

## 5.5 Cultural Resources

### CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

### 5.5.1 Setting

#### ***Approach to Analysis of Cultural Resources and Previous Cultural Resources Studies***

This analysis is based on a search of prehistoric and historical resources records from the Northwest Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System (NWIC). The results of the records searches conducted in October 2010 (NWIC File No.10-0320) and in February 2011 (NWIC File No.10-0760) indicate that 17 studies have been conducted along the distribution lines associated with the proposed project. In February 2010, Garcia and Associates (GANDA) conducted an additional records search of a 25-foot radius along the approximate 1.50-mile corridor of the Fulton No. 1 60 kV Power Line and the existing overhead distribution line along Old Redwood Highway associated with the proposed substation site. Site reconnaissance surveys were also conducted by GANDA in 2011 and 2012 (Siskin and Cox 2012a, 2012b).

On August 31, 2011, GANDA initiated consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) with a request for information about sacred lands that may be located within the project area and a list of interested Native American groups and individuals who might have information regarding resources within the project area. In a letter dated September 7, 2011, the NAHC responded and reported that no known Native American resources are present in the project area or within the 0.25-mile radius of the area. On September 7, 2011, GANDA initiated consultation with the Native American representatives. Follow-up calls were conducted on September 21, 2011. Native American consultation yielded no specific information regarding prehistoric or ethnographic use of the project area (Siskin and Cox 2012a, 2012b).

#### ***Paleoenvironment***

The geology in the vicinity of the proposed project consists largely of Holocene and Pleistocene age sedimentary and volcanic rocks (see Section 5.6, Geology and Soils, for detailed description). The substation site is located on Quaternary sedimentary units which include alluvium, Glen Ellen, Huichica, and Sonoma Volcanics formations. The alluvial sediments are unlikely to contain any significant fossil resources. The sedimentary rocks of the Glenn Ellen and Huichica formations have not been identified as important paleontological formations. Sonoma Volcanics are typically deep below the surface, so construction activities would be unlikely to encounter this formation.

The UC Museum of Paleontology (UCMP) databases of known paleontological sites in Sonoma County were reviewed by the applicant to identify the occurrence of fossils in these formations and to determine the likelihood that paleontological resources might be encountered during excavation and grading of the proposed substation site. The UCMP records search indicated that there are 503 fossil locations within Sonoma County, with two specimens collected from locations two to five miles west of the project. Most previously identified fossils within Sonoma County were found in the Wilson Grove and Petaluma formations. These formations are unlikely to be encountered during project construction. None of the previously identified fossil locations are on or in the vicinity of the project site (PG&E 2010).

### ***Prehistory***

The project area contains soils belonging to the Huichica and Haire Series (see Section 5.6, Geology and Soils, for further detail). In Sonoma County, the alluvial parent material to these soil series is estimated to be early to late Pleistocene in age. The age and well-developed soil profiles suggest that the soils in the project area were deposited well before documented human occupation of the region. As such, the project area has a low potential for buried sites (PG&E 2010).

The project area is within the North Coast Ranges, which have been the focus of relatively few archaeological studies. Nevertheless, a general chronological framework has been established and divided into three broad time periods: Paleoindian, the three-stage Archaic period, and the Emergent period (Hildebrandt 2007, Milliken et al 2007, PG&E 2010).

The Paleoindian period began more than 11,000 years ago and ended approximately 8,000 years ago (ca. 10,000–6000 B.C.). Sites are known to have been established near lakes, but overall there have been very few California sites firmly dated to the Paleoindian period.

The Lower Archaic (6000–3000 B.C.) in northern California is represented by sites located in upland settings. It appears that people used a general hunting and gathering economy, with an emphasis on the collection of seeds. During the Middle Archaic period (3000–1000 B.C.), climatic conditions changed significantly, becoming warmer and drier. This period is characterized by more localized foraging and longer term settlements. These settlements are well represented on the Santa Rosa Plain. By the Upper Archaic period (1000 B.C.–A.D. 500), the climate had become cooler and wetter. More sedentary Berkeley pattern groups, originating in the Clear Lake area, became established in the Santa Rosa area. Berkeley pattern groups had a high dietary reliance on acorns and also subsisted on large game and fish.

During the Lower Emergent Period (A.D. 500–1500) socioeconomic strategies diversified in this period in the North Bay; while artifacts at some sites suggest sedentary systems like those initiated in the Upper Archaic, others represent increased mobility. A diversification of local bead forms and technological innovations are present in sites in the Santa Rosa Plain during this time. The onset of the Upper Emergent Period (A.D. 1500–) coincides with the arrival of the Spanish explorers in the New World (ca. A.D. 1500). The activities of Native people during this period are thought to be similar to those observed by the early non-native chroniclers.

