

3.12: PUBLIC SERVICES AND SOCIOECONOMICS

Introduction

This section describes the existing public service levels and infrastructure in the project area and the potential impacts of the proposed project on these service levels. This section also examines the socio-economics of the project area and the potential project impacts, particularly related to jobs created during construction and operation of the proposed project. The proposed project is subject to a Project Labor Agreement in which contractors would fill jobs from the union hiring halls in Butte, Colusa, and Sutter counties. Consequently, the socio-economics of Sutter County, in addition to Butte and Colusa Counties, is examined in this section.

Environmental Setting

REGIONAL SETTING

The proposed project extends through rural communities of Butte County and Colusa County in the Northern Sacramento Valley. The region's economy is principally dependent upon agricultural production, services, and trade (Great Valley Center 2001). Tomatoes, rice, and olives are among the most prominent crops produced in the area (Ceres 2000). In addition to agriculture, the mountainous area to the east of the project area has been conducive to the Northern Valley's historic dependence on timber production and related manufacturing (Great Valley Center 2001).

Historically, unemployment in the upper Sacramento Valley has been four percent higher than the California average primarily due to the seasonality of employment opportunities associated with agricultural development (Great Valley Center 2001). In addition, real per capita income has decreased in recent years due to a slow economy and continued

population growth. The forecast for 2001 showed a continuing downward trend in real income for the region (Great Valley Center 2001). Unemployment in the Northern Central Valley was forecast to be as high as 9.3 percent in 2001 in contrast to the average unemployment rate for California of 4.9 percent (Great Valley Center 2001).

LOCAL SETTING

Public Services

Police/Sheriff. The Remote Facility, Well Pad Site, Storage Loop Pipeline, and the westernmost portion of the pipeline are located in Butte County. Butte County Sheriff and Constables, which serves the unincorporated areas of Butte County, is headquartered in Oroville, with substations in Biggs, Chico, and Magalia. Butte County currently has 96 deputies. For Butte County, the nearest substation is in Gridley, approximately 6 miles from the Remote Facility Site and 10 miles from the Well Pad Site, where 3 deputies are stationed. In Colusa County, the sheriff's office is in Colusa, approximately 23 miles from the Delevan Interconnect Facility. A total of 9 deputies are stationed at Colusa.

The Delevan Station and the majority of the proposed pipeline route are located in Colusa County. The unincorporated areas of Colusa County receive general safety and law enforcement services from the County Sheriff's Department. The Department, which also serves as the Coroner's Office and the County Emergency Services Center, is located in the City of Colusa.

Fire Protection and Emergency Response. The Butte County Fire Department provides the primary protection to the County's unincorporated areas. The nearest station is located in Gridley, approximately 6 miles east of the project area. An engine is located at the Gray Lodge Wildlife Management Area headquarters, approximately 1.5 miles south of the Remote Facility Site and 3 miles from the Well Pad Site via the Tule Goose Club.

Eight rural districts, two city fire departments, the California Department of Forestry, and the U.S. Forest Service provide fire protection services in Colusa County. Volunteer fire fighters staff the majority of districts. The project components would be located in the Glenn-Colusa, Colusa Rural, and the Maxwell Rural fire districts. The Maxwell Fire Department is the closest station to the Delevan Interconnect Facility, approximately 13 miles from the site.

Schools. Butte County currently operates ten elementary school districts, two high school districts, four unified school districts, and the Butte Community College District. The proposed project components in Butte County are within the Gridley School District boundaries. Butte County public school districts require school impact fees for new development.

There are six school districts within Colusa County, which includes seven elementary schools, three middle schools, and five high schools. The project components would be located in the Colusa Unified, Princeton, and Maxwell Unified school districts. The school districts require school impact fees for new development.

Socioeconomics

Butte County. Butte County's employment level in 2000 was 87,900 jobs (California Department of Finance 2001). Table 3.12-1 provides an overview of the project area's labor force broken down by industry for each potentially affected county. Food manufacturing is the fastest growing labor market in Butte County. The timber industry and construction are also important sectors to the area (Great Valley Center 2001). Because county employment is heavily influenced by the city of Chico, only 3 percent of county jobs are in agriculture, with trade (19%), services (25%) and government (19%) sectors providing the greatest number of jobs.

In 2000, Butte County had an average unemployment of 7.0 percent with a real per capita income of \$20,838 in 1998 (California Department of Finance). Both figures were forecast to increase in 2001 (Great Valley Center 2001).

