

6. Other Considerations

Additional topics associated with implementation of the Eldorado–Ivanpah Transmission Project (EITP or the proposed project) and its alternatives that must be considered under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) are discussed in this chapter. The following additional considerations are discussed: environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated to less than significant levels; irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources; growth-inducing effects; and a summary of cumulative impacts. The Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System (ISEGS) project is also discussed. While the EITP would not be a source of additional power, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) have determined that because the EITP is intended to facilitate the transmission of power from ISEGS, power generation from ISEGS should be considered in this EIR/EIS (Figure 1-1).

6.1 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

The proposed project and its alternatives would result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts on biological resources and potentially significant impacts air quality, hydrology and water quality, and public services and utilities. Under NEPA, the proposed project would result in major, adverse and unavoidable impacts on aesthetics and visual resources for one of the eight key observation points (KOPs) analyzed; with mitigation, impacts on aesthetics and visual resources would be less than significant under CEQA. As discussed in Section 3.4, “Biological Resources,” the proposed project would impact several special-status wildlife species and their habitat. Mitigation measures would reduce impacts to less than significant for all of the species discussed, except for desert tortoise. Impacts on desert tortoise and its habitat would be significant even after mitigation (IMPACT BIO-2).

As described in the analysis of IMPACT AIR-2, the estimates of average daily emissions of $PM_{2.5}$, PM_{10} and NO_x from project construction activities exceed The Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) daily significant thresholds. Implementation of MM AIR-1 (low-emission equipment) and MM AIR-2 (enhanced fugitive dust control measures) would reduce potential impact but are not expected to reduce emissions from construction activities to below the MDAQMD daily significant thresholds. Long-term impacts would not occur because construction would be temporary at any one location. Therefore, temporary ambient air quality impacts caused by construction activities would violate or contribute substantially to an air quality violation.

In addition, construction of the proposed project or its alternatives would occur in an area designated non-attainment for ozone and PM_{10} (IMPACT AIR-3). The estimates of average daily emissions of PM_{10} and ozone precursors, NO_x and VOCs, from project construction activities exceed MDAQMD daily significant thresholds. The construction is expected to adversely impact the proposed project region for a short term. Mitigation measures to be implemented, including the use of low-emission equipment and enhanced fugitive dust control measures are not expected to reduce PM_{10} and NO_x emissions from construction activities to below the MDAQMD daily significant thresholds. Therefore, temporary emission increases of NO_x , VOCs, and PM_{10} during construction would contribute to a cumulatively considerable net increase of a criteria pollutant in a non-attainment area.

The proposed project and its alternatives could also result in a significant impact on water resources by impacting aquifer recharge processes and exceeding existing levels of groundwater withdrawal (IMPACT HYDRO-2). This potentially significant impact relates to IMPACT PUSVC-2, which indicates that construction of the proposed project would temporarily increase water use. Depending on the quantity and sources of water to be used, the proposed project could decrease local groundwater supply and recharge. Because the sources of the water to be used during construction is currently unknown, the impact on groundwater supplies could be significant (Section 3.8, “Hydrology and Water Quality” and Section 3.11, “Public Services and Utilities”).

1 **6.1.1 Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System Project**
2

3 The ISEGS project would result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts on existing scenic visual resources as
4 seen from several key observation points in the Ivanpah Valley and Clark Mountains (CEC and BLM 2009, CEC
5 2010). ISEGS project impacts, when combine with the impacts of present and reasonably foreseeable projects,
6 would also result in significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts with respect to visual resources, land use, and
7 traffic and transportation (CEC 2010). These ISEGS project impacts are further reviewed in Section 3.2, “Visual
8 Resources” and Chapter 5, “Cumulative Scenario and Impacts,” of the EITP EIR/EIS.
9

10 **6.2 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources**
11

12 This section discusses irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources as a result of energy and materials
13 consumption, accidental release of hazardous materials, land disturbance (and associated habitat loss for sensitive
14 biological resources), damage to or the loss of cultural or paleontological resources, land use, and visual impacts.
15 During the proposed project’s operational phase, the transmission of electrical power generated from nonrenewable
16 resources would continue. Operation of the proposed project, however, would facilitate the distribution of solar
17 energy from the ISEGS project and accommodate the area’s potential for renewable power generation in order to
18 achieve the State of California Renewables Portfolio Standard goals. For this reason, the irreversible and irretrievable
19 resource commitments discussed in this section are considered to be acceptable.
20

