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CHAPTER 4 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.15 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant Impact with Mitigation	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume-to-capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in substantial safety risks caused by a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.15.0 Introduction

This section describes existing conditions and potential impacts to transportation and traffic from construction and operation of Sierra Pacific Power Company's (SPPCo) proposed 625 and 650 Line Upgrade Project (project). A summary of existing roadways, airports, transit, and bicycle facilities, as well as a description of the regulatory setting for transportation and traffic are presented. Also, an analysis of transportation and traffic impacts that will result from the project

is provided. The project spans three freeways and several public and private roadways in the north Lake Tahoe area. The project will not have a significant impact on transportation and traffic in the area and will not conflict with any adopted alternative transportation policies.

4.15.1 Methodology

Transportation and traffic data was obtained from literature review, Internet research, and communication with agency staff members. The general plans for the counties of Placer and Nevada, the Town of Truckee 2025 General Plan, the Placer County Regional Transportation Plan 2027, the Nevada County 2005 Regional Transportation Plan, the Kings Beach Community Plan, the Martis Valley Community Plan, the Tahoe City Community Plan, and local ordinances were reviewed. In addition, planning and engineering staff at the city and county offices were contacted to identify the existing transportation and traffic conditions in the area, and relevant transportation policies, plans, and programs.

4.15.2 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Background

Construction projects that cross public transportation corridors are subject to local, state, and federal encroachment permits. Use or obstruction of navigable air space also requires permits. The following summarizes transportation and traffic regulations that are applicable to the construction of electric facilities such as the project.

Federal

All airports and navigable airspace not administered by the Department of Defense are under the jurisdiction of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Title 14, Section 77 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) establishes the standards and required notification for objects affecting navigable airspace. In general, construction projects exceeding 200 feet in height above ground level or extending at a ratio greater than 50 to one (horizontal to vertical) from a public or military airport runway less than 3,200 feet long out to a horizontal distance of 20,000 feet are considered potential obstructions and require FAA notification. In addition, the FAA requires a Helicopter Lift Plan for operating a helicopter within 1,500 feet of residential dwellings.

State

The use of California state highways for other than normal transportation purposes may require written authorization or an encroachment permit from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Caltrans has jurisdiction over the state's highway system and is responsible for protecting the public and infrastructure. Caltrans reviews all requests from utility companies that plan to conduct activities within its right-of-way (ROW). Encroachment permits may include conditions or restrictions that limit when construction activities can occur within or above roadways that are under the jurisdiction of Caltrans.

Local

The Placer County Code and Nevada County General Code govern the placement of any structures on, over, or under county roads. Encroachment permits are required for the

construction of any pole, driveway, private road, building, or structure or object of any kind that is placed in, under, over, or adjacent to any portion of a county roadway.

The circulation elements of the Placer County and Nevada County general plans provide guidance to help achieve efficiency and economy in the transportation system, and to facilitate the planning required to maintain and expand the existing transportation network.

The Placer County Regional Transportation Plan 2027 and Nevada County 2005 Regional Transportation Plan serve as blueprints for the north Lake Tahoe transportation system. The goal of these plans is to better connect the existing transportation network of freeways, public transit, and roads to the existing and future community.

Transportation Policies, Plans and Programs

As described previously, the general plans and regional transportation plans for each of the counties, cities, and communities that the project traverses were reviewed for relevant transportation policies, plans, and programs. These policies are summarized in Attachment 4.9-A: Policies Consistency Analysis in Section 4.9 Land Use. Each of these governments require an encroachment permit to perform construction activities in public ROWs and may prohibit projects that will increase the Level of Service¹ (LOS) on roads above the minimum acceptable level, which is generally LOS C or D.

Freeways

The main transportation corridors in the project area include Interstate 80 (I-80), State Route (SR) 89, and SR 267. The existing and new 625 lines span SR 267 once and SR 89 once in Placer County. The existing 650 Line spans SR 267 three times in Placer County. The existing 132 Line spans I-80 once in Nevada County. Figure 3-1: Project Overview Map in Chapter 3 – Project Description illustrates the general location of these spans and provides a detailed description of the construction techniques that will be used to install the project over the freeways. Table 4.15-1: Freeways Spanned provides the approximate spanning location and associated traffic data for these highways.