Table 3.12-1: Labor and Employment in the Project Area

	Butte County	Colusa County	Sutter County
Civilian labor force	87,900	8,830	36,900
Agricultural Employment (2000)	3,000	2,540	6,200
Construction & Mining	2,700	160	2100
Manufacturing	6,100	780	3400
Transportation & Public Utilities	2,800	260	1600
Wholesale & Retail Trade	16,900	1350	8900
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	4,200	160	1300
Services	21,600	600	8800
Federal Government	700	80	1500
State-local Government	15,600	1660	9300
County Unemployment Rate	7.0%	17.6%	13%
Real Per Capita Income (1998)	\$20,838	\$20,287	\$21,965
County Rank	37	42	32

SOURCE: California Department of Finance, February 2001

Colusa County. Approximately 7,280 people are employed in Colusa County. Agriculture is the staple of the County's economy and makes up almost 30 percent of the county's industry (refer to Table 3.12-1). Growth in the manufacturing sector is largely a result of the expanding food processing industry in an area dominated by agricultural production (California Employment Development Department 2000).

The average unemployment rate for Colusa County was 17.6 percent in 2000. Real per capita income in 1998 was \$20,287 for Colusa County (California Department of Finance 2001).

Sutter County. Approximately 36,900 people are employed in Sutter County. Retail trade is the dominant industry in the county accounting for 24 percent of employment (refer to

Table 3.12-1). Agriculture accounts for only 19 percent of the economy in Sutter County with government ranking third and accounting for 16 percent (California Employment Development Department 2001).

The average unemployment rate in 2000 was 13 percent in Sutter County. The county had a Real Per Capita income of \$21,965 (California Department of Finance 2001).

Regulatory Setting

LOCAL SETTING

Butte County

The Butte County General Plan includes the following policies regarding provision of fire protection services in Butte County.

Policy 1.1. Make protection from fire hazards a consideration in all planning, regulatory, and capital improvement programs, with special concern for areas of "high" and "extreme" fire hazard.

Policy 2.1. Encourage adequate fire protection services in all areas of population growth and high recreation use.

Colusa County

The Colusa County General Plan provides an inventory of the public services provided within Colusa County and guidelines for development of public services in response to new development. The policies of the Community Services Element were developed in coordination with the policies of the Land Use Element. The intent of these policies is to channel development into areas where community services can either accommodate growth or be expanded most efficiently.

The following policies contained in the Colusa County General Plan are applicable to the proposed project.

FIRE-2. Proposed development applications should be referred to the local fire chief for recommendations and comments. Comments should include specific recommendations about equipment, manpower, or facilities that might be required as a result of the development.

FIRE-4. Development which could create a public hazard in the event of fire shall be located away from existing and planned residential areas.

FIRE-5. New development should incorporate design measures which are responsive to the risk of fire hazard in those areas.

Environmental Analysis

AREAS OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

The proposed project would be considered to have a significant adverse effect on economies and public service infrastructures of communities within the project area if it would result in any of the following impacts:

- Increase the demand for public services in excess of their existing and/or projected capabilities
- Cause a substantial increase in acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for all emergency response providers

Based on professional judgment, the following criteria are also utilized to evaluate potential impacts to socio-economics in the project area:

- Cause a quantifiable reduction in the value of properties crossed by the pipeline or substantially impact the economies of those communities affected by the proposed project or take a significant amount of land from owners
- Cause a disruption in the balance between employment opportunities and available housing in the area.

Public Services impact analysis focused primarily on construction-related impacts to adequate service levels for the project area. Criteria for determining the significance of public service impacts was developed based on questions from Appendix G of the State CEQA guidelines. WGSi provided information regarding the estimated number of workers needed during construction and operation of the proposed project. These numbers are shown in Table 3.12-2 below.

Table 3.12-2: Major Construction Phases and Workforce

Phase	Total Workforce	Nonlocal Workforce	Estimated Duration	Construction Year
Pipeline Construction	65	10	32 weeks	2003
Delevan Interconnect Facility	20	5	18 weeks	2003
Well Pad Expansion	20	0	4 weeks	2002
Well Drilling	32	12	16 weeks	2003
Remote Facility Expansion				
Site Preparation	20	10	4 weeks	2002
Civil	34	13	6 weeks	2002/03
Mechanical	42	20	28 weeks	2003
Electrical/ Instrumentation	45	5	34 weeks	2003
Testing/Commissioning	15	0	3 weeks	2004

Phase	Total Workforce	Nonlocal Workforce	Estimated Duration	Construction Year
Clean-up/Restoration	10	5	14 weeks	2004
PROJECT TOTALS	303	80		

SOURCE: WGSJ 2001

Socioeconomic impact analysis focuses on direct changes in employment that would be generated by the project. This analysis also examines potential changes to the land value of properties crossed by the proposed project. Data was collected from the 2000 Census, the California Department of Finance, and the California Employment Development Department, in conjunction with data provided by the applicant, to assess potential impacts. Impacts to socioeconomics were assessed based on criteria developed in EIR analyses for similar gas storage and pipeline projects (Jones and Stokes Associates, Inc. 1999; State Lands Commission and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 2000).

