

**NextEra Energy Transmission, West LLC's Suncrest Dynamic Reactive Power Support Project**  
**Draft Environmental Impact Report Comment Table**  
**California State Clearinghouse No. 2016011004**

PAGE	DEIR LANGUAGE	NEXTERA ENERGY TRANSMISSION WEST'S COMMENT
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>		
Page ES-1	<p><b>Project Purpose and Objectives</b></p> <p>“The Proposed Project’s objectives are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide reactive support at or connected to the Suncrest Substation;</li> <li>• Improve and maintain the reliability of the transmission grid; and</li> <li>• Support achievement of the state’s RPS by facilitating delivery of a higher percentage of renewable energy generation from the Imperial Valley area to population centers to the west.”</li> </ul>	<p>The Project Purpose and Objectives in the DEIR differ significantly from those identified by NEET West in its Proponent’s Environmental Assessment. Specifically, the DEIR completely eliminates the majority of NEET West’s stated Project Objectives, including, most significantly, the Project Objectives comprising the underlying purpose of the Suncrest SVC Project (the “Proposed Project” or “SVC”). Please see NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for concerns related to the DEIR’s formulation of the Project Objectives.</p>
Page ES-1, Lines 18-26	<p><b>Project Purpose and Objectives</b></p> <p>“The Proposed Project was identified as a policy-driven need by the CAISO in its transmission plan for the State to meet its 50 percent Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). The retirement of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station and anticipated increases in renewable energy generation in the Imperial Valley area have created a deficit of reactive power in the transmission system in Southern California. Essentially, because renewable generation does not produce reactive power at the same level as traditional generating sources (e.g., fossil fuels), dynamic reactive power support is needed at the Suncrest Substation to support the voltage necessary to deliver power from the Imperial Valley to demand centers in the San Diego Basin.”</p>	<p>The Proposed Project was identified as needed during the California Independent System Operator Corp. (“CAISO”) 2013-14 Transmission Planning Process (“TPP”) planning cycle to <u>meet the 33% Renewable Portfolio Standard (“RPS”), not 50%.</u> Senate Bill 350, which requires a 50% RPS by 2030 became effective in October, 2015, after the CAISO’s 2013-14 TPP was completed. The CAISO has not yet made plans to meet the 50% goal. Therefore, references to the 50% RPS should be corrected to “33%”, here and throughout the DEIR.</p> <p>In addition, the CAISO 2013-2014 TPP identified the Proposed Project need as not only renewable integration and San Onofre retirement but also the impact of potential retirement of gas generation in the San Diego and LA Basin.</p> <p>The CAISO approved the Proposed Project as a policy-driven project that was needed primarily due to a combination of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The state’s goal, <u>to have renewable resources provide 33 percent of California’s retail electricity consumption by 2020</u>, has become the principal driver of substantial investment in new renewable generation capacity both inside and outside of California. <u>See CAISO 2013-2014 Transmission Plan at Executive Summary, page 1.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>The deliverability of future renewable generation from the Imperial Valley area has been significantly reduced primarily due to changes in flow patterns resulting from the retirement of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station further coupled with the impacts of potential retirement of gas-fired generation in the San Diego and LA Basin areas (largely to eliminate coastal water use in “once-through cooling” have created both opportunities for development of preferred resources as well as challenges in ensuring continued reliable service in these areas). See CAISO 2013-2014 Transmission Plan at Executive Summary, pages 1-2, 9.</u></li> </ul> <p>Accordingly, please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“The Proposed Project was identified as a policy-driven need by the CAISO in its transmission plan for the State to meet its <u>33%0</u> percent Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). The retirement of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, <u>other potential retirements of gas-fired generation in the San Diego and LA Basin areas</u>, and anticipated increases in renewable energy generation in the Imperial Valley area have created a deficit of reactive power in the transmission system in Southern California. Essentially, because renewable generation does not produce reactive power at the same level as</p>

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		traditional generating sources (e.g., fossil fuels), dynamic reactive power support is needed at the Suncrest Substation to support the voltage necessary to deliver power from the Imperial Valley to demand centers in the San Diego Basin.”
Page ES-2, Lines 24-25	<p><b>Project Location</b></p> <p>“The parcels comprising the Lightner Mitigation Site are currently owned by San Diego Gas &amp; Electric (SDG&amp;E), but are scheduled to be transferred from SDG&amp;E to the U.S. Forest Service for conservation in perpetuity.”</p>	<p>The entire Lightner Mitigation Site will not be transferred to the U.S. Forest Service (“USFS”). San Diego Gas &amp; Electric Company (“SDG&amp;E”) will retain ownership of the Suncrest Substation, Bell Bluff Truck Trail, and a portion of the road surrounding Bell Bluff Truck Trail.</p> <p>Therefore, for clarity, please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“The parcels comprising the Lightner Mitigation Site are currently owned by San Diego Gas &amp; Electric (SDG&amp;E), <u>Certain parcels owned by SDG&amp;E, but</u> are scheduled to be transferred from SDG&amp;E to the U.S. Forest Service for conservation in perpetuity. <u>SDG&amp;E will retain ownership of certain of the Lightner parcels, including the Suncrest Substation, Bell Bluff Truck Trail, and a certain width outside of the road bed.</u>”</p>
Page ES-4, Line 16	<p><b>Proposed Project</b></p> <p>“Electrical equipment at the SVC would include, but not be limited to, lightning shielding masts, circuit breakers, busbars, two single phase 230-kilovolt (kV) main power transformers, capacitor banks, air core reactors, surge arrestors, and air break switches.”</p>	<p>The Proposed Project includes two, three-phase 230 kV main power transformers, not two single-phase 230 kV transformers. To ensure an accurate description of the Proposed Project, please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“Electrical equipment at the SVC would include, but not be limited to, lightning shielding masts, circuit breakers, busbars, two, <u>three single</u> phase 230-kilovolt (kV) main power transformers, capacitor banks, air core reactors, surge arrestors, and air break switches.”</p>
Page ES-4, Line 28	<p><b>SVC Dynamic Reactive Device</b></p> <p>“A Mechanically Stabilized Earth retaining wall approximately 480 feet long and 15 feet tall at its highest point (an average height of 8 feet) along the east side of the facility”</p>	<p>A Mechanically Stabilized Earth (“MSE”) wall was not part of the Project Description contained within the PEA.</p> <p>To ensure an accurate description of the Proposed Project, please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“A <del>Mechanically Stabilized Earth</del> retaining wall approximately 480 feet long and approximately 15 feet tall at its highest point (an average height of 8 feet) along the east side of the facility”</p>
Page ES-4, Line 31	<p><b>SVC Dynamic Reactive Device</b></p> <p>“Chain link and barb wire security fencing approximately 7 feet high with secure gates accessible only by NEET West staff and emergency services personnel.”</p>	<p>To ensure an accurate description of the Proposed Project, please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“Chain link and <u>barbed</u> wire security fencing approximately <u>7.8</u> feet high with secure gates accessible only by NEET West staff and emergency services personnel.”</p>
Page ES-5 line 21	<p><b>Transmission Line</b></p> <p>“Up to five underground splice vaults would be installed along the transmission line alignment to allow for installation of the underground cables and for operation and maintenance of the transmission line.”</p>	<p>NEET West has continued to optimize its project design to minimize environmental impacts. To reflect NEET West’s current design, please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“Up to <u>two five</u> underground splice vaults would be installed along the transmission line alignment to allow for installation of the underground cables and for operation and maintenance of the transmission line.”</p>
Page ES-5, Line 36	<p><b>Project Construction</b></p> <p>“Overall, Project construction is anticipated to take 11 months (6.5 months for construction; 2.5 months for testing and commissioning, and 2 months for restoration and cleanup).”</p>	<p>The DEIR contains several areas discussing the duration of project scheduling. Please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“Overall, Project construction is anticipated to take 11 months (6.5 months for construction, 2.5 months for testing and commissioning, and 2 months for restoration and cleanup, <u>which will occur after project commercial operation</u>).”</p> <p>Please note that the construction schedule stated here is 11 months. In other chapters it is described also as 9 and 10.5 months.</p>

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Page ES-7, lines 27-28	<p><b>Areas of Known Controversy and Issues to be Resolved</b></p> <p>“Potential location of the SVC within the existing Suncrest Substation, which could avoid virtually all of the Proposed Project’s environmental impacts.”</p>	<p>NEET West disagrees that the Suncrest Substation Alternative is a feasible project alternative that would avoid virtually all of the Proposed Project’s environmental impacts. The DEIR fails to disclose the environmental impacts associated with the Suncrest Substation Alternative. Please see also NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for objections to the DEIR’s discussion of the Suncrest Substation Alternative and the lack of support for such alternative.</p>
Page ES-7, Lines 34-35	<p><b>Areas of Known Controversy and Issues to be Resolved</b></p> <p>“Possible impacts to Hermes copper butterfly and the possible presence of suitable habitat on the proposed SVC site.”</p>	<p>There is no evidence supporting identification of possible impacts to Hermes copper butterfly as an area of known controversy. Please see NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for NEET West’s objections to the DEIR’s discussion of the Hermes copper butterfly.</p> <p>Specifically, NEET West performed a habitat assessment in 2015 and no suitable habitat for the Hermes copper butterfly was found at the Proposed Project location due to the distance between California buckwheat and spiny redberry, which need to be within 15 feet of each other to constitute suitable habitat.</p> <p>The Sunrise Powerlink Project Documents also confirm such findings. An excerpt from the Sunrise Powerlink Site-Specific Restoration Plan (SRP) SRP AS-47 Southern Foothills; Link 3; Wilson (August 2012). Section 2.3 and 4.3 states:</p> <p><i>“No sensitive wildlife species are known to occur within the Wilson Construction Yard site. Hermes copper butterfly (Lycaena hermes), a species of local importance is known to occur within 500 feet of the Wilson Construction Yard (see Appendix A, Figure 2). However, habitat suitable for this species does not occur within the site boundaries.”</i></p> <p>Accordingly, please revise the DEIR language to delete lines 34-35 as an area of known controversy and issue to be resolved. Also refer to comment on Mitigation Measure BIO-9 regarding Hermes copper butterfly.</p>
Page ES-8, Line 9 to Page ES-10, Line 29	<p><b>Alternatives Considered</b></p>	<p>Please see NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for a discussion of NEET West’s objections to the DEIR’s discussion of alternatives to the Proposed Project.</p>
Page ES-9, Lines 13-20	<p><b>“Suncrest Substation Alternative</b></p> <p>Under the Suncrest Substation Alternative, the SVC would be installed within the existing Suncrest Substation and, therefore, no transmission line would be required. SDG&amp;E has indicated that there is room within the existing substation to construct the SVC without expanding the substation footprint. Under this alternative, NEET West would construct, own, and operate the SVC. The Suncrest Substation Alternative would produce and consume reactive power at the same level as the Proposed Project and would meet all of the project objectives.”</p>	<p>NEET West disagrees that the Suncrest Substation Alternative is a feasible project alternative.</p> <p>There is also no evidence in the record for the proposition that NEET West could construct, own, and operate the SVC within SDG&amp;E’s Suncrest Substation. See PEA Section 5.2.6.4; see also SDG&amp;E Comment Letter, DEIR, Appendix B at page 3.</p> <p>Additionally, NEET West disagrees that “no transmission line” would be required for the Suncrest Substation Alternative, as NEET West understands that a 230 kV transmission line would be required to connect the SVC to the 230 kV bus at the Suncrest Substation even under the Suncrest Substation Alternative.</p> <p>Please see NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for objections to the DEIR’s discussion of the Suncrest Substation Alternative and the lack of support for such alternative.</p>
Page ES-9, lines 15-18	<p><b>Suncrest Substation Alternative</b></p> <p>“SDG&amp;E has indicated that there is room within the existing substation to construct the SVC without expanding the substation footprint. Under this alternative, NEET West would construct, own, and operate the SVC.”</p>	<p>There is no evidence in the record demonstrating that NEET West could construct, own, and operate the SVC within SDG&amp;E’s Suncrest Substation. Please see NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for objections to the DEIR’s discussion of the Suncrest Substation Alternative. See also SDG&amp;E Comment Letter, DEIR, Appendix B at page 3.</p>
Page ES-10, Lines 4-5	<p><b>Environmentally Superior Alternative</b></p> <p>“Likewise, the Suncrest Substation Alternative would have no substantial impact on aesthetics or hydrology and water quality, and would avoid the need for a transmission line.”</p>	<p>NEET West disagrees with the DEIR’s characterization of the Suncrest Substation Alternative as avoiding the need for a transmission line. Please see NEET West’s comment above regarding Page ES-9, Lines 13-20. Please see also NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for a general discussion of concerns related to the DEIR’s discussion of the Suncrest Substation Alternative.</p>

