

# CHAPTER 6

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## CEQA Statutory Sections

### 6.1 Growth-Inducing Effects

CEQA requires a discussion of the ways in which a project could induce growth. Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, identifies a project to be growth-inducing if it fosters economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. New employees hired for proposed commercial and industrial development projects and population growth resulting from residential development projects represent direct forms of growth. Other examples of projects that are growth-inducing are the expansion of urban services into a previously unserved or under-served area, the creation or extension of transportation links, or the removal of major obstacles to growth. It is important to note that these direct forms of growth have secondary effects of expanding the size of local markets and attracting additional economic activity to the area.

Typically, the growth-inducing potential of a project would be considered significant if it fosters growth or a concentration of population above what is assumed in local and regional land use plans, or in projections made by regional planning authorities. Significant growth impacts could also occur if the project provides infrastructure or service capacity to accommodate growth levels beyond those permitted by local or regional plans and policies.

#### 6.1.1 Growth Caused by Direct and Indirect Employment

The combined number of construction workers that would be required to construct the Proposed Project components would be approximately 300 crew members, including SCE and contracted construction personnel. However, it is assumed that the majority of the crews would move from one project component site to the next (e.g., from one substation site to the next), resulting in the need for well under 300 total construction crew members at any one time. Project operation and maintenance requires minimal staffing, which would be handled by current SCE employees; therefore, no new jobs would be created.

It is anticipated that construction workers would commute from within Riverside County or adjacent areas and would not need to relocate to the project area. Therefore, Proposed Project construction activities are not expected to result in any significant increase to the local population or housing market, and would not indirectly induce growth by creating new opportunities for local industry or commerce. Over the long term, the Proposed Project would have no impact on population growth, as no long-term growth employment would result from project operations and maintenance.

## 6.1.2 Growth Related to Provision of Additional Electric Power

Construction of the Proposed Project is needed to meet electric system reliability and planned demand in the Electrical Needs Area, which includes the cities of Palm Springs, Rancho Mirage, Cathedral City, Palm Desert, Indian Wells, and unincorporated areas of Riverside County, including the Thousand Palms community. Therefore, the Proposed Project is designed to increase reliability and accommodate existing and planned electrical load growth, rather than to induce growth.

Growth in the Electrical Needs Area is planned and regulated by applicable local planning policies and zoning ordinances. The provision of electricity is generally not considered an obstacle to growth nor does the availability of electrical capacity by itself normally ensure or encourage growth within a particular area. Other factors such as economic conditions, land availability, population trends, availability of water supply or sewer services and local planning policies have a more direct effect on growth. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not indirectly induce growth by creating new opportunities for local industry or commerce.

## 6.2 Significant Environmental Effects that Cannot be Avoided

Sections 15126.2(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR identify significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided by the Proposed Project including those that can be mitigated, but not to a less than significant level. The Proposed Project would result in temporary impacts to Air Quality during construction, that even with implementation of mitigation measures, would remain significant unmitigable. Emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) and particulate matter during construction activities would exceed regional and localized thresholds of significance set by the South Coast Air Quality Management District. As discussed in Chapter 3, *Alternatives and Cumulative Projects*, a number of alternatives were analyzed to determine if they could meet most project objectives while avoiding or minimizing the significant impacts associated with the Proposed Project. No alternatives were identified that would meet most project objectives while reducing impacts associated with the Proposed Project to a mitigable level. Accordingly, temporary impacts to air quality during construction could not be alleviated through development of alternatives.

## 6.3 Significant Irreversible Changes

Sections 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR identify significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the Proposed Project. These changes may include, for example, uses of nonrenewable resources, or provision of access to previously inaccessible areas, as well as project accidents that could change the environment in the long-term. Development of the Proposed Project would require a permanent commitment of natural resources resulting from the direct consumption of fossil fuels, construction materials, the manufacture of new equipment that largely cannot be recycled at the end of the project's useful lifetime, and energy required for the production of materials.

During the project's operational phase, the subtransmission and transmission lines would allow for the efficient transport of additional electrical power generated from renewable and non-renewable resources. However, the Proposed Project would not require the future use of specific amounts of non-renewable resources.

## 6.4 Cumulative Impacts

This section presents the analysis of the potential for the Proposed Project to create cumulative effects when the impacts of projects listed in Table 3-7 (see Chapter 3, *Alternatives and Cumulative Projects*) are considered together with the impacts of the Proposed Project.

