# Environmental Minor Project Refinement Form

Project Name: West of Devers Upgrade Project Request Prepared By: Sylvia Granados

Date Approval Required: 8/20/2018 Variance Request No.: 19

Date Submitted: 8/13/2018 Location: Transmission Line Segment 4 Tower Sites 4N58 and 4N59 in the City of Calimesa and Tower Site 4N64 in unincorporated Riverside County.

Landowner: Riverside Land Conservancy; Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space.

Current Vegetative Cover/Land Use: Chaparral, Coast Live Oak Woodland, Developed/Disturbed, Grassland Forbland.

Existing Sensitive Resource? ☐ NO ■ YES Specify: Least Bell's Vireo, Bat Roost

Modifying (check as many as apply): ☐ MITIGATION MEASURE ☐ PLAN/PROCEDURE ☐ SPECIFICATION ■ DRAWING ☐ PERMIT CONDITION ☐ OTHER

Specify Source (e.g., Mitigation Measure B.5): Modification to NTP #4 Work Area Mapping.

---

**Description of Change and Justification** (Attach additional sheets if needed.)

Attachments:

■ CONSTRUCTION DRAWING ☐ ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS ☐ CORRESPONDENCE ☐ OTHER: _____

**Transmission Line Segment 4 - Tower Site 4N58**

The work area for Segment 4 Tower Site 4N58 has been expanded south to facilitate wire pulling activities at the site, by providing additional workspace for material and equipment staging, as shown in Figure 1.

The temporary impacts associated with the expansion area total 0.01 acre (.01-acre Chaparral).

**Transmission Line Segment 4 - Tower Site 4N59**

The work area for Segment 4 Tower Site 4N59 has been expanded north to facilitate the installation of the TSP foundation while minimizing impacts to Coast Live Oak Woodland, where feasible. See Figure 1.

The temporary impacts associated with the expansion area total 0.27 acre (0.16-acre Coast Live Oak Woodland, 0.11-acre Disturbed/Developed).

**Transmission Line Segment 4 - Tower Site 4N64**

A new work area along the El Casco Substation access road is required to facilitate wire pulling activities at Segment 4 Tower Site 4N64. The new work area will provide additional space for material and equipment staging, as shown in Figure 2.

The temporary impacts associated with the new work area total 0.33 acre (0.27-acre Developed/Disturbed, 0.06-acre Grassland Forbland).

**Biological Resources:**

A desktop analysis of publicly available data and relevant project data was conducted to determine the potential for special-status species to occur at the new work locations. Since included in early iterations of project design, these new work locations were included in the study area for previous biological surveys. In addition, preconstruction clearance surveys were conducted for the Transmission Sites, including the new work areas. (FRED Survey ID 000041 and 000067)

**Burrowing Owl** – Burrowing owl habitat is widespread in the project area; however burrowing owls only have a moderate potential to occur within 500 feet of the new work areas. No burrowing owls have been observed within 500 feet of the proposed work areas during preconstruction surveys.

**Jurisdictional Waters** – A constructed watercourse (concrete lined) runs along the south side of the El Casco Substation access road. The new work space will be located north of the feature. The feature will be avoided and stormwater BMPs will be implemented in accordance with the Project SWPPP. No jurisdictional water features directly intersect the new work areas. Therefore, no impacts to jurisdictional waters are anticipated.

**Special-status Plants** – Smooth tarplant (Centromadia pungens ssp. laevis; CRPR 1B.1, WR-MSHCP Criteria Area Plant Species) occurs throughout the habitat immediately north of the El Casco access road. The tarplants have been flagged for avoidance. Tarplants have not been identified within the new work area; therefore, no impacts to smooth tarplant are anticipated. No other special-status plants have been identified within the other proposed new work areas during focused plant surveys. Therefore, no impacts to special-status plants are anticipated.

**Regulated Trees** – A tree pruning and removal permit was issued by the City of Calimesa for oak tree trimming/removals near 4N59 (FRED ID 2201335). The oak tree protection measures identified in the arborist report will be implemented during construction and removals will be avoided, if feasible.

