

3.3 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

This section discusses existing agriculture resources that may be affected by the Tule Wind Project. The following identifies the existing agricultural resources in the project area, analyzes impacts that may result from the construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning of the proposed project and alternatives. The project incorporates applicant proposed mitigation measures to avoid and reduce impacts of the project.

3.3.1 Affected Environment/Environmental Setting

The project area is situated in the eastern portion of San Diego County, approximately 50 miles east of City of San Diego, 90 miles west of Arizona, and north of the community of Boulevard. The area is accessible via Interstate 8 (I-8), State Route 94 (SR-94) and Ribbonwood Road junction, and McCain Valley Road off Old Highway 80. The majority of the project area lies in McCain Valley Resource Conservation Area and Land Cooperative, in the In-Ko-Pah Mountains adjacent to the Tecate Divide, south of the Cleveland National Forest. The topography of the area is gently-to-steeply sloping with an elevation ranging between about 3,600 and 5,600 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). The project vicinity is shown in Section 2.0, Project Actions and Alternatives, **Figure 2.0-1**.

Small-scale agriculture operations are scattered throughout the subregion and are typically dry land farming or grazing. Topography is the primary limiting factor for agriculture, with the area's steep, rocky terrain. However, the Mountain Empire Plan also finds that "while the subregion is essentially rural in character, the topography, lack of water and poor soil quality offer little opportunity for instituting any large scale agricultural operations." The agricultural goal of the Mountain Empire Plan is to "encourage the expansion and continuance of agricultural uses in the subregion." The nearest agricultural enterprise to the project area had been the Ketchum Ranch near Jacumba, which ceased operation and is currently planned as a residential development. According to project area field observations, there are currently cattle grazing located within the project area, but no active crop agriculture.

Table 3.3-1 summarizes the approximate acreage of land in the agricultural land use designations, agricultural use regulations (zones), and agriculture preserves located within the Mountain Empire Planning Area.

Table 3.3-1. Mountain Empire Planning Area Agricultural Statistics

Mountain Empire Planning Area	
Acres in Agricultural Uses	9,865
Acres Within Agriculture Zoning 19)	0
Acres Within Agriculture Zoning Designation (20)	25,099
Acres in Agricultural Preserves	55,562
Acres in Williamson Act Contract	1,560

Source: Open Space Element, San Diego County General Plan 2002. <http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/dplu/docs/existgp/openspace.pdf>.

The California Land Conservation Act or Williamson Act, allows counties and cities in California to establish agricultural preserves, and offers contracts to landowners for the purpose of protecting agricultural land from premature conversion to other uses. The program is voluntary, and the County of San Diego, like many of the counties and cities in the state, participates in the program. According to the information acquired from the County of San Diego Geographic Information Systems (GIS) department, there are no designated Williamson Act Contracts within the project area.

3.3 Agricultural Resources

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produce maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status; the best quality land is called Prime Farmland. Maps are updated every two years, with current land use information gathered from aerial photographs, a computer mapping system, public review, and field reconnaissance. The minimum mapping unit is 10 acres. The DOC Prime Farmlands, Farmlands of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmlands are referenced in the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines*, Appendix G as resources to consider in an evaluation of agricultural impacts.

The list below provides a comprehensive description of all the categories mapped by the DOC. Collectively, lands classified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland are referred to as Farmland (DOC 2004).

- **Prime Farmland.** Farmland that has the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance.** Farmland similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Unique Farmland.** Farmland of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of Local Importance.** Land of importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee.
- **Grazing Land.** Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities. The minimum mapping unit for grazing land is 40 acres.
- **Urban and Built-up Land.** Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately six structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, public administrative purposes, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.
- **Other Land.** Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines and borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

The nearest Non-Prime Agricultural Lands identified are located off Thing Valley Road west of the project area, and shown in **Figure 3.3-1**, Williamson Act and Important Farmlands.

3.3 Agricultural Resources

There are no soils identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Resource Conservation Service (2003) that contain agricultural lands which have a high soil quality and irrigation status. The proposed project area does not contain any Prime Farmland, Farmlands of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmlands or Farmland of Local Importance.