### 6.4.1 Aesthetics

The geographic scope of the cumulative impacts to visual quality is the viewsheds that could be affected by the Proposed Project facilities from public roadways, trails, open space, and residential areas. Viewsheds of the project vicinity are extensive, given the extensiveness of the landscapes traversed, general lack of vegetative screening, and large number of people who reside in western Coachella Valley.

Mitigation Measures 4.1-3, 4.1-6, 4.1-7, and 4.1-8 would ensure that the Proposed Project would not result in significant individual effects on visual resources. The past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects described in Chapter 3, *Alternatives and Cumulative Projects*, include numerous major development projects in western Coachella Valley that could substantially alter the visual character of areas within the project vicinity. Many of these projects would have the potential to create new visual impacts within the viewsheds that could be affected by the Proposed Project from public roadways, trails, open space, and residential areas. However, the projects would generally be located in urbanized, developed areas and so would not be likely to affect the area's visual character. Additionally, future development within the project vicinity is guided by the applicable city and Riverside County General Plans, and associated planning and environmental documents. Furthermore, new development would be subject to the applicable city and Riverside County design review processes.

The Proposed Project would add new or upgraded electrical infrastructure to the overall visual setting of the project area. The Proposed Project would contribute to cumulative adverse influences where aboveground facilities occupy the same field of view as other built facilities or impacted landscapes that are currently in the viewsheds of sensitive viewers in the project area. Existing electricity infrastructure (described in Section 4.1, *Aesthetics*), including subtransmission lines, transmission lines, and substations, have compromised the existing visual setting in the project vicinity. Therefore, the Proposed Project, along with the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects, would not dominate the landscape setting.

When considered with the existing visual setting, the Proposed Project would not significantly alter existing scenic quality or viewsheds and would not substantially add cumulative effects. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant (Class II).

## 6.4.2 Agriculture Resources

The construction, operation, and maintenance of the Proposed Project, in addition to the other reasonably foreseeable future developments listed in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, would not result in cumulative impacts to agricultural resources. The Proposed Project would not convert Farmland to non-agricultural use. In addition, the project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or with land currently under a Williamson Act contract, or involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to its location or nature could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. The proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV alignment traverses a parcel designated as Farmland of Local Importance under the FMMP. However, impacts to this parcel would be less than significant given that the parcel is not currently used for agricultural purposes and the portion of the proposed alignment that traverses the parcel would be located within existing SCE ROW. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have a less than significant contribution to a cumulatively considerable impact when considered in combination with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects in the area (Class III).

## 6.4.3 Air Quality

Construction of the Proposed Project would have a temporary impact on regional air quality from emissions of particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5), and NOx, which would be cumulatively considerable when combined with construction of other projects proposed in the project vicinity. The SCAQMD regional thresholds were set to limit air pollution and to help the district reach attainment status for PM10, PM2.5, and ozone. By exceeding the regional PM10, PM2.5, and NOx thresholds, emissions generated by the Proposed Project combined with emissions from construction of other projects may contribute to air quality violations in the SSAB and may inhibit the SSAB's ability to achieve attainment status. Although the SSAB is in attainment for nitrogen dioxide, NOx emissions are still a concern as NOx is a precursor to ozone generation. Applicant proposed measures and Mitigation Measures 4.3-1a and 4.3 1-b would help reduce construction emissions; however, impacts would remain significant and would therefore result in a significant short-term unmitigable cumulative impact to regional air quality (Class I).

In addition to regional impacts, construction of the Proposed Project would cause significant unmitigable impacts to localized air quality during construction activities. Proposed construction components that would have a significant impact on nearby receptors include the following: the Farrell-Garnet 115 kV line, the Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV line, and the 220 kV loop-in, and the upgrades to Mirage Substation. Construction projects located in close proximity to these components would exacerbate the localized impact if construction activities overlap, and would thus cause a significant impact when considered on a cumulative level (Class I).

Construction projects that may overlap with construction of the proposed Farrell-Garnet 115 kV line and are within close proximity of potential construction areas include the Casa Verona Subdivision project and the Palm Springs Classic/Escena project. The Casa Verona Subdivision project would be located approximately 0.3 mile from the proposed Farrell-Garnet 115 kV line alignment and would include the subdivision of a 6.1 acre parcel into 25 residential lots. This project is currently approved but construction has not commenced. The Palm Springs

Classic/Escena project is located approximately 0.1 mile from the Farrell Substation and includes the construction of an 18-hole golf course, a 450 unit hotel, and 1,450 residential units. This project is currently under construction and therefore may overlap with construction of the proposed Farrell-Garnett 115 kV line if construction activities associated with this cumulative project continue into the second quarter of 2010. If construction activities from any of these projects overlap with construction of the proposed Farrell-Garnett 115 kV line, there would be an increased chance of exposing nearby receptors to harmful pollutant concentrations, thus resulting in a cumulatively considerable impact to localized air quality.

