C. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Sections C.1 through C.4 consider the environmental impacts of the Proposed Project and alternatives that have been modified in response to comments on the Draft EIR. 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

Section C.5 presents changes to the technical information and analysis contained in the Draft EIR that were made in response to comments on the Draft EIR. These routes and the other alternatives considered in the Draft EIR are compared in Section D of this Final EIR.

C.1 MODIFIED S2A ALTERNATIVE

As described in Section B.2, the southernmost portion of the S2A Alternative has been modified to eliminate use of parklands under the jurisdiction of the Livermore Area Recreation and Parks District and to stay outside of the property of the Zone 7 Del Valle Water Treatment Plant. Both an Overhead and an Underground Route are considered, as described in Section B.2. The following sections evaluate the impact of this revised route.

Air Quality. This route is approximately the same length as the S2A Alternative considered in the Draft EIR, and therefore would have similar impacts. Underground alternatives have greater air quality impacts than overhead routes so S2A would have greater impacts than the S1/S2 Alternatives (overhead through Sycamore Grove Regional Park), but Mitigation Measures A-1 through A-4 would ensure that impacts from dust (PM10) would not be significant (**Class II**). Impacts of the Overhead route would be slightly less than for the underground route since there would be less intensive construction, but the impacts of both would be less than significant.

Biological Resources. No additional impacts are anticipated as a result of this modification to the S1/S2 route. Most of the route would be in either Non-Native Annual Grassland Habitat or adjacent to Agricultural Areas (vineyards). It appears that the line may cross under a drainage, which would result in temporary impacts; however, Mitigation Measure B-1 and those identified under Hydrology and Water Quality (below) would reduce this impact to less than significant levels. Impacts to wildlife would likely be reduced due to the relocation of the line outside Sycamore Grove Regional Park. Installation of the underground line would cause short-term impacts, as compared to potential long-term bird strike issues (less than significant) associated with the overhead portion of the original S1/S2 route. Impacts to California red-legged frog may increase due to construction and maintenance of the underground line in relatively close proximity to the perennial creek west of the modified S2A route. These impacts are also mitigable to less than significant levels (**Class II**) with implementation of Mitigation Measure B-9.

The relocation of Switching Station 2 would not change the assessment of impacts at this site since both sites would be located in Non-Native Annual Grassland habitat. Similar to the original S2A Alternative, this route would result in a decrease in potential bird collisions associated with the overhead line when compared with the overhead portion of the S1/S2/L2 Alternative. There would be very little difference in impact between the Overhead and Underground options.

Cultural Resources. As with the original S2A Alternative, there would be a slight increase in chance of uncovering previously unknown cultural resources during underground construction activities since this route would have more underground construction than the original S1/S2 Alternative. However, this impact would be reduced to less than significant levels (**Class II**) with implementation of Mitigation Measures C-1 through C-4. The impacts of the Overhead option would be slightly less than those of the Underground option, but neither would have significant impacts.

Geology and Soils. Similar to the S2A Alternative considered in the Draft EIR, this route would result in an increase in impacts (soil erosion) during underground construction activities as compared to an overhead segment. No mitigation is required as PG&E Co.'s Applicant Proposed Measures (Draft EIR Table C.5-2) would ensure that impacts remain at a less than significant level (**Class III**).

Hydrology and Water Quality. Both the S2A and Modified S2A Alternative would have more severe hydrologic impacts than the S2 Alternative due to the greater extent of construction. Underground transmission lines have greater impacts on surface water flow, water quality, erosion and sediment transport, and groundwater. Implementation of Mitigation Measures H-2 though H-6 would ensure that impacts were less than significant (**Class II**).

Land Use and Recreation. The modified S2A Alternative would result in similar impacts on existing vineyards as identified for Alternative S1/S1 (Impact 7-8) and the Stanislaus Corridor Alternative (Impacts 7-32 and 7-33). The same mitigation measures (L-1, L-2, L-5, L-22, and L-23) would be required to reduce these **Class II** impacts to less-than-significant levels. The alternative would avoid all other impacts identified for Alternatives S1/S2 in the vicinity of Sycamore Grove Regional Park. There is minimal difference in impact between the Overhead and Underground options.

Noise. There is a general increase in noise levels associated with underground construction as compared with overhead lines, although long-term underground lines have no corona noise as do overhead lines during operation. As with the original S2A route, there are two or three residences along this route south of Highway 84. Impacts of short-term construction noise are considered to be less than significant (**Class III**) and would be further reduced with implementation of Mitigation Measures L-1 and L-2 (pre-construction notification and construction liaison).

Socioeconomics and Public Services. As discussed in Draft EIR Section C.13.3.2, the original S2A Alternative would have been located on the Zone 7 Del Valle Water Treatment Plant property. The revised S2A route would not be on that property, and would not be located within the access road leading to the plant. Therefore, this route is not expected to affect plant operations or land use.

Transportation and Traffic. Construction of this route would be outside of the existing roadway. While access to the right-of-way would be required via the existing road to the water plant, the traffic flow on this private road should not be affected. All relevant mitigation measures identified in Draft EIR Section C.11 would be implemented to ensure that impacts were not significant.

Visual Resources. The following discussion addresses the **Underground Option**, which would require an overhead-underground transition station southwest of the Zone 7 plant on grazing land. The transition station would be located just south of an existing vineyard, immediately north of the overhead Contra Costa-Newark Transmission Line and southwest of the Zone 7 Del Valle Water Treatment Plant. To the east is the far southern portion of Sycamore Grove Regional Park. Public views of the transition station would be limited to the few visitors to the southern end of the park, adjacent to the Zone 7 water plant. The industrial character of the transition station would be similar to that of the water plant and numerous transmission structures in the adjacent transmission line corridor. As a result of the structural context established by the existing water plant and adjacent transmission towers and the limited public visual access to the site, the transition station would result in an adverse but not significant (**Class III**) visual impact.

Views of the Phase 2 Switching Station Alternative/Site 2 would also be limited to users of the extreme southern portion of Sycamore Grove Regional Park. The switching station would be located between the existing Contra Costa-Newark Transmission Line and a relocated Tesla-Newark Transmission Line. To the extent that the switching station is viewed by park visitors, it would be seen within the same viewshed that encompasses the numerous transmission line structures of the two adjacent transmission lines. Within this structural context, and given the relatively few viewers that would see the station from the nearby park, the switching station is anticipated to cause an adverse but not significant (**Class III**) visual impact.

As described in Section B.2, the **Overhead Option** of this Alternative would require two tubular steel towers leading north from the existing Contra Costa-Newark transmission line, to a half-acre transition station located on private land immediately west of Foley Road and about 1,000 feet north of the Contra Costa-Newark line. The potential visual impacts of this short overhead segment were evaluated from the following locations: Arroyo Road, Wetmore Road, Route 84, Vineyard Avenue, Isabel Avenue, Ruby Hill Development, Prima Development, the Zone 7 access road, and the vicinity of the nearest residence. From each location, the visual impact was determined to be less than significant (**Class III**). This impact conclusion results from the setting of this short overhead segment: it is located immediately adjacent to the Tesla-Newark transmission corridor (which has four major transmission lines within it) and adjacent to the Zone 7 water facility which contains many large structures (water tanks and buildings) that are visible from a distance.

