

7 ADDITIONAL CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter includes a discussion of other CEQA considerations pursuant to California PRC § 21100. Section 7.1 addresses the growth-inducing impact of the Revised Project (PRC § 21100[b][5]). Significant effects on the environment that would be irreversible if the Revised Project is implemented are included in Section 7.2 (PRC § 21100[b][2][B]). Significant effects on the environment that cannot be avoided if the Revised Project is implemented are included in Section 7.3 (PRC § 21100[b][2][A]).

7.1 GROWTH-INDUCING EFFECTS

The discussion on growth-inducing effects must address “ways in which the Proposed Project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2[d]). Growth-inducing effects of a Proposed Project are considered significant if the project directly causes population growth beyond that considered in local and regional land use plans or another relevant population growth projection. Effects would also be significant if a Proposed Project would provide the means to allow for population growth beyond that considered in local and regional land use plans or another relevant population growth projection.

While the Revised Project components are located in the City of Jurupa Valley, the project, as a whole, will serve RPU and the City of Riverside. The RTRP will not provide power to the City of Jurupa Valley or surrounding areas; growth-inducing impacts are limited to the City of Riverside.

According to the Southern California Association of Governments, the City’s estimated population in 2016 was 324,696 (Southern California Association of Governments, 2017). The population projection for 2040 is 386,600 (Southern California Association of Governments, 2015). Within the RPU’s service area, demand is already exceeding capacity to provide reliable electric power from external generation sources. The Revised Project will allow RPU to meet current demand for energy service within the city limits as well as projected demand related to population and economic growth in the City’s planned sphere of influence.

7.1.1 Growth Caused by Direct and Indirect Employment

Construction and operation of the Revised Project would not alter the employment patterns in the Riverside or Jurupa Valley areas. SCE and RPU would employ approximately 187 workers throughout project phases over the estimated 38-month construction period. Refer to Table 2.4-2 in Chapter 2: Project Description for a summary of workforce estimates for the Revised Project. Construction of the Revised Project would be performed by either SCE construction crews or

7 ADDITIONAL CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

contractors depending on the availability of utility construction personnel at the time of construction. If SCE construction crews are used, they would be based out of local facilities within Riverside County. Additional housing to accommodate these workers would not be required.

Revised Project operation and maintenance would be incorporated into current operation and maintenance plans and would be accomplished by current SCE and RPU employees. The Revised Project would, therefore, not create new jobs. No new permanent staff would be required; new transmission facilities would be unattended. The Revised Project would not result in an increase in employment during either the operation or maintenance phase and thus would not increase the demand for new housing.

7.1.2 Growth Related to Provision of Additional Electric Power

SCE provides electrical power services to the Cities of Riverside and Jurupa Valley, and it therefore must plan to meet electric demand needs for growth that is planned for and approved by the local planning agencies. Power is currently delivered to RPU through the regional transmission system owned by SCE and operated by the CAISO. RPU provides electric service to customers in the City of Riverside through a 69-kV distribution system that currently is served exclusively through SCE's Vista Substation, which is located in the City of Grand Terrace approximately 14 miles east of the proposed Mira Loma Substation.

RPU requested in 2014 that SCE develop a means to provide additional transmission capacity to meet projected load growth and a second interconnection to the grid for system reliability. SCE reviewed a range of alternatives that would provide Riverside with a second source of transmission capacity and interconnection. SCE identified the Proposed Project as the preferred solution to provide RPU with long-term system capacity for load growth and needed system reliability and flexibility.

SCE determined that the RPU 69-kV system should be expanded and divided into eastern and western systems to integrate additional transmission capacity into the RPU system. The existing grid connection from Vista Substation would continue to supply the eastern system, while the western system would be supplied through Wilderness Substation (as described in the 2013 RTRP EIR). Creating two separate 69-kV electrical systems would provide the required level of emergency back-up service in the event of an interruption to either substation.

SCE has identified the following objectives of the Revised Project:

- Increase capacity to meet existing electric system demand and anticipated future load growth
- Provide an additional point of delivery for bulk power into the RPU electrical system, thereby reducing dependence on Vista Substation and increasing overall reliability

The Revised Project is not intended to supply power related to growth for any particular development, either directly or indirectly, and would not result in direct growth-inducing

7 ADDITIONAL CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

impacts. The Revised Project would not modify land use or zoning designations to permit new residential or commercial development and therefore would not foster growth, remove direct growth constraints, or add a direct stimulus to growth. Growth in the Revised Project areas is expected to occur with or without implementation of the Revised Project.

The provision of electricity is not considered removal of a barrier to growth. Electricity, on its own, is generally not the sole obstacle to growth in any specific area. Other factors, such as the economic conditions of the area, land availability, or the adequacy of water supplies, affect population growth more than the provision of electricity. The provision of additional electricity due to the Revised Project would support the growth projections for the service area. The Revised Project would not create new opportunities for local industry or commerce and would not induce growth through economic opportunities. In the absence of the Revised Project, planned development and population growth would occur; however, the electrical services in the area would become more unreliable over time as the demand for energy increases and exceeds the capacity of the existing area substations.

7.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

Pursuant to Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must address significant irreversible environmental changes and irretrievable commitments of resources that would be caused by the Revised Project. These changes include the use of non-renewable resources during construction and operation, long-term or permanent access to previously inaccessible areas, and irreversible damages that may result from project-related accidents.

