

C. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

C.1 INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

C.1.1 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Part B offers a complete and detailed description of the Proposed Project and Alternatives. Part C of this document examines the environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Project and the Alternatives to it. Analysis within each issue area includes consideration of the following project components:

- Proposed Project (transmission line and substation components in Pleasanton, North Livermore, Dublin/San Ramon, and the Phase 2 portion of the project)
- Alternatives to each of the areas/phases listed above.

C.1.2 CONTENTS OF PART C

Part C includes analyses of the 11 environmental issue areas listed below:

C.2	Air Quality	C.8	Noise
C.3	Biological Resources	C.9	Public Health, Safety, and Nuisance
C.4	Cultural Resources	C.10	Socioeconomics and Public Services
C.5	Geology and Soils	C.11	Transportation and Traffic
C.6	Hydrology	C.12	Visual Resources
C.7	Land Use and Recreation	C.13	Other Alternatives

Within each issue area, the Proposed Project and alternative projects are discussed in the following order:

- Environmental Baseline and Regulatory Setting
- Environmental Impact Analysis and Applicant Proposed Measures
- Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures: Pleasanton Area
- Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures: Dublin Area
- Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures: North Livermore Area
- Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures: Tesla Connection (Phase 2)
- Mitigation Monitoring Program

By identifying the impacts associated with each issue area and the offsetting mitigation measures, the regulatory agencies and the general public are offered a discussion and full disclosure of the significant environmental impacts of this Proposed Project and its alternatives.

Section C.13 considers additional alternatives, including the No Project Alternative, Local Generation and a Switching Station Alternative, and also evaluates potential impacts of mitigation measures that would require transmission line reroutes.

C.1.3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

C.1.3.1 Environmental Baseline

In Part C, the analysis within each issue area begins with an examination of the existing physical or baseline setting wherein the Proposed Project would be placed. The regulatory setting, which includes applicable government rules, regulations, plans, and policies, is also presented in the baseline setting. For the purpose of this document, and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, the baseline used for the impact analysis reflects conditions at the time of issuance of the Notice of Preparation (May 2000).

C.1.3.2 Environmental Consequences

The environmental consequences and potential impacts that the Proposed Project and the Alternatives would bring to each issue area were assessed. Mitigation measures for each impact are identified, where feasible, and the residual impact determined. The analysis of impacts on the environment and specific resources is based on the description of the Proposed Project and the Alternatives as presented in Part B of this document.

Significance Criteria. The impacts identified by applying the assessment methodology were then compared with predetermined, specific significance criteria, and were classified according to significance categories listed in each issue area (see Section C.1.4 for discussion of significance criteria). The cumulative impacts of the project taken together with the related cumulative projects (listed in Section E.3) were assessed next, and mitigation measures for each impact were identified, if feasible. The focus in the cumulative impact analyses was to identify those project impacts that might not be significant when considered alone, but contribute to a significant impact when viewed in conjunction with future planned projects. Finally, the impacts found to be significant and unavoidable or unmitigable to a non-significant level were identified. The same methodology was applied systematically to each alternative project and alternative route alignment. A comparative analysis of the Proposed Project and the alternatives is provided in Part D of this document.

Applicant Proposed Measures. The Applicant has incorporated a substantial number of measures and procedures into the description of its Proposed Project that would avoid or reduce impacts. In the assessment of the impacts, these measures have been assumed to be part of the Proposed Project, and are not included as mitigation measures nor in the Mitigation Monitoring Programs. The Applicant Proposed Measures that could reduce the potential impacts in an issue area (such as air quality, biology, etc.) are listed in that particular issue area.

Mitigation Measures. Once an impact was identified, diligent effort was taken to identify mitigation measures that will reduce the impact to a level that is not significant. Since some reviewing agencies require a demonstration of reduction of impacts to the maximum extent possible, mitigation measures were identified for all classes of impacts (except beneficial impacts). The mitigation measures recommended by this study have been identified in the impact assessment sections and presented in a Mitigation Monitoring Program at the end of the analysis for each issue area (see also Part F for discussion of the Mitigation Monitoring Program).

C.1.4 IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE CATEGORIES

While the criteria for determining significant impacts are unique to each issue area, the classification of the impacts was uniformly applied in accordance with the following definitions:

- Class I:** Significant; cannot be mitigated to a level that is less than significant
- Class II:** Significant; can be mitigated to a level that is less than significant
- Class III:** Adverse, less than significant
- Class IV:** Beneficial impacts