Assessment of project-related socioeconomic impacts and associated mitigation is based on the size and characteristics of the workforce and the duration and methods of construction. Construction of the Initial Phase expansion is anticipated to occur over a 20-month period and may follow the schedule described in Chapter 2, Project Description and shown in Figure 2.7-1. Construction activities may occur up to 13 hours a day, 5 to 7 days a week, depending on the particular task and overall construction progress. The normal work schedule would be about 10 hours per day, Monday through Saturday. The "local" labor pool is assumed to extend to Sacramento. It is also assumed that nonlocal labor would be used only for specialized skills not readily available locally.

THRESHOLD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following are areas of potential environmental concern that may be associated with implementation of the proposed project:

- **Increase the demand for public services.** Project related actions that increase demand for public services in the area would be considered to have a significant effect on the environment if current service levels could not accommodate the increase in demand.
- **A substantial increase in acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for all emergency response providers.** Project related actions that would interfere with emergency access would be considered to have a significant effect on the environment. In addition, if the proposed project would result in a violation of any of the objectives of the counties' general plan guidelines or exceed acceptable service ratios, this would be considered a potentially significant impact.

The following areas of potential environmental concern are evaluated based on professional judgment and the understanding that taking of land may be an important issue to address even though it is not explicitly mandated under CEQA guidelines.

- **Cause a quantifiable reduction in the value of properties crossed by the pipeline or substantially impact the economies of those communities affected by the proposed project.** If it can be shown that the proposed project would significantly diminish the property values of the lands crossed by the proposed project, this would be considered a significant impact. In addition, if the proposed project adversely affects the local

economies of communities within the project area this would be considered to be a significant impact.

- **Result in a disruption in the balance between employment opportunities and available housing in the area.** If it can be shown that the proposed project would result in a demand for housing that exceeds the availability of lodging in the area, this would be considered to be a significant impact.

IMPACT DISCUSSION

The following impact discussion is organized by the type of public service potentially affected, rather than by the project component where impacts could potentially occur (i.e. well pad, remote facility, etc.). It is assumed that potential impacts to public services in the project area would be similar across project components; therefore, impacts are discussed in general terms for the entire project area.

Impact 3.12-1: Potential to Increase the Demand for Public Services in Excess of their Existing and/or Projected Capabilities

Police/Sheriff and Fire Protection. Potential impacts to public services would primarily be associated with construction activities. Potential increases in demand on local agencies may arise due to a demand for emergency medical services to respond to potential construction work-related accidents.

As discussed above, the Butte County Fire Department provides the primary fire protection to the County's unincorporated areas. The nearest station is located in Gridley, approximately 6 miles east of the project area with an engine stationed at the Gray Lodge Wildlife Management Area headquarters, approximately 1.5 miles south of the Remote Facility Site and 3 miles from the Well Pad Site via the Tule Goose Club. Response times would be approximately 10 minutes and 15 minutes respectively. Response time from the Maxwell Fire Station would be approximately 20 minutes to the Delevan site. Ambulance and emergency medical services are provided by several private ambulance companies in the area.

Response times for police and sheriffs in both counties is dependent on the location of the assigned deputy at the time of the call. It is not anticipated that the project would result in increased demand for local police and sheriff services. Local police and sheriff services are currently adequate to serve the existing Wild Goose project. The construction and operation of the project expansion would not have a significant effect on the capacity to provide these services.

Construction. Construction activities would have little, if any, effect on the need for police / sheriff and fire protection services. No additional law enforcement or fire protection services were required during initial project development, and none are expected for the proposed expansion.

In the event that there are injuries during construction, demand for emergency response in the area may be temporarily increased. However, there were no injuries during initial project development that required emergency medical care or a call to the local emergency service providers. It is expected that few instances requiring assistance from emergency service providers would occur during the proposed construction. Any increase in demand

for emergency response during construction would be accommodated by the existing equipment and staffing. Project construction would not be expected to have a significant effect on demand or exceed service capacity.

Operations. WGSi maintains an Emergency Response Plan for employees to reference in case of an emergency during operations. Typically, emergency response personnel would secure the area and evacuate the area of influence, as necessary. A command post would be established from which emergency operations would be directed. WGSi maintains emergency response equipment on-site and a detailed protocol for contacting emergency response providers in the area.