21 **6.2.1 Energy and Materials Consumption**
22

23 Implementation of the proposed project would result in the consumption of energy and materials. Fossil fuels would
24 be required for construction of the proposed project as well as operation and maintenance. A total of 35,000 gallons
25 of gasoline, 665,000 of diesel, and 8,300 of aviation fuel are estimated to be required for construction of the proposed
26 project. The amount of fossil fuels to be stored for the emergency back-up generator for microwave
27 telecommunications is estimated at 499 gallons.
28

29 The proposed Ivanpah Substation would be routinely visited on a monthly basis, and the Eldorado–Ivanpah
30 Transmission Line would be monitored routinely in its entirety by helicopter or truck on an annual basis. Additional
31 visits for maintenance purposes would be expected in response to inclement weather or other issues as needed—
32 generally five or more times annually for the transmission line and 20 or more times annually for the substation. The
33 Nipton, California, microwave site would also be visited for operations and maintenance purposes several times
34 annually.
35

36 Additionally, construction would require the manufacture of new materials, some of which would not be recyclable
37 after the estimated 80-year lifespan for the proposed project. The raw materials and energy required for the
38 production of these materials would also result in an irretrievable commitment of natural resources. Operation and
39 maintenance of the proposed project or its alternatives would not cause a substantial increase in the consumption or
40 use of non-renewable resources.
41

42 **6.2.2 Hazards and Hazardous Materials**
43

44 Construction activities could result in the accidental release of hazardous materials in localized areas of the
45 transmission line, Ivanpah Substation, or telecommunication lines. Such accidents could pose a hazard to humans or
46 result in long-term impacts on the environment. With mitigation, however, potential impacts would be reduced to less
47 than significant levels. No long-term adverse impacts would occur as result of construction, operation, or
48 maintenance of the proposed project or its alternatives.
49

6.2.3 Land Disturbance

Clearing and grading activities for proposed project infrastructure (e.g., the new substation; improvements to existing access and spur roads; new access and spur roads; staging areas; powerline tension and pull areas; stringing and splicing areas; and tower and pole installation) would cause direct losses of vegetation communities and would be potential sources of direct mortality to wildlife. Wildlife would also be indirectly impacted through the loss or modification of vegetation.

Approximately 51 acres of land would permanently be disturbed with implementation of the proposed project. Consequently, 51 acres of plant and wildlife habitat would be eliminated. Approximately 424 acres would temporarily be disturbed during construction of the proposed project; therefore, total land disturbance would be approximately 465 acres (464.9; Table 6-1). The extent that temporary land disturbances would impact biological resources would vary by vegetation or wildlife community and the location of disturbance. The loss of habitat from permanently disturbed land would be long-term, enduring throughout the 80-year lifespan estimated for the proposed project.

The amount of land that would be disturbed with the implementation of each alternative is provided in Table 6-1. The effect of land disturbance with the implementation of each alternative would be similar to that of the proposed project. Potential impacts from land disturbance are further analyzed in Section 3.4, “Biological Resources.”

Table 6-1 Estimated Land Disturbance by Alternative

| Component | Acres Disturbed During Construction ^{1, 2} | Acres Permanently Disturbed ¹ |
|---|---|--|
| Proposed Project (Proposed Action) | 464.9 | 51.2 |
| Transmission Route Alternative A | 536.3 | 59.3 |
| Transmission Route Alternative B | 605.5 | 61.2 |
| Transmission Route Alternative C | 551.8 | 57.7 |
| Transmission Route Alternative D | 526.9 | 52.4 |
| Transmission Route Alternative E | 525.1 | 52.2 |
| Golf Course Telecommunication Alternative | 475.5 | 51.3 |
| Mountain Pass Telecommunication Alternative | 475.7 | 51.3 |

Notes:

¹ Land disturbance estimations are based on the applicant’s preliminary design information and are subject to change during final engineering.