According to the San Diego County General Plan, the area has a General Agriculture (20) land use. The County of San Diego Zoning Ordinance has two Agricultural Use Regulations: the A70, Limited Agriculture, and the A72, General Agriculture, of which only A72, General Agriculture is located within the project area boundaries. The A72 General Agriculture Use Regulations are intended to create and preserve areas for raising crops and animals. The County allows the processing of products produced or raised on the premises, and certain commercial activities associated with crop and animal raising are allowed. These regulations are applied to areas distant from large urban centers. There are approximately 410,033 acres of land with the A72 Use Regulations, located within the County of San Diego, 55,562 acres are located within the Mountain Empire Planning area, of which 203 acres are located within the project area.

According to the San Diego County Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU), the Fadem land parcel located within the project area previously had an Agricultural Preserve designator (AP-30). This designation was removed as part of a rezone (04-026) and administrative permit (04-003) in April 2006, reducing 1,722 acres of a larger 14,000-acre agricultural preserve. According to the San Diego County DPLU Geographic System Mapping data, the project area contains 202.7 acres of agricultural preserves as shown in **Figure 3.3-1**. According to DPLU Project Manager, there currently are no agricultural preserves located within the project boundaries.

According to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Eastern San Diego County Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (2007), the McCain Valley Allotment covers 31,481 acres (including the In-Ko-Pah, Mt. Tule, Table Mountain, and Tierra Blanca sub-allotments) of grazeable land. **Table 3.3-2** shows the current grazing activity which occurs only in the McCain Valley Allotment. The McCain Valley/In-Ko-Pah and Tierra Blanca Areas allotment currently has 20,497 active acres or 1,112 animal units per month (AUM), with the BLM permit to expire in 2010. Additionally, according to the BLM RMP, wells which have supported grazing cattle have gone dry and have not been re-drilled. Current grazing allotments are shown in **Figure 3.3-2**.

Table 3.3-2. BLM Current Livestock Grazing

Allotment		Acres	Grazing Preference (AUMs)		
Number	Name		Active	Suspended	Total
<i>Perennial/Ephemeral</i>					
07002	McCain Valley – In-Ko-Pah	10,704	1023	0	1023
07002	McCain Valley – Tierra Blanca	9,793	89	0	89
07002	McCain Valley – Mt. Tule	5,305	0	0	0
07002	McCain Valley – Table Mountain	5,679	0	0	0
07018	Banner Queen	4,132	0	0	0
07020	Canebrake	6,820	0	0	0
07037	Oriflamme	5,281	0	0	0
07045	Vallecito	15,985	0	0	0
07015	San Felipe Hills	1,845	0	0	0
Total		65,544*	1,112		

*Acreage total may be slightly different elsewhere in the document due to differences in acreage calculations in GIS applications.

Currently, there is livestock grazing within the McCain Valley area. According to the BLM Associate Field Manager, grazing policies have changed and public lands are not available for livestock grazing in accordance with the San Diego County RMP. The current permit will not be renewed and a two-year non-renewal notification letter for the McCain Valley Allotment was sent by BLM to the permit holder on September 18, 2009. The grazing permit will expire on September 18, 2010.

3.3.2 Regulatory Setting

There are many laws, regulations, policies and programs that aim to protect, preserve and promote agriculture. The following discussion details the most relevant federal, state and county regulations, policies and programs pertaining to agricultural land use as they relate to the processing of discretionary land use projects pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and CEQA.

The majority of the project is on federal land and subject to the jurisdiction of the BLM. There are portions of the project located on a state land parcels, and portions of the project located on private parcels within the County's jurisdiction.

Federal

Farmland Protection Policy Act (7 U.S.C. Section 4201)