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<b>CHAPTER 2, PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b>		
Page 2-11, Line 18	<p><b>Electrical Equipment and Facilities</b></p> <p>“Two single phase 230-kV main power transformers (one would be a spare), outdoor heating, venting and air conditioning equipment and thyristor/convertor cooling equipment”</p>	<p>Please see comment above regarding Page ES-4, Line 16. The Proposed Project includes two, three-phase 230 kV main power transformers, not two, single-phase 230 kV transformers.</p> <p>Please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“Two <del>three single</del> phase 230-kV main power transformers (one would be a spare), outdoor heating, venting and air conditioning equipment and thyristor/converter cooling equipment”</p>
Page 2-15, Lines 8 and 35-37	<p><b>Associated Site Improvements</b></p> <p>The third bullet states, “A Mechanically Stabilized Earth retaining wall approximately 480 feet long and 15 8 feet tall at its highest point (an average height of 8 feet) along the east side of the 9 facility”</p> <p>Then Lines 35-37 at the bottom of the page then state, “The retaining wall would be supported by a concrete foundation constructed of concrete blocks, installed 1-2 feet below grade.</p>	<p>Please see comment above on Page ES-4, Line 28 regarding the proposed retaining wall.</p>
Page 2-15, Line 11	<p><b>Associated Site Improvements</b></p> <p>“Chain link and barb wire security fencing approximately 7 feet high with secure gates accessible only by NEET West staff and emergency services personnel”</p>	<p>Please see the comment above regarding Page ES-4, Line 31.</p>
Page 2-17, Line 26	<p><b>Riser Pole and Above-Ground Transmission Line Segment</b></p> <p>“The new riser and intermediate poles would facilitate entry into the existing substation via an approximately 300-foot-long overhead span of 1272 kcmil' (45/7) aluminum steel reinforced, non-specular, ‘Bittern’ conductors.”</p>	<p>Please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“aluminum <u>conductor</u> steel reinforced (<u>ACSR</u>), non-specular, ‘Bittern’ conductors.”</p>
Page 2-17, Line 32	<p><b>Riser Pole and Above-Ground Transmission Line Segment</b></p> <p>“Additionally, SDG&amp;E would need to add electrical infrastructure to facilitate interconnection to SDG&amp;E equipment at the Suncrest Substation.”</p>	<p>Please remove the reference to “SDG&amp;E equipment at”. Change to:</p> <p>“Additionally, SDG&amp;E would need to add electrical infrastructure to facilitate interconnection to <del>SDG&amp;E equipment at</del> the Suncrest Substation.”</p>
Page 2-18, Line 18	<p><b>Site Preparation, Grading, and Earthwork</b></p> <p>“Construction of the SVC would require clearing of approximately 8.56 acres of California buckwheat scrub, non-native grassland, and ruderal lands.”</p>	<p>Please revise text to reflect current total acreage of impacts of the SVC:</p> <p>“Construction of the SVC would require clearing of approximately <del>8.56</del> <u>8.59</u> acres of California buckwheat scrub, non-native grassland, and ruderal lands.”</p>
Page 2-18, Line 23	<p><b>Site Preparation, Grading, and Earthwork</b></p> <p>“Following initial clearing, topsoil would be salvaged to a depth of approximately 6 inches (or less if <u>subsoil is not present to that depth</u>) in all areas to be restored and would be stored on-site or at a nearby approved work area for use in site restoration, as appropriate.”</p>	<p>The word “subsoil” should be replaced with “topsoil”. If topsoil is shallower than 6 inches, NEET West would only salvage to the depth of the topsoil layer whatever that depth actually is on-site.</p> <p>Please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“Following initial clearing, topsoil would be salvaged to a depth of approximately 6 inches (or less if <u>topsoil</u> <del>subsoil</del> is not present to that depth).”</p>

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Page 2-19, Table 2-1: SVC Grading Summary and Line 17	<p><b>Site Preparation, Grading, and Earthwork</b></p> <p>“Maximum depth of excavation from ground surface 15 feet”</p>	Please revise table and text to state “approximately <del>±</del> 18 feet.” These are estimates based on preliminary design.
Page 2-23, Line 32	<p><b>Construction Workforce and Equipment</b></p> <p>“The workers for the more common development tasks of grading and building foundations for the SVC and riser pole structure are likely to be hired from San Diego County.”</p>	<p>Please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“The workers for the more common development tasks of grading and building foundations for the SVC and <del>riser pole</del> <u>transmission</u> structures are likely to be hired from San Diego County.”</p>
Page 2-24, Lines 43-45	<p><b>Water Use</b></p> <p>“Currently, NEET West is negotiating a water services agreement with the Padre Dam Municipal Water District (PDMWD) for use of recycled water from their water recycling facility, located approximately 19 miles from the Project site. NEET West is also coordinating with the owner of the property on which the SVC would be built for use of the property owner’s storage ponds.”</p>	<p>During the preparation of the DEIR by the CPUC, NEET West has entered into a water supply agreement to obtain water from the Wilson Pond. The agreement with Padre Dam Municipal Water District is intended to serve as a back-up water source.</p> <p>Therefore, please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“NEET West has rights to obtain water from the Wilson ponds, located on the Wilson property where the SVC is to be built. As a back-up water source, NEET West is also negotiating a water services agreement with the Padre Dam Municipal Water District (PDMWD) for use of recycled water from their water recycling facility, located approximately 19 miles from the Project site. <del>NEET West is also coordinating with the owner of the property on which the SVC would be built for use of the property owner’s storage ponds.”</del></p>
Page 2-25, Lines 25-26	<p><b>2.4.3.1 Operation</b></p> <p>“NEET West anticipates remotely operating the Proposed Project from its affiliate Lone Star Transmission, LLC’s control center in Austin, Texas.”</p>	<p>Please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“NEET West anticipates remotely operating the Proposed Project from <del>its</del> a <u>NextEra</u> affiliate’s <del>Lone Star Transmission, LLC’s</del> control center <del>in Austin, Texas.</del>”</p>
Page 2-27, Table 2-3	<p><b>2.6 Applicant Proposed Measures</b></p> <p>“The Applicant, NEET West, would implement several measures to reduce the potential impacts of Project construction. Applicant proposed measures (APMs) that would be implemented for the Proposed Project are listed in Table 2-3.”</p>	<p>Please see NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for concerns related to the DEIR’s characterization of the Applicant Proposed Measures (“APM”).</p> <p>With respect to this specific reference, please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“The Applicant, NEET West, <u>included project design features and Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) in its September August 31, 2015 PEA. NEET West proposed to implement these measures during the design, construction, and operation of the Proposed Project to avoid or minimize would implement several measures to reduce the potential environmental impacts of Project construction. Applicant proposed measures (APMs) are considered part of the Proposed Project in the evaluation of environmental impacts. The APMs are presented that would be implemented for the Proposed Project are listed</u> in Table 2-3.”</p>
<b>CHAPTER 4, AESTHETICS</b>		
Page 4-12, Lines 7-8	<p><b>Impact AES-1 (Adverse Impacts on Scenic Vistas)</b></p> <p>“The Proposed Project would be marginally visible (e.g. the tops of the lightning masts within the SVC) from I-8 for less than 0.25-mile (KOP 10).”</p>	<p>There is no evidence in support of this conclusion. Based on NEET West’s technical analysis set forth in the PEA and accompanying documents, it would be nearly impossible that the slender lightning masts would be visible from I-8 to a motorist passing at 75 mph. The topography shields the SVC from I-8. Please see NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for NEET West’s objections regarding Impact AES-1.</p> <p>Please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“The Proposed Project would <u>not</u> be marginally visible (e.g. the tops of the lightning masts within the SVC) from I-8 <u>at KOP 10 for less than 0.25-mile (KOP 10).</u>”</p>