² Construction land disturbances include both temporary and permanent land disturbance estimations.

Transmission Alternative Route A would shorten the overall length of the proposed project by one mile but require additional right-of-way (ROW). There would be an increase in total permanent impacts by 0.2 acres and an increase in temporary impacts by 17 acres in previously undisturbed desert habitat. The increase in acreage of both permanent and temporary impacts would be due to construction activities required for the completion of this alternative. Transmission Alternative Routes B and C and would result in a longer transmission line and require additional ROW, which would increase the acreage of permanent and temporary impacts. Transmission Alternative Route D and Subalternative E would result in a slightly longer transmission line, which would increase the acreage of habitat that is temporarily impacted. The acreage permanently impacted would be slightly greater than under the proposed project.

The Golf Course and Mountain Pass Telecommunication Alternatives would result in the installation of additional communication line (20 and 25 miles, respectively). There would be a substantial increase in the acreage of habitat that would be impacted as a result of these alternatives. The No Project Alternative would not result in impacts to biological resources. Under this alternative, construction, demolition, or ground disturbance would not occur because neither the proposed project nor the alternatives would be implemented.

6.2.4 Cultural Resources

Construction of the proposed project would result in a significant impact on cultural resource sites 36-10315 and 36-7694/26CK4957 (Section 3.5, “Cultural Resources”). Without mitigation, impacts would be adverse and permanent. Implementation of mitigation measures, however, would reduce all potentially significant impacts associated with the proposed project to less than significant levels.

Site 36-10315/26CK8280, the Boulder Dam–San Bernardino 132-kV Transmission Line, would be impacted by the EITP because towers from this line would be removed and replaced with new towers to accommodate the existing and new transmission capacity. While this impact could not be avoided, mitigation would be incorporated that would require a full record be made of the resource before impacts are made. Site 36-7694/26CK4957, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Boulder Transmission Line, was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in 1994. The applicant intends to span over the line using H-Frame towers, which would allow the EITP line to cross the historic line without impacting it. Implementation of APM CR-2 would minimize impacts to less than significant levels.

Transmission Route Alternatives A and B would cross no known cultural resources, and no newly discovered cultural resources were found during the field survey of this alternative. Transmission Route Alternative C would result in significant adverse permanent impacts to sites 36-10315 and 36-7694/26CK4957 by altering the setting and disturbing elements of the site that contribute to its historic significance. Without mitigation, impacts would be adverse and permanent. With mitigation, potential impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Transmission Route Alternatives D and E would not result in impacts on cultural resources. The alternative routes contain no previously recorded cultural resources, and no newly discovered cultural resources were found during the field surveys. The Golf Course and Mountain Pass Telecommunication Alternatives would also not result in impacts to known cultural resources. The No Project Alternative would not result in impacts to cultural resources.

If subsurface cultural resources or human remains are discovered with the implementation of the proposed project and any of the alternatives, an impact could occur. Implementation of the mitigation described in Section 3.5, “Cultural Resources,” would reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels.

6.2.5 Geology, Soils, Minerals, and Paleontology

The proposed project would result in minor long-term impacts to geology and soil resources because of transmission line, Ivanpah Substation, and telecommunication line construction. Activities associated with the construction of access road and structures along the transmission and telecommunication line routes would disturb the existing ground surface and natural drainages, causing minor erosion-related impacts. Operations and maintenance activities would result in continued erosion.

Expansive soils in the proposed project area could result in low to moderate levels of structural failure of the transmission and telecommunication line poles and towers and the Ivanpah Substation. There is also the potential for impacts as a result of changing geologic conditions including seismic events (fault rupture and ground shaking), subsidence, or liquefaction. Numerous non-metallic and metallic mineral deposits occur along or near the transmission line route. Non-metallic deposits within the general project area include pumice, feldspar, limestone, and sand and gravel, with sand and gravel potential being the highest along the routes.