The Ponderosa Homes II project, which includes the construction of 237 single family residences, is located within half a mile from the proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV line alignment as well as the proposed 115 kV reconfiguration at Gerald Ford Drive and Portola Avenue. This project is currently under construction and could overlap with construction of the Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV line, thus resulting in a cumulatively considerable impact on localized air quality.

There is a proposed subdivision that would be located within half a mile from the proposed 220 kV loop-in alignment just north of Ramon Road between Desert Moon Drive and Vista Del Sol. This subdivision would result in the development of 144 residential and commercial lots. If approved, the construction of these units could overlap with construction of the proposed 220 kV loop-in and could result in a cumulatively considerable impact to nearby receptors located between the two project sites.

As demonstrated above, there are a number of proposed and approved construction projects located near the components of the Proposed Project that are expected to cause significant and unmitigable impacts to localized air quality. Therefore, any overlap between construction of the Proposed Project and nearby projects would increase the chances of exposing a receptor to harmful pollutant concentrations. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be cumulatively considerable and cumulative impacts to localized air quality would be significant and unmitigable (Class I).

Significance of GHG emissions is determined based on whether they would have a cumulatively considerable impact on global climate change. The Proposed Project would generate considerably less than 7,000 metric tons CO<sub>2</sub>e per year, and, with mitigation, would not conflict with the State's GHG reduction goals. The Proposed Project's contribution to global climate change would not be cumulatively considerable and cumulative impacts would be mitigated to a less than significant level (Class II).

#### **6.4.4 Biological Resources**

The geographical context includes urban and open space land uses in the Coachella Valley that support common and sensitive biological resources.

Construction of the Proposed Project could result in both temporary and permanent impacts on special-status species (i.e., CV fringe-toed lizard, burrowing owl, Le Conte's thrasher, ferruginous hawk, loggerhead shrike, Palm Springs pocket mouse, and Palm Springs round-tailed

ground squirrel), and their habitats. It is anticipated that ongoing and future development projects as described in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, would contribute to the incremental loss of undeveloped natural lands that provide habitat for these special-status species. Many development activities in the Coachella Valley would be guided by the recently adopted CVMSHCP. The CVMSHCP aims to guide growth in a way that would not result in cumulatively significant impacts on special-status species, through special-status species minimization measures, conservation planning, and establishing preserves in biologically rich areas. Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects, whether they are part of the CVMSHCP or not, are required to comply with federal and State regulations protecting special-status species through implementation of mitigation measures during construction. Activities associated with the construction of the Proposed Project would cause relatively minor loss of undeveloped Sonoran creosote bush scrub, stabilized and partially stabilized desert dunes, and active sand fields in the area; most of these losses would be associated with the footprint of individual transmission towers/poles and access roads that would traverse native habitat. Therefore, implementation of APM BIO-1 through APM BIO-11 and Mitigation Measures 4.4-1 through 4.4-10, which require SCE to conduct surveys and to avoid, minimize, and mitigate for potential impacts to special-status species and their habitat, would reduce the cumulative contribution of the Proposed Project to less than significant (Class II).

Construction of the Proposed Project could impact active sand fields, a sensitive natural community, and Whitewater Wash, which is a jurisdictional water of the United States. It is anticipated that ongoing and future development projects as described in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, would contribute to impacts to such features. As with special-status species, past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects are required to comply with federal and State regulations protecting sensitive natural communities and jurisdictional waters.

The proposed Farrell-Garnet subtransmission line would cross through active sand fields and Whitewater Wash; therefore, it is expected that there would be temporary and/or permanent impacts to both of these features. The Proposed Project's impact in combination with other projects could contribute to a cumulatively significant impact on sensitive natural communities and jurisdictional waters of the United States. Implementation of APM BIO-2 (Minimize Vegetation Impacts), and Mitigation Measures 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 would require SCE to minimize impacts to existing vegetation (although Active Sand Fields contain little vegetation cover) and replace lost habitat. Implementation of APM BIO-3 (Avoid Impacts to State and Federal Jurisdiction Wetlands), and Mitigation Measures 4.4-10 would require SCE to avoid jurisdictional waters to the extent possible, to perform a wetland delineation and have it verified by the USACE. Additionally, SCE would be required to avoid, minimize or mitigate potential impacts. As noted above, it is anticipated that impacts from construction of the Proposed Project to sensitive natural communities and jurisdictional waters would be avoided or minimal; therefore, in combination with other projects as described in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, the Proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulatively significant impact on sensitive natural communities or jurisdictional waters of the United States or waters of the State (Class II).