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Page 4-12, Line 17	<p><b>Impact AES-2 (Adverse Effects on the Visual Character or Quality of the Site...)</b></p> <p>“During the Proposed Project’s construction period (approximately 9 months), construction activities, including vegetation removal and the staging of construction materials, equipment, and vehicles would be moderately visible along Bell Bluff Truck Trail (KOPs 3, 6, 7, and 8) to authorized personnel.”</p>	<p>The text indicates that the construction period is approximately 9 months. This construction length is inconsistent with other chapters/sections. However, the Proposed Project’s construction period as reflected in the PEA is estimated to last a total of 11 months, which includes 2 months of testing and commissioning or restoration and cleanup that will occur after project commercial operation. See comment above regarding Page ES-5, Line 36 regarding NEET West’s proposed construction schedule.</p> <p>To accurately reflect the full construction period, please revise the DEIR language to read:</p> <p>“During the Proposed Project’s construction period (approximately <del>9</del><u>11</u> months), construction activities, including vegetation removal and the staging of construction materials, equipment, and vehicles would be moderately visible along Bell Bluff Truck Trail (KOPs 3, 6, 7, and 8) to authorized personnel.”</p>
<b>CHAPTER 5, AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY</b>		
Page 5-4, Line 24	<p><b>5.4.2 Criteria for Determining Significance</b></p> <p>“Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines and professional expertise, it was determined that the Proposed Project would result in a significant impact on aesthetics if it would:”</p>	<p>There is an incorrect reference to “aesthetics” on Line 24, which instead should refer to “agriculture and forestry resources”. Please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“Based on Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines and professional expertise, it was determined that the Proposed Project would result in a significant impact on <u>agriculture and forestry resources</u> <del>aesthetics</del> if it would:”</p>
Page 5-5, Lines 7-8	<p><b>Impact AGR-2: Conflict with Existing Zoning for Agricultural Use or Williamson Act Contract (Less than Significant)</b></p> <p>“The Proposed Project would appear to conflict with the CNF Land Management Plan Strategy LG-1 (shown in Section 5.2 above), which is intended to maintain livestock grazing areas, because it would develop an area that has been used for animal grazing; however, although portions of the Project site may have been used for livestock grazing in the past, currently there does not appear to be any grazing activity. Furthermore, the construction, operation, and maintenance of the Proposed Project would not discourage future agricultural uses within the area, as grazing and farming could occur around the SVC without it conflicting with agricultural operations.”</p>	<p>Impact AGR-2 should be characterized as “No Impact” because CNF Land Management Plan strategies do not apply to private land. Please revise this impact to state “No Impact” and the text should read:</p> <p><b>“Impact AGR-2: Conflict with Existing Zoning for Agricultural Use or Williamson Act Contract (No Impact)</b></p> <p>The Proposed Project would not conflict with the CNF Land Management Plan Strategy LG-1 (shown in Section 5.2 above), which is intended to maintain livestock grazing areas, because it such provisions do not apply to private lands.”</p>
<b>CHAPTER 6, AIR QUALITY</b>		
Page 6-15, Lines 13-16	<p><b>Impact AQ-3 (Create Emissions During Construction that Exceed County of San Diego Significance Thresholds)</b></p> <p>“There are a few discovered issues that may overestimate emissions, such as a likely overestimation of use for off-road trucks, and a few discovered issues that could underestimate emissions, such as not assuming any unpaved road travel.”</p>	<p>NEET West revised the CalEEMod air model inputs to include the use of an unpaved access road leading to the intermediate pole along the overhead segment of the project. This road is an existing, gravel SDG&amp;E access road that exists outside the fence of the Suncrest Substation. NEET West included a 30-foot-wide by 150-foot-long portion of this road in the model inputs and assumed it would be used during the 12-week construction period of the overhead segment and during operations and maintenance. The revised CalEEMod inputs and outputs have been summarized in a memorandum attached to these comments (Attachment B). Results indicate that even with the addition of this unpaved road, San Diego County emissions thresholds for all pollutants considered would not be exceeded. As a result, the “margin of safety” described in Mitigation Measure AQ-1 below is unnecessary and should be removed from this document. Additionally, NEET West anticipated that a large portion of the construction equipment used for the project would already have Tier 3 or better compliant engines as Tier 3 engines have been required for new equipment/engines since 2006 to 2008. Please see NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for NEET West’s objections related to Mitigation Measure AQ-1</p>
Page 6-16, Lines 9-18 Page 6-17,	<p><b>Mitigation Measure AQ-1 (Off-Road Equipment Control)</b></p> <p>“While the uncontrolled NOx emissions were determined to be <u>marginally below</u> the daily emissions significance threshold, changes in the project’s work task schedule, equipment size, or</p>	<p>Please refer to above comment on Impact AQ-3 and Mitigation Measure AQ-1 (Page 6-15, Lines 13-16). Please see also NEET West’s accompanying cover letter.</p>

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Lines 1-8	<p>equipment engine tier level assumption could cause emissions to exceed this threshold. Therefore, in order to ensure the daily NOx emissions would be below the County of San Diego emissions significance threshold and have a margin of safety, which would allow for additional task overlap and construction schedule compression, it is considered prudent to increase the off-road equipment mitigation to require USEPA/CARB Tier 3 or better compliant engines. Tier 3 engines have been required for new equipment/engines since 2006 to 2008, so this additional level of mitigation is not a burdensome requirement. Mitigation Measure AQ-1 (Off-Road Equipment Control) is proposed to address this mitigation recommendation.”</p> <p>“NEET West or their contractor(s) shall implement the following measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All off-road equipment engines that are 50 horsepower or greater shall meet or exceed USEPA/ CARB Tier 3 emissions standards.</li> <li>▪ Exceptions to the Tier 3 requirement shall be allowed for specialty equipment that will be used for no more than 5 days; provided that a due diligence search, which includes at least three (3) appropriate equipment rental firms could not procure the necessary equipment type with a Tier 3 compliant or better engine.”</li> </ul>	<p>Please revise DEIR text to read:</p> <p><del>“While the uncontrolled NOx emissions were determined to be marginally below the daily emissions significance threshold, changes in the project’s work task schedule, equipment size, or equipment engine tier level assumption could cause emissions to exceed this threshold. In addition, a large portion of the construction equipment used for the project would have Tier 3 or better compliant engines as Tier 3 engines have been required for new equipment/engines since 2006 to 2008. Therefore, in order to ensure the daily NOx emissions would be below the County of San Diego emissions significance threshold and impacts will be less than significant. No mitigation is required, have a margin of safety, which would allow for additional task overlap and construction schedule compression, it is considered prudent to increase the off road equipment mitigation to require USEPA/CARB Tier 3 or better compliant engines. Tier 3 engines have been required for new equipment/engines since 2006 to 2008, so this additional level of mitigation is not a burdensome requirement. Mitigation Measure AQ-1 (Off Road Equipment Control) is proposed to address this mitigation recommendation”</del></p> <p><del>“NEET West or their contractor(s) shall implement the following measure:</del></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>▪ All off road equipment engines that are 50 horsepower or greater shall meet or exceed USEPA/ CARB Tier 3 emissions standards.</del></li> <li>▪ <u>Exceptions to the Tier 3 requirement shall be allowed for specialty equipment that will be used for no more than 5 days; provided that a due diligence search, which includes at least three (3) appropriate equipment rental firms could not procure the necessary equipment type with a Tier 3 compliant or better engine.”</u></li> </ul>
<b>CHAPTER 7, BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b>		
Pages 7-7 and 7-37	<b>Figures 7-1 and 7-7</b>	Please update Figures 7-1: Vegetation Types and 7-7: Likely Golden Eagle Nesting Area to include the existing Suncrest Substation with cross-hatching, consistent with the other aerial figures in the DEIR.
Page 7-14, Lines 20-21	<b>Special-Status Species</b> “Plants considered by the California Native Plant Society [CNPS] to be “rare, threatened, or endangered in California” (CNPS Rare Plant Ranks 1, 2, 3 and 4)”	<p>The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (“CDFW”) administers the Native Plant Protection Act and generally regards as rare many plant species included on California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) 1A, 1B, 2A, and 2B of the California Native Plant Society (“CNPS”) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California. In addition, sometimes CRPR 3 and 4 plants are considered if the population has local significance in the area and is impacted by the project.</p> <p>As a result, please revise the DEIR text to read:</p> <p>“Plants considered by the California Native Plant Society [CNPS] to be “rare, threatened, or endangered in California” (CNPS Rare Plant Ranks 1, 2, <u>and sometimes</u> 3 and 4)”</p>
Page 7-26, Table 7-2	<b>Table 7-2 Mammals</b> Table 7-2 lists the Townsend’s bid-eared bat (State Candidate Species and Species of Special Concern) as “Possible. The Proposed Project contains suitable habitat for this species. This species is not expected to roost in the Proposed Project.”	<p>On August 25, 2016, CDFW determined that Townsend’s big-eared bat (<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>) is not warranted for listing pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act (“CESA”). On October 20, 2016, the California Fish and Game Commission adopted the finding, and the species is therefore no longer is afforded the protections of a CESA candidate or listed species.</p> <p>(see documentation here: <a href="http://www.fgc.ca.gov/CESA/Townsend's_Big-eared_Bat/tbeb_findings_listing_not_warranted.pdf">http://www.fgc.ca.gov/CESA/Townsend's_Big-eared_Bat/tbeb_findings_listing_not_warranted.pdf</a>)</p>
Page 7-44, Line 38 and Page 7-45, Lines 1-5	<b>Mitigation Measure BIO-9 (Mitigate for Impacts to Hermes Copper Butterfly)</b> NEET West or their contractor(s) shall implement the following measures:	NEET West objects to the text of Mitigation Measure BIO-9 as proposed. There is no evidence of suitable habitat for the species on site. Accordingly, there is no basis, absent further information to the contrary, for the DEIR to identify a potentially significant impact to the species and to require compensatory mitigation. The only suitable habitat for Hermes