Several paleontological resources would be located within 1 mile of the proposed project and one paleontological resource location would be within 300 feet. The nearest location identified in record searches indicated the presence of indeterminate large mammal bone fragments. All potentially significant geology, soil, mineral, and paleontological impacts would be mitigated to less than significant levels. All potentially significant short and long-term geology, soil,

1 mineral, and paleontological impacts associated with the proposed project would be mitigated to less than significant
2 levels (Section 3.6, “Geology, Soils, Minerals, and Paleontology”).

3
4 Implementation of Transmission Route Alternatives A and B would result in negligible impacts associated with
5 seismic ground shaking, and seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction. Minor impacts would be associated
6 with erosion and unstable geologic units (subsidence). Negligible impacts would be associated with expansive soil
7 and non-metallic mineral resources. Construction of Transmission Route Alternatives A and B may also impact
8 buried paleontological resources as a result of ground-disturbing activities. The two routes could impact areas where
9 underlying formations have been identified as high paleontological sensitivity.

10
11 Implementation of Transmission Route Alternative C could result in several impacts. A segment of the Stateline Fault
12 System crosses Transmission Route Alternative C along the California–Nevada border. This impact would be
13 negligible and localized but long term. Minor impacts would be associated with erosion and result from unstable
14 geologic units (subsidence). Negligible impact would be associated with expansive soil and non-metallic mineral
15 resources. Areas where underlying formations have been identified as high paleontological sensitivity could also be
16 impacted.

17
18 Impacts and mitigation associated with Transmission Route Alternatives D and E would be similar to those
19 associated with Transmission Route Alternative C. Only Transmission Route Alternatives C and D, however, would
20 cross a segment of the Stateline Fault System. Impacts associated with the Golf Course and Mountain Pass
21 Telecommunication Alternatives would also be similar to those associated with the proposed project and
22 Transmission Route Alternatives A, C, and D. The No Project Alternative would have no impact on existing geologic,
23 soil, mineral, or paleontological resources. All potentially significant short and long-term geology, soil, mineral, and
24 paleontological impacts associated with the alternatives would be mitigated to less than significant levels (Section
25 3.6, “Geology, Soils, Minerals, and Paleontology”).

26 27 **6.2.6 Land Use**

28
29 Long-term negligible adverse impacts on the Clark Mountain grazing allotment would occur as a result of proposed
30 project construction. No additional long-term adverse impacts on existing, approved land use plans, livestock grazing
31 management, livestock, or Special Management Areas would occur as a result of implementation of the proposed
32 project or Transmission Route Alternatives A through E, the Golf Course or Mountain Pass Telecommunication
33 Alternatives, or the No Project Alternative (Section 3.9, “Land Use”).

34
35 While an EIS for the Southern Nevada Supplemental Airport is currently in progress and is expected to be completed
36 by 2012, the applicant would consult with the Federal Aviation Administration prior to final project design to determine
37 if a Hazard/No Hazard Determination is necessary as discussed in Section 3.7, “Hazards, Health, and Safety.” Once
38 this determination is made, land use impacts on the Ivanpah Airport Environs Overlay would be reduced.

39
40 The portion of the proposed project that crosses the BCCE would be constructed mostly within the boundary of BLM-
41 managed utility corridors; however, less than one mile would cross outside of the corridor at MP 2 along an existing
42 70-foot ROW, which would require approval from Clark County and Boulder City. With the approval of these
43 jurisdictions, impacts on land use within the BCCE would be reduced.

44 45 46 **6.2.7 Visual Impacts**

47
48 The proposed project would result in permanent, minor, adverse impacts on visual resources because of the use of
49 taller transmission line structures and construction of the Ivanpah Substation and microwave tower. The
50 undergrounded portion of the telecommunications line would result in temporary moderate impacts on visual

1 resources. All visual impacts would be consistent with applicable BLM visual resource designations for the proposed
2 project area, however, and would not significantly impact visual resources (Section 3.9, “Visual Resources”).
3

4 Implementation of Transmission Route Alternatives A through E would result in stronger overall visual contrast in
5 comparison to the proposed project. Increased visual contrast would occur in areas where the alternative routes
6 would veer from the existing transmission line route. Visual impacts would still be consistent with applicable BLM
7 visual resource designations, however, and would not significantly impact visual resources.
8