### ***Ethnography***

The proposed project lies within the area inhabited by the Southern Pomo. Southern Pomo tribelets include *Kataictemi*, north of Santa Rosa, *Bitakomtara*, who occupied the area from Santa Rosa to Cotati, and *Konhomtara* near Sebastopol. Southern Pomo groups maintained a relatively dense population with complex social structures. Domestic buildings were built of brush and grass or tule while public structures were larger, semi-subterranean, and more substantial. The ethnohistoric settlement of *Tsolika'wi*, which roughly translates to “at redwing (blackbird) field” was reportedly located in East Windsor, although

its location remains undetermined. The Pomo typically lived in large villages with ancillary smaller villages for most of the year and dispersed into seasonal camps to exploit variable resources. The Pomo survived the diseases introduced during contact with the Euroamericans. Although now generally integrated into American culture, the Pomo still survive in the area, as is evident in the local Pomo rancherías (Bean and Theodoratus 1978).

### ***Regional History***

**Spanish and Russian Periods.** The indigenous patterns of Pomo peoples were irrevocably changed with the arrival of Euroamericans in California. Following the founding of Mission Dolores and the Presidio in San Francisco, the Spanish began raiding the Southern Pomo territory for potential converts. By the 1820s at least 600 Pomo had been baptized at missions San Rafael and Sonoma. The Russian outpost of Fort Ross was established by the Russian-American Company just two years later along the coast as a regional base for its fur-trading venture. For nearly three decades, the Russian-American Company employed an ethnically diverse workforce, including local Pomo people, until the decline in sea otters, and their pelts, made the colony unprofitable and the operation was abandoned.

**Mexican Period.** After Mexico achieved its independence from Spain in 1821, it began an aggressive colonizing effort in northern California to assert its territorial claims against Russia. In 1823, Mission San Francisco Solano was established in the town of Sonoma, the 21st and last of the Spanish/Mexican missions built in California. Sonoma soon became the focus of settlement for the Mexican colonists as their attempts to settle in near the present-day towns of Fulton, Petaluma, and Santa Rosa met failure due to resistance by local Native American groups. This resistance ultimately collapsed when diseases introduced by the Euroamerican colonists devastated Native populations. Beginning in 1833, the landholdings of the missions were broken up and distributed to individuals. Most of these ranchos were focused on the trade of hides and tallow to foreign traders. Many Native Americans, including Southern Pomos, were employed by these operations. The project is situated just east of the northeast boundary of two land grants, Sotoyome and Molinos. No known features, dwellings, roads, corrals, or other structures associated with the ranchos are within or adjacent to the project area.

**American Period.** The Mexican-American War was fought between 1846 and 1848, and ended with the ceding of California to the United States. In 1849, gold was discovered in the Sierra Nevada foothills, and the California population soared due to immigration from local, national, and international sources. When California became a state in 1850, Sonoma was one of the original 27 counties. At that time, its population was concentrated in only a few settlements. As the gold rush subsided, former residents returned to Sonoma County, while many newcomers “squatted” on the extensive tracts of land, focusing on commercial agriculture, with wheat and potatoes as the preferred crops.

The area surrounding what is now the Town of Windsor was settled by these early farmers after 1851. The town itself was formally established in 1855. The region’s economy was primarily based on agriculture throughout most of its history, with wine grapes, hops, and prunes as the dominant crops during the twentieth century. Transportation into the region was also enhanced by the construction of the 14-mile-long Old Redwood Highway between Healdsburg and Santa Rosa in 1915 and later by Highway 101, which was constructed between Santa Rosa and Windsor in 1962. By the 1980s, commercial and residential development was present along major highways in the region.

### ***Current Status***

No prehistoric cultural resources have been previously recorded or were identified during the fieldwork within or adjacent to the project area. The following historic-era resources have been identified.

- There is one previously identified historic-era cultural resource within the project area: a section of the Northwest Pacific Railroad (NWPRR) [Resource Number: CA-SON-2322H (P-49-002834)] and associated features. The NWPRR is approximately 25 feet east of the Fulton No. 1 60 kV Power Line at the intersection of Windsor Road and Windsor River Road. This NWPRR railroad segment (17.6 miles long) was evaluated in 2004 and determined to be ineligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) (Hart 2004). The archaeological survey in June 2012 identified additional features associated with this resource: culvert 110 and a metal box. These features have also been recommended as ineligible for listing in the NRHP and CRHR.
- The project area also includes a section of the Fulton No. 1 60 kV Power Line, which was installed in 1949 and rebuilt in 2009. Within the project area to the east of the substation site is an overhead distribution line that runs parallel to the historic-era Old Redwood Highway. Although the line was originally installed in 1938, the poles appear to be modern.
- The archaeological survey conducted in February 2011 resulted in the identification of one historic-era cultural resource, Old Redwood Highway (1.5 miles between Herb Road and Windsor River Road), which had not been previously recorded or evaluated. Old Redwood Highway is within the project area, as the distribution line that runs along the highway would be upgraded. There is evidence of Old Redwood Highway documented on U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps since 1877. Since then the road has been continuously used and frequently upgraded. PG&E would avoid impacts to this historic alignment of Old Redwood Highway.
- The archaeological survey in February 2011 also identified four historic structures in the study area: a shed west of NWPRR; a commercial complex at 9600 Old Redwood Highway; a commercial complex at 10603 Old Redwood Highway; and a garage building at 10071 Old Redwood Highway. PG&E would avoid any potential impacts to these structures.
- The archaeological survey in June 2012 identified newly recorded features associated with a non-extant residence at 10501 Herb Road, including a fence line, an electric pole, concrete debris and a path. These features were not formally evaluated.