C.2 RELOCATION OF S2/S4 ALTERNATIVES TO "NEW VINEYARD AVENUE"

This section evaluates the use of "New Vineyard Avenue" rather than the existing roadway for installation of the underground portions of the S2 and S4 Alternatives. Section B.3 describes this route and Figure B-3 illustrates its location. Three issues related to construction of this new roadway are considered in this section. Section C.2.1 considers relocation of the S2 Alternative to New Vineyard Avenue and Section C.2.2 considers relocation of the S4 Alternative to New Vineyard. Section C.2.3 considers the relocation of the underground transmission line from north of Old Vineyard Avenue to within the roadway.

C.2.1 RELOCATION OF THE S2 ALTERNATIVE TO NEW VINEYARD AVENUE

Section B.3 describes (and illustrates, in Figure B-3) the potential use of "New Vineyard Avenue" rather than the existing roadway for the S2 or S4 Alternatives. The sections below address the impacts of this potential relocation. No analysis is presented for issue areas in which impacts would be the same in either roadway (i.e., air quality, cultural resources, geology and soils, socioeconomics and public services, and visual resources).

This relocation presents a potential concern related to the timing of the construction of New Vineyard Avenue. PG&E Co.'s project is urgently needed to support the Tri-Valley's transmission system, and it would be difficult for PG&E Co. to construct the underground transmission line if the planned roadway has not yet been surveyed or graded. This timing issue is addressed below under "Transportation and Traffic."

Biological Resources. The relocation of the S2 route further north would bring it in closer proximity to Arroyo Del Valle. This may result in increased disturbance of wildlife, as various species of breeding birds may occupy the riparian area, but no sensitive species are expected to be affected. In addition, the applicant's proposed measures would mitigate these impacts. Temporary impacts to the drainage and any potential wetlands along the route may result from undergrounding of the line; however, Mitigation Measure B-1 and Hydrology measures would mitigate these impacts (**Class II**). Potential impacts to Heritage Trees (oaks) would decrease.

Hydrology and Water Quality. The New Vineyard Avenue route would have greater impacts in several of the criteria used to evaluate this project. First, due to the closer proximity of New Vineyard to the Arroyo del Valle, New Vineyard has greater potential for erosion and water quality impacts, and may be slightly worse for groundwater impacts. Impacts are mitigable to less than significant levels (**Class II**) with implementation of mitigation measures presented in the Draft EIR (H-2 through H-6).

Land Use and Recreation. The land use impacts of the New Vineyard Route would be similar to those identified for the original S2 Alternative. In particular, the construction impact on the planned elementary school would still occur, as the revised alignment would pass adjacent to the northern boundary of the school site, as opposed to the southern boundary of the site passed by the original alternative. The magnitude of the impact could be somewhat reduced under the realigned alternative,

assuming the school building(s) would be located closer to the Old Vineyard Avenue than to the New Vineyard Avenue (based on site plans provided by Randall Lum, Director of Public Works, City of Pleasanton). However, implementation of Mitigation Measure L-12 would still be required to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level (**Class II**).

Noise. Construction impacts along New Vineyard would be less than those along Old Vineyard, since there are several residences (and more proposed for the near future) along Old Vineyard. Overall impacts in this area would be less than significant (**Class III**).

Public Safety and Health. There would be a greater distance between the S2/S4 transmission line and existing and proposed residences and the proposed school if the line were located on New Vineyard rather than Old Vineyard (based on site plans provided by the City of Pleasanton). The level of impact in both cases would be less than significant (**Class III**), as described in Draft EIR Section C.9.2.2.1.

Transportation and Traffic. If the S2 or S4 Alternatives were constructed in New Vineyard Avenue concurrently with the construction of the new roadway and prior to it carrying vehicular traffic, traffic impacts during construction would be minimized because no traffic obstructions would occur. However, there is uncertainty associated with the timing of New Vineyard construction, and PG&E Co.'s project will need to be constructed in mid-2002 regardless of the status of road construction. As described in Draft EIR Section C.11.3.3, an attempt to follow the proposed realigned roadway prior to it being constructed would require PG&E Co. crews and equipment to trench in an area that is about one mile long and located between 500 to 1,000 feet north of the existing paved road. Therefore, Mitigation Measure T-12 is recommended to ensure that the construction timing of New Vineyard does not delay project completion.

T-12 If the S2 or S4 Alternatives are selected in conjunction with the New Vineyard Avenue route, PG&E Co. shall coordinate with the City of Pleasanton regarding the status of New Vineyard construction. If PG&E Co. believes that construction of New Vineyard is not sufficiently advanced to allow timely installation of the underground transmission line, PG&E Co. shall present documentation of this finding to the CPUC Energy Division, supported by documentation from the City, at least 60 days before the start of construction. If the CPUC Energy Division concurs that road construction could delay installation of the transmission line, the Old Vineyard Avenue shall be utilized instead, as envisioned in the Draft EIR (and as defined and conditioned in Final EIR Section C.2.3).

C.2.2 Relocation of the S4 Alternative to New Vineyard Avenue

The analysis presented above would apply to the S4 Alternative as well as the S2 Alternative. The only difference between the two alternatives is that the S4 route joins Old Vineyard at a point where New Vineyard has already diverged (see Figure B-3). Therefore, in order for the S4 route to use New Vineyard, the S4 route would have to cross the Vineyard Corridor Specific Plan development to the north. The crossing point for S4, as illustrated on Figure B-3, was selected to be immediately adjacent to and west of "C Street" which has an open space corridor and a small drainage along its west side.

The construction disturbance associated with this approximately 1/4 mile-long crossing between New and Old Vineyard Avenues, if constructed prior to construction of the homes east of "C Street" would not affect any sensitive receptors. There is the potential for construction to affect the adjacent drainage, but Mitigation Measures B-1 and H-2 through H-6 would ensure that impacts would be less than significant.

C.2.3 RELOCATION OF S2/S4 ALTERNATIVES INTO ROADWAY OF OLD VINEYARD AVENUE

As described in Section B.3, the central portion of the Vineyard Avenue section of the S2 or S4 Alternatives (west of the Ruby Hill development and east of the divided road) was originally proposed to be located north of the roadway in the currently undeveloped land. This land (north of Old Vineyard) is included in the Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan, and in accordance with that plan, both housing and a new school will be constructed adjacent to Old Vineyard Avenue. Therefore, if the S2 or S4 Alternatives are selected and the Old Vineyard (rather than New Vineyard) option is selected, the following mitigation measure is recommended to further minimize noise, land use, and EMF impacts (all of which would be less than significant, **Class III**).

L-12a If the S2 or S4 Alternatives are selected and if Old Vineyard Avenue is identified as the selected route, the transmission line shall be located as follows:

(1) West from Highway 84, the underground route would be located in the firebreak road south of Vineyard, past Isabel Avenue to the western boundary of the Ruby Hill property (where the fire station is located).

(2) West from the fire station, where the road narrows and New Vineyard diverges towards the northwest, the transmission line would be installed within the roadway. Where New and Old Vineyard converge and the road becomes a divided roadway, the transmission line would be installed within the roadway (with the final location to be determined in consultation with the City of Pleasanton as required in Mitigation Measure S-1).