Arterials, Collectors, and Urban Roadways

There is an extensive network of roads within Nevada and Placer counties that is spanned by the project. Table 4.15-2: Roadways Spanned provides the approximate span location and road classification for each of these roads. Placer County does not maintain traffic volume and LOS data for these roads. According to the Town of Truckee General Plan, despite the existence of some congestion during weekday afternoon peak periods, all roads and intersections operate at acceptable Levels of Service.

¹ LOS is based on traffic congestion, which is measured by dividing traffic volume by roadway capacity. The resulting number, known as the volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio, usually ranges from 0 to 1.0. The V/C ratings are divided into six LOS categories, A through F, representing conditions ranging from unrestricted traffic flow (A) to extreme traffic congestion (F).

Table 4.15-1: Freeways Spanned

Freeway	General Span Location	Approximate Milepost	Number of Lanes (2007)	Average Daily Traffic Volume² (2008)	LOS
Existing 625 Line					
SR 267	At Northstar Drive	3.8	2	9,550	D
SR 89	At SR 28	15.2	2	12,350	E
New 625 Line					
SR 267	At Northstar Drive	3.6	2	9,550	D
SR 89	At SR 28	15.5	2	12,350	E
650 Line					
SR 267	At Martis Creek Road	1.4	2	8,350	D
SR 267	At Northstar Drive	3.6 and 4.0	2	9,550	D
Northstar Fold					
SR 267	At Northstar Drive	0.5	2	9,550	D
132 Line					
I-80	At Donner Pass Road	0.3	4	33,000	E

Sources: Caltrans Traffic and Vehicle Data Systems Unit, 2009; Caltrans, 2009a

² Highway traffic volumes are provided for the nearest span location available.

Table 4.15-2: Roadways Spanned

Roadway	Approximate Milepost	Number of Lanes	City/County Classification
Existing 625 Line			
Speckled Avenue	0.1	2	Light Commercial
Mount Watson Road	5.2, 5.3, and 7.0	2	Residential
New 625 Line			
Lake Vista Road	1.2	2	Dirt Road
Mount Watson Road	4.3, 4.8, 5.2, 6.1, 6.4, 6.6, 6.7, 8.9, 9.3, 9.8, 10.4, 10.9, 11.1, 11.3, 11.7, 12, and 12.6	2	Residential
650 Line			
Trout Creek Road	Not Applicable (NA) ³	2	Information Not Available (INA)
Donner Pass Road	NA	2	Minor Arterial
East Keiser Road	NA	2	INA
Martis Peak Road	5.5	2	INA
Stewart Way	8.0	2	Residential
Speckled Avenue	NA	2	Light Commercial
Northstar Fold			
Skidder Trail	0.1	2	Dirt Road
132 Line			
Pioneer Trail Road	0.1 and 0.2	2	Minor Arterial
East Jibboom Street	0.4	2	INA
Donner Pass Road	0.5	2	Minor Arterial
Glenshire Drive	0.9	2	Minor Arterial
East River Street	1.1	2	Minor Collector
Estates Drive	1.4	2	Rural Collector
Brockway Road	1.5	2	Minor Arterial

Sources: Placer County Traffic Division, 2007; Town of Truckee, 2006

³ The portions of the 650 Line to be removed have not been mileposted.

Access and Spur Roads

The transmission line ROW will primarily be accessed through the use of the previously described roadways and existing paved and dirt access roads, which vary in width from approximately 8 to 10 feet. Some new spur roads will be established to facilitate access from existing roads to the pole work sites. These access and spur roads are depicted in Attachment 3-A: Detailed Route Maps. Access roads requiring improvement will be graded generally level and will generally be 12 feet wide for straight sections and up to 25 feet wide at curves to safely allow the movement of construction equipment and vehicles to each site. A summary of these access roads is provided in Table 3-8: Project Access Roads in Chapter 3 – Project Description. Where the terrain allows, the individual pole work areas and stringing sites will be accessed using a centerline travel route within the transmission line ROW.

Public and Alternative Transportation

Bus

Tahoe Area Regional Transit

Tahoe Area Regional Transit (TART) provides bus service 7 days per week from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. along 30 miles of Lake Tahoe's shoreline, and connects Tahoe City to Truckee. The existing and new 625 lines span the Tahoe City to Truckee bus line near Tahoe City at SR 89 at approximate milepost (MP) 15.2 and MP 15.5, respectively. TART has five round-trip loops scheduled per day along this line.