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	<p>If areas mapped as Hermes copper butterfly habitat are adversely affected by the Proposed Project, NEET West shall mitigate permanent impacts at a 1:1 ratio for unoccupied habitat and 3:1 ratio for occupied habitat. Habitat should be considered occupied if it is within 150 meters of a Hermes copper sighting (County of San Diego 2010).</p>	<p>copper butterfly is located outside of the proposed SVC footprint. Please see NEET West's accompanying cover letter for NEET West's objections to the DEIR's discussion of the Hermes copper butterfly.</p> <p>NEET West notes that in the Sunrise Powerlink Documents there is an excerpt from the Restoration Plan for Sensitive Vegetation in Temporary Impact Areas (March 2011) applicable to mitigation for impacts to Hermes copper butterfly habitat. Section 2.3, page 7 and Section 4.1.2.3, page 37 states, "<i>Where habitat for Hermes copper occurred within chaparral, spiny redberry will be included in the seed mix. Hermes copper is a species of local importance but is not a species for which mitigation is required for the Project's impacts.</i>"</p> <p>The only suitable habitat for Hermes copper butterfly was found outside the proposed SVC footprint within the 150 meter survey buffer within chaparral habitat. This measure is extremely unusual in that it requires the applicant to provide compensatory mitigation for impacts to habitat, regardless of whether the species is present or not.</p> <p>As a result, NEET West recommends that Mitigation Measure BIO-9 requiring compensatory mitigation for Hermes copper butterfly be removed from the DEIR and that no potentially significant impact to Hermes copper butterfly be identified.</p>
<p>Page 7-46, Lines 2-8</p>	<p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-10 (Educational Training)</b></p> <p>NEET West or their contractor(s) shall ensure that before conducting construction activities all Proposed Project personnel shall participate in an educational training session conducted by a qualified biologist. All on-site personnel shall be informed about relevant special-status species and their habitat, conservation goals, identification, and procedures to follow in the event of a possible sighting. Personnel who miss the first training session or are hired later in the season must participate in a make-up session before conducting Project activities. A record of the personnel that attended the training shall be kept by the qualified biologist.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-10 states that training shall be conducted by a qualified biologist. During construction the need for training may arise when a qualified biologist is not at the project site and an environmental inspector provides the training.</p> <p>Therefore, please revise Mitigation Measure BIO-10 to read:</p> <p>NEET West or their contractor(s) shall ensure that before conducting construction activities all Proposed Project personnel shall participate in an educational training session <del>conducted</del> <u>prepared</u> by a qualified biologist. All on-site personnel shall be informed about relevant special-status species and their habitat, conservation goals, identification, and procedures to follow in the event of a possible sighting. Personnel who miss the first training session or are hired later in the season must participate in a make-up session before conducting Project activities. A record of the personnel that attended the training shall be <u>retained onsite</u> <del>kept by the qualified biologist</del>.</p>
<p>Page 7-6 and 7-48</p>	<p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-18 (Restoration Plan for Englemann Oak – Coast Live Oak/Poison Oak/Grass Association Habitat)</b></p> <p>"NEET West or their contractor(s) shall develop and implement a Habitat Restoration Plan to mitigate any temporary and permanent impact on Englemann Oak – Coast Live Oak/Poison Oak/Grass Association habitat. For any temporary impact, all disturbed soils and new fill in this habitat shall be revegetated with site-appropriate native species. For any permanent impact, Englemann Oak – Coast Live Oak/Poison Oak/Grass Association habitat shall be mitigated at a ratio of 1:1:1 (replacement to impact). Englemann Oak – Coast Live Oak/Poison Oak/Grass Association restoration or compensation may be completed at the Project site, in the vicinity, or at a conservation bank with a service area that covers the Project site. Revegetated or restored areas shall be maintained and monitored to ensure a minimum of 65 percent survival of woody plantings after 5 years."</p>	<p>Portions of the SVC site may have historically been mapped as Englemann oak woodland. However, this woodland area has been repeatedly disturbed, and as of the date of the Notice of Preparation (which serves as the baseline for CEQA analysis), the understory component of the community resembles that of a California buckwheat association (consistent with what is present on the rest of the proposed SVC site). Accordingly, there is no potential impact to Englemann oak habitat as indicated in the DEIR.</p> <p>Additionally, the DEIR section 7.3.2 explains that this Englemann oak vegetation community has been repeatedly disturbed, "This habitat is considered a sensitive natural community by CDFW (California Department of Fish and Game [CDFG] 2010). In the vicinity of the Static VAR compensator (SVC) facility, this community has been repeatedly disturbed. In the disturbed areas, the understory component of this community is not fully developed and is more similar to the Eriogonum fasciculatum Association, described below."</p> <p>For the Sunrise Powerlink project compensatory mitigation was not required for disturbed habitats as stated in the FEIR for that project on page E.4.2-5 which reads, "Impacts to nonnative vegetation, developed areas, and disturbed habitat would be adverse but less than significant (Class III), and no mitigation is required.</p> <p>Accordingly, please remove Mitigation Measure BIO-18 from the DEIR, and revise the DEIR such that no potentially significant impact to Englemann Oak – Coast Live Oak/Poison Oak/Grass Association Habitat is identified.</p>
<p>Page 7-34, Lines 15-17 and 39-41</p>	<p>Invertebrates, <b>Hermes Copper Butterfly</b></p>	<p>Please refer to comment on Mitigation Measure BIO-9 (Page 7-44, Line 38 and Page 7-45, Lines 1-5) regarding Hermes copper butterfly.</p>



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	<p>“Both of these species are present on the Proposed Project site (NEET West 2015a), though not in close enough proximity to each other to be considered suitable habitat for Hermes copper butterfly, as described further below.”</p> <p>“These surveys did not identify any suitable habitat within the Proposed Project site, but did identify suitable habitat within 150 meters (500 feet) of the Proposed Project site (NEET West 2015a).”</p>	
Page 7-41, Lines 33-38	<p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-2 (Perform Focused Surveys for Special-Status Plants)</b></p> <p>“NEET West or their contractor(s) shall implement the following measures:</p> <p>Within 1 year before commencement of ground-disturbing activities, a qualified botanist shall perform surveys for special-status plant species with the potential to occur at the site. Floristic surveys will be performed according to the <i>Protocols for 35 Surveying and Evaluating Impacts to Special Status Native Plant Populations and Natural Communities</i> (CDFG 2009 or current version). Floristic surveys will be performed during the appropriate bloom period(s) for each species. If special-status plants are detected within the construction zone or within a 100-foot radius of the construction zone, Mitigation Measure BIO-3 shall be implemented.”</p>	NEET West performed focused plant surveys during the appropriate blooming period for the species with potential for occurrence within the project area. As such, supplemental focused plant survey is unnecessary. The locations of special-status plant populations will be observed and documented during the preconstruction surveys that will be conducted prior to construction as required by Mitigation Measure BIO-13(c). Without a rationale for this measure, there is no basis to require additional focused plant surveys. Therefore, Mitigation Measure BIO-2 is unnecessary and should be removed from the document.
Page 7-42, Lines 13-33	<p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-4 (Compensate for Impacts to Special-Status Plant Species)</b></p> <p>“If avoidance of special-status plants is not feasible, NEET West shall implement measures to compensate for impacts on special-status plants. Compensation may be provided by purchasing credits at an approved mitigation bank (provided at a minimum 1:1 ratio [mitigation to impact]), or through transplanting perennial species, collecting and dispersing seed of annual species, and other conservation strategies that shall restore and protect the viability of the local population. Because of the differences in plant growth forms and life histories, conservation measures would be developed on a species-specific basis based on input from CDFW. If compensation measures are implemented, monitoring plant populations shall be conducted annually for 5 years to assess the mitigation’s effectiveness. Monitoring shall assess vegetative density, population size, natural recruitment, and plant health and vigor. Monitoring results may trigger management actions such as collection and sowing of additional seed, tillage/disturbance within existing populations to induce establishment, installation of container plants, and control of other competing vegetation to ensure successful plant establishment and survival. The determination of success will be based on whether there has been a substantial reduction (&gt; 20 percent) in the size or abundance of the population compared to baseline conditions. The site shall be evaluated at the end of the 5-year monitoring period to determine whether the mitigation has met the success criteria.”</p>	<p>Please refer to above comment on Page 7-14, Lines 20-21 regarding Special Status Plants. Additionally, compensatory mitigation was not required for special-status plants with a CNPS Rank 3 or 4 on the Sunrise Powerlink Project. Given the overlap in the project footprints, comparable nature and much smaller impact area of the Proposed Project, mitigation requirements should be comparable. Specifically, Mitigation Measure B-5 for Sunrise Powerlink stated, “Impacts to moderately sensitive plant species (i.e., BLM Sensitive, USDA Forest Service Sensitive, CNPS List 1 and 2 species) shall first be avoided where feasible, and, where not feasible, impacts shall be compensated through reseeding (with locally collected seed stock) or relocation to temporarily disturbed areas (reseeding and relocation of plants in ABDSP shall be determined in consultation with, and approval of, State Parks).” There was no mention of CNPS Ranks 3 or 4 receiving mitigation. Please also refer to NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for a discussion of NEET West’s concern with Mitigation Measure BIO-4.</p> <p>Therefore, please revise Mitigation Measure BIO-4 be revised to read:</p> <p>“If avoidance of special-status plants or <u>moderately sensitive (CNPS Ranks 1 and 2)</u> is not feasible, NEET West shall implement measures to compensate for impacts on special-status plants. Compensation may be provided by purchasing credits at an approved mitigation bank (provided at a minimum 1:1 ratio [mitigation to impact]), or through transplanting perennial species, collecting and dispersing seed of annual species, and other conservation strategies that shall restore and protect the viability of the local population. Because of the differences in plant growth forms and life histories, conservation measures would be developed on a species-specific basis based on input from CDFW. If compensation measures are implemented, monitoring plant populations shall be conducted annually for 5 years to assess the mitigation’s effectiveness. Monitoring shall assess vegetative density, population size, natural recruitment, and plant health and vigor. Monitoring results may trigger management actions such as collection and sowing of additional seed, tillage/disturbance within existing populations to induce establishment, installation of container plants, and control of other competing vegetation to ensure successful plant establishment and survival. The determination of success will be based on whether there has been a substantial reduction (&gt; 20 percent) in the size or abundance of the population compared to baseline conditions. The site shall be evaluated at the end of the 5-year monitoring period, <u>or sooner if conditions allow</u>, to determine whether the mitigation has met the success criteria.”</p>

