

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

San Diego Gas and Electric's Miguel–Mission 230kV #2 Project is proposed in response to the need for development of adequate transmission infrastructure to support the energy market in California, reduce congestion costs, and enhance competition among energy suppliers. The project also has the potential to prevent overloads that would otherwise occur on lines if the existing circuits experienced a simultaneous outage. Additionally, it would eliminate the need for a remedial action scheme for tripping generators offline in the event of such a simultaneous transmission outage. This overload would occur during high levels of power import from new merchant generators being constructed or proposed for construction in the United States-Mexico border region.

Although system and route alternatives to the proposed Miguel–Mission 230kV #2 Project were considered during the development of the project description, the proposed project ultimately was selected because it would cause the lowest potential environmental impact, cost less than the other alternatives to build, meet the required project schedule, and provide the most efficient solution to the project purpose and need.

With the exception of certain access roads, the proposed transmission facilities would be located within San Diego Gas and Electric's existing right-of-way, which lies within San Diego County, passing through the cities of San Diego and Santee, the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, and certain unincorporated areas of the county (see Figure ES-1). Potential exceptions to this routing include placement of certain new access or spur roads, which may be necessary to site adjacent to the right-of-way, and a small number of new 230kV steel pole support structures to be located on existing San Diego Gas and Electric property to facilitate routing in the vicinity of existing substations.

The California Public Utilities Commission is the lead agency for the Miguel–Mission 230kV #2 Project under the California Environmental Quality Act. According to the California Public Utilities Commission General Order 131-D, San Diego Gas and Electric is submitting this Proponent's Environmental Assessment as part of its Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity.

## **PROJECT COMPONENTS**

### **New 230kV Transmission Circuit**

A new 230kV transmission circuit would be added to modified existing double-circuit 138kV steel lattice tower structures currently supporting 69kV and 138kV circuits from Miguel Substation to Fanita Junction, and within a vacant 230kV position on existing double-circuit 230kV structures in the existing project right-of-way from Fanita Junction to Mission Substation. The new 230kV circuit, rated at approximately 1,000 megawatts, would result in a second 230kV circuit between the Miguel and Mission Substations.

**Placeholder for Figure ES-1**  
**Project Overview Map**  
**8.5 X11 B&W**

## Relocated Existing 69kV and 138kV Transmission Circuits

To provide a position for the new 230kV circuit, the existing 69kV and 138kV transmission circuits currently attached to existing 138kV steel lattice tower structures would be relocated onto one new double-circuit pole line within the existing project right-of-way. Construction of the relocated 69kV/138kV circuits utilizing both wood and steel pole support structures would run parallel to the new 230kV transmission circuit for approximately 24 miles within the existing project right-of-way from Miguel Substation to Los Coches Substation and from Los Coches Substation to Fanita Junction.

## Substation Modifications

The existing Miguel Substation and Mission Substation would be modified to accommodate the new 230kV transmission circuit. New 230kV circuit breakers would be added with associated disconnects, steel, and protection. All proposed substation modifications would occur on existing utility-owned property and within the existing substation areas.

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

The general schedule for the proposed project is shown in Table ES-1.

**Table ES-1: Project Schedule**

<b>Project Phase</b>	<b>Period</b>
Engineering and design	November 2001 to June 2003
Construction	June 2003 to June 2005
Operation	June 2005

## FINDINGS OF THE PROPONENT'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The following subsections summarize findings from both the investigation of existing conditions and the impact assessments for each of the 12 environmental resources that proposed projects must evaluate under the California Environmental Quality Act.

### Environmental Setting

The proposed project area lies entirely within San Diego County and generally consists of rough foothills with steep valleys and ravines, with scattered commercial and residential areas centered mainly around the cities of San Diego and Santee. The region has diverse visual and biological resources, hosts numerous recreational areas, and serves an ever-expanding population with public services and utilities, transportation, housing, and jobs. The area is also characterized by very dry vegetation resulting from recent drought conditions and relatively low air quality with

regard to some pollutants. San Diego Gas & Electric's existing transmission right-of-way has no known hazardous materials sites or noise level exceedances.