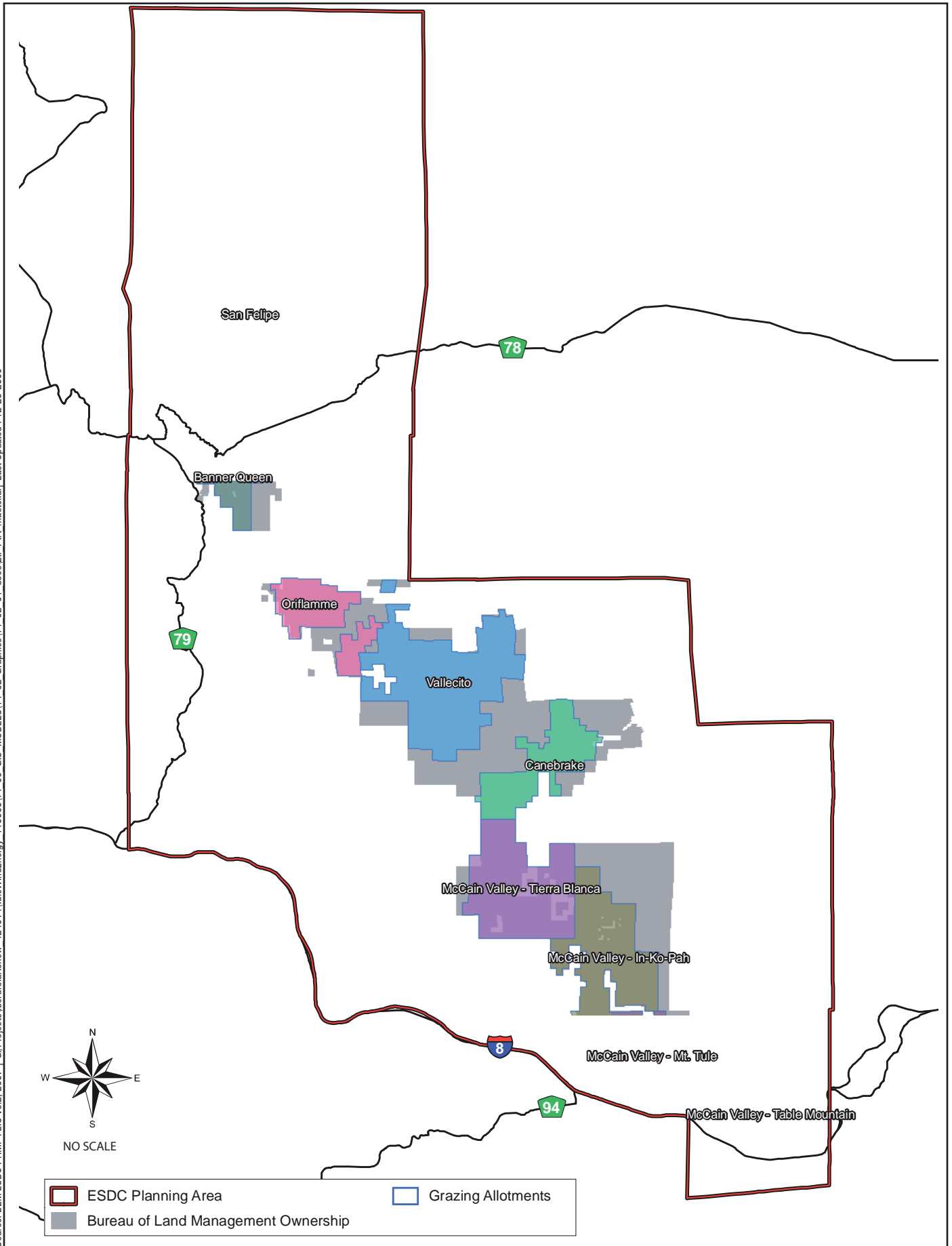
The purpose of the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) is to minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. It additionally directs federal programs to be compatible with State and local policies for the protection of farmlands. Congress passed the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (Public Law 97-98) containing the FPPA—Subtitle I of Title XV, Section 1539-1549. The final rules and regulations were published in the Federal Register on June 17, 1994.

The FPPA is intended to minimize the impact federal programs have on the unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. It assures that, to the extent possible, federal programs are administered to be compatible with state, local units of government, and private programs and policies to protect farmland. Federal agencies are required to develop and review their policies and procedures to implement the FPPA every 2 years. The FPPA does not authorize the Federal Government to regulate the use of private or nonfederal land or, in any way, affect the property rights of owners.

For the purpose of FPPA, farmland includes prime farmland, unique farmland, and land of statewide or local importance. Farmland subject to FPPA requirements does not have to be currently used for cropland. It can be forest land, pastureland, cropland, or other land, but not water or urban built-up land.

Projects are subject to FPPA requirements if they may irreversibly convert farmland (directly or indirectly) to nonagricultural use and are completed by a federal agency or with assistance from a federal agency (NRCS 2008).