North Lake Tahoe Express

The North Lake Tahoe Express operates three separate bus lines in the vicinity of the project. Of these three bus lines, two—the Red Line and Green Line—are spanned by the existing and new 625 lines and the 650 Line along SR 89 and SR 267. The approximate MPs for these span locations are provided in Table 4.15-1: Freeways Spanned. The Red Line connects Reno and Tahoe City via I-80 and SR 89. The Green Line connects Kings Beach and Truckee via SR 267. Each line has approximately seven roundtrip routes each day and operates between 3:30 a.m. and midnight.

Truckee Trolley

The Truckee Trolley operates three routes during the winter months—Route A operates between the Sugar Bowl Ski Area and downtown Truckee, Route B operates between the Northstar-at-Tahoe Ski Resort and downtown Truckee, and Route C operates between Kings Beach and the Northstar-at-Tahoe Ski Resort. Each of these routes operates 7 days per week between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. In non-winter months, one bus is operated Monday through Saturday between downtown Truckee and the west end of Donner Lake between approximately 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Truckee Trolley routes will be spanned by the existing and new 625 lines and the 650 Line along SR 89 and SR 267. The approximate MPs for these span locations are provided in Table 4.15-1: Freeways Spanned.

Bikeways

The Lake Tahoe region contains a vast network of paved and dirt bicycle routes, three of which are spanned by the project. The first route is a paved trail that parallels SR 267 from Kings

Beach to Truckee. This route is spanned once by the existing and new 625 lines, three times by the 650 Line, and is paralleled by the 650 Line for approximately 6.5 miles. Another paved bicycle route, running through Tahoe City and paralleling SR 89, is spanned by the existing and new 625 lines. The approximate locations where these routes are spanned are listed in Table 4.15-1: Freeways Spanned. In addition to these two paved bicycle routes, three dirt bicycle trails are spanned multiple times by the new and existing 625 lines. The Tahoe Rim Trail is spanned twice and the Western States Trail is spanned four times. The existing and new 625 lines also span the Glass Ridge Trail at one location.

Rail

Freight

The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) provides freight rail operations in Nevada and Placer counties. The UPRR operates a Class I railroad that transports commodities, including farm products, non-metallic minerals, food, petroleum or coal products, and lumber. The 132 Line spans the UPRR tracks near approximate MP 1.1.

Passenger

Amtrak provides long-distance, inter-city, and county passenger rail service, primarily during non-commuter hours. In the project area, Amtrak's California Zephyr provides service from Chicago, Illinois to Emeryville, California, with a stop in Truckee, along the same tracks utilized by the UPRR. As described previously, the 132 Line spans the UPRR tracks in one location.

Air Traffic

Reno/Tahoe International Airport, located approximately 21 miles northeast of the project in Washoe County, Nevada, is the only major airport near the project area that provides air carrier and air cargo services. There are four general aviation airports in Nevada and Placer counties. The Nevada County Air Park, located east of Grass Valley and approximately 45 miles west of the project, serves western Nevada County. Lincoln Regional Airport is located approximately 25 miles north of Sacramento and approximately 67 miles west of the project. Auburn Airport is located approximately 3 miles north of Auburn and approximately 53 miles southwest of the project. The fourth airport, the Truckee-Tahoe Airport, situated on the border of Nevada and Placer counties, is located approximately 0.7 mile from the 132 Line. The closest helipad is located at the Tahoe Forest Hospital in Truckee, approximately 1 mile from the 132 Line. There are no private airstrips within 5 miles of the project.

4.15.3 Impacts

Significance Criteria

According to Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, the project will have a significant impact if it:

- Results in a substantial increase in traffic that affects existing traffic flows
- Results in the exceedance of an established LOS standard
- Causes a change in air traffic patterns
- Results in a substantial increase in hazards due to design feature or incompatible uses

- Results in inadequate emergency access
- Results in inadequate parking capacity
- Conflicts with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation

This type of project is more likely to affect transportation facilities or increase traffic during the construction phase than during operation and maintenance because typically, a very limited amount of surface activity is required to operate a transmission line and substations. The upgraded and new transmission lines and the modified substations will be operated in the same manner as the existing lines and substations, where current operation activities occur and traffic impacts are insignificant. SPPCo does not anticipate that any additional trips, beyond those currently required for their facilities, will be required to operate or maintain the upgraded facilities. On average, operation and maintenance of the project will require no more than one trip per day. Consequently, the transportation analysis focuses on the construction phase. Where applicable, operational impacts are described following the discussion of impacts associated with construction of the project.