Various sources were consulted in writing the environmental setting sections of the Proponent's Environmental Assessment, including relevant federal, state, regional, and local websites; general plan documents; environmental studies and data findings from prior projects planned or constructed in the area; public information records; and maps of the area. Numerous inventory methods were also employed. For the aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, and geology, soils, mineral resources, and paleontology analysis, for example, both reconnaissance-level and full-scale ground surveys were conducted as warranted to inventory existing conditions in the project area.

### ***Aesthetics***

The existing project right-of-way traverses narrow alluvial valleys, rolling hills, and foothills. The landscape setting of the project area allows for vast and expansive views in the valleys and narrow, limited, and focused views within canyons, gorges, and the neighboring foothills near the San Diego River. The project area contains diverse visual resources, such as parks and golf courses, residential housing, and the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Otay-Sweetwater Unit.

### ***Air Quality***

The existing project right-of-way occurs in the San Diego Air Basin. In 2001, San Diego County was in nonattainment of state standards for the pollutants ozone and particulate matter. However, recent documentation shows that the air quality is improving.

### ***Biological Resources***

San Diego County is a biologically diverse region that supports rare and declining native habitats, numerous federally and state-listed plant and animal species, and an increasing amount of federally designated critical habitat for listed species. The environmental setting for the project right-of-way comprises rivers, ephemeral drainages, vernal pools, riparian woodland, annual grasslands, and large expanses of native coastal sage scrub and chaparral. It also includes the boundary of multi-jurisdictional regional habitat conservation plans, such as City of San Diego Multiple Species Preservation Program, the San Diego County Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan, and San Diego Gas and Electric's Subregional Natural Community Conservation Plan.

### ***Cultural Resources***

Although an inventory of cultural resources in the project area and vicinity found a rich archaeological, Native American, and recent history in the region, no known historical resources or human remains have been identified in the immediate project area. A records search conducted in 2000 identified seven archaeological resources in the vicinity of San Diego Gas and Electric's existing project right-of-way. None of these occurred within the right-of-way limits.

### ***Geology, Soils, Mineral Resources, and Paleontology***

The proposed project is located in two distinctive geomorphological areas—the coastal plain and the foothills. Soils in the vicinity range from silty clay to granitic rock. The project area is also located within a highly active seismic region comprising the Elsinore and Rose Canyon faults, which have the potential to create major earthquake damage in San Diego County. Another potential geologic hazard is ground subsidence, the effects of which are not common within the project area due to very low existing water tables. The susceptibility for liquefaction of soils in the project area is also low. Although San Diego Gas and Electric's right-of-way crosses two sites known to have produced landslides, existing lines in the proposed project area have not experienced damage from landslides. Mineral resources along the existing project right-of-way mostly include extensive deposits of sand, gravel, and metavolcanic rock. Although the proposed project crosses geologic formations that have produced fossils in other areas, no known paleontological sites have been identified in the project area.

### ***Hazards and Hazardous Materials***

The existing project right-of-way lies within urban and rural/suburban areas with predominantly open space, residential, commercial/retail, or light industrial usage. The existing transmission lines currently contribute a negligible level of induced current. The region is dry, exacerbated by the San Diego region's severe drought situation, and vegetation susceptible to wildfire abounds in the existing right-of-way. Project construction would require the use of potentially hazardous materials, such as fuels, lubricating oils, and hydraulic fluid. Numerous gasoline storage tanks (existing service stations) and other contained petroleum product facilities exist in the vicinity of but not within the existing project right-of-way.

### ***Hydrology and Water Quality***

Annual average precipitation in the project area occurs primarily as rainfall during winter months, and is calculated at 10 inches per year. The flow of surface and groundwaters in the area is generally east to west, with eventual drainage to the Pacific Ocean.

Surface water resources within the existing project right-of-way include two perennial rivers, three ephemeral creeks, and 34 unnamed ephemeral tributaries/drainages. Stormwater runoff is controlled along the existing project right-of-way with storm drains, flood channels, and natural drainages including surface waters. Approximately 0.3 mile of the proposed project lies within the 100-year flood zones of San Vicente Creek, San Diego River, and Sweetwater River. The existing project right-of-way also crosses inundation zones for dam failures at three local reservoirs: El Capitan, San Vicente, and Loveland. Groundwater basins developed for municipal and agricultural uses are typically shallow and susceptible to pollution, and can be found along the major drainages in the project vicinity, including Mission Valley Basin, Santee/El Monte Basin, and Sweetwater Basin.