Source: BLM, ESDC PRMP FEIS Vol2, 2007 | G:\Projects\IberdrolaRenew_424914\TuleWindEnergy_11596514_00_GIS_MODELS\14_02_Graphics\14_02_01_docs\Ltr_Pirtt_master.ai | Last Updated: 12-23-2009



Current Livestock Grazing Allotments
FIGURE 3.3-2

Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. 315), as Amended by the Act of August 28, 1937 (43 U.S.C. 1181d)

The Taylor Grazing Act authorizes:

- The establishment of grazing districts;
- Regulation and administration of grazing on the public lands; and
- Improvement of the public rangelands.

It also authorizes the Secretary to accept contributions for the administration, protection, and improvement of grazing lands, and establishment of a trust fund to be used for these purposes.

State

California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act)

Known formally as the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, it was designed as an incentive to retain prime agricultural land and open space in agricultural use, thereby slowing its conversion to urban and suburban development. The program entails a 10-year contract between the City or County and an owner of land whereby the land is taxed on the basis of its agricultural use rather than the market value. The land becomes subject to certain enforceable restrictions, and certain conditions need to be met prior to approval of an agreement. The underlying goals of the Williamson Act are to protect agriculture and open space. In the Williamson Act, the legislature found that “the discouragement of premature and unnecessary conversion of agricultural land to urban uses is a matter of public interest” and that “agricultural lands have a definitive public value as open space” (Government Code §51220[c][d]).

During the past 25 years, very few property owners have requested Williamson Act Contracts on their land within San Diego County. This lack of interest in Williamson Act Contracts may be due to the fact that Proposition 13 substantially slowed the increase in property taxes. According to information from the County Assessor’s Office, only two contracts were executed in San Diego County between 1980 and 2005 and 40 parcels currently under a Williamson Act Contract are in the process of non-renewal. The nonrenewal process takes ten years to complete, during which time property taxes are incrementally raised to remove the tax benefit, and at the end of the ten year period restrictions to development are lifted.

Local Regulations, Policies, Standards, and Programs

San Diego County General Plan and Draft General Plan Update

The County’s General Plan provides guidance for the protection, promotion and preservation of agriculture in San Diego County. Aspects of agriculture are discussed in the General Plan’s Open Space Element, Land Use Element, Conservation Element, and Community Plans. The Open Space Element establishes goals to encourage agriculture use in suitable areas; foster compatibility between agricultural and nonagricultural uses; enhance the economic viability of agriculture; preserve productive agricultural areas; recognize the value of agricultural areas as open space; facilitate agricultural lands as greenbelts; and highlight the importance of a rural lifestyle. The Regional Land Use Element explains the permitted uses of the County’s agricultural land use designations: (19) Intensive Agriculture and (20) General Agriculture. The project area contains General Agriculture (20) land use and according to the San Diego Zoning Ordinances, the project is zoned General Agriculture (A72). Use Regulations are intended to

create and preserve areas for the raising of crops and animals. Processing of products produced or raised on the premises would be permitted as would certain commercial activities associated with crop and animal-raising. Typically, the A72 Use Regulations would be applied to areas distant from large urban centers where the dust, odor, and noise of agricultural operations would not interfere with urban uses, and where urban development would not encroach on agricultural uses.

The construction of large wind turbines systems is allowable on agricultural land under Section 6951 of the County Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance states that large wind turbine systems shall be permitted on a parcel of at least five acres and be considered a Major Impact Services and Utilities use type requiring a Major Use Permit, of which was submitted to the County in October 2009.

The emphasis of these two designations is to promote agricultural use. The Conservation Element addresses agriculture's relationship with soils, climate, drainage, water availability, and economics in the County. The element established policies and action programs to monitor the agricultural conversion; and to analyze, improve and promote agriculture. The Community Plans focus on the protection, promotion and preservation of agriculture, on a community-by-community basis. The majority of the Community Plans only provide guidance on directing agricultural land use.

San Diego County Board of Supervisors Policy I-38 Agricultural Preserves

The Board of Supervisors Policy I-38 sets forth policies for the implementation of the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, known as the Williamson Act. In 1965 the State Legislature added to the Government Code Sections 51200 et seq. which authorized the County to establish agricultural preserves. An agricultural preserve is an area devoted to agricultural use, open space use, recreational use, or any combination of such uses, and compatible uses which are designated by the County. Preserves are established for the purpose of defining the boundaries of those areas within which the County will be willing to enter into contracts pursuant to the Act. Landowners within a preserve may enter into a Contract with the County to restrict their land to the uses stated above whereby the assessment on their land will be based on its restricted use rather than on its market value. Board Policy I-38 establishes criteria for the establishment, modification and disestablishment of an agricultural preserve including processing requirements, application fees, and hearing requirements. The policy also establishes a minimum size for an agricultural preserve, requires that each preserve establish minimum ownership sizes that landowners must meet to be eligible for a contract, requires the application of Zoning Regulations, establishes eligibility criteria for filing an application for an agricultural preserve and contract with the County, and establishes criteria to cancel a contract including cancellation by eminent domain.