Aviation impacts could occur during either construction or operation and maintenance of the transmission lines because such impacts are caused by encroachment into navigable airspace, such as by a crane, wire, or tall pole. Potential impacts to air traffic are described for both construction and operation and maintenance in the response to Question 4.15c.

Question 4.15a – Traffic Increases

Construction – Less-than-Significant Impact

Project construction personnel will generally drive to the work site at the beginning of the day and leave at the end of the day, with few people traveling to and from the work site throughout the day. This will result in approximately 60 personal vehicle trips per day during peak construction times and will only slightly increase the existing daily traffic in the project area. In addition to personnel travel, approximately 21,370 truck trips—an average of less than 75 trips per day—will be required to construct the project. Truck trip and access road requirements specific to each of the project's components are described as follows.

Existing 625 Line

The existing 625 Line is predominantly located in rural areas and will be accessed primarily by existing dirt United States (U.S.) Forest Service (USFS) roads, existing SPPCo access roads, and new spur roads. The northeastern portion of the line will be accessed by local, residential roads within the community of Kings Beach. Removal of the existing 625 Line will require approximately 1,260 truck trips.

New 625 Line

The new 625 Line ROW will be accessed primarily by existing paved and dirt access roads in the area and new spur roads. Mount Watson Road (also known as Fiberboard Highway), an existing road in the area utilized by loggers to transport felled trees out of the area to processing facilities, will be the primary access road. Construction crews and equipment will travel along the ROW to access individual pole work areas. The northeastern portion of the line will be accessed by local

residential roads within the community of Kings Beach. The installation of the new 625 Line will require approximately 8,270 truck trips.

650 Line

The existing 650 Line will be accessed primarily by existing dirt USFS roads. In addition, the southeastern portion of the line will be accessed by local, residential roads within the community of Kings Beach. Upgrading the 650 Line will require approximately 5,990 truck trips.

132/650 Line Double-Circuit

The existing 132 Line will be accessed primarily by existing paved roads located within residential and industrial areas of southern Nevada County and northern Placer County. Because there will be six conductors strung along this portion of the project, a total of six road closures will be required where the line crosses major roadways. Double-circuiting the 132 and 650 lines will require approximately 580 truck trips.

Northstar Fold

Access to the Northstar Fold is provided by existing paved and dirt access roads connected to Northstar Drive. Converting the Northstar Tap to a fold will require approximately 630 truck trips.

Substations and Switching Stations

All of the substations and switching stations will be accessed via existing access roads or public roadways. Some substation equipment may be oversized, and will be delivered to the substation sites during the evening or non-peak traffic hours in order to reduce impacts to traffic. Modifications to these facilities will require approximately 4,640 truck trips.

The truck trips required for the construction of the project will be dispersed among the various project components and will span the 3-year-long construction period. As described previously, the average traffic volume required to construct the project will be less than 75 trips per day. When compared to the average daily volume on the highways in the area, this traffic represents an approximate 1 percent increase. Construction related traffic is expected to peak at approximately 120 truck trips per day in July 2011 when construction of at 650 Line, North Star Fold, North Truckee Switching Station, Northstar Substation, and Kings Beach Substation, and Brockway Substation occur concurrently. This peak traffic represents a less than 2 percent increase in traffic along the major highways in the area. The roadways spanned by or that will be used to access the transmission lines generally operate at a LOS that is better than D, with a few operating at LOS E. This indicates that traffic generally flows freely in the project area, as described further in response to Question 4.15b – LOS Changes.

During the removal of the existing conductor or stringing of the new conductor, temporary road closures may be required at I-80, SR 89, and SR 267. These roads may be closed for 10 to 15 minutes during the pull of each conductor, for a total of three closures at each crossing. Traffic flow may also be disrupted during conductor stringing across local roadways, installation of crossing structures, or equipment and material deliveries to the ROW.

