

Alternative 3 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Alternative 3 involves extending the underground segment of the Revised Project by 0.25 mile along I-15 in the Revised Project alignment. The riser poles would be constructed at the north end of the extended underground segment.

	Significance Determination
Impact Biology-a: Would Alternative 3 have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS?	**Construction:** ***Less than Significant with Mitigation***
	Operation & Maintenance: ***Less than Significant***

Construction

Alternative 3 would require ground disturbance, including trenching and excavation within an active agricultural field to install the underground duct banks, vaults, and riser poles. The entire disturbance area for Alternative 3 is suitable habitat for western burrowing owl. The alternative could potentially result in destruction of an inhabited burrow, or injury or mortality of an individual burrowing owl, if any occurred in the area at the time of construction. Western burrowing owl is a covered species under the MSHCP. The impact on burrowing owl is potentially significant. MM BIO-01 requires compliance with the MSHCP, which requires pre-construction surveys for burrowing owl, avoidance of burrowing owls during the breeding season, and passive relocation of owls outside the nesting season. The mitigation in the MSHCP would avoid significant impacts on burrowing owl during construction of Alternative 3. ***Impacts as a result of construction of Alternatives 3 would be less than significant with mitigation.***

Operations and Maintenance

Alternative 3 would result in 0.14 acre of permanent impact on suitable burrowing owl habitat because of vegetation management. The impact on burrowing owl from the loss of 0.14 acre of suitable habitat would be less than significant due to the large quantity of similar agricultural habitat in the region. ***Impacts resulting from operation and maintenance of Alternative 3 would be less than significant.***

Mitigation Measures: MM BIO-01 (refer to Section 4.4.9: Revised Project Mitigation Measures)
Significance after Mitigation: Less than Significant

4.4.12 No Project Alternative Impact Analysis

The No Project Alternative would occur within the Western Riverside County MSHCP area. Construction would be required to comply with the MSHCP. The battery storage and power generators that may be installed under the No Project Alternative would likely occur within or

adjacent to existing SCE or RPU facilities. Suitable habitat for MSHCP-covered species would not exist within existing facilities but may occur on adjacent lands. Pre-construction surveys for MSHCP-covered species would be required in locations where suitable habitat exists, and appropriate avoidance measures, defined by the MSHCP and RCA, would be followed. ***Compliance with the MSHCP would ensure that biological impacts of the No Project Alternative would be less than significant.***

4.4.13 References

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