**Nesting Birds** – Suitable substrates for nesting birds protected by the California Fish and Game Code, including trees, shrubs, man-made structures, and the ground surface, can be found throughout and near the new work areas. Nesting bird clearance sweeps will be conducted during nesting bird season, prior to commencing work in the new work areas, which are not currently located within existing bird nest buffers.

**Desert Tortoise** – The new work areas are not located within the range of the species.

**Listed Riparian Birds** – Suitable breeding habitat for the listed riparian bird species (least Bell's vireo [LBVI] or Southwestern willow flycatchers [SWFL]) is associated with San Timoteo Creek, which is located adjacent to the northern edge of the work area for Tower 4N64 and west of Towers 4N58 and 4N59. Protocol surveys were conducted for LBVI and SWFL in 2018. Multiple least Bell's vireo observations have been made within the adjacent suitable riparian bird habitat in 2018 (e.g., FRED Species Events 000013, 000014, 000015, 000016, 000038 and 000054). Based on continued nest monitoring during the breeding season and analysis by LBVI/SWFL biologists John Green and/or Steve Myers, it has been concluded that the LBVI breeding season has concluded. No active LBVI nests are currently located within 500 feet of the new work areas. No SWFL have been confirmed in the project area to date. The additional work area would not require trimming or removal of riparian vegetation. Assuming construction activities at this location are completed outside the breeding season, no impacts to riparian birds are expected.

**Stephens' Kangaroo Rat** – Mapped suitable habitat for Stephens' kangaroo rat (SKR) is located adjacent to both sides of the El Casco access road. Tower 4N59 is also located within mapped suitable habitat for SKR. A habitat assessment, pedestrian surveys, and trapping surveys have been conducted for the project.

The area along the telecom route north of El Casco was trapped in 2015 with negative results. No sign of SKR has been observed during multiple pedestrian surveys from 2015 to the present. The habitat area is isolated from other areas of contiguous habitat by urban development and natural boundaries (e.g., habitat, watercourses). SKR are not expected at this location.

Tower 4N59 is located in Segment 4. Trapping surveys have been conducted annually in suitable habitat as recent as 2016 and 2017, and trapping has recently been completed in 2018 (report pending). No SKR have been captured. Based on a lack of historic data, habitat conditions, negative results over several years of surveys, and discussions with the wildlife agencies, SKR are unlikely to occur in the project area.

**Special-status Bats** – Yuma myotis, big brown bat, silver-haired bat, hoary bat, California myotis and canyon bat have been documented by Dr. Ed West (CDFW collection permit and Memorandum of Understanding with CDFW) as using the riparian area associated with San Timoteo Creek, east of 4N64 and near the associated additional work area, as a daytime roost site (Habitat Event 000031). Additionally, the oak woodland surrounding 4N59 has been identified as a potential daytime roost site (Habitat Event 000022). The bat buffers associated with Habitat Event 000031 and Habitat Event 000022 intersect the 4N64 and 4N59 work areas, respectively.

MM WIL-2i requires avoidance of the buffered areas to the extent feasible. If not feasible, it describes that construction activities should be delayed until the end of the breeding season. The wire site near 4N64 was sited to avoid sensitive resources to the extent feasible. The work area for 4N59, including the proposed additional work area, has been designed conservatively to avoid impacts to the extent feasible. Unfortunately, due to engineering constraints and safety concerns, the bat buffers cannot be avoided. However, based on the current outage schedule, construction within the established avoidance buffers will occur outside of bat breeding season (conservatively ending August 15 as determined by Dr. West).

If construction activities must proceed within the buffers during the breeding season, SCE/Barnard will coordinate with the CDFW, CPUC, and BLM.

It should be noted that no direct impacts (tree removals) are expected for the roosts near the additional work areas at this time. If it is later determined that direct impacts are required, additional surveys, and impact assessment will be conducted by a Qualified Biologist. If determined to be the best course of action, evictions will be conducted as described as in MM WIL-2i and/or via methods developed in coordination with the CDFW.

