

## 2.12 Population and Housing

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>12. POPULATION AND HOUSING— Would the project:</b>				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Setting

The Proposed Project site is located entirely on private property that would be acquired from Green Diamond Lumber Company. The site is located in northwest Del Norte County approximately one-quarter-mile southeast of the community of Smith River, California. PacifiCorp’s Proposed Project includes construction of the new Morrison Creek Substation and removal of the existing Simonson Substation, which is located approximately 1,000 feet to the northwest of the proposed substation site.

### Population

The U.S. Census Bureau 2006 population estimate for Del Norte County is 28,893. The County’s population has increased by approximately 23.2 percent over a 16-year period (1990-2006) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). According to the California Department of Finance, Del Norte County population is expected to steadily increase through 2050 to 56,218 (California Department of Finance, 2007). Table 2.12-1 shows projected population trends from 2000 to 2050 for Del Norte County.

**TABLE 2.12-1  
DEL NORTE COUNTY POPULATION, 2000–2050**

Area	2000	2010	% Change 2000–2010	2020	% Change 2010–2020	2030	% Change 2020–2030	2040	% Change 2030–2040	2050	% Change 2040–2050
<b>Del Norte County</b>	27,507	30,983	12.6	36,077	16.4	42,420	17.6	49,029	15.6	56,218	14.7

SOURCES: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007 and California Department of Finance, 2007.

The largest concentrated population in Del Norte County is located in Crescent City, approximately 11 miles south of the study area, at an estimated 11,452 people in 2004 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). The community of Smith River's core population is south of U.S. Highway 101, north of West First Street, east of Westbrook Lane, and west of North Fred Haight Drive (Del Norte County, 2003). Areas south and southwest of the Proposed Project site (excluding the community of Smith River) is primarily agricultural lands, and areas to the north and northeast of the Proposed Project site is primarily forested foothills.

### **Housing**

According to the California Department of Finance, as of 2006, Del Norte County had approximately 10,954 total housing units with approximately 12 percent of those dwelling units vacant. Within the unincorporated areas of Del Norte County, there are an estimated 9,155 housing units and about 13 percent of the units are vacant (California Department of Finance, 2007).

### **Regulatory Context**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 requires a discussion of the ways in which a proposed project could directly or indirectly foster economic development or population growth, and how that growth would, in turn, affect the surrounding environment. The following regulatory context is provided to set forth the planning framework that is anticipated under the *Del Norte County General Plan*.

### **Del Norte County Plans and Policies**

According to the *Del Norte County General Plan*, the County's population could potentially double in the next 20 years. Based on this estimate, the General Plan provides a potential for 7,000 to 8,000 new dwelling units, with Del Norte County aiming to have "moderate growth." To further address concerns about population growth, the Land Use and Housing Elements of the General Plan provide numerous growth management goals, objectives, and policies. One of the land use goals (3.A) is to "clearly differentiate between areas within Del Norte County appropriate for higher intensity urban services and land uses (i.e., high density residential, high density commercial and industrial) from areas where rural or resource uses should be continued." The Land Use Element also contains the following growth management policy applicable to the Proposed Project:

**Policy 3.C.5** The County shall provide for an orderly outward expansion of new urban development so that it is contiguous with existing development and district boundaries, allows for the incremental expansion of infrastructure and public services, and minimizes impacts on the environment.

Furthermore, the General Plan specifies residential development standards in terms of a *range* of dwelling units per acre. In the past, the County's standards specified only the *maximum* number of units permitted per acre. The difference is that the updated standards also specify a *minimum*

density for residential designations. The new approach responds to the County's *Housing Element* (adopted in 1992), which includes a policy and a program calling for establishment of minimum residential densities to "limit underutilization of land and maximize development potential." The specification of minimum densities also allows for more certainty with respect to the nature of future development and the overall development pattern. This certainty is critical to effective infrastructure planning and financing in urban areas (e.g., sizing of service lines and treatment facilities) (Del Norte County, 2003).

## Population and Housing Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### a) **Population growth inducement, either directly or indirectly: *Less than significant.***

Proposed Project construction is expected to last approximately three months, beginning in July 2008 and concluding in October 2008. The greatest number of construction workers on site at one time would be ten, which would likely occur only a few days during overlap of tasks. Outside contractors would complete most of the proposed construction activities. The Proposed Project construction activities would be temporary, and therefore would not result in any direct growth-inducing impacts, would not result in any significant increase in local population or housing, and would not indirectly induce growth by creating new opportunities for local industry or commerce. After construction is complete, the Morrison Creek Substation would be an unmanned facility that would operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and would receive routine maintenance comparable to that of the existing Simonson Substation.

Construction of the Proposed Project is needed to ensure transmission system reliability to meet existing demands in the Del Norte County area. The Proposed Project is designed to improve infrastructure to increase reliability; it would not induce growth.

Growth in the study area is planned and regulated by applicable local planning policies and zoning ordinances. The availability of electrical capacity by itself does not 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 induce substantial population growth – directly or indirectly – in the study area, thus, impacts related to population growth would be less than significant.

### b) **Displacement of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere: *No impact.***

Construction of the Morrison Creek Substation would occur on a private property site that does not contain any housing. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in the displacement of any existing housing units.

c) **Displacement of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere: *No impact.***

The Proposed Project would result in a land use that would not directly increase population within the community and therefore, would not result in significant impacts to population levels or housing opportunities. The Morrison Creek Substation would be constructed on private property that does not contain housing or any other structures that are currently used by people; therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in the displacement of people.

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## **References – Population and Housing**

California Department of Finance, 2007. *Population Projections by Race/Ethnicity for California and Its Counties 2000–2050*, Sacramento, California, July 2007.

Del Norte County, 2003. *Del Norte County General Plan*, adopted January 28, 2003.

United States Census Bureau, 2007. *Del Norte County from the US Census Bureau*, <http://factfinder.census.gov> accessed October 10, 2007.