### ***Land Use, Planning, Recreation, and Agricultural Resources***

As previously discussed, the proposed project area's land use setting includes communities primarily comprised of single-family residential housing, county and city parks, golf courses/clubs, and the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Otay-Sweetwater Unit. The project

would traverse lands under the jurisdictions and planning areas of the U.S. Department of Defense (Marine Corps Air Station Miramar), San Diego County, and the cities of San Diego and Santee. The existing project right-of-way also falls within a Habitat Conservation Plan area and within the Mission Trails Regional Park, which has its own master plan. There are approximately 34, primarily residential, new development projects either planned or proposed in the vicinity of the proposed project.

### ***Noise***

Most of the existing project right-of-way lies within undeveloped, unincorporated areas of San Diego County where potential noise impacts are limited. The subsections that traverse more populated areas of the City of San Diego are characterized by higher-density development and, therefore, are subject to higher cumulative noise levels than those found in the county's unincorporated communities. The existing right-of-way also traverses a portion of the City of Santee, where areas susceptible to increased noise include scattered, widely spaced residences and some tract homes. Localized noise sources along the current right-of-way add to ambient noise levels as the alignment crosses or comes into proximity of these areas.

### ***Population and Housing***

The 2000 population for the unincorporated regions of San Diego County was estimated at 469,275. The City of San Diego accounts for the largest portion of the county population at 43 percent. With a population of 94,869, the City of El Cajon accounts for 3 percent of the total county population. Santee is the least populous incorporated city, with a population of 52,975. The cities of San Diego, Chula Vista (also closeby), El Cajon, and Santee provide more than half of the region's total housing units. The vacancy rates in these cities range from 2.7 to 5.9 percent. The unincorporated areas of the county have a much higher residential vacancy rate of 7.4 percent.

About 9 percent of total employment in San Diego County occurs within unincorporated areas. San Diego, Chula Vista, El Cajon, and Santee represent approximately 47, 5, 4, and 2 percent of the county's employment, respectively. Despite large differences in population, unemployment rates were distributed relatively evenly. In terms of median household income, San Diego County reported 46,503 dollars per year in 2000 (a 33 percent increase from 1990). The unincorporated communities have a collective median household income of 51,621 dollars per year (a more than 26 percent increase from 1990).

### ***Public Services, Utilities, and Service Systems***

Public services include fire protection, law enforcement, schools, parks, and other public facilities. The San Diego Rural Fire Protection District provides fire protection services along San Diego Gas and Electric's existing right-of-way, the fire departments of the cities of San Diego and Santee, and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. For law enforcement, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department serves the project area in both incorporated and unincorporated communities, and the California Highway Patrol provides traffic services for unincorporated San Diego County. The City of San Diego provides police services for its own residents.

The proposed project area also contains a number of public schools, including 27 in the vicinity of project's existing right-of-way. Three schools are located within 0.25 mile of the right-of-way. In addition, the existing project right-of-way crosses four recreational areas/wildlife refuges, including Mission Trails Regional Park, Santee Lakes Regional Park and Campground, Louis A. Stelzer County Park, and San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Otay-Sweetwater Unit. San Diego County also supports two hospitals within approximately 2 miles of the existing project right-of-way in the City of San Diego. The City of Santee contains no hospitals.

Utilities and service systems include water, sewer, garbage, utilities, and communications. The two major water agencies serving the region are the San Diego County Water Authority and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. The San Diego Department of Public Works, Wastewater Management section provides sewer services in San Diego County. Seven landfills occur within the San Diego region, and trash collection service is provided through Waste Management of San Diego. Residences and businesses in the cities of San Diego and Santee, as well as in the unincorporated pockets of San Diego County, rely on San Diego Gas and Electric for all electric and gas service. Pacific Bell provides telephone service for the entire project area, and Cox Communications and Time Warner Cable offer cable television service.

### ***Transportation and Traffic***

The existing right-of-way spans several freeways, state highways, and major roads. In addition to public roadways, the project would primarily utilize existing San Diego Gas and Electric access roads and right-of-way to reach construction areas. Because the proposed project may use helicopters to install new pole support structures, air traffic in the existing project right-of-way is a factor. The proposed project lies within 5 miles of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, 2 miles of Montgomery Field in San Diego, and within 3.5 miles of Gillespie Field in Santee.