Installation of the transmission line within the roadway at a time when it is still in use as the only Vineyard Avenue traffic path could result in potentially significant (**Class II**) traffic disruptions, as evaluated in the Draft EIR. Therefore, the following mitigation measures would be required:

- Mitigation Measures T-1, T-2, and T-3 would reduce impacts of lane and road closures.
- Mitigation Measure T-4 would require repair of damaged roads or sidewalks
- Mitigation Measure T-5 and T-6 would ensure access to properties adjacent to construction.
- Mitigation Measure T-7 would ensure bicycle and pedestrian safety during construction.
- Mitigation Measure T-8 would require coordination to ensure access for emergency response vehicles.
- Mitigation Measure T-9 requires coordination with school districts to minimize impacts on school bus routes and stops.

C.3 S5 QUARRY ALTERNATIVE

As illustrated in Figure B-3, this route would allow either the S2 or S4 Alternatives to avoid the western portion of Vineyard Avenue by crossing the quarry to the north, turning west on the north side of Stanley Boulevard, and entering the Vineyard Substation from the north (overhead). The impacts of this alternative are evaluated in the following bullets.

Air Quality. The elimination of approximately 1.7 miles of underground construction (and its replacement with just over 2 miles of overhead transmission line) would create fewer impacts to air quality, since construction of an underground line would have substantially greater air quality impacts than those of an overhead line.

Biological Resources. The relocation of this route may increase impacts to wildlife compared to the S2 and S4 Alternatives since the lines would be overhead and may increase potential for bird strikes. On the other hand, this area is a highly disturbed industrial area with existing overhead lines and therefore the potential increase in impacts to wildlife would be slight. Potential impacts to Heritage Trees (oaks) would decrease. There is also the potential for the open cut crossing of Del Valle Creek to affect the quality of the aquatic habitat, a potentially significant (**Class II**) impact. Mitigation Measure B-13 should be implemented to minimize these impacts:

B-13 Prior to construction, a survey of the area that would be affected by the crossing construction shall be conducted to identify any sensitive plant or aquatic species; plants shall be flagged for avoidance. Construction shall be completed during the dry season (May to November) and erosion control measures shall be implemented to ensure that sedimentation within the stream is not increased. A biological monitor shall be on-site at all times during construction within the streambed.

Cultural Resources. The impacts of the overhead route through the quarry are not expected to be significant since no recorded resources have been identified in this area. However, Mitigation Measures C-1 through C-4 should be implemented to ensure that no cultural resources are affected. As described in Draft EIR Section C.4.3.2 (Alternative S1), the Stanley Boulevard railroad corridor includes historic resources. Impacts on these resources would also be avoided with implementation of Mitigation Measures C-1 through C-4.

Geology and Soils. Construction of the overhead transmission line support towers through the quarry land would not require extraordinary construction measures. Deeper than usual foundations would only be required in order to maximize the amount of aggregate reserves that could be extracted around the tower footings when the surrounding area is mined for aggregate. The extent of this buffer zone of aggregate materials will depend on the foundation design chosen by PG&E Co., and approved by the local planning agencies, however, it is reasonable that the deeper foundations will be chosen to partially reduce the cost of the aggregate reserves lost. Because the quarry owner would be compensated for the loss of mineral resources, impacts would be minimal (**Class III**).

Hydrology and Water Quality. The S5 Quarry Alternative route is preferable to the S2/S4 route along Vineyard Avenue because as an overhead route, it would have fewer erosion, water quality, and ground water impacts. Although the S5 route's distance is slightly longer, the impacts associated with overhead construction are less than those of underground construction lines (S2/S4). This route would require an open cut crossing of Arroyo Valle, whereas the Proposed Route and the S2/S4 Alternatives would have to make a bored crossing of the Arroyo Valle, adjacent to the Bernal Avenue bridge. Mitigation Measure B-13 (above) would reduce potential erosion and sedimentation impacts to less than significant levels.

Land Use and Recreation. The S5 Quarry Alternative would pass the future Neal Elementary School site on its north side, whereas the original S2 Alternative would pass its south side (nearer to the planned school buildings). As for the S2 Alternative, Mitigation Measure L-12 should be implemented to minimize construction impacts on the school (assuming that the school is operational at the time the transmission line is built). With implementation of this route, construction impacts on residential receptors would be reduced due to the shorter portion of Vineyard Avenue that would be affected.

This alternative would impact recreational trail users. The Vineyard Avenue Corridor Specific Plan identifies a bicycle route and multi-use trail along the planned New Vineyard Avenue. The overhead portion of the Quarry Alternative would be plainly visible to users of this planned trail. The impact would be considered adverse but not significant (Class III) due to the context in which the overhead transmission line would be viewed: adjacent to ongoing quarry operations and a large aggregate processing plant with a heavy industrial character. Furthermore, the trail's location alongside a busy arterial roadway would render it a less sensitive land use than a recreational trail located in a natural setting.

Noise. The S5 route would not affect any sensitive noise receptors.

Public Safety and Health. The S5 Alternative route would not abut any residential areas and therefore is preferred over the S2/S4 Alternative.

Socioeconomics and Public Services. The S5 Alternative route would not result in impacts to public services or raise new socio-economic issues, primarily due to the use of overhead lines rather than underground conduit, which could interfere with existing utilities and infrastructure. As discussed in Geology and Soils, above, PG&E Co. would be required to pay the landowner for minerals that would not be accessible as a result of the location of transmission towers.

Transportation and Traffic. Construction of the S5 Quarry Alternative would be within private quarry property or within the railroad right-of-way along the north side of Stanley Boulevard (the latter the same as the S1 Alternative). Mitigation Measure T-11 (requiring coordination with the railroad along Stanley) would be required, as with the S1 Alternative.

Visual Resources. The S5 Quarry Alternative would result in the establishment of an overhead transmission line that would be visible to users of Shadow Cliffs Regional Park. The Alternative would

pass through the active operational area of the quarry and would either span existing buildings and structures or be located in close proximity to those structures.

The portion of the S5 Quarry Alternative that would parallel the north side of Stanley Boulevard would cause the same adverse but not significant visual impact as that of the S1 Alternative (**Class III**). The S5 Alternative is not expected to cause significant visual impacts (**Class III**) on views from the Shadow Cliffs Regional Recreation Area due the industrial structural context and highly disturbed landscape that exists along the S5 route within the viewshed of the Recreation Area. This conclusion is based on the following factors:

- The transition station and its associated structures would be located further away from viewers at the Recreation Area (primarily the swimming beach) in an area that already hosts the smaller 60 kV transmission line structures that connect to Iuka Substation. Thus, the existing transmission structures have already established in the landscape vertical structural elements similar to those of the proposed transition structures. Although visibility of the transition station (to the south of the more southerly permanent quarry facilities) is not expected to cause significant adverse visual impacts, a mitigation measure has been proposed to plant trees along the western boundary of the transition station to lessen the adverse but not significant visual impact of the station.
- The four transmission line structures to be located on the quarry property north of the transition station would be the most prominent of the S5 components when viewed from the Recreation Area. Three of these four structures would be positioned within close proximity of the existing permanent quarry facilities which are highly complex in form and industrial in appearance.
- The proposed transmission line structures would be approximately 100 feet tall while the permanent quarry facilities are 90 feet tall. Thus, the existing quarry facilities have already established along the S5 route structural characteristics comparable to those of the proposed transmission structures with respect to scale and industrial appearance.
- The transmission line structure that would be located on the north side of Stanley Boulevard would be viewed within the context of numerous existing electric transmission and utility structures as well as the extensive quarry facilities on the north side of Stanley Boulevard.
- Although the Park District has planted trees along the northern portion of the Recreation Area's eastern boundary to partially screen views of the quarry facilities, the screening potential of these trees will be somewhat limited for several reasons including: (a) most of the trees are situated north of the more prominent quarry facilities visible in the center of views from the swimming beach; (b) the density of the trees that would provide some screening of the central quarry facilities is relatively sparse; (c) there is no screening of the quarry's more southerly facilities; and (d) at maturity, the treeline would obscure at most approximately the lower two-thirds of the permanent quarry facilities, leaving the approximately upper one-third of the facilities exposed to direct lines of sight from the Recreation Area.
- To the extent that the trees are effective in screening the lower two-thirds of the quarry facilities, they would similarly screen the lower portions of the proposed transmission line structures.
- Compared to the proposed S5 Alternative structures, the existing electric transmission line and utility structures along Stanley Boulevard would appear more prominent in views from the swimming beach given their closer proximity to viewers at the beach.
- The proposed S5 Alternative structures would also appear less prominent in views from the southern portion of the Recreation Area including the boat rental and launching areas and fishing areas given: (a) the more northerly viewing orientation (toward Stanley Boulevard) away from the S5 Alternative route, and (b) the greater prominence of the more southerly quarry facilities due to their closer proximity to the southern and eastern portions of the Recreation Area and lack of structural screening.

C.4 MODIFICATION OF P3 ALTERNATIVE

The P3 Alternative is an all-underground transmission line, starting from a transition station located adjacent to the existing Contra Costa-Newark 230 kV line. As described in Section B.5 and illustrated in Figure B-4, comments on the Draft EIR pointed out that the original P3 Alternative crossed active landslides in the easternmost portion. Therefore, the P3 Alternative has been modified, as described in Section B.5. The following discussions address impacts of this change. No analysis is presented for issue areas in which impacts would be the same in either case (i.e., air quality, cultural resources, socioeconomics and public services, public safety and health, transportation and traffic).

Biological Resources. The modified P3 Alternative could affect the hydrology of the Springtown Alkali Sink, which supports the federally-endangered palmate bracted birds beak. This plant survives based on the specific hydrologic conditions in the area (shallow subsurface flow), and these conditions could be affected by the concrete duct bank in which the transmission line is installed. The May School Road portion of the modified P3 route is 1.5 miles north of the north border of the sink area, so the potential for impact is less than for the L1 Alternative. If this alternative is adopted, Mitigation Measure B-12 should be implemented to define the specific hydrologic conditions in the area and determine whether the impact would create a potential hydrologic effect to the sink area. This study and resulting mitigation action would likely reduce the level of impact to less than significant (**Class II**). However, as stated in the mitigation measure, there is a possibility that the determination would be that the impact is unavoidable. This route is preferable to the original P3 route since the eastern portion of the route is an additional 0.25 mile further north.

Geology and Soils. The modified P3 Alternative crosses more moderate terrain and avoids a landslide that is located on the original P3 route.

Hydrology and Water Quality. No significant hydrologic impacts are identified for the revised portion of this alternative route, although implementation of Mitigation Measures H-2 through H-6 would be required. As stated in Draft EIR Section C.13.3.1 and in the Biological Resources discussion (above), the portion of this route along May School Road has the potential to impede subsurface hydrologic flows to special status plant species and their habitat in the Springtown Alkali Sink. However, due to the distance of this route north of the sink, and with implementation of Mitigation Measure B-12, this impact should be less than significant (**Class II**).

Land Use and Recreation. The revised P3 Alternative would have land use impacts similar to but somewhat greater than the original P3 Alternative. Because the alignment would pass adjacent to two farm residences east of Dagnino Road, the construction impacts to residential receptors would be marginally increased. These impacts would be less than significant with implementation of Draft EIR Mitigation Measures L-1, L-2, and L-22. These residences would also be affected by the presence of the transition station adjacent to the Contra Costa-Newark line, but given the presence of the line itself, the additional presence of the half-acre station would present a less than significant impact (**Class III**). Mitigation Measure L-25 is presented to minimize this impact.

L-25 The route of the easternmost 1,000 feet of the P3 Alternative (as modified in the Final EIR, Section B.5) shall be evaluated by PG&E Co. in conjunction with the adjacent landowners and the transition station shall be relocated to at least 500 feet from any residence, if feasible.

Noise. The adjacent residences are between 250 and 300 feet from the modified P3 route. PG&E Co.'s Applicant Proposed Measure 12.1e requires that they install temporary sound barriers or sound curtains if sensitive receptors will be exposed to construction noise for more than one day, so the noise impact would be less than significant (**Class III**).

Visual Resources. The realignment of P3 would place the underground-to-overhead transition station in relatively close proximity to two rural residences (east and west of the site). The site would also be visible to a third rural residence, which is located slightly further away to the north. From these residences, the transition station would be visible adjacent to the existing Contra Costa-Newark transmission line. Topography would screen the site from potential viewing locations to the south. The station's visibility to the three residences would be considered an adverse but not significant visual impact (**Class III**) given the similar structural context already established by the existing Contra Costa-Newark Transmission Line.

C.5 CHANGES TO THE DRAFT EIR

This section presents changes to Draft EIR text that have been made in response to comments on the Draft EIR. These changes are also indicated in Section H, Response to Comments, but are presented here in a consolidated form. Deleted text is indicated by strikethrough text (~~strikethrough~~) and added text is indicated with underlines (<u>underlines</u>). Changes to mitigation measures are shown in Table F-1.

Page ES-14, Executive Summary Section 4.3 (Comment 123-36)

"Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Project. Although most of the proposed transmission line route passes through developed areas and disturbed grasslands with marginal habitat value, there are segments of the route with sensitive habitats special status species that may be affected <u>by</u> construction of the Proposed Project."

Page B-7, Section B.2.2.1 (Comment 123-38)

"To connect the new 230 kV transmission line that would connect to the Vineyard substation with the existing Contra Costa-Newark 230 kV line (located in the Tesla-Newark corridor), a new single-circuit lattice tower and two short dead-end~~1~~ towers would be installed in a parallel position just south of…"

Page B-37, Section B.5.1 (Comment 123-41)

"15126<u>.6 (a)</u> Alternatives to the Proposed Action."

Page B-55, Section B.6.2.1 (Comment 123-43)

"The 230 kV double circuit transmission line connection would be from Vineyard Substation in the south. This route would follow~~s~~ part of the north-south route…"

Page B-55, Section B.6.2.1 (Comment 123-44)

"At this point, it would cross to the east side of the road, continuing north for 0.8 miles ~~to MP I5.2~~ where it would cross back to the west side and continue to the south side of the I-580 interchange."