3.3.3 Environmental Consequences/Impact Analysis

National Environmental Policy Act Criteria

Significance conclusions for individual impacts are not required for compliance with NEPA. Therefore, conclusions presented in the following analysis regarding the significance of identified impacts are provided for the purposes of CEQA. Currently, the only active agricultural activity within the project area is livestock grazing. As part of the recent San Diego County RMP, the BLM has determined that livestock grazing is not permitted on public land. BLM has notified the current permit holder that grazing in the McCain Valley Allotment will expire on September 18, 2010. At that time, no livestock grazing will be permitted. The project will not convert the area to a non-agricultural land use. The project will not result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

California Environmental Quality Act Significance Criteria

To satisfy CEQA requirements, conclusions are made regarding the significance of each identified impact that would result from the proposed project and alternatives. Appropriate criteria have been identified and utilized to make these significance conclusions. The following agricultural resources significance criteria were derived from previous environmental impact assessments and from the *CEQA Guidelines* (Appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form, Section IX).

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evolution and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Impacts of the proposed project or alternatives would be considered significant and would require mitigation if:

- Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use;
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract;
- Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use.

Significance conclusions for individual impacts are not required for compliance with NEPA. Therefore, conclusions presented in the following analysis regarding the significance of identified impacts are provided for the purposes of CEQA.

Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

As described in Section 3.3.1, there are no soils identified by the USDA National Resource Conservation Service (2003) which would qualify lands as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance located within the project boundaries. Therefore, the project will not impact Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

The proposed project would be considered a “Civic Use Type” by the County of San Diego Ordinance Part One, Basic Provisions, 1300 Civic Use Types. The project would be considered a Major Impact Services and Utilities (Amended by Ord. No. 8340 (N.S.) adopted 12-15-93. According to the County Ordinances, this use type is permitted in General Agriculture (A72), Open Space (S80), and General Rural (S92). A Major Use Permit was submitted to the County of San Diego on October 9, 2009 seeking permission to build the portion of the project located within the County’s land use control. If the Major Use Permit is approved, the project would not impact zoning for agricultural use. According to DPLU, there are no agricultural preserves listed within the project area. There are no identified Williamson Act

Contracts listed within the project area. Therefore, the project will not impact agricultural preserves or Williamson Act Contracts.

Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

Currently, the only active agricultural activity within the project area is livestock grazing. As part of the recent San Diego County RMP, the BLM has determined that livestock grazing is not permitted on public land. The BLM has notified the current permit holder that grazing in the McCain Valley Allotment will expire on September 18, 2010. At that time, no livestock grazing will be permitted. The project will not convert the area to a non-agricultural land use. The project will not result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

3.3.4 Cumulative Impacts

According to the Cumulative Project List, **Table 2.0-8**, projects in the area do not have a significant impact on agricultural resources. While there are general declines in agricultural practices in San Diego County and some due to continued development, East San Diego County does not possess the water resources or appropriate terrain to support large scale agriculture. No cumulative impacts are identified for agricultural resources.

3.3.5 CEQA Levels of Significance Before Mitigation

Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

The USDA National Resource Conservation Service (2003) identifies no soils that qualify lands located within the project boundaries as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. The project will not impact Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning or Williamson Act Contracts. According to the San Diego County zoning ordinances, the area is zoned as General Agriculture and wind turbines are permitted by a Major Use Permit. The applicant submitted a Major Use Permit to the County for the portions of the proposed project located within the County's jurisdiction. There are no Williamson Act Contracts in the project area; thus, there are no impacts.

Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use

The McCain Valley grazing allotment is scheduled to expire on September 18, 2010. The BLM notified the permit holder on September 18, 2008 with a required 2-year non-renewal letter. Project construction in December 2010 after the permit has expired; therefore, there are no impacts.

3.3.6 Mitigation Measures

The proposed project will not cause impacts to agricultural resources; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

3.3.7 CEQA Levels of Significance After Mitigation

All impacts are considered less than significant, thus no mitigation measures are required.