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Page 7-43, Lines 14-17 and 20-34	<p><b>Mitigation Measures BIO-5 (Avoid Impacts on Nesting Birds) and BIO-6 (Implement Preconstruction Surveys for Birds Protected Under MBTA)</b></p> <p>“Whenever possible, NEET West or their contractor(s) shall avoid impacts on native nesting birds by not initiating Proposed Project activities that involve clearing vegetation, generating mechanical noise, or ground disturbance during the typical breeding season from February 1 to August 31.”</p>	<p>Due to the phasing of construction, it is infeasible to comply with this measure and initiate all construction activities outside the nesting bird breeding season. As a result, NEET West requests that Mitigation Measure BIO-5 be removed from the DEIR. Additionally, BIO-5 is unnecessary; any impacts to nesting birds will be less than significant through compliance with Mitigation Measure BIO-6.</p>
Page 7-43, Line 24	<p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-6 (Implement Preconstruction Surveys for Birds Protected Under MBTA)</b></p> <p>“If construction is scheduled to commence during the non-nesting season (September 1 to January 31), no preconstruction surveys for nesting birds are required. If construction begins between February 1 and August 31, NEET West or their contractor(s) shall ensure that surveys for nesting birds are conducted by a qualified biologist within a 500-foot radius of the construction area. The survey shall be conducted no more than 14 days prior to construction. If the biologist determines that the area surveyed does not contain any active nests, then construction activities may commence without any further mitigation. If active nests are found, CDFW and USFWS will be notified and no-work buffers around nests shall be established that are sufficient to ensure that breeding is not likely to be disrupted or adversely affected by construction. Buffers for non-special-status birds protected under the MBTA shall be 250 feet around the nest. Special status birds are not anticipate to nest within 500 feet of the Proposed Project, but if active special status bird nest are detected, no-work buffer shall be 500 feet around the nest. Buffers will be maintained until the young have fledged or the nests become inactive.”</p>	<p>There is no provision in Mitigation Measure BIO-6 allowing the qualified biologist to adjust no-work buffers as NEET West had proposed in APM BIO-5 in the PEA. In certain circumstances where there is visual screening from the nest, intervening topography, active and existing roadways between the nest and construction areas, or habituation to construction as determined by a qualified biologist, the applicant should be afforded the opportunity to coordinate with CDFW and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (“USFWS”) to obtain a buffer reduction. Similarly, in some circumstances it may be necessary to perform certain types of work within the standard buffer. In these cases, qualified biologists consider all relevant site-specific conditions, including the species’ tolerance for disturbance, work activity type, noise levels, and distance to nest to determine if reducing the standard buffer is appropriate. Buffers should not apply to construction related traffic using existing roads that are not limited to project-specific use (i.e., county roads, highways, farm and/or neighborhood roads, etc.).</p> <p>Additionally Mitigation Measure BIO-6 includes only one no-work buffer of 250 feet for non-special-status birds. Typically the buffers are based on whether the birds are passerine species or raptors. NEET West accepts the 250 foot buffer for common raptors; however, a 250-foot buffer for passerines is atypical. On most projects the no-work buffer for common passerine species protected by MBTA is 100 feet.</p> <p>As a result, please revise Mitigation Measure BIO-6 to read:</p> <p>“If construction is scheduled to commence during the non-nesting season (September 1 to January 31), no preconstruction surveys for nesting birds are required. If construction begins between February 1 and August 31, NEET West or their contractor(s) shall ensure that surveys for nesting birds are conducted by a qualified biologist within a 500-foot radius of the construction area. The survey shall be conducted no more than 14 days prior to construction. If the biologist determines that the area surveyed does not contain any active nests, then construction activities may commence without any further mitigation. If active nests are found, CDFW and USFWS will be notified and no-work buffers around nests shall be established that are sufficient to ensure that breeding is not likely to be disrupted or adversely affected by construction. Buffers for non-special-status birds protected under the MBTA shall be 250 feet around the nest <u>for raptors and 100 feet for passerine species</u>. Special status birds are not anticipate to nest within 500 feet of the Proposed Project, but if active special status bird nest are detected, no-work buffer shall be 500 feet around the nest. Buffers will be maintained until the young have fledged or the nests become inactive. <u>Encroachment into the buffer may occur at the discretion of a qualified biologist in certain circumstances such as visual screening from the nest, intervening topography, existing roadways between the nest and construction areas, habituation to construction, or similar. If bird nesting is initiated during active construction, the birds will be assumed acclimated to the disturbance and no buffer will be applied; however, direct impacts to active nests will be avoided. Buffers will not apply to construction related traffic using existing roads that are not limited to project-specific use (i.e., county roads, highways, farm and/or neighborhood roads, etc.).</u>”</p>
Page 7-44 and 7-45, Line 18-38 on page 7-44 and Line 1-5 on page 7-45	<p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-8: Survey for Potential Hermes Copper Habitat.</b></p> <p>“Prior to the start of vegetation clearing for the Project, a survey shall be conducted to determine the presence or absence of potentially suitable Hermes copper habitat within the Project footprint. Potentially suitable habitat is defined as mature (woody) spiny redberry shrub(s) within 15 feet of California buckwheat. If Hermes copper habitat is mapped within the project footprint and will be affected by Project activities, then Mitigation Measure BIO-9 shall be implemented.”</p>	<p>Please refer to comment on Mitigation Measure BIO-9 (Page 7-44, Line 38 and Page 7-45, Lines 1-5) regarding Hermes copper butterfly.</p>

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Page 7-46, Lines 26-33	<p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-12 (Vehicle Use of Existing Roads)</b></p> <p>“NEET West or their contractor(s) shall restrict all Proposed Project vehicle movement to existing roads as a part of the Proposed Project, except when not feasible due to physical or safety constraints. When it is not feasible to keep vehicles on existing access roads or avoid construction of access driveways during the nesting, breeding, or migration season, NEET West shall perform a site survey in the area where the work is to occur. This survey shall be performed to determine presence or absence of special-status nesting birds or other special-status species in the work area.”</p>	<p>Portions of Mitigation Measure BIO-12 are duplicative with Mitigation Measure BIO-6 relating to the need to conduct surveys during nesting, breeding, or migration seasons.</p> <p>Accordingly, please modify the DEIR language as follows:</p> <p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-12 (Vehicle Use of Existing Roads)</b></p> <p>“NEET West or their contractor(s) shall restrict all Proposed Project vehicle movement to existing roads as a part of the Proposed Project, except when not feasible due to physical or safety constraints. <del>When it is not feasible to keep vehicles on existing access roads or avoid construction of access driveways during the nesting, breeding, or migration season, NEET West shall perform a site survey in the area where the work is to occur. This survey shall be performed to determine presence or absence of special-status nesting birds or other special-status species in the work area.”</del></p>
Page 7-47, Lines 7-10	<p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-13(c) (Preconstruction Sweeps for Biological Resources)</b></p> <p>“c) In the event of the discovery of a previously unknown special-status plant, the area will be marked as an environmentally sensitive area, and avoided to the maximum extent practicable. If avoidance is not possible, NEET West will consult with USFWS and/or CDFW as appropriate given the species’ status.”</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-13(c) is duplicative and inconsistent with Mitigation Measure BIO-4, which already requires compensatory mitigation for impacts to special-status plants, which is sufficient mitigation for impacts to such species. Furthermore, Mitigation Measure BIO-13(c) is vague and contains no criteria for developing actual mitigation, other than coordination/consultation with CDFW and USFWS “as appropriate given the species’ status.”</p> <p>Therefore, please revise Mitigation Measure BIO-13(c) text to read:</p> <p>“c) In the event of the discovery of a previously unknown special-status plant, the area will be marked as an environmentally sensitive area, and avoided to the maximum extent practicable. If avoidance is not possible, NEET West will implement MM BIO-4 <del>consult with USFWS and/or CDFW as appropriate given the species’ status.”</del></p>
<b>CHAPTER 8, CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>		
Page 8-19, Lines 24-25	<p><b>Mitigation Measure CR-1 (Conduct Archaeological Sensitivity Training and Construction Monitoring)</b></p> <p>“Prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities, NEET West shall arrange for construction crews to receive training about the kinds of archaeological materials that could be present within the project site and the protocols to be followed should any such materials be uncovered during construction. Training shall be conducted by an archaeologist who meets the U.S. Secretary of Interior’s professional standards. Training may be required during different phases of construction to educate new construction personnel.”</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure CR-1 states that training shall be conducted by an archaeologist who meets the U.S. Secretary of Interior’s professional standards. Not all archaeological monitors meet these standards nor do they need to if overseen by a principal investigator. In addition, during construction environmental awareness training is often provided by the on-site environmental inspector and it is unnecessary for an archaeologist meeting U.S. Secretary of Interior professional standards to come to the site to facilitate the cultural resources portion of the training.</p> <p>Therefore, please revise Mitigation Measure CR-1 to read:</p> <p>“Prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities, NEET West shall arrange for construction crews to receive training about the kinds of archaeological materials that could be present within the project site and the protocols to be followed should any such materials be uncovered during construction. Training materials <del>shall be developed</del> <del>shall be conducted</del> by an archaeologist who meets the U.S. Secretary of Interior’s professional standards. Training may be required during different phases of construction to educate new construction personnel.”</p>
Page 8-19, Lines 28-30	<p><b>Mitigation Measure CR-1 (Conduct Archaeological Sensitivity Training and Construction Monitoring)</b></p> <p>The DEIR states:</p> <p>“Prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities, NEET West shall arrange for construction crews to receive training about the kinds of archaeological materials that could be present within the project site and the protocols to be followed should any such materials be uncovered during construction. Training shall be conducted by an archaeologist who meets the U.S. Secretary of Interior’s professional standards. Training may be required during different phases of construction to educate new construction personnel.</p>	<p>Based on the November 2015 Cultural Resources Technical Report findings, the PEA included an APM for construction monitoring by an archaeologist and Native American for initial ground disturbing activities. In contrast, Mitigation Measure CR-1 would require full time monitoring of all ground disturbing activities by archaeologist and Native American. This level of monitoring is not warranted, given the low likelihood that there are subsurface archaeological deposits within the Project’s footprint.</p> <p>The November 2015 Cultural Resources Technical Report (pages 66-67) concludes that it is unlikely that previously unidentified cultural resources, including intact buried archaeological deposits, occur within the Proposed Project Area:</p> <p><i>“The results of SWCA’s survey and research indicate that it is unlikely that intact, subsurface archaeological deposits are present in the Proposed Project Area. As noted above, the SVC location has been disturbed down to a depth of 24 inches as part of recent construction activities. The majority of the proposed underground transmission line will be located</i></p>