Page C.3-39, Section C.3.1.1.5 (Comment 123-47)

Table C.3-12a Plant Communities and Other Areas along the D2 Alternative Alignment: Underground Section from the Proposed Dublin Substation to the San Ramon Substation

Milepost (approximate)	Plant Communities/ Other Areas	Comments
B17.30 – B18.09	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B18.09 – B18.10	Developed Area	Tassajara Road
B18.10 – B18.27	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B18.27 – B18.28	Central Coast Riparian Scrub	Tassajara Creek
B18.28 – B19.86	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B19.86 – B19.87	Seasonal Wetland	Seasonal drainage
B19.87 – B19.89	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B19.89 – B19.90	Blue Oak Woodland/ Seasonal Wetland	Seasonal drainage with blue oaks; Connects several stockponds
B19.90 – B21.0	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B21.0 – B21.01	Alkali-Freshwater Marsh	Alamo Creek
B21.01 – B21.40	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B21.40 – Substation	Developed Area	San Ramon Substation

Page C.3-45, Section C.3.1.1.7 (Comment 123-47)

Table C.3-16 Plant Communities and Other Areas along the Proposed Transmission Line North Area route (Phase 2)

Milepost	Plant Communities/ Other Areas	Comments
B0.00 – B0.01	Alkali-Freshwater Marsh	Perennial drainage with cattail
B0.01 – B0.05	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Disked
B0.05 – B0.06	Developed Area	Patterson Pass Road
B0.06 – B0.21	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed, wind farm
B0.00 – B1.62	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed, wind farm
B1.62 – B1.63	Alkali-Freshwater Marsh	Stock pond
B1.63 – B1.74	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B1.74 – B1.75	Developed Area	Railroad right-of-way
B1.75 – B3.45	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed, wind farm
B3.45 – B3.49	Alkali Meadow	Seasonally flooded by Mountain House Creek
B3.49 – B3.50	Alkali-Freshwater Marsh	Mountain House Creek
B3.50 – B3.61	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B3.61 – B3.65	Developed Area	Interstate 580, eastbound
B3.65 – B3.70	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Interstate 580, median

Table C.3-16 Plant Communities and Other Areas along the Proposed Transmission Line North Area route (Phase 2)

Milepost	Plant Communities/ Other Areas	Comments
B3.70 – B3.74	Developed Area	Interstate 580, westbound
B3.74 – B4.11	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed, wind farm
B4.11 – B4.15	Alkali-Freshwater Marsh	Stock Pond
B4.15 – B4.46	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed, wind farm
B4.46 – B4.49	Seasonal Wetland	Grazed
B4.49 – B5.58	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed, wind farm
B5.58 – B5.60	Developed Area	Altamont Pass Road
B5.60 – B5.63	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed, alkaline soils
B5.63 – B5.64	Alkali-Freshwater Marsh	Altamont Creek, seasonal – contains cattails, willows
B5.64 – B5.67	Developed Area	Railroad right-of-way
B5.67 – B8.73	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed, wind farm, San Joaquin saltbush habitat
~~W2.47-W2.58~~	~~Non-Native Annual Grassland~~	~~Grazed, San Joaquin saltbush habitat~~
B8.73 - B8.80	Alkali Meadow	Grazed, San Joaquin saltbush habitat
B8.80 - B8.90	Alkali-Freshwater Marsh	Unnamed watercourse – contains cattails, willows, blue wild rye, salt grass, bulrush
B8.90 - B8.99	Developed Area	Laughlin Road
B8.99 - B9.05	Alkali-Freshwater Marsh	Unnamed watercourse – contains bulrush, salt bush
B9.05 - B9.13	Alkali Meadow	Grazed
B9.13 - B9.26	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B9.26 – B9.32	Developed Area	Republic Services Landfill - includes a settling basin
B9.32 – B9.45	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B9.45 – B9.53	Developed Area	Republic Services Landfill – paved entrance
B9.53 – B10.13	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Includes a paved drainage
B10.13 – B10.33	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
B10.33 – B10.34	Seasonal Wetland	Seasonal drainage with scattered live oak, willow
B10.34 – B10.35	Developed Area	Vasco Road
B10.35 – B10.42	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed

Page C.3-46, Section C.3.1.1.7 (Comment 123-47)

Table C.3-17 Plant Communities and Other Areas along the Brushy Peak Alternative

Milepost (approximate)	Plant Communities/ Other Areas	Comments
B9.05 = BP0.00	Proposed Phase 2 (North Area) route	
BP0.00 – BP0.52	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
BP0.52 – BP0.53	Developed Area	Laughlin Road
BP0.53 – BP0.54	Seasonal Wetland	Seasonal drainage, alkali
BP0.54 – BP0.61	Potential Alkali Meadow/ Non-Native Annual Grassland	Heavily grazed by horses, dominated by saltbush
BP0.61 – BP0.73	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
BP0.73 – BP0.74	Seasonal Wetland	Seasonal drainage
BP0.74 – BP1.31	Non-Native Annual Grassland	Grazed
BP1.31 = B7.83	Proposed Phase 2 (North Area) route	

Page C.3-51, Section C.3.4.3 (Comment 123-48)

The ~~CEQA~~ CDFG reviews the proposed actions and, if necessary, submits to the Applicant a proposal for measures to protect affected fish and wildlife resources.

Page C.3-91, Section C.3.4.3 (Comment 123-49)

"Impact 3-1: Temporary or permanent impacts to Seasonal Wetlands at Mileposts B19.86 ~~F0.86~~ and B19.89, an Alkali-Freshwater Marsh at Milepost B21.0 ~~X0.15~~, and a Central Coast Riparian Scrub plant community along Tassajara Creek at Milepost B18.27 may occur along the D2 Alternative between the San Ramon Substation and the proposed Dublin Substation during construction."

Page C.3-101, Section C.3.4.3 (Comment 123-49)

Impact 3-8: Temporary and permanent loss of special status plant species and their habitats may occur during construction. One special status plant species, San Joaquin saltbush, has been observed along the proposed transmission line route between Mileposts B8.68 ~~W2.53~~ and B8.75 ~~W2.60~~ during surveys conducted by PG&E Co. (1999).

Page C.5-20, Section C.5.1.4.3 (Comment 123-51)

"…from approximately Mileposts B12.0 to B.13.2 and V0.0 to V1.0."

Page C.5-27, Section C.5.3.1.1 (Comment P-14)

The following paragraphs are added to the discussion of **Impact 5-3: Slope Instability and Unstable Soil Conditions**:

The Proposed route of the all weather access road crosses one small landslide at approximately Milepost M1.8, lies below two small landslides at approximately Milepost M1.65 and extends across the large older landslide at the northern end of the overhead portion of the Proposed transmission route between approximately Mileposts M2.25 and M2.35. The Proposed route of the road also crosses a mapped debris flow at approximately Milepost M2.0, passes upslope of a small debris flow source area at approximately Milepost 2.05, and passes downslope of a slightly larger debris flow source area at approximately Milepost M2.1 (Majmundar, CDMG, 1991). The unstable nature of the terrain mapped as "mostly landslide" by the USGS (Wentworth et al., 1997) and as the "most susceptible area" for landslides and other features related to soil instability by the CDMG (Majmundar, 1991). These designations are given to areas of slopes which "should be considered naturally unstable, subject to failure even in the absence of the activities of man" (Majmundar, 1991).