To minimize traffic impacts, temporary closures will occur during off-peak traffic hours, to the extent practical, in order to minimize disruptions and traffic backups. Caution signs and/or flagmen will be used to regulate traffic where necessary and to maintain a safe transportation corridor during construction. SPPCo will coordinate these isolated, temporary closures with local jurisdictional agencies; obtain encroachment permits, as required, to cross these roadways; and perform work according to permit requirements. Traffic Control Plans for each jurisdiction will also be required as part of the encroachment permit process. A typical Traffic Control Plan will include a discussion of work hours, haul routes, work area definitions, traffic control and flagging methods, parking restrictions, and methods for coordinating construction activities with emergency service providers. As a result, traffic increases will be minimal and the impact will be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

SPPCo does not anticipate that any additional trips beyond those currently required for operation and maintenance of the upgraded facilities will be necessary. As a result, there will be no increase in traffic and no impact.

Question 4.15b – Level of Service Changes

Construction – Less-than-Significant Impact

As previously discussed in the response to Question 4.15a – Traffic Increases, project-related construction traffic will result in a less-than-significant increase in the existing daily traffic. Some of the roads spanned by the project may require temporary closure to through traffic (for approximately 10 to 15 minutes at a time), but this will generally occur during off-peak traffic times. In addition, traffic delays could occur when large trucks enter and exit the roadway at designated access points. The existing LOS standards for the roadways in the area range from LOS A through E (indicating generally free flowing traffic with some areas of unstable flow with reduced vehicle speeds); therefore, the existing network of roads in the project area generally have adequate capacity to handle the increase in traffic volume due to construction. In addition, construction-related traffic will be dispersed among the project components during the 3-year-long construction period. As described previously, SPPCo will coordinate with local agencies during the encroachment permit process to ensure that any potential traffic impacts are minimized. While construction of the project will add slightly to the daily traffic, this temporary increase is not expected to result in changes to the current LOS in the project's vicinity; therefore, the impact will be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

As described previously, SPPCo does not anticipate that any additional trips beyond those currently required for their facilities to operate or maintain the upgraded facilities will be necessary. As a result, there will be no impact to the existing LOS due to the operation and maintenance of the project.

Question 4.15c – Air Traffic Changes***Construction – Less-than-Significant Impact***

Helicopters will be used for line work, particularly while removing or installing new structures and stringing the new conductor in areas of rugged terrain, which will temporarily increase air traffic and encroach on navigable air space during construction. The Truckee-Tahoe Airport is the closest public airstrip to the project, and is located approximately 0.7 mile from the existing 132 Line and approximately 1 mile from the 650 Line. The tallest project component will be the transmission line poles that measure approximately 80 feet above the ground surface. The transmission lines within the Airport Influence Area Boundary of the Truckee-Tahoe Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) are existing facilities that will increase in height by approximately 7 to 12 feet, thereby increasing the hazard potential only slightly. At distances of between 0.7 mile and 1 mile, the 80-foot-tall structures will conform to the required 50 to 1 horizontal to vertical slope ratio and will not be classified as an obstruction. Cranes will also be used to install the poles along the proposed transmission line routes in the vicinity of the Truckee-Tahoe Airport. The maximum reach of the cranes is approximately 200 feet and, similar to the new poles, will not be classified as an obstruction.

SPPCo or their contractor will coordinate flight patterns with local air traffic control and the FAA prior to construction to prevent any adverse impacts due to increased air traffic. A Helicopter Lift Plan will also be prepared and implemented for the construction phase of the project, as required by Title 14 of the CFR. Further, SPPCo will consult the Foothill Airport Land Use Commission regarding the height increase prior to construction, as required by the ALUCP. Compliance with the Truckee-Tahoe ALUCP is described further in Section 4.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials. As a result, the impact to air traffic during construction will be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

The project's operation and maintenance activities will require the periodic use of a helicopter for transmission line inspection, which SPPCo already implements for the existing facilities in the area. Because there will be no change in the helicopter activities after construction, there will be no impact to air traffic as a result of the project.

Question 4.15d – Increase in Hazards***Construction – Less-than-Significant Impact***

Construction of the project will not necessitate any permanent modifications to existing public roadways. As previously discussed, temporary road or lane closures may be required to ensure safety to the public and workers during certain activities. Road closures and encroachment into public roadways could increase hazards if appropriate safety measures are not in place, such as proper signage, orange cones, and flaggers. An increase in hazards could also result from an increase in vehicular traffic at the intersections of temporary access roads and public roadways. The new 625 Line will generally parallel Mount Watson Road, which if not designed correctly, could increase the potential for vehicular collisions with the new steel poles.