## 6.4.5 Cultural Resources

There are over 100 proposed, approved, and in-progress projects within 0.5 mile of the Proposed Project and alternative alignments and sites. Section 4.5.4 includes several mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to cultural resources during construction of the Proposed Project (i.e., accidental damage or destruction of previously unknown archaeological sites) to less-than-significant levels. The study area contains significant archaeological and historical records that, in many cases, have not been well documented or recorded. Thus, there is the potential for future development projects in the vicinity to disturb landscapes that may contain known or unknown cultural resources. However, future projects with potentially significant impacts to cultural resources would be required to comply with federal, State, and local regulations and ordinances protecting cultural resources through implementation of similar mitigation measures during construction. Therefore, the potential construction impacts of the Proposed Project in combination with other projects in the area would not contribute to a cumulatively significant impact on cultural or paleontological resources. With the implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.5-2, 4.5-3a, 4.5-3b, 4.5-3c, 4.5-4a, 4.5-4b, and 4.5-4c (discussed in Section 4.5, *Cultural Resources*), cumulative impacts would be less than significant (Class II).

## 6.4.6 Geology and Soils

Impacts on geology and soils are generally localized and do not result in regionally cumulative impacts. Geologic conditions can vary significantly over short distances creating entirely different effects elsewhere. Other future development would be constructed to current standards, which could potentially exceed those of existing improvements within the region, which reduces the potential impacts to the public.

The impact of the Proposed Project on geology and soils is localized and is incrementally less than significant. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not affect the immediate vicinity surrounding the study area. The Proposed Project components would all be constructed in accordance with the most recent version of the California Building Code seismic safety requirements and recommendations contained in the Proposed Project's specific geotechnical reports. Therefore, incremental impacts to area geology and soils resulting from construction and operation of the Proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact (Class III).

## 6.4.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Construction activities would increase the hazard potential in the study area. However, it is unlikely that the Proposed Project, with the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, would contribute to a cumulative hazards or hazardous materials related impact. APMs HAZ-1 through HAZ-4 and Mitigation Measure 4.7-3 would ensure that the Proposed Project's construction-related hazards and hazardous materials impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., because the Proposed Project would mitigate its contribution to any potential cumulative impact). Therefore, the cumulative impact of the Proposed Project related to hazards

and hazardous materials, in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects, would be less than significant with mitigation (Class II).

## 6.4.8 Hydrology and Water Quality

This Proposed Project along with other projects occurring in the area would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local water quality regulations. The Proposed Project, along with other projects over one acre in size, would be required to obtain coverage under the General Permit. Storm water management measures would be required to be identified and implemented that would effectively control erosion and sedimentation and other construction related pollutants during construction. Other management measures, such as construction of infiltration/detention basins, would be required to be identified and implemented that would effectively treat pollutants that would be expected for the post-construction land use for certain projects.

Construction and operational related stormwater runoff from the Proposed Project would be controlled by the requirements of the NPDES permit. Other new development in the area would also be required to control construction and operational stormwater by implementing State and local requirements regarding hydrology and water quality. Furthermore, the APMs and mitigation measures described in this EIR would ensure that the Proposed Project impacts to hydrologic resources and water quality would be less than cumulatively considerable. Therefore, the cumulative impact of the Proposed Project, in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects, would be less than significant with mitigation (Class II).

## 6.4.9 Land Use and Planning

The geographic context for the cumulative impacts associated with land use and planning issues are the cities of Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, Palm Desert, Indian Wells, as well as unincorporated areas of Riverside County, including the Thousand Palms community, which assumes full buildout of the Proposed Project, in combination with build out of the projects listed in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*.