The ability of local fire departments to respond to fires and explosions would be dependent upon the scale of such an emergency (Wells 2002). It is expected that existing capacity would be adequate to respond to a small fire, explosion, or release of hazardous substances. However, because the project is located in a rural area with limited equipment and personnel, individual local fire departments have indicated that they would not have sufficient equipment and/or personnel to respond to a large or catastrophic event such as a large explosion or fire (Wells 2002). Response to a catastrophic event would require a concerted effort by multiple emergency response providers in the area. However, due to low probability of such a catastrophic event, as discussed in Section 3.7, Hazards, the potential impact is considered to be less than significant.

Schools. Construction and operation impacts associated with the project's implementation and the effects on schools in the project area are described in the following paragraphs.

Construction. As discussed in Section 3.12, Population and Housing, an estimated 80 specialized nonlocal workers would be hired during the 20-month construction period, with an estimate of 40 nonlocal employees working on the project at any one time. Because these non-local workers would be in the area only for the duration of their particular phase, they would not become permanent residents. It is expected that because most of the nonlocal labor is at a work site during these temporary work shifts, it is unlikely that they would bring school age children with them. The majority of nonlocal workers would be in the area during the summer months when children are not in school. Thus, project construction activities should not impact local schools.

Operations. As discussed in Section 3.12, Population and Housing, approximately four permanent employees would be added during project operations. Any children that might move to the area would not have a significant effect on school capacity. Due to the small number of permanent employees who could potentially have children attending schools in this area, the potential impact on schools in the project area is considered to be less than significant.

Level of Significance Without Mitigation. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in a significantly adverse impact on public services in the project area. Existing public services infrastructure in the project area is expected to be sufficient to meet any temporary increase in demand for services. The impact is considered to be less than significant without mitigation.

Mitigation Measures. No mitigation is required.

Impact 3.12-2: Potential To Cause A Substantial Increase In Acceptable Service Ratios, Response Times, Or Other Performance Objectives For All Emergency Response Providers

Emergency Service Ratios. Construction and operation impacts associated with the project's implementation and the effects on service ratios in the project area are described in the following paragraphs.

Construction. As shown in Table 3.12-2, the majority of workers would be drawn from a local labor pool. Non-local labor would only be utilized for specialized skills unavailable in the local area. The temporary influx of the small number of non-local workers into the area is not expected to significantly affect emergency service ratios in the area.

Operations. Only four new permanent employees would be required during project operations. No significant additional demand for emergency services is expected during project operations.

Emergency Response Times. Construction and operation impacts associated with the project's implementation and the effects on emergency response times in the project area are described in the following paragraphs.

Construction. Access to all residences near project construction would be maintained except when closures are coordinated with the owner/tenants. As discussed in Section 3.15, Transportation, the proposed project may disrupt emergency response times due to construction occurring on main access roadways. However, it is anticipated that implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.15-1, Development of a Transportation Management Plan would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

Operations. Following construction, access to all residences temporarily affected by construction activities would be cleared. No impact to emergency response times during project operations is anticipated.

Level of Significance Without Mitigation. It is not expected that the proposed project would significantly affect acceptable service ratios or response times of emergency response providers in the project area. Potential impacts to emergency response times would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.15-1.

Mitigation Measures. No mitigation is required.

Impact 3.12-3: Potential To Cause A Quantifiable Reduction in the Value Of Properties Crossed By The Pipeline Or Substantially Impact The Economies Of Those Communities Affected by the Proposed Project

As with Public Services above, the following potential impacts to Socioeconomics are discussed in general terms for the entire project area. It is assumed that potential impacts to socioeconomics in the project area would be similar across project components (Well Pad Site, Remote Facility Site, Storage Loop Pipeline, etc.).

Property Values. Construction and operation impacts associated with the project's implementation and the effects on property values in the project area are described in the following paragraph.

Construction and Operations. The potential effect of a pipeline easement on property value, including resale ability, is difficult to quantify based on data currently available. The pipeline easement would preclude construction of above-ground structures atop the permanent pipeline ROW; However, the installation of the proposed pipeline would not change the use of the land, predominantly agriculture, crossed by the proposed pipeline route. Because property taxes for a parcel of land are typically based on the current use of the land, it is not anticipated that the proposed project would have a substantial effect on property values in the project area (California State Lands Commission and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission 2000).

Tax Revenues. Construction and operation impacts associated with the project's implementation and the effects on tax revenues in the project area are described in the following paragraphs.