9 The Golf Course and Mountain Pass Telecommunication Alternatives would result in moderate temporary impacts on
10 visual resources because of an additional segment of trenching along Nipton Road but would not result in long-term
11 impacts. A segment of the Mountain Pass Telecommunication Alternative would traverse an area designated by the
12 BLM with stricter objectives for visual resources than the proposed project or other alternative routes, but would still
13 not result in significant impacts. This segment of telecommunication line would be strung on existing 33-kV
14 distribution structures. It would not result in a visual impact because the new telecommunication line would not be
15 noticeable with respect to the existing distribution lines. Under the No Project Alternative, there would be no impact
16 on visual resources.
17

18 **6.2.8 Hydrological and Water Quality**

19
20 Construction of the proposed project and its alternatives would result in localized erosion and sedimentation impacts
21 ranging from minor to moderate. Additionally, the proposed project and its alternatives would use water for dust
22 suppression during construction, and water would be used at the substation for sanitary purposes and fire control
23 during emergencies during proposed project operation. The applicant has stated that no wells would be drilled for
24 water supply; however, until the water source is identified by the applicant, potential minor to moderate localized
25 impacts on groundwater are assumed (see MM W-2, Water Use Plan).
26

27 **6.2.9 Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System Project**

28
29 Implementation of the ISEGS project would result in the consumption of a substantial amount of energy from fuel
30 (i.e., gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel) for construction activities. Additionally, construction would require the manufacture
31 of new materials, some of which would not be recyclable when the ISEGS project is decommissioned. The raw
32 materials and energy required for the production of these materials would also result in an irretrievable commitment
33 of natural resources. Operation of the ISEGS project would not cause a substantial increase in the consumption or
34 use of non-renewable resources.
35

36 The use of a limited amount of hazardous materials (e.g., fuel, lubricants, and cleaning solvents) would be required.
37 Hazardous materials would be stored, handled, and used in accordance with best management practices and
38 applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Assuming appropriate implementation of plans and practices, impacts
39 associated with the degradation of the environment because of the accidental release of hazardous materials would
40 be less than significant.
41

42 Implementation of the ISEGS project would require the loss of approximately 4,073 acres of vegetation and wildlife
43 and habitat. The loss of this habitat would be long-term, enduring throughout the proposed 50-year lifespan of the
44 ISEGS project facility. Following decommissioning, restoration would be conducted which would involve removal of
45 structures, restoration of topography, and revegetation, all of which would work towards restoration of the original
46 habitat. However, it is likely that restoration of native vegetation would be slow and the success uncertain. The loss of
47 desert tortoise habitat would be permanent since restoration of vegetation for which they depend for foraging and
48 other factors affecting the quality of the restored habitat would be uncertain.
49

1 The majority of access required for construction, operation, and maintenance of the ISEGS project would use existing
2 ROW and access roads. Opportunities for public access would not be significantly affected nor would previously
3 inaccessible areas be made accessible.

4
5 Visual impacts would be significant and long-term enduring throughout the proposed 50-year lifespan of the facility.
6 The ISEGS project site would be near a national preserve, two designated wilderness areas, and an area used for
7 *land sailing*—moving on land in a wind-powered wheeled vehicle with a sail on flat open spaces such as Ivanpah Dry
8 Lake. Concerns were expressed during the public comment period regarding potential impacts on visual resources
9 as well as the level of glare from the solar towers; and concern over cumulative visual effects of renewable projects
10 on the Southern California Mojave Desert as a whole. After the end of the ISEGS project’s useful life, it would be
11 decommissioned and the area restored and revegetated, but visual recovery is would likely take a very long period of
12 time.

14 **6.3 Growth-Inducing Effects**

15
16 The proposed project would induce growth if it results in additional development, such as increases in population,
17 employment and/or housing above and beyond what is already assumed will occur in local and regional land use
18 plans or in projections made by regional planning authorities, irrespective of the proposed project. Under CEQA
19 (Section 15126.2(d)), the proposed project would be growth-inducing if it:

- 20 • Directly or indirectly fosters economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing;
- 21 • Taxes community facilities to the extent that the construction of new facilities would be necessary;
- 22 • Removes obstacles to population growth; or
- 23 • Encourages or facilitates other activities that cause significant environmental effects.