The slope instability and unstable soil conditions found along the Proposed Route of the all weather access road may contribute to destabilization of natural and constructed slopes as a result of construction activities. Implementation of Applicant Proposed Measures 13.3 and 13.9 during the design, construction and operation phases of the Proposed Project should ensure that the impacts of the transmission line towers are less than significant **(Class III)** as stated in the Draft EIR in Section

C.5.3.1, page C.5-27. However, upon re-evaluation of the conditions for the all weather access road, these measures are deemed insufficient. The impacts to slope instability and unstable soil conditions posed by the Proposed all weather access road will be less than significant with implementation of the following additional mitigation measure **(Class II)**.

Mitigation Measure for Slope Instability and Unstable Soil Conditions. Destabilization of natural or constructed slopes could occur as a result of construction activities, and from loading of unstable slopes with heavy construction equipment and project facilities. Excavation, grading, and fill operations could alter existing slope profiles and could result in the excavation of slope-supporting material, steepening of slopes, or increased loading, particularly along the proposed all-weather access road in the hills south of Pleasanton.

G-3 PG&E Co. should perform design-level geotechnical investigations to define areas of slope instability along the routes of constructed access roads through areas with known incidence of slope instability and unstable soil conditions. Where possible, areas with the potential for unstable slopes, landslides, mudflows, and debris flows along proposed access road routes should be avoided. Where avoidance of unstable conditions is impractical, excavation or stabilization of unstable slope material may also be performed, including grading of cut slopes, and excavation of unstable materials.

Implementation of this Mitigation Measure, along with the incorporation of standard engineering practices will ensure that people and structures are not exposed to geologic hazards, and potential impacts are reduced to a significant but mitigable level **(Class II)**.

This Mitigation Measure should also be applied to portions of the Proposed Phase 2 and Stanislaus Corridor Alternative connections to the Tesla Substation for the construction of all access roads in steep terrain where slope stability is a known hazard.

Page C.5-28, Section C.5.3.1.1

The following impact discussion was inadvertently omitted from the Draft EIR.

Impact 5-10: Loss of Aggregate Mineral Resources. Project Alternatives would cross areas classified as MRZ-2 and MRZ-3, described previously as areas where significant deposits and potentially significant deposits of mineral resources exist, respectively. Of greatest impact would be the placement of transmission line support towers along the S1, D1 and L2 Alternative routes within areas mapped as MRZ-2, where present land use includes the extraction of aggregate mineral resources. These Alternative routes would require placement of approximately 7, 9, and 4 support towers, respectively, within areas mapped as MRZ-2. The placement of support towers would preclude extraction of the existing aggregate resources under and immediately around the proposed tower locations. In addition to the tower locations, retention of a cone of land beneath each tower location would be required to maintain adequate structural support for the tower foundations, substantially increasing the area of mineral resources that would be unavailable for extraction of aggregate. The loss of aggregate

resources would be compensated for as part of the easement acquisition for placement of utility lines. This potential loss of aggregate resources would constitute less than 1 percent of the area mapped as MRZ-2 currently under use for the extraction of aggregate resources and would constitute a less than significant impact (**Class III**) on the extraction of aggregate mineral resources.

Page C.6-11, Section C.6.1.2.1 (Comment K-21)

~~Zone 7 owns the water supply and DWR operates the dam, releasing water when requested by Zone 7.~~ The reservoir is owned and operated by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), and Zone 7 receives water from the reservoir through its water supply contract with DWR. Local runoff is stored in this reservoir and Zone 7, through a separate operating contract with DWR, develops a current annual average local surface water yield of around 7,000 acre-feet per year.

Page C.6-40, Section C.6.4.1.2 (Comment 123-52)

"The outcome of Mitigation Measure H-10 may result in this increased runoff and erosion impact being considered…"

Page C.7-8, Section C.7.1.1.2 (Comment 123-58)

"Just before the Fallon Road interchange with Interstate 580, the alignment would convert to an underground cable and head west along the south side of the freeway for about 2,600 feet, crossing currently vacant land flanked by single-family residential development on the west. A transition station is required to convert the overhead transmission line to an underground cable. Just east of this subdivision…"

Page C.7-10, Section C.7.1.1.2 (Comment 123-60)

"Immediately after this change in jurisdiction, at approximately Milepost B21.1, the alignment would transition from underground to an overhead alignment as it continues toward the east. A transition station is required to convert the overhead transmission line to an underground cable."

Page C.7-13, Section C.7.1.1.4 (Comment 123-63)

"**North Area (PG&E Co.'s Phase 2).** The Phase 2 alignment would originate at the Tesla substation, which is surrounded by grazing land in unincorporated Alameda County. The alignment would be located in an existing 75-foot-wide vacant PG&E Co. easement, nearly all of which is on land used to graze cattle, except as otherwise noted. Cattle grazing also occurs on the wind farms discussed below. The Phase 2 line would depart from the northwest corner of the substation heading in a north-of-west (i.e., WNW) direction, continuing to cross grazing land. Traversing hilly open space land, the existing easement crosses numerous hills and ridges lined with windmills, in some cases passing adjacent to a line of windmills and in others crossing through a line of windmills. At about Milepost B1.8 ~~C1.0~~, the easement passes roughly 500 feet to the north of the US Windpower substation and control room. At Milepost B2.3 ~~C1.5~~, the easement crosses the Union Pacific Railroad corridor and about 800 feet south of the Southern Pacific Railroad corridor. West of this crossing, the easement continues through wind

farms, all of which are crossed by a network of maintenance roads that would provide construction access for PG&E Co. Co.

The alignment would cross Interstate 580 overhead at Milepost B4.4 ~~C3.6~~, with a support tower placed on the southern end of a truck parking apron located adjacent to the eastbound freeway lanes. West of the freeway, at about Milepost B4.9 ~~C4.1~~, the alignment would pass immediately north of two stock ponds. At Milepost B6.4 ~~C5.6~~ the easement crosses another railroad corridor and Altamont Pass Road, which provides access to the Altamont Landfill, located about a mile to the northeast. At roughly Milepost B6.9 ~~C6.1~~, the Phase 2 line would cross over a north/south-trending transmission line operated by the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). A final line of windmills is crossed at about Milepost B7.2 ~~C6.4~~.

The Phase 2 alignment veers slightly to the northwest at Milepost B7.9 ~~C7.1~~, then turns dues west at Milepost B8.7 ~~C7.9~~ and crosses Laughlin Road ~~at Milepost B8.0~~, about 1,000 feet south of a former residence now owned by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) and about 800 feet north of a second residence on the east side of the roadway. The EBRPD intends for Laughlin Road to provide access to the Brushy Peak Regional Preserve~~, which~~; this park is currently closed to the public. Due to concerns about the visual impacts of PG&E Co.'s proposed crossing of this gateway to an important regional natural resource, an alternative to this crossing location is examined below (the Brushy Peak Alternative Segment).