As noted in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, a number of projects are planned within the project area and would have the potential to be constructed simultaneously with the Proposed Project. All potential Proposed Project land use impacts resulting from temporary construction activities, including temporary increases in noise and dust, decreased air quality from construction vehicles, odors from construction equipment, safety issues, loss of vegetation, and access issues are analyzed in the corresponding sections of this EIR (see Sections 4.1, *Aesthetics*; 4.3, *Air Quality*; 4.4, *Biological Resources*; 4.11, *Noise*; and 4.15, *Transportation and Traffic*). From an operations and maintenance perspective, the Proposed Project would not be cumulatively considerable because the projects discussed in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, are representative of the ongoing level of development in the region and would all be required to be consistent with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations of the agencies with jurisdiction over the respective projects. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in significant cumulative impacts to land use and planning. Impacts would be mitigated to less than significant (Class II).



## 6.4.10 Mineral Resources

Since the Proposed Project would not have any individual impact on mineral resources, it can be concluded that the Proposed Project would have no contribution to a cumulatively considerable impact to mineral resources (No Impact).

## 6.4.11 Noise

Noise levels tend to lessen quickly with distance from a source; therefore, the geographic scope for cumulative impacts associated with noise would be limited to projects that are in the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Project.

Equipment used during construction activities would temporarily increase short-term noise levels in the study area. Construction of the Proposed Project, in conjunction with the other projects listed in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, would have the potential to contribute to a cumulative noise impact because construction of the cumulative projects may occur in the immediate area at the same time as the Proposed Project. For example, the Casa Verona residential subdivision project, located approximately 0.3 mile from the proposed Farrell-Garnet alignment, has been approved by the Palm Springs City Council. Therefore, construction of this project could potentially overlap with construction of the proposed Farrell-Garnet line. Also, the Ponderosa Homes II project, which includes the construction of 237 single family homes, is currently being constructed within 0.2 mile of the proposed 115 kV reconfiguration site at Portola Avenue and Gerald Ford Drive. If construction of this project continues into 2010, it may overlap with construction of the Proposed Project, thus exposing nearby sensitive receptors to cumulatively considerable noise increases.

Although construction of the Proposed Project may occur simultaneously with the various other cumulative projects, implementation of APMs NOISE-1 through NOISE-3 identified in Section 4.11.3 and Mitigation Measures 4.11-6a and 4.11-6b identified in Section 4.11.4 would ensure that the Proposed Project's construction-related noise impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., because the Proposed Project would mitigate its contribution to the cumulative impact). As a result, cumulative noise impacts would be mitigated to less than significant (Class II).

Operations of the Proposed Project, in conjunction with the operations of other projects listed in Section 3.6, would have the potential to contribute to a long-term cumulative noise impact because operations of at least one of the cumulative projects would occur in the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Project. SCE plans to construct a new distribution substation in 2011 within the Mirage Substation property that would have one 28 MVA transformer, two 12 kV circuits, and capacitors. However, operations of the distribution voltage transformer and other equipment would result in minor noise levels that would be considerably less than the current ambient levels at Mirage Substation. In addition, impacts associated with the proposed modifications to Mirage Substation would be mitigated to less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.11-2. Therefore, noise levels associated with the proposed new transformer would not be cumulatively considerable (Class II).

Corona discharge would not substantially increase ambient noise levels and would therefore not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to noise impacts. Moreover, maintenance activities would include infrequent inspection of the lines and would also not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to noise impacts. Therefore, operations and maintenance of the Proposed Project would not be cumulatively considerable. Cumulative impacts would be mitigated to less than significant (Class II).

## 6.4.12 Population and Housing

The geographic context for the cumulative impacts associated with population and housing issues are the cities and unincorporated communities of western Coachella Valley in Riverside County, which assumes full buildout of the Proposed Project, in combination with buildout of the projects listed in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*. Riverside County, including western Coachella Valley, is expected to undergo substantial growth over the next two decades. By 2030, the population of Riverside County is expected to nearly double to 3.3 million persons residing in approximately one million residential dwelling units. However, the Proposed Project is designed to increase reliability and accommodate existing and planned electrical load growth, rather than to induce growth. Therefore, the Proposed Project represents no incremental portion of a potential growth impact, and the Proposed Project would not have cumulatively considerable impacts in regards to population and housing (No Impact).