Construction. The proposed project is expected to have a beneficial impact on tax revenues and local economies in the area. It is estimated that nonlocal construction workers spend \$65-\$70 per day in the local area. On this basis, approximately \$630,000 would be spent in the Butte, Colusa, Glenn, and Sutter County areas during the proposed project construction. Additional income would result from payroll spending by local workers. Based on the estimated local labor component of project construction, local labor payroll for the project would be approximately \$5 million. Since the project would not result in any additional costs to local governments, residents, or businesses, construction of the proposed project is expected to provide a net financial benefit to the local area.

The initial project development generates annual property tax revenues of approximately \$460,000 in Butte County. These tax revenues are distributed (WGSJ 2001) in the following (approximate) proportions according to prescribed taxation rates:

- Schools (all districts): 83 percent
- County General Fund: 8 percent
- Other county services and special districts: 9 percent

With the proposed project, the initial tax revenues generated in Butte County would increase to approximately \$1.1 million. Colusa County would also benefit in property taxes from its portion of the Line 400/401 Connection Pipeline and the Delevan Interconnect Facility. The initial annual property tax payment for the proposed facilities in Colusa County would be approximately \$350,000 and would likely be distributed in proportions similar to Butte County.

Operations. Following construction, potential fiscal benefits would primarily be associated with increased employment and income described below. Project operations would not be expected to have a significant impact on tax revenues in the project area following construction.

Employment and Income. Construction and operation impacts associated with the project's implementation and the effects on employment and income in the project area are described in the following paragraphs.

Construction. The proposed project would result in an increase in temporary and permanent employment locally and regionally. As shown in Table 3.12-2, a total of 303 workers would be required to construct the various project phases over the 20-month construction period. Peak project employment would occur during June, July, and August in 2003, when approximately 204 workers, about 40 of whom would be nonlocal, would be in the project area. Since the project is subject to a Project Labor Agreement, contractors would fill jobs from the union hiring halls in Butte, Colusa, and Sutter Counties. As a result, project construction may have a short-term beneficial effect on local unemployment and income in Butte, Colusa, and Sutter counties.

Operations. Existing operations support four permanent positions and represent a beneficial effect on the local economies of Butte and Colusa, with an annual payroll of over \$250,000. Since the proposed expansions are occurring at the existing facilities, the present complement of four operations and maintenance staff would be only need to be supplemented with up to four additional positions.

The project would continue to produce secondary local employment opportunities in its need for support services, such as:

- Landscape/grounds maintenance
- Gravel and haulers
- Grader operators
- Welders
- Water haulers
- Equipment inspectors
- Vehicle sales and maintenance

Annual expenditures for these types of services are estimated at \$300,000. By using local suppliers for service needs the project would continue to provide additional economic benefits without an adverse effect on population, housing, employment, or schools. Given the high unemployment rates in Colusa, Butte, and Sutter counties, the introduction of additional jobs would represent a beneficial impact on the economies of these communities.

Level of Significance Without Mitigation. Economic benefits are anticipated from the project in the form of increased construction-related employment, income, and sales, as well as increased property tax revenues for Butte and Colusa Counties during project operation. Increased costs borne by the counties for the public services provided the project would be minimal, if any. Consequently, only a positive fiscal impact from construction and operation is anticipated.

Mitigation Measures. A beneficial impact is anticipated. No mitigation is required.

Impact 3.12-4: Potential To Result In A Disruption In The Balance Between Employment Opportunities And Available Housing In An Area

Construction. As discussed earlier, the proposed project would result in an increase in temporary and permanent employment locally and regionally. The majority of the increase in employment would be temporary. As discussed in Section 3.12, Population and Housing, the proposed project would create a need for temporary housing for up to 80 people during the 20-month construction period estimated by WGSI. Since nonlocal workers would be in the area only during project construction and would then move on to construction projects in other locations, there should be no population growth or housing impact.

As discussed in Section 3.12, based on the number of available hotel, motel, RV parks, camping sites, rental properties, and available housing in Butte and Colusa Counties, the increase in demand for housing associated with the project is expected to be accommodating regardless of the phase of the project or the time of the year. It is not expected that the proposed project would result in a disruption between employment opportunities and available housing in the area.

Operations. As discussed in Section 3.12, only four additional employees would be added during project operations. The additional employment opportunities discussed above would constitute secondary local employment and would not require a significant influx of additional permanent workers into the area. Project operations would not be expected to result in a disruption between employment and available housing in the project area. The impact is considered to be less than significant.

Level of Significance Without Mitigation. No significant impact is anticipated.

Mitigation Measures. No mitigation is required.