Continuing in a westerly direction, the easement begins passing immediately to the south, Browning-Ferris Industries' Vasco Road Landfill at about Milepost B9.1 ~~C8.3~~, then turns sharply to the northwest at Milepost B9.35 ~~C8.55~~, crossing closed landfill cells and to the west of the active fill areas of the landfill. At Milepost B10 ~~C9.2~~, the alignment again heads due west. Again crossing grazing land, the easement passes to the south of an existing residence at Milepost B10.3 just before crossing Vasco Road. About 500 feet west of Vasco Road, the Phase 2 line would connect with the Phase 1 line at Milepost B10.4 (at the junction with the Contra Costa-Newark transmission line)."

Page C.7-13, Section C.7.1.1.4 (Comment B-6)

"The Phase 2 alignment veers slightly to the northwest at Milepost C7.1, then turns due~~s~~ west at Milepost C7.9 and crosses Laughlin Road at Milepost B8.0, about 1,000 feet south of a former residence now owned by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) and about 800 feet north of a second residence on the east side of the roadway. The EBRPD intends for Laughlin Road to provide access to the Brushy Peak Regional Preserve~~, which;~~ this park is currently closed to the public. Due to concerns about the visual impacts of PG&E Co.'s proposed crossing of this gateway to an important regional natural resource, an alternative to this crossing location is examined below (the Brushy Peak Alternative Segment)."

Page C.7-14, Section C.7.1.1.4 (Comment 123-64)

"If Alternatives S1 or S2 were selected for implementation, the Phase 2 line would terminate in the park at about Milepost V13.2, where either of these alternatives would connect into the Stanislaus line."

Page C.7-21, Section C.7.1.2.3 (Comment B-7)

"A number of EBRPD facilities are located in the project area. The Vineyard substation in Pleasanton is immediately west of Shadow Cliffs Regional Park, a 296-acre park with an 80-acre lake and a four-flume water slide. In addition, the proposed Phase 2 route passes south of Brushy Peak Regional Preserve, a 507-acre scenic open space area owned by the Livermore Area Recreation and Park District (LARPD) (see below), ~~but~~ and managed and operated by LARPD and the EBRPD. Currently, the Preserve may only be visited via LARPD-guided tours. The EBRPD has recently acquired ~~two~~ three properties immediately to the south of the Preserve, ~~and a third property will be acquired in January 2001. These properties~~ totaling ~~1,120~~ 1,528 acres ~~will be~~ that have been added to the Brushy Peak Regional Preserve. The recent addition ~~and~~ will provide the primary public access into the Preserve. The proposed Phase 2 alignment crosses these properties approximately between Mileposts B8 and B9.4. Due to concerns by the EBRPD that the proposed transmission line would cross the entrance way to the park and visually degrade the visual gateway to the Preserve and Brushy Peak, an alternative alignment (Brushy Peak Alternative) south of the planned park entrance is examined in this EIR."

Page C.7-27, Section C.7.1.2.3 (Comment 123-66)

"***Proposed Phase 2 Alignment***: The Tesla substation and all of the Phase 2 alignment from Milepost B0.8 ~~C0~~ to Milepost B10.4 are entirely within the Large Parcel Agriculture land use category, as designated on Alameda County's *East County Area Plan* land use map. In addition, the area between Mileposts B0.8 ~~C0~~ and approximately B7.2 ~~C6.4~~ is identified on the Open Space Diagram of the *East County Area Plan* as a Wind Resource Area. While the County does not define this as a land use category with development standards and restrictions, it has promulgated policies pertaining to wind farms in the East County area, which are addressed in Appendix 1."

Page C.7-32, Section C.7.1.2.3 (Comment 123-67)

"This alternative is identical to the Proposed Project alignment from the tap point to the transition station at Milepost M3.1."

Page C.7-47, Section C.7.3.2.1 (Comment K-4)

"**L-7** PG&E Co. Co. shall remove the existing 60-kV transmission line that crosses the park on the same approximate alignment as the S1 alignment. If this isn't feasible, the 230-kV alignment through the park shall be placed underground or the tap point and transmission line shall be ~~aligned along the access road to the Zone 7 Water Treatment Plant~~ located in an alternative alignment outside the park."

Page C.7-49, Section C.7.3.2.1 (Comment PPH-128)

"*Adverse Effects on Regional Trail Users*

The placement of the S1 transmission line along Stanley Boulevard would adversely affect hikers and bicyclists along a planned regional trail on the north side of the roadway. The East Bay Regional Park District's Master Plan 1997 trails and parks map designates the north side of Stanley Boulevard as the future alignment for the San Joaquin County to Shadow Cliffs Regional Trail. Future trail users would be exposed to EMFs and the visual intrusion of the overhead transmission line. Exposure to EMFs would be limited by the distance of the transmission lines from the trail and the short duration of exposure. In addition to the height of the lines above the trail, the trail would laterally separated from the transmission line, which would closely parallel the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. While the exact trail alignment has not yet been determined, the railroad would be unlikely to allow a public-access trail immediately adjacent to an active rail corridor. For additional information on exposure to EMFs, please refer to Section C.9, Public Health, Safety, and Nuisance.

With respect to the visual effects, the transmission line would be located in a context of an industrial area that has few remaining natural amenities. The surrounding gravel mining operations, heavy truck and auto traffic, adjacent railroad operations, and existing power lines all contribute to degraded visual conditions in the area.

Alternative S1 would also be located in proximity to a planned regional trail along the east side of Isabel Avenue. The *Livermore Area Recreation and Park District Master Plan 1995* identifies Isabel Avenue as a potential trail. Development of this trail has been tied to the ongoing construction of residential housing to the east of Isabel Avenue, and is expected to be completed in the near future. While future trail users would not be exposed to EMFs, they would experience a similar visual intrusion of the overhead line into their viewshed as along Stanley Boulevard. While the visual context along Isabel Avenue is not nearly as industrial as along Stanley Boulevard, it is nonetheless a setting that is anything but natural. Extensive residential development flanks the trail alignment to the east, with a continuous plain wall enclosing the development. Immediately to the west of the future trail is Isabel Avenue, which is slated for expansion to a six-lane freeway in a realigned State Highway 84. An existing overhead 60-kV electric distribution line is located along the east side of the roadway. To the west is an active gravel quarry operation, which is expected to be actively mined at least until 2030. Given this existing context, the visual impact of the overhead transmission line on future trail users along Isabel Avenue would not be significant.

~~With respect to the visual effects, the transmission line would be located in a context of an industrial area that has few remaining natural amenities. The surrounding gravel mining operations, heavy truck and auto traffic, adjacent railroad operations, and existing power lines all contribute to degraded visual conditions in the area. In this~~ Given the existing and foreseeable context of the planned EPRDP trail along Stanley Boulevard and the planned LARPD trail along Isabel Avenue, the addition of the transmission line along these roadways would create an adverse, but not significant, impact on future

recreational trail users (**Class III**). More details on this visual impact are provided in Section C.12, Visual Resources."

Page C.7-53, Section C.7.4.2 (Comment PPH-54)

"Similar to the impact identified for Alternative S1, this alternative would cross land designated by the State Department of Conservation as Prime Farmland, and the support towers would remove this land from potential production. Some of the designated land is currently being quarried for gravel. While the west side of El Charro Road south of I-580 and north of Milepost 15.2 is currently agricultural land, the transmission line support towers would be placed in the fire break along the edge of the roadway. Consequently, no active agricultural land would be removed from production. This would therefore be a Class III impact, requiring no mitigation. Also similar to Alternative S1, Alternative D1 would protrude into FAA boundaries around Livermore airport, and could potentially create an obstruction to air navigation. This would be a significant but mitigable impact (**Class II**). The same mitigation measure (L-11) identified for the Alternative S1 impact would apply to this alternative."