3.3.8 Comparison of Alternatives

In developing the alternatives to be addressed in this environmental document, the potential alternatives were evaluated in terms of their ability to meet the basic objectives of the project, while avoiding or reducing the environmental impacts of the project. The alternatives will contain all of the same components and construction corridor as the proposed project except they may vary in number and location.

No Project/No Action Alternative

Under the No Project/No Action Alternative, the proposed project would not be implemented and the impacts associated with construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning as described in Section 3.3.3 would not occur. This alternative would mean that the project area would remain the same and would have no impacts. The no impact determination for this alternative is the same as the proposed project.

Alternate Transmission Line Alternative #1

The Alternate Transmission Line Alternative #1 (T-line Alternative #1) would include all of the same components as the proposed project except for an alternate overhead 138 kV transmission line (T-line Alternative #1), as shown in **Figure 2.0-12**. The T-line Alternative #1 would be located parallel to, but in lieu of, the proposed transmission line. T-line Alternative #1 would be located further west and run from either the proposed or deviant collector substation approximately 5.5 miles south to the Rough Acres Ranch (south of turbine G-19). From Rough Acres Ranch, the line would continue west to Ribbonwood Road. The line would continue south on Ribbonwood Road to Old Highway 80, and east along Old Highway 80 to the SDG&E proposed Rebuilt Boulevard Substation.

This alternative would increase the land disturbance by approximately 14.8 acres; from 762.5 acres to 777.3 acres, utilizing the deviant collector substation. The 138 kV transmission line would increase in distance from 9.7 miles to 11.7 miles and would increase the amount of transmission line poles from 116 poles to 152 poles, utilizing the deviant collector substation. The 34.5 kV overhead collector lines would remain the same distance of 9.4 miles, and would require the same amount of collector line poles (250), and the underground collector lines would also remain the same distance of 29.3 miles, utilizing the deviant collector substation.

Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

As shown in **Figure 3.3-1**, there are no Williamson Act Contracts listed within the area of the alternate transmission line, nor does the area contain Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as identified by the USDA National Resource Conservation Service (2003). The Alternate T-Line Alternative #1 will not impact Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

The Alternate T-Line Alternative #1 is located over an area designated with the following land uses; Multi-Rural Use (S92), General Agriculture (A72), Residential (1 dwelling unit per 1,2, 4 acres), Public/Semi-Public Lands, and General Commercial (C36). The portion of transmission line south of turbine G-19 located on Rough Acres Ranch is located on a parcel identified by County GIS mapping as an agricultural preserve. According to DPLU, there currently are no agricultural preserves located in the project area. The construction of the transmission lines would be allowed, subject to the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. The alternate transmission line being proposed on privately owned lands within the jurisdiction of the County of San Diego, would be considered a minor impact utility and thus subject to a Minor Use Permit. The Alternate T-Line Alternative #1 will not impact agricultural preserves or Williamson Act Contracts.

Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

There currently are no agricultural practices located in the area of this alternative and would not change farmland to a non-agricultural use. The Alternate T-Line Alternative #1 will not result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. There are greater impacts identified for this alternative than those identified for the proposed project.

This Alternate Transmission Line Alternative #1 has the same level of impacts to agricultural resources as the proposed project.

Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative

The Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative would include the alternate O&M/Substation facility co-located on Rough Acres Ranch (T17S R7E Sec9), the Alternate Transmission Line #2 (138 kV), as well as an alternate overhead collector system, as shown in **Figure 2.0-13**. This alternative would consist of two 34.5 kV lines connecting the turbines to the alternate collector substation location. All other elements of the project including the turbine locations, parking and laydown areas, roadway upgrades, and batch plant would remain as described in the proposed project. The Alternate Transmission Line #2 would run from the alternate collector substation south along

3.3 Agricultural Resources

McCain Valley Road, and then west along Old Highway 80 until reaching the SDG&E proposed Rebuilt Boulevard Substation.

This alternative would increase the land disturbance by 2.0 acres; from 762.5 acres to 764.5 acres. The 138 kV transmission line would decrease in distance as a result of this alternative from 9.7 miles to 3.8 miles and would decrease the amount of transmission line poles from 116 poles to 44 poles. The 34.5 kV overhead collector lines would increase in distance from 9.4 miles to 17 miles, and would increase the amount of collector line poles from 250 to 452 poles. The underground collector lines would decrease in distance from 29.3 miles to 28.9 miles.

Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use

Construction, and Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

This alternative does not contain Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, and would not convert any farmland to a non-agricultural use. The Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative will not impact Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

The O&M/Substation facility would be located in an area which is designated as General Agriculture (A72). This alternate substation, being proposed on privately owned lands within the jurisdiction of the County of San Diego, would be considered a minor impact utility and thus subject to a Minor Use Permit. Upon the approval of a Minor User Permit, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use. This would have the same impact as that identified for the proposed project.

As shown in **Figure 3.3-1**, there are no Williamson Act Contracts listed within the area of the alternate transmission line and alternate O&M/Substation facility. The Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative will not impact agricultural preserves or Williamson Act Contracts.

Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

There currently are no agricultural practices located in the area of this alternative and would not change farmland to a non-agricultural use. The Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative will not result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

The Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative has the same level of impacts to agricultural resources as the proposed project.

Alternate Transmission Line #3 and Collector Substation Alternative

The Alternate Transmission Line #3 and Collector Substation Alternative would include the alternate O&M/Substation facility co-located on Rough Acres Ranch (T17S R7E Sec9), the Alternate Transmission Line #3 (138 kV), as well as an alternate overhead collector system as shown in **Figure 2.0-14**. This alternative would consist of two 34.5 kV lines connecting the turbines to the alternate collector substation. All other elements including the turbine locations, parking and laydown areas, roadway upgrades, and batch plant would remain as described in the proposed project. The Alternate Transmission Line #3 would run from the alternate collector substation west to Ribbonwood Road, continue south along Ribbonwood Road, and then east along Old Highway 80 until reaching the SDG&E proposed Rebuilt Boulevard Substation.

This alternative would increase the land disturbance by 7.5 acres; from 762.5 acres to 770.0 acres. The 138 kV transmission line would decrease in distance as a result of this alternative from 9.7 miles to 5.4 miles and would decrease the amount of transmission line poles from 116 poles to 60 poles. The 34.5 kV overhead collector lines would increase in distance from 9.4 miles to 17 miles, and would increase the amount of collector line poles from 250 to 452 poles. The underground collector lines would decrease in distance from 29.3 miles to 28.9 miles.

Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

As described in Section 3.3.1, there are no soils identified by the USDA National Resource Conservation Service (2003) which would qualify lands as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance located within the project boundaries. The Alternative T-Line #3 and Collector Substation Alternative will not impact Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

The Alternate O&M/Substation facility would be located on private land that has a designated land uses of Multi-Rural Use (S92), General Agriculture (A72), Residential (1 dwelling unit per 1,2, 4 acres), Public/Semi-Public Lands, and General Commercial (C36). The alternate transmission line would not conflict with zoning ordinances nor prevent the continuation of future agricultural practices. The alternate O&M/Substation facility would be considered a minor impact utility and thus subject to a Minor Use Permit. Upon the approval of a Minor User Permit, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use. This would be the same impact as that identified for the proposed project.

The O&M/Substation facility would be considered an accessory to the wind energy project and would be consistent with the current parcel zoning of General Agriculture (A72).

There are no Williamson Act Contracts listed within the area of the alternate transmission line and alternate O&M/Substation facility. The Alternative T-Line #3 and Collector Substation Alternative will not impact agricultural preserves or Williamson Act Contracts.

3.3 Agricultural Resources

Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

There are no agricultural practices currently on the private land. The Alternative T-Line #3 and Collector Substation Alternative will not result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

This Alternative has the same level of impacts to agricultural resources as the proposed project.

Operation and Maintenance Facility Location #1 Alternative

The O&M Facility Location #1 Alternative would be located on private property (T17S R7E Sec4), north of the alternate collector substation and located west of McCain Valley Road, as shown in **Figure 2.0-13**. This alternative would consist of separating the 5-acre O&M building site from the collector substation; however, both would remain on Rough Acres Ranch property. Alternate Transmission Line #2 would be utilized under this alternative, as well as the Alternate Overhead Collector System consisting of two 34.5 kV lines connecting the turbines to the alternate collector substation. All other elements of the project including the turbine locations, parking and laydown areas, and batch plant would remain as described in the proposed project.