The San Diego Department of Public Works maintains roads in unincorporated areas, and the cities of San Diego and Santee manage roadways within their respective boundaries. Interstate 8 and State Route 52 predominantly serve east-west traffic in the project area, while Interstate 15 and Interstate 805 serve north-south traffic. Transit operators within the project area include the San Diego County Transit System, the San Diego Transit Corporation, and the San Diego Trolley.

### **Potential Environmental Impacts**

The Environmental Checklist from Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines aided in determining the scope and detail of the environmental setting and potential impacts for the proposed project, as required by the California Public Utilities Commission. The methodologies used to determine standards of significance for potential project impacts varied by resource, some being quantifiable according to local agency requirements and others requiring professional judgment to determine significance thresholds.

The Miguel–Mission 230kV #2 Project would be constructed to the greatest extent feasible within the existing San Diego Gas and Electric right-of-way. This right-of-way is already highly developed with existing 230kV, 138kV, and 69kV transmission line facilities. The proposed

project also would use existing access roads and existing transmission structures to the greatest extent feasible to install new 230kV circuit, relocate the 69kV/138kV circuits, and modify substations. Implementing the project in this manner and incorporating the Project Protocols, the Natural Community Conservation Plan, and mitigation measures would result in avoidance or reduction of potential impacts to the environment during construction, operation, and maintenance to a level of insignificance. The following sections summarize the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project.

### ***Aesthetics***

Visual surveys and simulations of the proposed project found a less than significant impact to existing visual resources in the area. Any potential impacts could be effectively reduced through implementation of Project Protocols, such as nonspecular conductors and dull-finish poles. Also, because the project would be constructed primarily within an existing right-of-way already containing existing transmission facilities, no significant impacts would occur to existing scenic resources. Although pole installation for the relocated 69kV/138kV circuits would incrementally increase the potential visual impact of the site to some sensitive receptors, placing new poles span for span next to existing structures to the greatest extent feasible would reduce any adverse visual impacts. In addition, because construction activities are expected to occur during daylight hours, no additional light sources would be required. Therefore, construction, operations, and routine maintenance procedures would not result in permanent substantial light or glare that would adversely affect views in the area.

### ***Air Quality***

The proposed project would not result in significant impacts to air quality. Construction would result in only short-term, temporary, and non-cumulative air emissions. Operation and maintenance of the project would result in minimum air emissions from maintenance vehicles and activities. Further, emissions as a result of construction, operation, and maintenance of the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Finally, the project would neither generate objectionable odors nor conflict with or obstruct implementation of any applicable air quality attainment plans.

### ***Biological Resources***

Although the proposed project traverses sensitive habitats, adherence to the Project Protocols, the Natural Community Conservation Plan, the project mitigation measures, and any applicable regulatory requirements would result in avoiding or minimizing any potential impacts to biological resources to less than significant levels. To minimize impacts, biological resources such as jurisdictional wetlands, drainages, and vernal pool habitat would be spanned or otherwise avoided. Wherever avoidance is not feasible, San Diego Gas and Electric would obtain and comply with all necessary state and federal permits to protect biological resources. Further, except for certain access roads, the project would be located within an existing right-of-way. Therefore, its potential effect on existing wildlife movement would be less than significant.

A combination of Project Protocols, the Natural Community Conservation Plan, and mitigation measures of this Proponent's Environmental Assessment would reduce potential impacts to the



federally listed Quino checkerspot butterfly, the arroyo southwestern toad, San Diego fairy shrimp, and Otay tar plant to a less than significant level. Potential construction impacts to the federally listed Quino checkerspot butterfly may be difficult to avoid because it resides year-round in the limited locations where it occurs. San Diego Gas and Electric would implement avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures prescribed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. For any unavoidable impacts to covered species, San Diego Gas and Electric would implement the mitigation in its agency-approved Natural Community Conservation Plan to reduce potential impacts to a level of insignificance.

### ***Cultural Resources***

If any cultural resources (historic, archaeological, pertaining to human remains) were discovered in surveys prior to or during construction, Project Protocols and project monitoring would be employed to reduce or eliminate the potential impact to cultural resources to a less than significant level. Construction, operation, and maintenance of the project would not result in a substantial change in significance of historical or archaeological resources in the project area. If human remains were encountered during construction, no further excavation or disturbance would be allowed at or nearby the site until the remains had been investigated according to California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines and the Native American Graves Protection Act and its implementing regulations. San Diego Gas and Electric and its contractors would also comply with state laws applicable to the discovery of human remains, including California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98.