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	<p><b>The presence of archaeological sites both within the Proposed Project SVC area and along the Bell Bluff Truck Trail indicates that the area is sensitive for archaeological resources.</b> As a result, a qualified archaeological monitor shall be retained to monitor all ground disturbing activities associated with the project. A Native American monitor shall also participate in observing ground-disturbing activities. If any prehistoric or historic-era features, or human remains, are exposed during construction, the archaeological monitor shall have the authority to stop work in the vicinity of the finds and implement the actions identified in Mitigation Measure CR-2.”</p>	<p><i>within the paved roadbed of Bell Bluff Truck Trail. Further, with the exception of the SVC site, most of the Proposed Project Area is located on slopes where the depositional context is not conducive to sediment accumulation, reducing the possibility of encountering buried deposits. Prehistoric sites in the vicinity of the project consist primarily of lithic and ground stone scatters, bedrock milling stations, or a combination of these. These types of sites typically do not have buried deposits. Of the three sites in the project vicinity that have been evaluated, two (CA-SDI-20166 and CA-SDI-20239) did not have a buried component, and the buried component of the remaining site (CA-SDI-19036) was not significant.</i></p> <p><i>Further, the survey coverage of the Proposed Project Area is excellent, and it is likely that any resources present have been identified. In addition to the current study, three cultural resources studies have been conducted within the Proposed Project Area since 2008: these include two cultural resources surveys (Garcia-Herbst et. al 2010 and Noah 2008) and one construction monitoring project (Kyle and Williams 2013).</i></p> <p><i>Based on background research, survey results, and the highly disturbed context of sediments in the Proposed Project Area, it is unlikely that previously unidentified cultural resources, including intact buried archaeological deposits, occur within the Proposed Project Area. Proposed construction activities will be limited to the Proposed Project Area, and potential blasting will be limited to excavations for the underground electrical transmission line in areas wherein standard excavation methods are not feasible, such as within bedrock, which is highly unlikely to contain archaeological deposits. NEET West anticipates that majority of the site can be excavated by conventional methods, although a minimal amount of hydraulic hammering or blasting may be required. Further, the potential blasting will occur after other sediments have been mechanically removed through standard excavation methods and will be minimized to localize disturbance. Thus, proposed construction activities, including potential blasting, are unlikely to disturb previously unidentified cultural resources.”</i></p> <p>Based on the foregoing, please revise Mitigation Measure CR-1 to read:</p> <p>“Prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities, NEET West shall arrange for construction crews to receive training about the kinds of archaeological materials that could be present within the project site and the protocols to be followed should any such materials be uncovered during construction. Training shall be conducted by an archaeologist who meets the U.S. Secretary of Interior’s professional standards. Training may be required during different phases of construction to educate new construction personnel.</p> <p><del>The presence of archaeological sites both within the Proposed Project SVC area and along the Bell Bluff Truck Trail indicates that the area is sensitive for archaeological resources. As a result, a</del> qualified archaeological monitor shall be retained to <del>monitor all</del> conduct full-time monitoring of initial ground disturbing activities associated with the project. A Native American monitor shall also participate in observing <u>initial</u> ground-disturbing activities. <u>The archaeological monitor will work under the supervision of the principal investigator. The duration and timing of the monitoring will be determined by the CPUC, with recommendations provided by the principal investigator. If the principal investigator determines that monitoring is no longer warranted, he or she may recommend to the CPUC that monitoring cease entirely. In addition, if the principal investigator determines that an increase in the level of monitoring is warranted, he or she may recommend to the CPUC that full-time monitoring continue beyond initial ground disturbance.</u> If any prehistoric or historic-era features, or human remains, are exposed during construction, the archaeological monitor shall have the authority to stop work in the vicinity of the finds and implement the actions identified in Mitigation Measure CR-2.”</p>
Page 8-20, Line 2	<p><b>Mitigation Measures CR-2 (Immediately Halt Construction if Cultural Resources Are Discovered, Evaluate All Identified Cultural Resources for Eligibility for Inclusion in the CRHR, and Implement Appropriate Mitigation Measures for Eligible Resources)</b></p> <p>“Not all cultural resources are visible on the ground surface. Construction activities, including possible blasting, at the SVC would require excavation up to 15 feet deep for the installation for the transmission line along the Bell Bluff Truck Trail would be up to 9 feet deep.”</p>	<p>Please refer to comment above on Page 2-19, Table 2-1: SVC Grading Summary and Line 17 regarding approximate excavation depths. As a result, please change DEIR text to read:</p> <p>“Not all cultural resources are visible on the ground surface. Construction activities, including possible blasting, at the SVC would require excavation up to <u>approximately 45</u>18 feet deep. <u>Excavation</u> for the installation for the transmission line along <del>the</del> Bell Bluff Truck Trail would be up to <u>approximately</u> 9 feet deep.”</p>

PAGE	DEIR LANGUAGE	NEXTERA ENERGY TRANSMISSION WEST'S COMMENT
Page 8-20, Lines 41-42	<p><b>Mitigation Measure CR-3 (Immediately Halt Construction if Human Remains Are Discovered and Implement Applicable Provisions of the California Health and Safety Code)</b></p> <p>“If human remains are accidentally discovered during the Proposed Project’s construction activities, the requirements of California Health and Human Safety Code Section 7050.5 shall be followed. Potentially damaging excavation shall halt in the project site of the remains, with a minimum radius of <b>100 feet</b>, and the County Coroner shall be notified. The Coroner is required to examine all discoveries of human remains within 48 hours of receiving notice of a discovery on private or state lands (Health and Safety Code § 7050.5[b]). If the Coroner determines that the remains are those of a Native American, he or she must contact NAHC by phone within 24 hours of making that determination (Health and Safety Code § 7050[c]). Pursuant to the provisions of Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, the NAHC shall identify a Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The MLD designated by the NAHC shall have at least 48 hours to inspect the site and propose treatment and disposition of the remains and any associated grave goods. NEET West shall work with the MLD to ensure that the remains are removed to a protected location and treated with dignity.”</p>	<p>If human remains are encountered during construction, NEET West will comply with California law (Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5; Public Resources Code sections 5097.94, 5097.98, and 5097.99). These laws specify that work stop immediately in any areas where human remains or suspected human remains are encountered. A 100-foot buffer is excessive and not required.</p> <p>Please revise the DEIR text to read:</p> <p>“If human remains are accidentally discovered during the Proposed Project’s construction activities, the requirements of California Health and <del>Human</del> Safety Code Section 7050.5 shall be followed. Potentially damaging excavation shall halt in the project site of the remains, with a minimum radius of <del>100</del> <b>50</b> feet, and the County Coroner shall be notified. The Coroner is required to examine all discoveries of human remains within 48 hours of receiving notice of a discovery on private or state lands (Health and Safety Code § 7050.5[b]). If the Coroner determines that the remains are those of a Native American, he or she must contact NAHC by phone within 24 hours of making that determination (Health and Safety Code § 7050[c]). Pursuant to the provisions of Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, the NAHC shall identify a Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The MLD designated by the NAHC shall have at least 48 hours to inspect the site and propose treatment and disposition of the remains and any associated grave goods. NEET West shall work with the MLD to ensure that the remains are removed to a protected location and treated with dignity.”</p>
<b>CHAPTER 11, HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b>		
Page 11-20, Lines 25-32	<p><b>Mitigation Measure HAZ-3: Prepare and Implement a Construction Fire Prevention Plan</b></p> <p>“NEET West and/or its contractor(s) shall prepare and implement the Project’s Construction Fire Prevention Plan (CFPP) in accordance with applicable sections of the San Diego County Consolidated Fire Code. The document will address fire prevention measures that will be employed during the construction phase, identifying potential sources of ignition and detailing the measures, equipment, and training that will be provided to all site contractors. The CFPP shall be prepared, reviewed, and approved by the San Diego County Fire Authority (SDCFA) and CAL FIRE a minimum of 45 days prior to commencement of construction activities.”</p>	<p>The San Diego County Fire Authority (“SDCFA”) has assumed primary jurisdiction over wildland firefighting in the Proposed Project vicinity and will be the lead agency with approval authority for the Proposed Project’s Construction Fire Prevention Plan. CAL FIRE was involved with SDCFA in the review and approval of the Proposed Project’s Fire Protection Plan.</p> <p>Accordingly, please revise text of Mitigation Measure HAZ-3 to read:</p> <p>“NEET West and/or its contractor(s) shall prepare and implement the Project’s Construction Fire Prevention Plan (CFPP) in accordance with applicable sections of the San Diego County Consolidated Fire Code. The document will address fire prevention measures that will be employed during the construction phase, identifying potential sources of ignition and detailing the measures, equipment, and training that will be provided to all site contractors. The CFPP shall be prepared, reviewed, and <del>approved by</del> provided to the San Diego County Fire Authority (SDCFA) <del>and CAL FIRE</del> for a minimum of 45 days for review prior to <del>commencement</del> of construction activities.”</p>
Page 11-22, Lines 19 through 32	<p><b>Mitigation Measures HAZ-5: Follow Operational Requirements and Recommendations Identified in the Fire Protection Plan</b></p> <p>“NEET West and/or its contractor(s) shall follow all of the requirements and recommendations contained in the FPP prepared for the Proposed Project by Dudek, dated June 2016. These requirements include, but are not limited to, design and implementation of defensible space around the proposed SVC facility according to the parameters described in the FPP; conducting training sessions with local fire station personnel and providing technical support to fire personnel regarding electrical fires and firefighting at energized facilities; appropriate design of driveways and access roads to allow for safe and efficient fire personnel and equipment access; development and implementation of appropriate protocols for de-energizing the proposed facilities; inclusion of a 10,000-gallon water storage tank accessible to firefighters at the SVC site, and arrangement of electrical equipment on the SVC site to maintain adequate setbacks from vegetated areas.”</p>	<p>This section does not discuss the private fire brigade that will be contracted and refers to the June 2016 FPP. DEIR should reference the December 2016 version (provided as Attachment C to this comment matrix)</p> <p>Please revise text of Mitigation Measure HAZ-5 to read:</p> <p>“NEET West and/or its contractor(s) shall follow all of the requirements and recommendations contained in the FPP prepared for the Proposed Project by Dudek, dated <del>June</del> <b>December</b> 2016. These requirements include, but are not limited to, design and implementation of defensible space around the proposed SVC facility according to the parameters described in the FPP; conducting training sessions with local fire station personnel and providing technical support to fire personnel regarding electrical fires and firefighting at energized facilities; appropriate design of driveways and access roads to allow for safe and efficient fire personnel and equipment access; development and implementation of appropriate protocols for de-energizing the proposed facilities; inclusion of a 10,000-gallon water storage tank accessible to firefighters at the SVC site, and arrangement of electrical equipment on the SVC site to maintain adequate setbacks from vegetated areas.”</p>
<b>CHAPTER 12, HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY</b>		