**Coastal California Gnatcatcher** – No CAGN habitat occurs within 500 feet of the new work areas, therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**Golden Eagle** – Based on aerial habitat assessments and protocol surveys conducted for the project, no suitable nesting habitat for golden eagles is located within 2 miles of the new work areas.

**Special-status Terrestrial Herpetofauna** – One red diamond rattlesnake occurrence was recorded approximately 284 feet southwest of the work area associated with tower 4N64. No special status-herpetofauna have been observed within 500 feet of the 4N58 or 4N59 expanded work areas to date. Preconstruction sweeps will be conducted prior commencing work in the new work areas to identify and move any special status herpetofauna observed prior to the commencement of work.

**Special-status Small Mammals** – Special-status small mammals such as the pallid San Diego pocket mouse, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, American badger, desert kit fox, and/or black-tailed jackrabbit can occur in many parts of the project area. Ringtail are not expected based on a lack of suitable habitat and local range. The locations are outside the known range of the Palm Springs pocket mouse. Suitable habitat for the Los Angeles Pocket Mouse (LAPM) is mapped along the El Casco access road. However, based on negative trapping surveys and considerations for habitat quality in this area, it has been determined that the species are absent. However, if any of these special-status small mammal species are determined to be present during pre-construction surveys, potential impacts will be addressed according to the Small Mammals Avoidance and Minimization.

**Cultural Resources:**

The new work areas above are located within the WOD APE and were covered within the record search data that was conducted during previous WOD surveys and studies. The record search and survey results for the area were negative for cultural resources. *Cultural Resources Management Plan for Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Transmission Line Upgrade Project, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California.* 2016. Rosemead, CA: Southern California Edison.

**Resources:**

Biological ☐ NO SENSITIVE RESOURCES PRESENT ■ SENSITIVE RESOURCES PRESENT N/A

New Survey Report Attached: YES ■ NO

If No, Previous Biological Survey Reference:

(FRED Survey ID 000041 and 000067). The transmission site preconstruction surveys are currently active.

Cultural ■ NO RESOURCES PRESENT ☐ RESOURCES PRESENT WITH PROJECT APE: ☐ YES ■ NO
(PAVED/GRAVEL AREA AND NO GROUND DISTURBANCE)

If in APE, Previous Cultural Survey Reference: The Project specific Cultural Resources Management Plan:

The new work areas above are located within the WOD APE and were covered within the record search data that was conducted during previous WOD surveys and studies. The record search and surveys were negative for cultural resources. *Cultural Resources Management Plan for Southern California Edison Company's West of Devers Transmission Line Upgrade Project, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California.* 2016. Rosemead, CA: Southern California Edison.

**Other Potential Impacts:** (Check any potential changes to permitted impacts and provide details below. Attach additional sheets if needed.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ AIR QUALITY | ☐ LAND USE | ☐ TRAFFIC |
| ☐ BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES | ☐ NOISE | ☐ VISUAL |
| ☐ CONTAMINATED SOILS | ☐ PALEO RESOURCES | ☐ WATER RESOURCES |
| ☐ CULTURAL RESOURCES | ☐ SOCIOECONOMIC | ☐ WETLANDS |
| ☐ HAZARDOUS MATERIALS | ☐ STORM WATER (SWPPP) | |

NA

**CEQA and Permitting:** (Provide details for any "Yes" answer and attach additional information if needed.)

1. Will modification involve substantial changes that will require major changes to the CEQA document?
   ☐ YES ■ NO
2. Will modification result in new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts?
   ☐ YES ■ NO
3. Additional agency notifications and/or permit modifications required? ☐ YES ■ NO

