

4 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

This chapter includes descriptions of the existing environmental setting in the Revised Project area and analyses of the environmental impacts that would occur from implementation of the Revised Project and alternatives, including the No Project Alternative. Discussions and explanations of the findings are provided for the following topics:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 4.1 Aesthetics | 4.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials |
| 4.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources | 4.8 Hydrology and Water Quality |
| 4.3 Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions | 4.9 Land Use and Planning |
| 4.4 Biological Resources | 4.10 Noise |
| 4.5 Cultural, Tribal Cultural, and Paleontological Resources | 4.11 Public Services and Utilities |
| 4.6 Geology and Soils | 4.12 Recreation |
| | 4.13 Transportation and Traffic |

Proposed Project

The 2013 RTRP EIR addressed the entirety of the RTRP including project elements that would be owned by RPU and SCE. SCE filed an application for a CPCN over the project elements that would be owned and operated by SCE. The portion of the RTRP that would be owned and operated by SCE is referred to as the Proposed Project in this EIR. Subsequent to the City of Riverside publication of the 2013 RTRP EIR, substantial development occurred within the originally proposed RTRP alignment. SCE entered into a settlement agreement in 2016 that changed the project location. The changes in the project location and configuration are collectively referred to as the Revised Project. This subsequent EIR provides subsequent evaluation of environmental impacts in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15162(a), where:

- (1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the EIR ... due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in severity of previously identified significant effects.
- (2) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is being undertaken which will require major revisions of the EIR ... due to involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in severity of previously identified significant effects.

Refer to Chapter 1: Introduction and Chapter 2: Project Description for a description of the Revised Project elements analyzed in this Subsequent EIR.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Initial Study Screening

As described in Chapter 1: Introduction, the CPUC prepared an Initial Study Checklist (CPUC, 2017) to evaluate the Revised Project and determine whether changes in the project design or changes in baseline conditions could result in new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of a significant environmental impact than was previously evaluated in the 2013 RTRP EIR. The Initial Study Checklist can be found in Appendix B of this Subsequent EIR.

Reconsidering Impacts Screened Out in the Initial Study Checklist

Several scoping comments requested that the CPUC reconsider the Revised Project's impacts under CEQA significance criteria that had been initially screened out of this Subsequent EIR through the Initial Study Checklist. In addition, further review by the CPUC determined the need to consider potentially new or increased significant impacts on additional topics in the Initial Study Checklist. As more information became available, screened-out environmental topics were re-evaluated and, in some instances, were determined to require additional analysis in this Subsequent EIR. Table 4-1 identifies significance criteria that have been added to this Subsequent EIR analysis, subsequent to preparing the Initial Study Checklist.

Table 4-1 Environmental Topics Reconsidered for Analysis

Topic	Impact
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	Potential to convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use.
Air Quality	Potential to create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.
Biological Resources	Potential to 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.
Hydrology and Water Quality	Potential to violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. Potential to substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site.
Land Use	Potential to conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted to avoid or mitigate an environmental effect.
Noise	Potential to expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.
Public Services and Utilities	Potential to be serviced by a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Project Alternatives

Chapter 3: Alternatives provides a list, description, and map of alternatives to the Revised Project. Section 4.1 through Section 4.13 present the impact analyses for the alternatives carried forward for analysis in this Subsequent EIR, including the No Project Alternative. Alternatives are analyzed in detail to provide decision makers with the opportunity to approve an alternative or combination of alternatives over the Revised Project. The analysis of impacts from alternatives focuses on how the impacts of each alternative differ from that of the Revised Project or Proposed Project. If an alternative would have no impact associated with a significance threshold, the rationale is provided at the beginning of the section and no further analysis is provided.