PAGE	DEIR LANGUAGE	NEXTERA ENERGY TRANSMISSION WEST'S COMMENT
Page 12-21, Lines 18-22	<p><b>Impact HYD/WQ-1, Potential Impacts to Surface or Groundwater Quality</b></p> <p>“It is possible, however, that the transmission line may not be able to avoid the culverts across Bell Bluff Truck Trail, and may therefore require CWA Section 401 and/or 404 permits. If required, a Section 401 WQC and/or Section 404 nationwide or individual permit also may require water quality protection measures and compensatory mitigation for any impacts to waters of the U.S. or State.”</p>	<p>The waters mapped along Bell Bluff Truck Trail do not meet the federal definition of waters of the U.S. and were noted in the PEA as only “potential CDFW-jurisdictional” drainages outside the project footprint where the natural drainages exist. Therefore, even if impacts were to occur, no Section 404 or 401 permits would be required, and no associated compensatory mitigation would be necessary.</p>
Page 12-25; Lines 12-27	<p><b>Impact HYD/WQ-5: Potential to Expose Persons or Structures to Significant Risk of Loss Due to Flooding</b></p> <p>The Proposed Project is located relatively high in the watershed in a mountainous area. The surrounding topography is steep and there are no defined river or stream systems in immediate proximity to the Project site. The nearest features are Sweetwater River and Taylor Creek, which are approximately 1 mile northwest and 0.55 mile south of the Project site, respectively. In addition to being relatively far away, these drainages are at lower elevations than the Proposed Project, which is relatively elevated on a ridge. The Project site is not located in a 100-year flood hazard zone as defined by FEMA. In this type of setting, flooding would not be anticipated and there would be little possibility of significant loss to people or structures from flooding. The proposed SVC would be an important, if not critical, component to the regional transmission system, as it would provide needed voltage support and regulation. As such, any damage to the facility from flooding could have impacts on the transmission system beyond those impacts to the facility; however, there is no reason to believe such an event is likely or possible. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant.</p>	<p>Analysis under Impact HYD/WQ-5: Potential to Expose Persons or Structures to Significant Risk of Loss Due to Flooding (Less than Significant) is about significant loss to people or structures from the placement of structures in a 100-year floodplain. Both the PEA and DEIR analyses explain that the nearest waterbodies/floodplains are over 0.5 mile away and that the project would not be located in a 100-year flood hazard zone. As a result, the conclusion in the DEIR analysis should be No Impact as opposed to Less than Significant.</p>
<b>CHAPTER 13, LAND USE AND PLANNING</b>		
Page 13-5, Lines 7-9	<p><b>Lightner Mitigation Site</b></p> <p>“For long-term management and protection of the site, it is anticipated that ownership of the Lightner Mitigation Site will be transferred to the U.S. Forest Service (currently the site is still owned by SDG&amp;E).”</p>	<p>Please refer to comment above regarding Page ES-2, Lines 24-25. The entire Lightner Mitigation Site will not be transferred to USFS. SDG&amp;E will retain ownership of the Suncrest Substation, Bell Bluff Truck Trail, and a portion of the road surrounding Bell Bluff Truck Trail.</p>
Page 13-5, Line 27	<p><b>13.3 Environmental Setting</b></p> <p>“The existing SDG&amp;E Suncrest Substation represents a very large utility/industrial use in the area, as it includes an approximately 40-acre concrete pad with large electrical equipment and high-voltage transmission lines entering and exiting the facility from the southwest and northeast.”</p>	<p>It should be noted that Suncrest Substation site is not 100% concrete. Therefore, please revise the DEIR language to:  ““The existing SDG&amp;E Suncrest Substation represents a very large utility/industrial use in the area, as it includes an approximately 40-acre <u>site concrete pad</u>.””</p>
<b>CHAPTER 15, NOISE AND VIBRATION</b>		
Page 15-9, Lines 18-25	<p><b>15.5.2 Methodology</b></p> <p>“Project construction noise impacts were assessed by applying the FTA's <i>Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment</i> (FTA 2006) recommended methodology. This methodology assumes that the two loudest pieces of construction equipment would operate simultaneously at the same location under full power, assuming the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• full power operation for a full 1-hour,</li> <li>• there are no obstructions to the noise travel paths,</li> </ul>	<p>The DEIR uses a different methodology for assessing construction noise impacts than NEET West used in the PEA. The DEIR uses the <i>FTA's Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment</i> guidelines for evaluating daytime construction noise in outdoor areas and for construction vibration impacts. The Proposed Project is not subject to FTA regulations. The County of San Diego General Plan's Noise Element specifies in Policy N-31 to defer to FTA guidelines for construction vibration to avoid harmful effects from excessive groundborne vibration only. This methodology assumes that the two loudest pieces of equipment would operate simultaneously at the same location under full power for one hour. Loudest equipment was called out under the Impacts section as a rock drill, scraper, and/or blasting.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• typical noise levels from construction equipment are used, and</li> <li>• all pieces of equipment operate at the center of the project site.”</li> </ul>	<p>NEET West questions the rationale for changing the noise impact assessment methodology from that used in NEET West’s PEA without providing a basis for doing so. The FTA methodology is not appropriate for the Proposed Project, and it appears to have been selected solely to arrive at a different impact conclusion and therefore provide justification for additional mitigation. The FTA methodology is extremely conservative, and the assumption under it that a rock drill, scraper, and/or blasting will be used simultaneously during the same hour of construction simply is not appropriate for the Proposed Project. Typically blasting is only used when a rock drill or scraper prove ineffective in reaching required excavation depths. In other words, blasting will not occur at the same time as these activities, and thus the FTA model assumptions are flawed for the Proposed Project. NEET West contests the use of this methodology and the basis for prescribing additional noise mitigation, specifically Mitigation Measure NOI-1 below.</p> <p>While NEET West contends that mitigation is unwarranted for noise, if the DEIR text remains unchanged, the appropriate mitigation would be one precluding the use of a rock drill, scraper, and/or blasting at the same time over a one-hour period. There is no basis for Mitigation Measure NOI-1 as written, and NEET West requests it either be eliminated, or revised accordingly to the preceding revision.</p>
Page 15-12, Lines 5-10	<p><b>Construction</b> <b>Mitigation Measure NOI-1 (Construction Noise Mitigation Plan)</b></p> <p>NEET West and/or its contractors shall develop and implement a construction-noise mitigation plan in close coordination with adjacent noise-sensitive land uses so that construction activities can be scheduled to minimize noise disturbance. The plan must be approved by the CPUC prior to the initiation of construction activities. The construction-noise mitigation plan shall consider the following available controls to reduce construction-noise levels to as low as practicable:</p> <p>Equip all internal combustion-driven equipment with mufflers that are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment.</p> <p>Construct temporary sound barriers using plywood or similar material bearing the same sound attenuating effectiveness as plywood between portions of the construction sites and sensitive receptors. These temporary sound barriers, which could also consist of construction grade sound blankets/curtains, should be at least feet in height. Sound barriers shall be used during activities involving use of a rock drill, scraper, and/or blasting.”</p> <p>Residences or noise-sensitive land uses within 500 feet of the construction site should be notified in writing of construction at least seven (7) days prior to the onset of construction activities. A “construction liaison” contact person should be designated in the notifications; he/she would be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The liaison would determine the cause of the noise complaints (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and institute reasonable measures to correct the problem. The phone number of the liaison should be conspicuously posted at the construction site.</p>	<p>Please refer to comment above regarding the rationale for changing the methodology used to assess noise impacts. Additional noise mitigation is unwarranted as the methodology chosen for the DEIR analysis is extremely conservative and highly unlikely to ever occur during a one-hour period. Additionally, there are no residences or noise sensitive land uses within 500 feet of the construction site; therefore, the notification requirement of this measure is not applicable to this project. As a result, NEET West requests that Mitigation Measure NOI-1 be removed from the document, or revised as proposed above.</p>
<b>CHAPTER 17, PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES</b>		
Page 17-9, Line 11	<p><b>Water Supply</b></p> <p>“At the Project site, currently, there is a 4-inch-diameter water line that runs underneath Bell Bluff Truck Trail.”</p>	<p>The 4-inch-diameter water line lies beneath SDG&amp;E’s driveway to the Suncrest Substation and only crosses Bell Bluff Truck Trail near its intersection with SDG&amp;E’s driveway and the water tank. Therefore, please revise DEIR text to read:</p> <p>“At the Project site, currently, there is a 4-inch-diameter water line that <u>lies beneath a portion of</u> <del>runs underneath</del> Bell Bluff Truck Trail.”</p>

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Page 17-15; Lines 38-39	<p><b>Impact PUB/UTL-6: Effects on Existing Landfill Capacity (Less than Significant with Mitigation)</b></p> <p>“As described in Mitigation Measure PUB/UTL-2 (see Impact PUB/UTL-7 below), the Project would recycle at least 90 percent of inerts and at least 70 percent of other materials, in accordance with the County’s Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling Ordinance. With implementation of this mitigation measure, depending on the type and composition of solid waste generated by the Proposed Project, much less than 7,030 cy of material would be disposed of at a landfill. <u>Even without mitigation, this impact would be less than significant.</u>”</p>	<p>The DEIR analysis for Impact PUB/UTL-6 ends with the following sentence: “<i>Even without mitigation, this impact would be less than significant.</i>” Therefore, the DEIR significance conclusion in the title of the Impact should be revised to read:</p> <p><b>Impact PUB/UTL-6: Effects on Existing Landfill Capacity (Less than Significant with Mitigation)</b></p> <p>“As described in Mitigation Measure PUB/UTL-2 (see Impact PUB/UTL-7 below), the Project would recycle at least 90 percent of inerts and at least 70 percent of other materials, in accordance with the County’s Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling Ordinance. With implementation of this mitigation measure, depending on the type and composition of solid waste generated by the Proposed Project, much less than 7,030 cy of material would be disposed of at a landfill. <u>Even without mitigation, this impact would be less than significant.</u>”</p>
<b>CHAPTER 19, TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC</b>		
Page 19-10, Lines 2-8	<p><b>Mitigation Measure TR-1 (Maintain Traffic Flow)</b></p> <p>NEET West or their contractor(s) shall implement the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To the extent feasible, work shall be staged and conducted in a manner that maintains two-way traffic flow on roadways in the vicinity of the work site.</li> <li>▪ Heavy equipment and haul traffic shall be prohibited in residential areas to the greatest extent feasible. When no other route to and from the site is available, heavy equipment and haul traffic through residential areas shall be restricted to the hours of 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.</li> </ul>	<p>The Proposed Project involves delivery of transformers on oversized tractor-trailers, concrete deliveries, hauling of spoils and import of materials. The activities will typically occur during normal work hours (7 a.m. to 7 p.m.) as described in the PEA. Due to the limited number of residences in the area, and the fact that Bell Bluff Truck Trail is already used by SDG&amp;E for similar activities, there is no reason for further restricting these hours for heavy equipment and hauling to 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. There also must be some provision, such as notifying adjacent property owners or similar, if heavy equipment will be needed beyond these normal working hours.</p> <p>Therefore, please revise Mitigation Measure TR-1 to read:</p> <p>“NEET West or their contractor(s) shall implement the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To the extent feasible, work shall be staged and conducted in a manner that maintains two-way traffic flow on roadways in the vicinity of the work site.</li> <li>▪ Heavy equipment and haul traffic shall be prohibited in residential areas to the greatest extent feasible. When no other route to and from the site is available, heavy equipment and haul traffic through residential areas shall be restricted to the normal working hours of <del>7</del> a.m. to <del>5:30</del> 7 p.m., Monday through Friday.</li> <li>▪ <u>If heavy equipment or hauling is required beyond the hours above, NEET West or its contractor will provide adjacent property owners advance notice of such activities.</u>”</li> </ul>
Page 19-12; Lines 6-7	<p><b>Impact TR-6: Conflicts with Alternative Transportation</b></p> <p>“No public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities are located in the Project vicinity, although bicycles are allowed to use the shoulder of I-8 for approximately 3.5 miles, from Willows Road to the SR 79/Japatul Valley Road interchange. Despite the absence of bicycle or pedestrian facilities, bicyclists and pedestrians may use roadways in the project vicinity, as allowed by the California Vehicle Code. With the implementation of Mitigation Measures TR-1 and TR-2, described above, any impacts to alternative transportation would be less than significant.”</p>	<p>Roadway construction activities associated with this project will be limited to the private section of Bell Bluff Truck Trail. NEET West’s PEA concluded that there would be No Impact as a result. The analysis of Impact TR-6 indicates that even though there are no designated public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities in the project vicinity that bicyclists and pedestrians may still use the roadways in the project vicinity. The DEIR analysis ignores the fact that this is a private section of road where construction will occur. As a result, NEET West requests that the DEIR significance determination be changed to No Impact.</p>
<b>CHAPTER 20, ALTERNATIVES</b>		
Page 20-1, Lines 24-31	<p><b>20.1.1 Regulatory Requirements</b></p> <p>“In determining whether alternatives are potentially feasible, Lead Agencies are guided by the definition of feasibility found in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15364: ‘capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors.’ In accordance with State</p>	<p>The referenced portion of CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f) omits additional language that should be included for completeness. Therefore, please revise the DEIR language to:</p> <p>“In determining whether alternatives are potentially feasible, Lead Agencies are guided by the definition of feasibility found in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15364: “capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors.” In</p>