**Conditions of Approval or Reasons for Denial:** (Attach additional information if needed.)

**___ Required Signatures:** (Attached email approvals may be used in lieu of signatures.)

__X__ Chief Construction Inspector or Foreman: ■ VARIANCE MODIFICATION IS NEEDED FOR SAFE AND EFFICIENT CONSTRUCTION

Name: Jeff Miller Signature: [signature] Date: 8-13-18

Environmental Inspector: ■ FIELD REVIEW COMPLETE

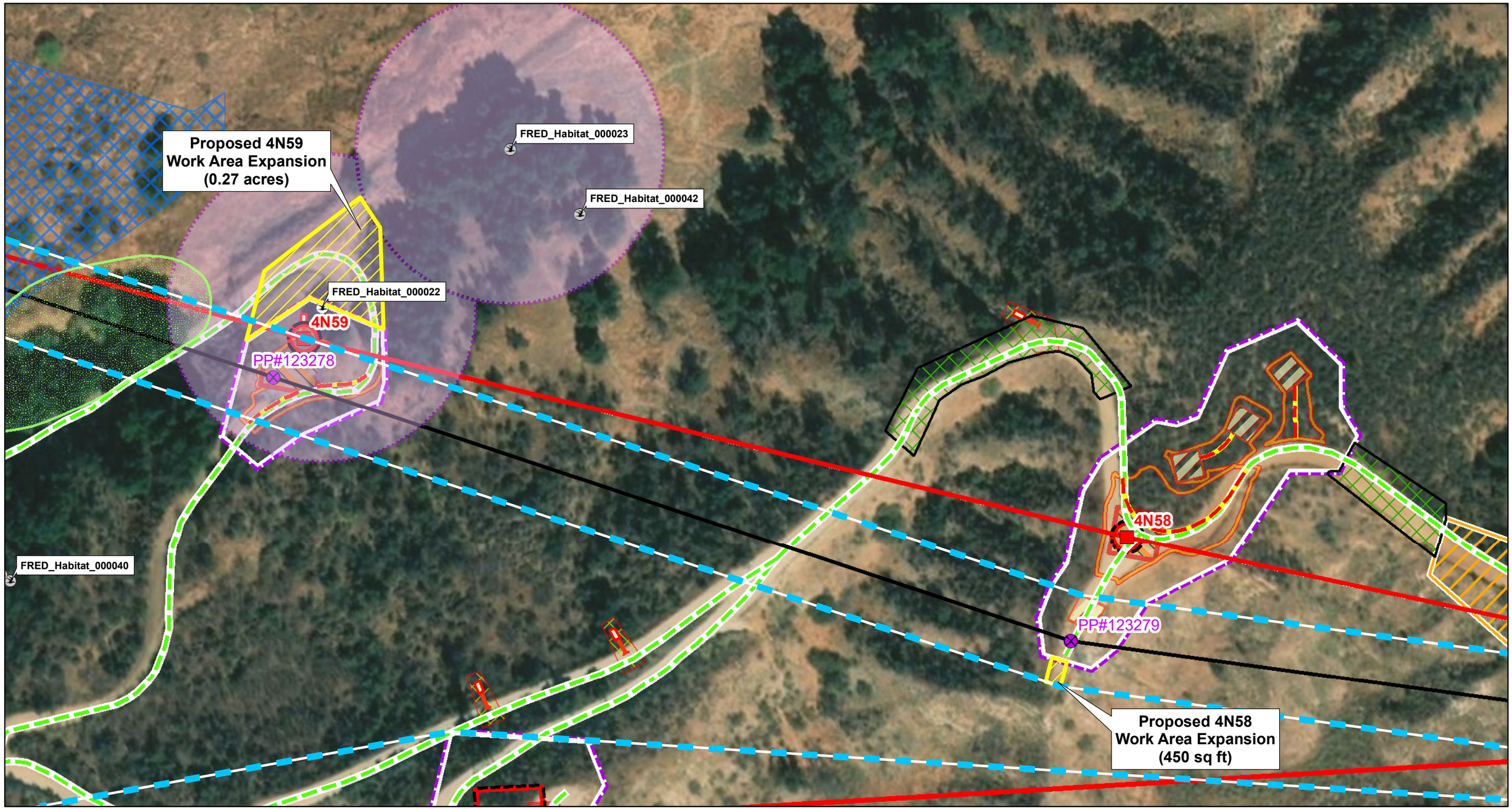
Name: Lisa Amador Signature: Lisa Amador Date: 8-13-18