To minimize impacts, SPPCo will obtain the required encroachment permits from Nevada and Placer counties and will implement traffic control measures according to the permits and Traffic Control Plans. Temporary access roads will also be designed to allow safe ingress and egress from any public roadways and to accommodate large construction equipment safely. In addition, new transmission line poles for the 625 Line will be installed with a setback of approximately 200 feet from Mount Watson Road to reduce the hazard to motorists. In many locations, the new poles will be installed above or below the roadway's grade, protecting them from an accidental collision with a motorist. As a result, any increase in hazards will be minimal and the impact will be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

Operation and maintenance activities will not change from their existing practices and access will be provided by SPPCo's existing ROW or from public roadways. The majority of the project's transmission lines will be rebuilt in their existing ROWs. As a result, no additional hazards will be created and there will be no impact.

Question 4.15e – Emergency Access Effects

Construction – Less-than-Significant Impact

Emergency access will not be directly impacted during construction because all streets will remain open to emergency vehicles at all times throughout construction. Increased vehicle traffic and brief closures (approximately 10 to 15 minutes in duration) may occur while pulling or removing the conductors across roadways, or during the installation and removal of guard structures. Although this can indirectly impact emergency access, as described previously, the increase in traffic will be less-than-significant and emergency vehicles will be provided access even in the event of temporary road or lane closures. Thus, the impact will be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

As discussed previously, the operation and maintenance of the project will not change from the existing procedures which are in place. The project may result in a minimal amount of additional traffic as compared to pre-project conditions and will not require any planned road closures. Therefore, no impact to emergency vehicle access will occur from operation and maintenance activities.

Question 4.15f – Parking Capacity

Construction – Less-than-Significant Impact

Construction of the project will necessitate parking vehicles and construction equipment along the transmission line routes, at substations, at staging areas, and along roads. The various staging areas distributed across the project area will serve as the primary location for construction personnel to park personal vehicles. In most cases, construction vehicles will be parked within the ROW, but on occasion, a few trucks may park on the side of a public roadway. Construction of the transmission lines will occur in a linear fashion, and vehicles will generally be parked in different locations each day. If construction-related parking occurs outside of the ROW or staging areas, vehicles will be parked in a manner so as not to impede traffic and in accordance

with encroachment permits. Any parking along public roads will be confined to asphalt roads, compacted road shoulders, and/or designated parking areas. Parking will not be permitted on uncompacted surfaces. The 132/650 Line Double-Circuit spans an existing parking lot at the Cedar House Sport Hotel, located at 10918 Brockway Road in Truckee. This parking lot will require a temporary, short-term closure during the pulling of six conductors. This closure is expected to last a few days and will be coordinated with the hotel owner and management in advance. As a result, the impact will be less than significant.

The construction activities at the Tahoe City Substation will require the temporary use of an adjacent 1-acre parcel located directly south of the substation. This previously disturbed area will be used to house temporary transformers that will be connected to the North Lake Tahoe Transmission System while the Tahoe City Substation is being upgraded. This location is not currently used for parking; therefore, use of this parcel will not impact existing parking capacity. The proposed substation upgrades at the remaining facilities will occur within existing SPPCo-owned or leased parcels and will not require the removal of any existing parking capacity.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

As described previously, the operation and maintenance requirements will not change as a result of the project. Therefore, there will be no impact to parking capacity during operation and maintenance activities.

Question 4.15g – Alternative Transportation Conflicts

Construction – Less-than-Significant Impact

With the exception of the new 625 Line, construction will generally occur within existing transmission line easements and will not involve any activities that will conflict with transportation policies, plans, or programs, including bus transportation in the area. The project spans multiple bus routes and bicycle trails in the area, which may require temporary closures during construction. These temporary closures will be short-term and isolated, as discussed in response to Question 4.15a. Where feasible, conductor pulling will be conducted during off-peak hours or during the evening to further reduce impacts. Therefore, the impact will be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

As described previously, the operation and maintenance requirements will not change as a result of constructing the project. Therefore, there will be no impact to alternative transportation during operation and maintenance activities.

4.15.4 Applicant-Proposed Measures

The project will not result in any significant impacts to traffic or transportation in the project area; therefore, no avoidance or minimization measures are proposed.

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