This alternative is estimated to have the same land disturbance impacts as the Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative. However, by relocating the O&M building site to the northern portion of Rough Acres Ranch, this alternative would require an approximate 650-foot new access road to be constructed on the west side of McCain Valley Road, thus necessitating an approximate 0.24 acres of temporary disturbance area, and resulting in 0.30 acres of permanently impacted area. In comparison to the proposed project, this alternative would increase the land disturbance by approximately 2.6 acres; from 762.5 acres to 765.1 acres. The 138 kV transmission line would decrease in distance as a result of this alternative from 9.7 miles to 3.8 miles and would decrease the amount of transmission line poles from 116 poles to 44 poles. The 34.5 kV overhead collector lines would increase in distance from 9.4 miles to 17 miles, and would increase the amount of collector line poles from 250 to 452 poles. The underground collector lines would decrease in distance from 29.3 miles to 28.9 miles.

Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

As shown in **Figure 3.3-1**, the O&M Facility Alternative Location #1 does not contain Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as identified by the USDA National Resource Conservation Service (2003). The O&M Facility Location #1 Alternative will not impact Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

The Alternate O&M Facility Alternative #1 is located over an area designated as General Agriculture (A72). The alternate O&M facility location would be subject to the County zoning ordinances. This building would be permitted under the designated land use. The alternate transmission line would be consistent with the proposed project. No impacts are identified.

The portion of transmission line south of turbine G-19, located on Rough Acres Ranch, would be located on a parcel identified by County GIS mapping as an agricultural preserve. However, according to DPLU, there are currently no agricultural preserves located in the project area. The O&M Facility Location #1 Alternative will not impact agricultural preserves or Williamson Act Contracts.

Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use

Construction, and Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

There are no agricultural practices currently on the private land. The O&M Facility Location #1 Alternative will not result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

This Alternative has the same level of impacts to agricultural resources as the proposed project.

Operation and Maintenance Facility Location #2 Alternative

The O&M Facility Location #2 Alternative would be located on private property (T17S R7E Sec 16), south of the alternate collector substation and located west of McCain Valley Road, as illustrated in **Figure 2.0-13**. This alternative would consist of separating the 5-acre O&M building site from the collector substation; however, both would remain on Rough Acres Ranch property. Alternate Transmission Line #2 would be utilized under this alternative as well as the Alternate Overhead Collector System consisting of two 34.5 kV lines connecting the turbines to the alternate collector substation. All other elements of the project including the turbine locations, parking and laydown areas, and batch plant would remain as described in the proposed project.

This alternative is estimated to have the same land disturbance impacts as the Alternate Transmission Line #2 and Collector Substation Alternative. However, by relocating the O&M building site to the southern portion of Rough Acres Ranch, this alternative would result in a very slight difference (0.06 acres) in permanent impacts resulting from the construction of new access roads than those described in **Table 2.0-10**. In comparison to the proposed project, this alternative would increase the land disturbance by approximately 2.1 acres; from 762.5 acres to 764.6 acres. The 138 kV transmission line would decrease in distance as a result of this alternative from 9.7 miles to 3.8 miles and would decrease the amount of transmission line poles from 116 poles to 44 poles. The 34.5 kV overhead collector lines would increase in distance from 9.4 miles to 17 miles, and would increase the amount of collector line poles from 250 to 452 poles. The underground collector lines would decrease in distance from 29.3 miles to 28.9 miles.

3.3 Agricultural Resources

Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

As shown in **Figure 3.3-1**, the O&M Facility Location #2 does not contain Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as identified by the USDA National Resource Conservation Service (2003). The O&M Facility Location #2 Alternative will not impact Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance.

Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract

Construction, Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

The Alternate O&M Facility Alternative #2 is located over an area designated as General Agriculture (A72). The alternate O&M facility location would be subject to the County zoning ordinances. This building would be permitted under the designated land use. The alternate transmission line would be consistent with the O&M/Substation Facility Alternative #2. No impacts are identified.

The portion of transmission line south of turbine G-19, located on Rough Acres Ranch, would be located on a parcel identified by County GIS mapping as an agricultural preserve. However, according to DPLU, there currently are no agricultural preserves located in the project area. The O&M Facility Location #2 Alternative will not impact agricultural preserves or Williamson Act Contracts.

Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use

Construction, and Operation and Maintenance, and Decommissioning

There are no agricultural practices currently on the private parcels identified for the location of the O&M facility #2. The O&M Facility Location #2 Alternative will not result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

This alternative has the same level of impact to agricultural resources as the proposed project.

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