## 6.4.13 Public Services

The geographic scope of cumulative impacts related to public services is the service area of affected public services, generally limited to the cities of Palm Springs, Rancho Mirage, Cathedral City, Palm Desert, and Indian Wells, and unincorporated areas of Riverside County, including the Thousand Palms community. The Proposed Project would not result in significant effects on the ability of service providers to provide adequate police services, fire protection and emergency medical services, and public school facilities to the project area. The past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects described in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, include several large development projects planned in the vicinity of the Proposed Project alignment and sites that may impact public services. These projects include numerous new housing subdivisions. It is likely that this cumulative development would require expansion of existing, or development of new, public service infrastructure to support the planned population growth. If this growth were to occur prior to improvements in public service infrastructure, then there could be significant adverse effects on fire protection and emergency medical services, police protection, schools, and other public facilities. However, the Proposed Project's impacts to public services would generally be limited to the construction period from 2010 to mid-2011, after which the Proposed Project's demand on public services would be inconsequential. Additionally, Mitigation Measures 4.13-1 and 4.13-2 would ensure that the Proposed Project's temporary public service impacts during construction would be less than significant. Therefore, the effect of the Proposed Project on public services, in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects, would not be cumulatively considerable. The Proposed Project's contribution to cumulative impacts would be mitigated to less than significant (Class II).

## 6.4.14 Recreation

The geographic scope of cumulative impacts is the regional recreational facilities in the project area, generally located within Riverside County and the cities of Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, Indian Wells, and Palm Desert.

Implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in demand for recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the existing facilities would occur or be accelerated. Implementation of new projects as described in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, would include residential developments which may increase demand on existing recreational facilities and/or result in the need for new recreational facilities within the project vicinity. However, since the Proposed Project would not have an individual incremental impact on demand for recreational facilities once construction is complete, it would not contribute to cumulative demand associated with other reasonably foreseeable projects (No Impact).

There are a number of other reasonably foreseeable development projects within the vicinity of the Tri-Palm Golf Course; however, none of these projects would actually be constructed in the golf course and would therefore not impact operation of the course. Since there are no reasonably foreseeable projects that would impact the golf course simultaneously with construction of the Proposed Project, short-term impacts associated with the proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa subtransmission line would not be cumulatively considerable and cumulative impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

## 6.4.15 Transportation and Traffic

The geographic context for the cumulative impacts associated with transportation and traffic issues is primarily limited to the areas where transportation facilities (e.g., roads, railroads, etc) would be crossed during conductor stringing activities.

Proposed Project construction activities, as described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, could have a temporary construction-related impact on local traffic flow in the Proposed Project area as street and lane closures may be required. The geographic context for the cumulative impacts associated with transportation and traffic issues is primarily limited to the areas where transportation facilities (e.g., roads, railroads, etc.) would be crossed during conductor stringing activities. In conjunction with other construction projects identified in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, potential cumulative impacts could occur. For example, the City of Palm Desert has proposed construction of a new westbound loop on-ramp and to realign the existing westbound off-ramp from I-10 to Varner Road. If this project, or other projects identified in Section 3.6 of this EIR, were to be constructed at the same time that components of the Proposed Project would be constructed, a cumulative traffic impact could result along certain access routes to the Proposed Project alignments and sites. However, Mitigation Measure 4.15-1 would require SCE to prepare a Traffic Management and Control Plan, which would reduce the construction impacts of the Proposed Project, including effects on emergency access and any increase in hazards, to a less than significant level. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be cumulatively considerable and cumulative impacts would be mitigated to less than significant (Class II). Furthermore, the limited and dispersed nature of the

parking requirements of the Proposed Project would be unlikely to create a cumulatively significant use of local parking capacity when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects (Class III).

During operation, proposed maintenance activities would not increase above existing levels that are employed to maintain the existing subtransmission and transmission line ROWs and substations. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not be cumulatively considerable and there would be no cumulative long-term impacts (No Impact). There would also be no cumulative conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (No Impact).

### **6.4.16 Utilities and Services Systems**

Construction, operation, and maintenance activities that would be associated with the Proposed Project would result in no impacts that would affect the ability of Riverside County, or the cities of Palm Springs, Palm Desert, Rancho Mirage, Cathedral City, and Indian Wells, and other service providers to effectively deliver public water supply, sanitary sewer (wastewater), solid waste, and other utility services in the study area. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not have any contribution to cumulative impacts to those services (No Impact). The past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects described in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, include several development projects planned in the vicinity of the study area that may contact and/or disturb underground utility lines and/or facilities during construction activities. However, the Proposed Project's potential to adversely impact existing underground utilities would be substantially reduced by contacting Underground Service Alert, manually probing for existing buried utilities prior to any powered-equipment drilling or excavation, and implementing two APMs (PUSVC-01 and PUSVC-02). Furthermore, construction activities associated with the other cumulative projects in the area would be required to comply with Article 2 of California Government Code 4216 (i.e., contact Underground Service Alert and manually probe for existing buried utilities) to avoid impacting underground utilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact to existing underground utilities (Class III).