**California Public Resources Code.** According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)(3), generally a resource shall be considered “historically significant” if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the CRHR (Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 4852). When a project will impact an archeological site, it needs to be determined whether the site is a historical resource, which is defined as any site which: (a) is historically or archeologically significant, or is significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political or cultural annals of California; and (b) meets any of the following criteria:

- Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage;
- Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
- Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In addition, a resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined by Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k) or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(g), shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. CEQA also requires lead agencies to consider whether projects will impact “unique archaeo-

logical resources.” Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 (g), states that “unique archaeological resource” means an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

- Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
- Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
- Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

## 5.5.2 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### *Applicant Proposed Measures*

PG&E proposes to implement measures during the design, construction, and operation of the proposed project to ensure it would occur with minimal environmental impacts in a manner consistent with applicable rules and regulations. Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) are considered part of the proposed project in the evaluation of environmental impacts. APMs CU-1 through CU-3 relate to cultural resources. CPUC approval would be based upon PG&E adhering to the proposed project as described in this document, including this project description and the APMs (see Table 4-5 in the Project Description), as well as any adopted mitigation measures identified by this Initial Study.

#### ***a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource as defined in §15064.5 [§15064.5 generally defines historical resource under CEQA]?***

*LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED* The section of the NWPRR (P-49-002834) and associated features, one section of the Fulton No. 1 60 kV Power Line, Old Redwood Highway, and several other structures in the survey are historic-era cultural resources. However, the railroad, power line, and highway have been consistently used and upgraded and contain modern components in addition to or instead of historical components. The NWPRR segment was determined to be ineligible for inclusion in the CRHR in 2004 (Hart 2004). The other features/structures have not been formally evaluated, but appear not to meet the definition of a “historical resource” in CEQA Guidelines §15064.5. The construction of the proposed project would not require removal, relocation, or other temporary or permanent damage to any of these resources. **APM CU-1** requires training construction personnel regarding appropriate procedures for unanticipated discoveries of cultural resources. In addition, **Mitigation Measure C-1** requires marking the limits of the project area with visible flagging tape, excluding the known cultural resources. With the implementation of these measures, the impacts of the proposed project on historic resources (including those that have not been formally evaluated for inclusion in the NRHP and CRHR) would be less than significant.

- C-1**            **Mark limits of project area near known cultural resources.** In areas near identified cultural resources, a qualified cultural resources specialist (approved by the CPUC) shall mark the limits of the project area with visible flagging tape. The construction crews shall be instructed that no vehicle access, travel, equipment staging, storage, or other construction-related work shall occur outside the flagged areas to ensure that known historic resources are not inadvertently damaged during implementation of the project.

**b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?**

*LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.* No archaeological resources have been recorded within the project boundaries. There is no evidence of prehistoric archaeological resources in the immediate vicinity of the substation site or distribution lines. There is low regional archaeological sensitivity for buried prehistoric sites based on analysis of soil profiles (PG&E 2010). It is possible that previously unknown intact archaeological resources could be inadvertently discovered during ground-disturbing activities associated with project construction. The implementation of **APM CU-1** (Train construction personnel to recognize possible buried cultural resources) and **APM CU-2** (Halt work and notify archaeologist if possible cultural resources are discovered) would minimize the risk of damaging archaeological resources; therefore, this impact would be less than significant.

**c. Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?**

*LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED.* Construction of the proposed substation and associated distribution line work is not likely to have significant impacts on paleontological or geologic resources as no such resources are known in the project vicinity. Given the lack of known paleontological resources and the limited disturbance associated with the project, the probability of encountering rare fossils is low. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure Pal-1** would further reduce potential impacts of construction. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure Pal-1, this impact would be less than significant.

**Pal-1**      **Avoid previously unidentified paleontological resources.** If paleontological remains are discovered during construction, construction will cease or be directed away from the discovery, and the potential resource will be evaluated by a qualified paleontologist. The paleontologist will recommend appropriate measures to avoid, record, preserve, or recover the resource/s.

**d. Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?**

*LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT.* It is unlikely, but possible, that unmarked burials may be unearthed during construction. To minimize the effects of this potential impact, PG&E would implement **APM CU-3**. APM CU-3 requires that if human remains are encountered during construction or any other phase of development, work in the area of the discovery would be halted in that area and directed away from the discovery. The County Coroner would be notified immediately. In the event the remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner would notify the Native American Heritage Commission, who would then identify a Most Likely Descendent. The Most Likely Descendent would consult with PG&E's archaeologist to determine further treatment of the remains. With the implementation of APM CU-3, this impact would be less than significant.