### ***Geology, Soils, Mineral Resources, and Paleontology***

#### Geology and Soils

Because San Diego Gas and Electric Company's transmission circuits and substation equipment are typically designed to accommodate significant seismic activity, even a strong earthquake would result in minimal exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects. Earth-disturbing activities at the structure sites, spur roads, and staging areas would potentially increase the soil's susceptibility to wind and water erosion. However, implementation of the Project Protocols and best management practices for erosion and sedimentation control under a *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan*, as required under the state's regulations controlling stormwater discharges associated with construction activity, would minimize the potential for substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil to a less than significant level. Small portions of the existing project right-of-way are susceptible to landslides, land spreading, and liquefaction. Generally, poles and other support structures would be located in a manner that avoids these areas. Implementation of the Project Protocols would minimize to a level of insignificance the potential risk of soils becoming unstable as a result of construction.

#### Mineral Resources

The only known mineral-related resource in the vicinity of the project area is an existing gravel pit east of the Mission Substation. Construction, operation, and maintenance of the project would not occur outside of existing project right-of-way or substation property and would not impact

operations of the gravel pit. Therefore, the project would not adversely affect any known mineral resources.

### Paleontology

Excavation for installation of new structures would affect a very small area at each new pole site. Spacing for pole footing excavations sites would be infrequent/spread over long distances, and construction would occur primarily within the existing right-of-way. Therefore, potential impacts to paleontological resources/sites or unique geologic features resulting from the project would be limited and, with application of Project Protocols, reduced to a less than significant level.

### ***Hazards and Hazardous Materials***

Construction equipment would require routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials, such as fuels, lubricating oils, and hydraulic fluid. Implementation of Project Protocols for storage, handling, and disposal of these materials would reduce potential risks to the environment and the public to a less than significant level. If the use of these potentially hazardous materials resulted in an accidental release during construction, Project Protocols would be implemented to ensure prompt and effective cleanup and disposal.

Three schools lie within 0.25 mile of the existing project right-of-way. However, implementation of Project Protocols for hazardous materials containment, control, and transport would minimize the potential impact to schools in the project vicinity to a less than significant level.

No listed contaminated sites were reported in the existing right-of-way. If hazardous wastes were discovered during construction activities, Project Protocols would be implemented to ensure prompt and effective cleanup, reducing the potential hazards to the public or the environment to a less than significant level.

The project's proximity to the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Montgomery Field, Gillespie Field, or Lindberg Field would not result in a safety hazard to people residing or working in the project area. No private airstrips are located in the vicinity of the proposed project. Any helicopter use necessarily during project construction would be brought to the attention of the Federal Aviation Administration for a hazard determination, rendering the potential impact to a less than significant level.

Construction, operation, and maintenance of the project would not impair or interfere with any existing emergency response or evacuation plans adopted in the project area. Implementation of Project Protocols for fire protection during construction would reduce potential fire risk associated with operating construction equipment in fire-prone areas.

### ***Hydrology and Water Quality***

Any potential adverse impacts to hydrology or water quality would either be nonexistent or less than significant with implementation of Project Protocols and best management practices. For example, although there is a potential for stormwater runoff from new pole site construction areas, staging areas, improved access roads, and other disturbed sites, best management practices for erosion and sedimentation control (as defined in the *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan*)

and implementation of Project Protocols would minimize the potential to violate water quality standards.

### ***Land Use, Planning, Recreation, and Agricultural Resources***

No impacts to existing or planned land uses, recreation, or agricultural resources would result from implementation of the Miguel–Mission 230kV #2 Project. The project would be located along an existing right-of-way and would not displace any existing facilities or physically divide an established community. It would not conflict with any jurisdictional agencies' plans, policies, or regulations in the project area (none of which contain specific policies regarding the siting of electric transmission lines). Because San Diego Gas and Electric has its own Natural Community Conservation Plan and would design and site the project to avoid and minimize effects to sensitive habitats, no conflict with or negative impact to the plans or policies of agencies with jurisdiction over the project would occur.