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	CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f), the Lead Agency should consider site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other regulatory limitations, and jurisdictional boundaries in determining the feasibility of alternatives to be evaluated in an EIR.”	accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f), <u>among the factors</u> the Lead Agency should consider <u>in determining the feasibility of alternatives to be evaluated in the EIR are</u> site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other regulatory limitations, <u>and</u> jurisdictional boundaries, <u>and the project proponent’s control over alternative sites, in determining the feasibility of alternatives to be evaluated in an EIR.”</u>
Page 20-2, Lines 20-24	<p><b>20.2.1 Project Purpose and Objectives</b></p> <p>“1. Provide reactive support to Suncrest Substation;</p> <p>2. Improve and maintain transmission grid reliability; and</p> <p>3. Facilitate delivery of renewable energy generation from the Imperial Valley area to population centers to the west and support achievement of California’s Renewables Portfolio Standard.”</p>	<p>The Project Purpose and Objectives in the DEIR differ significantly from those identified by NEET West in its PEA. Please see NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for concerns related to the DEIR’s formulation of the Project Objectives.</p> <p>Further, the Project Objectives listed on this page are different than those presented in the Executive Summary. At a minimum, they should be consistent.</p>
Page 20-7, Lines 3-6	<p><b>CAISO Initiative for Reactive Power Support from Asynchronous Generators</b></p> <p>“This policy, currently under review by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), would require that new or repowered asynchronous resources provide reactive power and voltage regulation. In its PEA submitted to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), NEET West theorized that if the new CAISO requirements were to go into effect and several large solar or wind facilities were to be required to provide reactive power capability, it could reduce the amount of reactive power needed at the Suncrest Substation. Therefore, instead of building the SVC, the transmission grid could potentially receive reactive power support from new renewable generating facilities built in compliance with CAISO’s initiative.”</p>	<p>Please revise the DEIR language to read:</p> <p>“This policy, currently under review by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), would require that new or repowered asynchronous resources provide reactive power and voltage regulation. <del>In its PEA submitted to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), NEET West theorized that if the new CAISO requirements were to go into effect and several large solar or wind facilities were to be required to provide reactive power capability, it could reduce the amount of reactive power needed at the Suncrest Substation.</del> Therefore, <del>instead of building the SVC,</del> the transmission grid could potentially receive reactive power support and voltage regulation from new renewable generating facilities built in compliance with CAISO’s initiative.”</p>
Page 20-9, Lines 19-26	<p><b>20.3.2 Northeast Site Alternative</b></p> <p>“No part of the site is mapped as California Buckwheat Scrub habitat. In this respect, the Northeast Site Alternative would reduce potential impacts on Hermes copper butterfly habitat.”</p>	<p>This analysis states that “no part of the Northeast site alternative is mapped at CA buckwheat scrub habitat. In this respect, the Northeast Site alternative would reduce potential impacts on Hermes copper butterfly habitat.” It goes on to state that “suitable habitat for Hermes copper butterfly is unlikely to be present.”</p> <p>With regard to the first statement, the Hermes copper butterfly depends on CA buckwheat <i>and spiny redberry to be within 15 feet of each other</i> to be determined suitable habitat for Hermes copper butterfly. This situation does not exist at the proposed SVC location as there are no spiny redberry within 15 feet of buckwheat. Therefore, this distinction between the two sites is incorrect.</p> <p>With regard to the second statement that suitable habitat for Hermes copper butterfly is unlikely to be present at the Northeast site alternative, no habitat assessments measuring the spacing between the two plant species that constitute habitat were conducted at this site. Habitat assessment was conducted at the SVC site and no suitable habitat was found in this location.</p> <p>As a result, this argument for carrying the Northeast site alternative forward is unsubstantiated.</p>
Page 20-12, Lines 1-17	<p><b>20.3.3 Suncrest Substation Alternative</b></p> <p>“Under the Suncrest Substation Alternative, the SVC would be installed within the existing Suncrest Substation and, therefore, no transmission line would be required. San Diego Gas &amp; Electric (SDG&amp;E) has indicated that there is room within the existing substation to construct the SVC without expanding the substation footprint. Under this alternative, NEET West would construct, own, and operate the SVC.” See also footnotes 1 and 2.</p>	<p>Please see NEET West’s accompanying cover letter for objections to the DEIR’s discussion of the Suncrest Substation Alternative and the lack of support for such alternative, as well as the comments above regarding Page ES-7, Lines 27-28 and Page ES-9, Lines 13-20.</p>
<b>CHAPTER 21, OTHER STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS</b>		

PAGE	DEIR LANGUAGE	NEXTERA ENERGY TRANSMISSION WEST'S COMMENT
Page 21-1, Line 32	<p><b>21.3 Growth Inducement</b></p> <p>“Additionally, operation of the Proposed Project would not require any on-site workers as NextEra Energy Transmission West, LLC (NEET West) anticipates remotely operating the facility from its Lone Star control Center in Austin, Texas.”</p>	<p>Please see comment above regarding Page 2-25, Lines 25-26. Please revise DEIR language to:</p> <p>“Additionally, operation of the Proposed Project would not require any on-site workers as NextEra Energy Transmission West, LLC (NEET West) anticipates remotely operating the facility from <del>its a NextEra affiliate’s Lone Star</del> control center <del>in Austin, Texas.”</del></p>
Page 21-12, Lines 11-15	<p><b>Impact CUM-5: Cumulative Impacts on Fire Protection Services</b></p> <p>“Implementation of Mitigation Measure PUB/UTL-1 would ensure that NEET West coordinates with the County of San Diego, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine if additional fire protection improvements are needed to ensure adequate fire protection services for the Proposed Project.”</p>	<p>Please revise DEIR language to read:</p> <p>“Implementation of Mitigation Measure PUB/UTL-1 would ensure that NEET West coordinates with the County of San Diego, <del>California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine if</del> <del>additional fire protection improvements are needed</del> to ensure adequate fire protection services for the Proposed Project.”</p>
<b>CHAPTER 23, REFERENCES</b>		
NA	References	Chapter 23 of the DEIR lists documents referenced and lists the PEA as prepared in August 2015. However, the Biological Resources chapter of the PEA and Biological Resources Technical Report were revised in November 2015. The November 2015 update of the Biological Resources Technical Report is provided as Attachment D to these comments.
<b>APPENDIX D, EMF MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>		
<b>APPENDIX G, CULTURAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL REPORT</b>		
NA	General comment	The Cultural Resources Technical Report was updated in November 2015 and is provided as Attachment E to these comments.
<b>APPENDIX I, MITIGATION, MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM</b>		
Page L-33, HAZ 5	<p><b>Follow Requirements and Recommendations Identified in the Fire Protection Plan (FPP)</b></p> <p>“NEET West and/or its contractor(s) shall follow all of the requirements and recommendations contained in the FPP prepared for the Proposed Project by Dudek, dated June 2016. These requirements include, but are not limited to, design and implementation of defensible space around the proposed SVC facility according to the parameters described in the FPP; conducting training sessions with local fire station personnel and providing technical support to fire personnel regarding electrical fires and firefighting at energized facilities; appropriate design of driveways and access roads to allow for safe and efficient fire personnel and equipment access; development and implementation of appropriate protocols for de-energizing the proposed facilities; inclusion of a 10,000 gallon water storage tank accessible to firefighters at the SVC site; and arrangement of electrical equipment on the SVC site to maintain adequate setbacks from vegetated areas.”</p>	<p>The Fire Protection Plan was finalized in December 2016 and is provided as Attachment C to these comments.</p> <p>Please revise DEIR text to read:</p> <p>“NEET West and/or its contractor(s) shall follow all of the requirements and recommendations contained in the FPP prepared for the Proposed Project by Dudek, dated <del>June</del> <u>December</u> 2016. These requirements include, but are not limited to, design and implementation of defensible space around the proposed SVC facility according to the parameters described in the FPP; conducting training sessions with local fire station personnel and providing technical support to fire personnel regarding electrical fires and firefighting at energized facilities; appropriate design of driveways and access roads to allow for safe and efficient fire personnel and equipment access; development and implementation of appropriate protocols for de-energizing the proposed facilities; inclusion of a 10,000 gallon water storage tank accessible to firefighters at the SVC site; and arrangement of electrical equipment on the SVC site to maintain adequate setbacks from vegetated areas.”</p>
Page L-37, PUB/UTIL 1	<p><b>“Fund Fair Share toward Any Necessary Fire Protection Service Improvements.</b></p> <p>NEET West shall coordinate with the County of San Diego, CAL FIRE, and U.S Forest Service (USFS) to determine if any additional apparatus, equipment, personnel, or facilities are necessary to provide adequate fire service to the Proposed Project. If recommended improvements or upgrades to facilities, and/or additional apparatus, equipment, or personnel are identified, NEET</p>	<p>Please revise DEIR text to read:</p> <p><b>“Fund Fair Share toward Any Necessary Fire Protection Service Improvements.</b></p> <p><u>The Fire Protection Plan commits NEET West to enter into an agreement with San Diego Community Fire District, CAL FIRE, and U.S Forest Service (USFS) to provide fair-share funding to be used for</u></p>

PAGE	DEIR LANGUAGE	NEXTERA ENERGY TRANSMISSION WEST'S COMMENT
	West shall contribute its fair share toward the attributed costs. The Proposed Project's, or NEET West's, fair share will be proportionate to its contribution to the need for improvements."	<del>fire protection improvements, as determined by County of San Diego, determine if any additional apparatus, equipment, personnel, or facilities are necessary to provide adequate fire service to the Proposed Project. If recommended improvements or upgrades to facilities, and/or additional apparatus, equipment, or personnel are identified, NEET West shall contribute its fair share toward the attributed costs.</del> The Proposed Project's, or NEET West's, fair share will be proportionate to its contribution to the need for improvements."
<b>APPENDIX K, FIRE PROTECTION PLAN</b>		
NA	General comment	The Fire Protection Plan was finalized in December 2016 and is provided as Attachment C to these comments.

**Attachments:**

- Attachment A: Applicant-Proposed Measures versus DEIR Mitigation Measures Comparison Table
- Attachment B: Updated Air Quality Memorandum (January 2017)
- Attachment C: Fire Protection Plan (December 2016)
- Attachment D: Biological Resources Technical Report (November 2015)
- Attachment E: Cultural Resources Technical Report (November 2015)