24
25
26 Typical growth inducing factors might be the extension of urban services or transportation infrastructure to a
27 previously unserved or under-served area or the removal of major barriers to development. This section evaluates
28 the proposed project’s potential to create such growth inducements. It should also be noted that growth inducement
29 can be positive or negative depending on resulting effects and the development objectives of the planning authorities
30 in the proposed project area. Negative impacts associated with growth inducement would occur only where growth
31 associated with the proposed project would result in significant/adverse environmental impacts.

33 **6.3.1 Workforce for the Proposed Project / Proposed Action**

35 **6.3.1.1 Construction**

36
37 Section 3.13, “Socioeconomics, Population and Housing, and Environmental Justice” provides a detailed description
38 of the availability of existing labor within the proposed project area. Construction employment for the proposed
39 project would include both skilled and semi-skilled positions. The construction workforce available in San Bernardino
40 County, California is 35,973 and Clark County, Nevada 92,364. As discussed in Chapter 2.0, “Description of the
41 Proposed Project and Alternatives,” construction of the proposed project would occur over an estimated 18-month
42 period and require a total construction workforce of approximately 190 workers.

43
44 Because the total expected construction workforce is 190 workers (approximately 0.015 percent of the total workers
45 available), it is not expected that any additional workers would be required to relocate into the proposed project area
46 during construction. The presence of 190 workers in the proposed project area would have a localized beneficial
47 effect as a result of the temporary localized spending on goods and services, but this effect would be short-term and
48 would not be expected to result in a permanent increase in housing or need for community facilities that could not be
49 met by existing services and facilities.

1
2 The analysis presented in Section 3.11, “Public Services and Utilities,” confirms that construction of the proposed
3 project would not create significant additional demands for emergency response services, schools, drinking water, or
4 solid waste and wastewater facilities that could not be met by existing providers and facilities. Therefore, workforce
5 required for construction of the proposed project would not have any direct or indirect growth inducing effect.
6

7 **6.3.1.2 Operation**

8

9 Operation and maintenance of the proposed project would be conducted by the existing work force currently
10 assigned to the operation and maintenance of the existing Eldorado–Ivanpah Transmission Line (Section,
11 “Socioeconomics, Population and Housing, and Environmental Justice”) and would not create new jobs locally or
12 regionally. Operation of the proposed project would not cause growth in population, employment, or housing because
13 no additional workers would be required beyond those currently employed.
14

15 The analysis presented in Section 3.11, “Public Services and Utilities,” confirms that operation and maintenance of
16 the proposed project would not create long-term demands for emergency response services, schools, drinking water,
17 or solid waste and wastewater facilities that could not be met by existing services and facilities. Therefore, workforce
18 required for operation and maintenance of the proposed project would not have any direct or indirect growth inducing
19 effect.
20

21 **6.3.1.3 Alternatives**

22

23 Potential growth-inducing impacts from implementation of each alternative would be similar to that for the proposed
24 project. The alternatives would require a similar number of workers as the proposed project. Under the No Project
25 Alternative, there would be no growth-inducing impacts on the proposed project area. Therefore, workforce required
26 for implementation of the alternatives would not have any direct or indirect growth inducing effect.
27

28 **6.3.2 Provisions for Additional Electric Power**

29

30 As described previously, growth inducement can occur directly, as a result of increases in employment, housing, and
31 demands for public facilities and services. Growth inducement can also occur indirectly as the result of the removal of
32 existing constraints to growth or the creation of factors that encourage or otherwise facilitate development that would
33 not otherwise have occurred. The provision of electrical power can be a trigger for growth, either by alleviating a
34 constraint where limitations on power availability are curtailing development and growth that would otherwise occur or
35 by providing easier and/or cheaper access to power.
36