Page C.7-56, Section 7.5.1.2 (Comment 60-13)

"**C.7.5.1.2** ***Operation and Maintenance***

The operational impact related to the loss of grazing land identified for the proposed project in the Pleasanton area would apply equally to the project in the North Livermore area, and would apply to land used for hay production as well as cattle grazing. In addition, the following impacts would be unique to the North Livermore portion of the project:"

Page C.7-61, Section (Comment PPH-13)

"***C.7.6.1.2 Operation and Maintenance***

Conflict with Alameda County Scenic Route Policy

Similar to the impact identified for Alternative S1, implementation of the proposed Phase 2 transmission line would conflict with the *Alameda County General Plan* Scenic Route Element principle stating that new overhead transmission towers and lines should not be located within scenic corridors when it is feasible to locate them elsewhere. The Phase II line would cross Vasco Road, a designated Scenic Route, in conflict with the intent of the policy. The severity of this impact would be mitigated by several factors: (1) it would be located adjacent to an existing high-voltage transmission line corridor which crosses Vasco Road in several locations, including in close visual proximity to the proposed Phase II crossing; (2) the crossing point is immediately west of Vasco Road Landfill, which presents a view to drivers at this location of altered, artificial landforms with exposed slopes and waste collection and transfer trucks climbing and descending the hillside; (3) the line would not parallel the scenic corridor, but would merely cross it; and (4) due to the surrounding topography and the winding road, the transmission line crossing would be visible only briefly to passing motorists. Because the viewshed into which the Phase II line would be introduced is already substantially compromised and the

introduction of the line would not substantially degrade existing visual conditions, this would be an adverse, but not significant impact (**Class III**).”

Page C.7-61, Section 7.6.1.1 (Comment 62-9)

“**C.7.6.1.1** ***Construction***

The temporary construction disturbance of grazing cattle identified for the proposed south alignment would also occur during Phase 2 construction. Although there would be no need to construct new access roads for the construction of Phase 2, there would a laydown area located in the vicinity of Milepost C5 and five pull-and-tension sites would be located along the Phase 2 alignment. As with the South Alignment, the amount of land that would be temporarily removed from grazing would be miniscule relative to the total amount of grazing land in the area. No mitigation would be required for this Class III impact. In addition, the noise and dust impacts on residential receptors identified for the South Area project alignment would also apply to a limited number of residents along the Phase 2 alignment, and the same measures (Mitigation Measures L-1 and L-2) would be recommended to reduce the severity of the impacts. No other construction impacts have been identified for the Phase 2 alignment.”

Page C.7-62, Section C.7.6.1 (Comment B-8)

This would be a significant impact (**Class I**~~), mitigable by the adoption of the Brushy Peak Alternative (Sec. C.7.6.2)~~.

~~***Mitigation Measures for Conflict with Recreational Use and EBRPD Master Plan Policy***~~

~~**Impact 7-31:** Visual intrusion on regional preserve and conflict with EBRPD policy on transmission lines (**Class II**).~~

~~Adoption of the Brushy Peak Alternative (Sec. C.7.6.2) would avoid this impact.”~~

“**C.7.6.2.2** ***Operation and Maintenance***

This alternative would ~~avoid the Proposed Phase 2 line’s~~ have a similar significant, unavoidable (Class I) impact on the Brushy Peak Regional Preserve (the related conflict with the EBRPD Master Plan policy) as that identified for the Proposed Phase 2 line.”

Page C.7-62, Section C.7.6.2.2 (Comment E-1)

“This alternative would avoid the Proposed Phase 2 line’s impact on the Brushy Peak Regional Preserve (the related conflict with the *EBRPD Master Plan* policy). However, it would result in the following new impact:

Conflict with Proposed Elementary School

The east-west leg of the Brushy Peak Alternative would be located along the northern boundary of a planned elementary school, as identified in the draft *Vasco-Laughlin Specific Plan*. State regulations require school site property lines to be set back a minimum of 150 feet from 230-kV transmission line easements. The Brushy Peak Alternative would conflict with this requirement, and could prevent the school district from constructing the school in the proposed location. This would be an adverse but mitigable impact (**Class II**).

Mitigation Measures for Conflict with Proposed Elementary School

Impact 7-32A: Encroachment on school's required setback from transmission line.

L-22A If selected for implementation, the alignment for the Brushy Peak Alternative should be adjusted so as to maintain a separation of 150 feet from the edge of the transmission corridor right-of-way and the planned school property."

Page C.8-9, Section C.8.1.1.2 (Comment 123-70)

"Northeast of I-580, the route passes adjacent to Las Positas College and one to the L2 Alternative substation site study zone."

Page C.8-17, Section C.8.3.1.2 (Comment 123-72)

"It should be noted that the transformers would rarely operate at full capacity, operating at full capacity on only the hottest summer days or coldest winter nights."

Page C.11-2 to –3, Section C.11.1.1.1 (Comment N-19)

The daily traffic volume of 11, 300 (1998) for Alcosta Boulevard in the City of Dublin augments the data in Table C.11-1.

Page C.11-13, Section C.11.1.1.5 (Comment 123-76)

"Isabel Avenue – Class I bike paths on a new segment between Vineyard Avenue and Stanley Boulevard."

Table C.12-6, Description Column for Kew Viewpoint (KVP) 4 (General Response GR-4.2)

"View to the south from Concannon and Isabel captures views multi-use trail users and motorists on Isabel and adjacent residences."

Page E-7, Section E.3 (comment N-8)

Table E.3-1 Cumulative Projects

Site No.	Project	Project Type	Project Location	Project Size	Proximity	Permitting Status/Schedule
CITY OF SAN RAMON						

Table E.3-1 Cumulative Projects

Site No.	Project	Project Type	Project Location	Project Size	Proximity	Permitting Status/Schedule
1	Alcosta Community Park Canine Facility	Park (Fenced unleashed Dog Park)	West of Del Mar in PG&E Co. Right-of-Way	0.8 acre site	Adjacent to D2 Reconductor (San Ramon Substation)	City of San Ramon approved; PG&E Co. approved/ construction 50%
2	EBMUD Reservoir Tank Maintenance	Reservior Maintenance	North of Old Ranch Road, East of Alcosta Boulevard		Just south of D2 Alternative	Planning/Design
2a	EDMUD/DERWA Recycled Water System	Recycled water transmission and distribution pipelines	Various locations (Iron Horse Trail, Alcosta, Bollinger, Dougherty, etc.)	Install Main and distribution lines in Dublin, San Ramon and Danville	Within proximity of the D2 Alternative.	Planning
2b	Contra Costa Central Sanitary District Sewer Line	Sewer transmission pipeline	On Estero from Alcosta to Mangos	24" Dia. Sewer line	Within proximity of the D2 Alternative	Under dispute with City/design Central Contra Costa Sanitation District design