It should be noted that alternatives that replace only a portion of the Revised Project would require combination with the remainder of the Revised Project or other alternatives to form a complete alternative route conveying 230-kV transmission between the Mira Loma—Vista #1 230-kV Transmission Line and the proposed Wildlife Substation. Only the impacts associated with the alternative segments are discussed in Section 4.1 through Section 4.13. Chapter 6: Comparison of Alternatives provides a comparative analysis of the impacts of the Proposed Project and the alternatives taking into account all impacts that would occur from the construction, operation, and maintenance of a complete alternative route.

FORMAT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE SECTIONS

The analysis of each environmental resource topic consists of the following subsections:

1. **Consideration of scoping comments.** Includes a summary of public comments that are relevant to that environmental resource topic, along with an explanation of how that comment is addressed.
2. **Definitions.** Provides key terminology that is relevant to the environmental analysis where applicable.
3. **Approach to data collection.** Describes the methods used to obtain additional environmental or regulatory setting data where the baseline environmental or regulatory setting has changed since publication of the 2013 RTRP EIR.
4. **Environmental setting.** Includes a description of the existing physical setting (baseline physical conditions) that may be affected by the Revised Project. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a), the environmental setting used to determine the impacts associated with the Revised Project is based on the environmental conditions that exist within the study area as of January 5, 2017, the time that the NOP for the Revised Project Subsequent EIR was published.
5. **Regulatory setting.** Addresses all applicable regulations, plans, and standards, and provides a description of the relevant regulations and guidelines pertaining to each environmental resource topic.
6. **Applicant's environmental protection elements.** Identifies the EPEs that were proposed as part of the RTRP to reduce environmental impacts. The EPEs will be

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

tracked through the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) similar to mitigation measures.

7. **CEQA significance criteria.** CEQA significance criteria are identified for each environmental resource topic where the CPUC identified that the Revised Project could result in a potential new significant impact or a substantial increase in the severity of a significant impact (refer to Initial Study Checklist in Appendix B).
8. **Revised Project impact analysis.** Includes analysis of the effects of the Revised Project on the environment. The significance of each project impact is first considered prior to application of EPEs, and a significance determination is made. The implementation of EPEs (if applicable) is then considered part of the project when determining whether impacts would be significant and would require mitigation.
9. **Revised Project mitigation measures.** Feasible mitigation measures are identified to eliminate or reduce the intensity of significant impacts. Mitigation measures presented in the 2013 RTRP EIR are relied upon when appropriate and are supplemented by or replaced with new mitigation measures, when necessary, to reduce impacts to less-than-significant levels. The full text of supplemental and replacement mitigation measures is provided in the mitigation measure subsection.
10. **Alternatives setting.** Includes a description of the existing environmental and regulatory setting for the alternatives. Additional information is provided where the environmental or regulatory setting differs from that of the Revised Project.
11. **Alternatives impact analysis.** Includes analysis of the effects of the alternatives on the environment. The analyses of impacts from alternatives focuses on how the impacts of each alternative differ from that of the Revised Project.
12. **Alternatives mitigation measures.** Feasible mitigation measures are identified to eliminate or reduce the intensity of significant impacts of the alternative that cannot be avoided or reduced using mitigation measures identified in the 2013 RTRP EIR or the Revised Project analysis. The full text of mitigation measures that are identified to reduce an impact unique to the alternative are presented in the alternatives mitigation measure subsection.
13. **No Project Alternative impact analysis.** An evaluation of the No Project Alternative as required by CEQA, so that decision makers can compare the impacts of approving the project with the impacts of not approving the project. Under the No Project Alternative, none of the transmission facilities or infrastructure upgrades associated with the Revised Project, and consequently the RTRP, would be constructed by RPU or SCE. RPU would likely implement a combination battery storage and expand the use of existing gas generation facilities as described in Chapter 3: Alternatives.
14. **References.** Lists all sources cited in the environmental resource impact analysis.

Cumulative impacts of the Revised Project and alternatives are addressed in Chapter 5: Cumulative Impacts.

References

CPUC. (2017). *RTRP CEQA Initial Study Checklist*. Prepared by Panorama Environmental.