37 The purpose of and need for the EITP is to connect renewable generation sources in the Ivanpah Valley region to the
38 existing electrical transmission grid and to enable the applicant to comply with California’s Renewables Portfolio
39 Standards (Chapter 1, “Purpose and Need”). The Renewables Portfolio Standards and Energy Action Plan require
40 utilities, including the applicant, to increase the sale of electricity produced by renewable energy sources including
41 solar facilities to meet a goal of 20 percent renewable energy generation by 2010. The Ivanpah Valley area has been
42 identified as an area with high potential for solar resource development. The proposed project would allow the
43 applicant to increase the percentage of renewable resources in its energy portfolio and assist them in reaching the
44 goals set in the Renewable Portfolio Standards.
45

46 In addition, the Energy Policy Act of 2005 requires the Department of the Interior (the BLM’s parent agency) to
47 approve at least 10,000 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy on public lands by 2015. Currently, proposed
48 renewable energy projects amounting to 1,900 MW of electricity are on file with the BLM for the Ivanpah Valley area.
49 The EITP would allow for the transmission and distribution of energy from proposed renewable energy generation
50 facilities.
51

1 Irrespective of the proposed project, population in both San Bernardino and Clark counties has increased
2 substantially in the last decade and is expected to continue to increase (Section 3.13, "Socioeconomics, Population
3 and Housing, and Environmental Justice"). It is anticipated that growth would occur regardless of the availability of
4 additional renewable energy and electrical transmission capacity. Further, it is not anticipated that the proposed
5 project would have any effect on population growth because associated energy demands would be met by other
6 means.

7
8 Additionally, as described in Section 2.3.5, "No Project/No Action Alternative," if the EITP is not constructed, it is
9 assumed that the proposed renewable power generation projects that the EITP would be intended to serve would still
10 proceed. These renewable power projects would need alternate means to connect to electrical transmission systems.
11 SCE or other electrical transmission companies that currently serve the Ivanpah Valley region would be likely
12 candidates for providing electrical transmission projects if the EITP was not constructed.

13
14 Therefore, because the proposed project would not result in increases in employment, housing, or the demands for
15 public facilities and services nor result in the removal of existing constraints to growth or the creation of factors that
16 encourage or otherwise facilitate development that would not otherwise have occurred, its implementation would not
17 have any direct or indirect growth inducing effect due to the provision for additional electric power.

18 19 **6.3.2.1 Alternatives**

20
21 Potential growth-inducing impacts from implementation of each alternative would be similar to that for the proposed
22 project. The alternatives comprise route variations of the proposed project transmission and telecommunication lines
23 and would not result in differences in the amount of power that would be transmitted or the location of substations
24 where power would be transmitted. Under the No Project Alternative, there would be no growth-inducing impacts on
25 the proposed project area. Therefore, provisions for additional electric power resulting from implementation of the
26 alternatives would not have any direct or indirect growth inducing effect.

27 28 **6.3.3 Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System Project**

29
30 The ISEGS project would employ up to 959 construction personnel and 90 operations personnel. Construction
31 workers would commute as much as 2 hours each direction from their communities rather than relocate, and
32 operations workers would commute as much as 1 hour.

33
34 Socioeconomics data for the 1- and 2-hour commute ranges in counties were reviewed. The counties included San
35 Bernardino and Clark and others that were within the commute range. It was determined that there are approximately
36 231,000 construction workers within the commute-range study area. The number of workers required for the ISEGS
37 project would be negligible with respect to the total number of workers available. Additionally, all workers would
38 reside within the study area, and no impacts on existing population levels would occur.

39
40 The primary need for the ISEGS project relates to federal and state requirements for the generation of renewable
41 energy. According to the California Energy Commission (CEC), peak electricity demand within California is projected
42 to increase at a rate of 1.35 percent per year (CPUC, CEC, and CPA 2008), and therefore, additional generating
43 capacity from new sources will be required. The ISEGS project is not intended to supply power related to growth for
44 any particular development and would not result in direct growth-inducing impacts. However, the ISEGS project could
45 facilitate growth indirectly through the additional increased capacity of electric power that it would make available
46 (CEC and BLM 2009). This finding differs from the discussion of the EITP above, which concludes that there would
47 no direct or indirect growth inducing impact from the implementation of the EITP.

This page intentionally left blank