__X__ Land Agent: ■ CONSISTENT WITH EXISTING RIGHTS ☐ NEW RIGHTS OBTAINED

Name: James Spence Signature: [signature] Date: 8-13-18

__X__ Environmental Compliance Lead: ■ APPROVED ☐ APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS (SEE CONDITIONS ABOVE) ☐ DENIED

Name: Sylvia Granados Signature: [signature] Date: 8-13-18




SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
An EDISON INTERNATIONAL™ Company

0 50 100
FEET

SCE, ESRI World Street Map

**LEGEND**

- Proposed Work Area Expansion

**FRED Habitat Event**

- Bat Habitat
- Yuma Myotis Habitat

**FRED Habitat Event Buffer**

- Bat Habitat (165ft)
- Yuma Myotis Habitat (165 ft)

- Riparian Bird (LBVI/SWFL) Suitable Habitat

**Non-wetland Waters**

- CDFW Jurisdiction
- Approx. Existing T/L Corridor

**Major Trans Structure**

- Proposed
- Remove

**Major Trans Line**

- Proposed
- Existing

**Civil Access Roads Lines**

- New
- Existing

**Civil Disturbance Area**

- Permanent, Crane Pad
- Temporary, Civil Work Limits
- Temporary, Disturbance Area, Crane Pad
- Temporary, Grading Limit

**Construction Areas**

- Construction Work Site
- O&M Tower Area
- Structure Work Area
- Wire Setup

**Proposed Civil Drainage Area**

- Permanent, New, Gabion
- Permanent, New, Mac Drain Single
- Temporary, New, Retaining Wall