The project would affect neither the use of nor demand for existing parks and recreation facilities. No parks would be closed as a result of construction, although some trails may be subject to short-term closure. Therefore, physical deterioration of parks and facilities would not occur as a result of project construction. In addition, the project would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities and, as a result, it would not result in impacts to recreation.

Because the proposed project would not cross Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, these lands would not be converted to non-agricultural use. The project would not cross any land zoned for agricultural use or traverse any Williamson Act contract parcels. Therefore, no impacts to these lands would occur.

### ***Noise***

Construction activities at any one location of the proposed project would be short term and temporary. Therefore, it would not expose people to the generation of noise levels above limits set by San Diego County. In addition, noise levels would return to preconstruction levels at the end of each workday and at the completion of construction. Vibration from earth-moving and transport equipment may be perceptible to residents near the project area. However, groundborne vibrations from construction are exempt from the San Diego County zoning ordinance. Therefore, exposure of people to such vibrations would be less than significant.

Project operation and occasional maintenance would result in a less than significant impact to ambient noise levels in the project area. Such noise would include occasional use of vehicles for maintenance and repair activity and minimal audible noise/corona from the powerlines. Neither of these would result in a significant permanent increase in ambient noise levels.

### ***Population and Housing***

Because construction of the project would require only 25 to 35 mostly local workers, no adverse impacts to population and housing in the San Diego area would result. Construction activities primarily would occur within the existing right-of-way and approved work areas. Therefore,

project construction would not negatively affect or permanently displace residences or businesses. No impact to infrastructure would occur.

### ***Public Services, Utilities, and Service Systems***

Project construction, as well as operation and maintenance, has been designed to avoid both short- and long-term impacts to public services or utilities. It would not affect service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives of the fire or police protection agencies, schools, parks, or other public facilities. Therefore, the project would result in no significant impacts to these services and utilities.

The project would not require any significant increase in water consumption, stormwater runoff, or treated wastewater. Sufficient water sources are available for any construction dust- or fire-suppressant activities and for construction crew consumption.

Construction debris would be minimal and easily be served by local landfills. Any solid waste would be managed according to all federal, state, and local laws, resulting in no significant impacts to such services from project construction.

### ***Transportation and Traffic***

Key transportation and traffic concerns include the level of project-related traffic load; potential interference with local air traffic; access for emergency vehicles; parking of construction vehicles and equipment in designated areas; concurrence with existing alternative transportation policies, plans, or programs; and sufficient parking capacity for the public. The implementation of Project Protocols would reduce the only potential impacts to air traffic (e.g., helicopters installing structures) and vehicle traffic (e.g., equipment accessing the right-of-way) to a less than significant level. The project's short-term, temporary construction activities would not significantly affect any other transportation or traffic issues.

## **CONCLUSION**

San Diego Gas and Electric has not only established a compelling need for the Miguel–Mission 230kV #2 Project but also, through this Proponent's Environmental Assessment, demonstrated that it would construct, operate, and maintain the proposed project with minimal impact to sensitive and valued environmental resources. With the exception of biological resources, all potential project impacts would be reduced to a level of insignificance by applying the Project Protocols. For biological resources, impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels through application of mitigation measures, as well as Project Protocols. San Diego Gas and Electric's commitment to ensuring that the project would be conducted with limited, temporary, and short-term effects to environmental resources is further reflected in its development of relevant construction monitoring and reporting procedures.

The construction of the Miguel–Mission 230kV #2 Project offers the opportunity to meet the recognized goals of building adequate transmission infrastructure to support California's future energy market, reducing congestion costs, and enhancing competition among energy suppliers.

Of the several project (and “no-project”) alternatives that the utility analyzed to meet these goals, the proposed project was chosen for its concomitant objective of pursuing a course of action that would result in the lowest potential impact to the environmental resources that San Diego County residents enjoy.

The proposed project would not have a cumulative impact on hazards and hazardous materials. It would have the potential for cumulative impacts to aesthetics; air quality; geology, soils, mineral resources, and paleontology; hydrology and water; and land use, planning, recreation, and agricultural resources. However, these potential impacts would be incremental and would not be significant with implementation of Project Protocols. Considered in relation to other reasonably foreseeable projects in the area, potential cumulative impacts would be less than significant with implementation of Project Protocols and proposed mitigation measures.