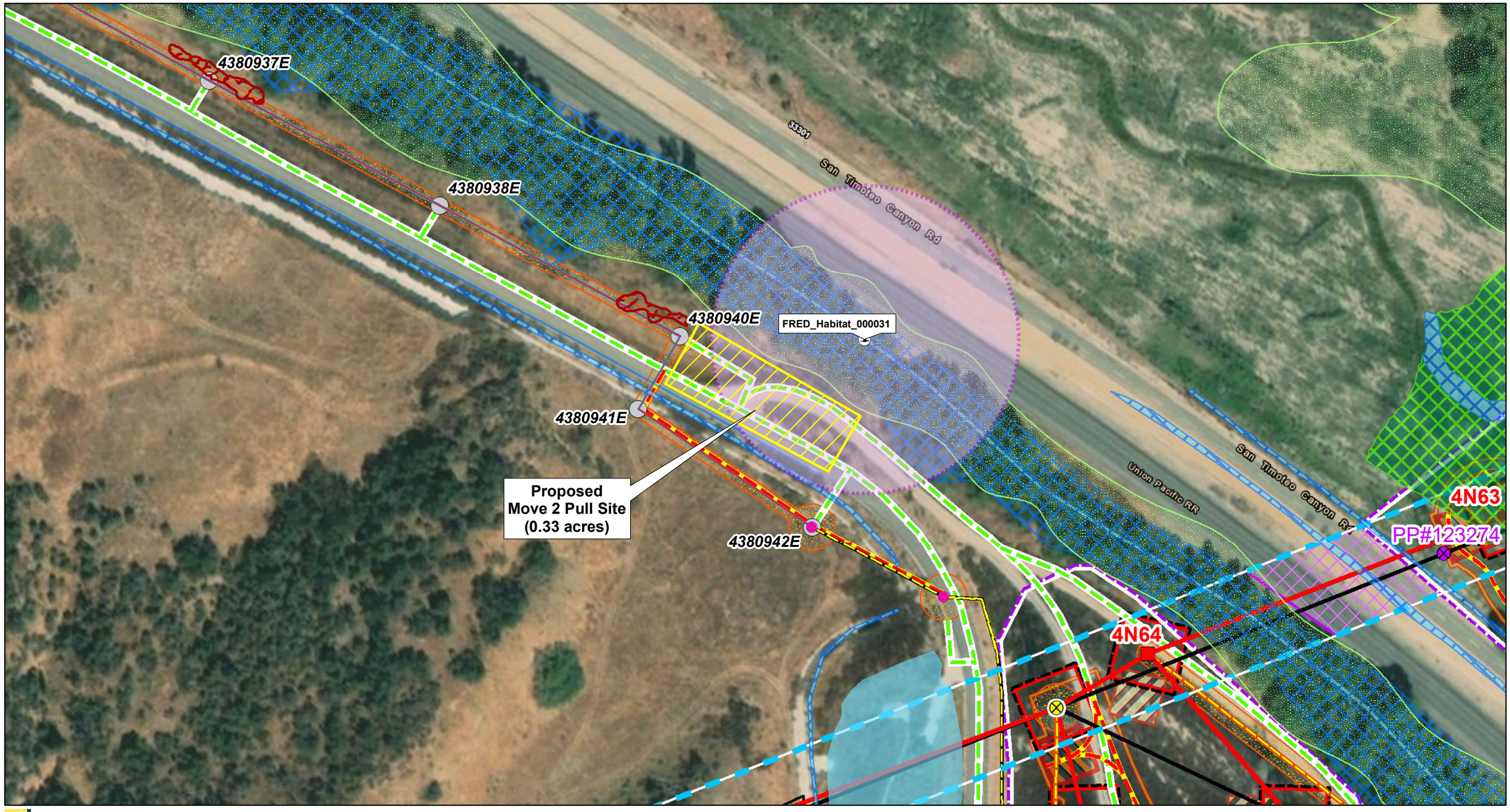

FIGURE 1

*Southern California Edison*
*West of Devers Upgrade Project*

**4N58 & 4N59**
**Work Area Expansions**
*MPR #19*

\\galt\Proj\SoCalEDISON\493461\MapFiles\Plans\MPR_19_2018-08-09\Fig1_MPR_19_4N58_4N59_Work_Area_Expansion_2018-08-10.mxd (8/10/2018)

JACOBS




SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
An EDISON INTERNATIONAL™ Company

0 50 100
FEET

SCE, ESRI World Street Map

**LEGEND**

- Proposed Move 2 Pull Site

**FRED Habitat Event**

- Yuma Myotis Habitat

**FRED Habitat Event Buffer**

- Yuma Myotis Habitat (165 ft)
- Riparian Bird (LBVI/SWFL) Occupied Habitat

**Non-wetland Waters**

- Non-wetland Waters (CDFW)
- Non-wetland Waters (USACE/RWQCB)

**Wetland Waters**

- Wetland Waters (CDFW)
- Wetland Waters (USACE/RWQCB)

- Smooth Tarplant
- Approx. Existing T/L Corridor

**Major Trans Structure**

- Proposed
- Modify
- Remove

**Major Trans Line**

- Proposed
- Existing

**Telecom Point**

- Existing
- Proposed

**Telecom Line**

- Existing, UG
- Proposed, OH
- Proposed, OPGW
- Proposed, UG

**Distribution Poles**

- Existing, 12

**Civil Access Roads Lines**

- New
- Existing

**Civil Disturbance Area**

- Permanent, Crane Pad
- Temporary, Disturbance Area, Crane Pad
- Temporary, Grading Limit

**Construction Areas**

- Construction Work Site
- General Disturbance Area
- Guard Pole
- O&M Tower Area
- Structure Work Area


FIGURE 2

*Southern California Edison*
*West of Devers Upgrade Project*

**Move 2 Pull Site on El Casco Access Road**

*MPR #19*

\\galt\Proj\SoCalEDISON\493461\MapFiles\Plans\MPR_19_2018-08-09\Fig2_MPR_19_Move_2_Pull_Site_2018-08-13.mxd (8/13/2018)

JACOBS