Revised Project construction activities would cause temporary and permanent loss of vegetation and habitat that could potentially support sensitive wildlife species. Construction would result in approximately 0.09 acre of permanent loss of sensitive vegetation communities, plus approximately 1.29 acres of additional temporary loss of sensitive vegetation communities. However, compliance with the requirements of the MSHCP and implementation of EPEs and mitigation measures for biological resources recommended in this Subsequent EIR (refer to Section 4.4: Biological Resources) would ensure that project-induced loss of vegetation and habitat would be less than significant. The MSHCP would require SCE and RPU to develop a restoration plan and mitigation approach that would restore temporary construction impacts to pre-construction conditions and conserve sensitive habitat within the MSHCP plan area that would mitigate impacts on sensitive vegetation and habitats.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15127 further clarifies:

The information required by Section 15126.2(c) concerning irreversible changes, need be included only in EIRs prepared in connection with any of the following activities:

- (a) The adoption, amendment, or enactment of a plan, policy, or ordinance of a public agency;

7 ADDITIONAL CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

- (b) The adoption by a Local Agency Formation Commission of a resolution making determinations; or
- (c) A project which will be subject to the requirement for preparing an environmental impact statement pursuant to the requirements of the EPA of 1969, 42 USC 4321–4347.

The Revised Project would not meet any of the conditions stipulated above.

7.2.1 Non-Renewable Resources

The use of non-renewable resources is considered an irreversible change to the environment. Implementation of the Revised Project or any of the alternatives would result in the consumption of energy as it relates to the fuel needed for construction-related activities. Fuel would be needed for construction vehicles, construction equipment, construction operations, and helicopter use. Chapter 2: Project Description of this Subsequent EIR includes information on the Revised Project's design, construction, and operational characteristics. Construction equipment types and duration of use are listed for all construction elements.

Additionally, construction would require the manufacture of new materials, which would result in the irretrievable commitment of natural resources. SCE would attempt to recycle or salvage waste materials. Waste materials that cannot be reused or recycled (i.e., wood, soil, vegetation, and sanitation waste) would be disposed of at an appropriate facility. The Revised Project would not cause a substantial increase in the consumption of non-renewable resources.

7.2.2 Potential Accidents

During construction and operation of the Revised Project, potential accidents could result in significant changes that cannot be reversed or completely mitigated. Major construction activities, such as site preparation and installation of components and equipment, would pose the greatest risks for accidents to occur that could potentially result in significant irreversible changes. Section 4.6: Hazards and Hazardous Materials of this Subsequent EIR describes hazards and hazardous materials that could create the potential for accidents.

Fires caused by power lines are also a significant potential accident, but because higher voltage transmission line conductors are spaced far apart, fires started by contact with fallen or wind-blown tree limbs and debris, or from arcing, are rare. Transmission line protection and control systems are designed to detect faults and rapidly shut off power flow. High voltage lines are typically mounted on very tall structures to provide adequate distance from vegetation. California law requires minimum clearances for high-voltage transmission lines. The risk of fire hazards, including the risk of wildfire, were addressed in the 2013 RTRP EIR (Riverside Public Utilities, 2012). The risks of shock hazard, falling power lines and falling transmission structures associated with the Revised Project are discussed in Section 4.7: Hazards and Hazardous Materials. MM HAZ-05 requires SCE to identify existing conducting objects near the Revised Project and model the induced current touch voltages on these objects. If the modeled induced current voltage of a conductive objective exceeds maximum touch voltage thresholds, SCE

7 ADDITIONAL CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

would be required to incorporate grounding measures into the design features to reduce the touch voltages below threshold levels. During construction, the conductor would not be energized, and temporary guard structures would be installed to protect infrastructure under the transmission line. Once completed, conductor phases would be adequately spaced to allow “blow out” room. If a transmission structure was to be blown over, the protection system of the line would shut off power flow in a fraction of a second. Impacts resulting from excessive shock hazard, falling power lines, and falling transmission structures would be less than significant with mitigation.

Shock hazards are another significant source of potential accidents. Alternating current overhead and underground electric transmission lines produce electric and magnetic fields. These fields have the potential to create induced voltages and currents in nearby conductive objects such as buildings, roofs, fences, railroads, communication lines, pipelines, farm equipment and vehicles. When a person or animal comes in contact with a conductive object near an operational power line, a perceptible current or electric shock may occur. Revised Project construction would meet or exceed IEEE, ANSI, CPUC GO 95 and GO 128 safety standards, and OSHA and Cal/OSHA safety regulations. Impacts resulting from induced current and voltage during construction of the Revised Project would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

7.3 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED

Section 15126.2(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR identify significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided by a Proposed Project, even with the implementation of mitigation measures. The environmental impacts of the Revised Project are described in the environmental analysis sections in Chapter 4: Environmental Analysis. Impacts that are significant and cannot be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the application of feasible mitigation measures have been characterized as significant and unavoidable impacts. The significant and unavoidable impacts resulting from the Revised Project are summarized in Table 7.3-1 below. Complete descriptions of these impacts are presented in Chapter 4.

7 ADDITIONAL CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

Table 7.3-1 Summary of Significant and Unavoidable Impacts of the Revised Project

Resource Area	Significant and Unavoidable Impacts
Aesthetics	Aesthetics-c: Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings
Agricultural Resources	Agriculture-a: convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use
Noise	Noise-d: result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project
Traffic	<p>Traffic-a: conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including, but not limited to, intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit</p> <hr/> <p>Traffic-b: conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to, level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways</p>

7.4 REFERENCES

- Riverside Public Utilities. (2012, October 23). Final Environmental Impact Report Riverside Transmission Reliability Project SCH #2007011113.
- Southern California Association of Governments. (2015). *Demographics & Growth Forecast Draft December 2015*. Retrieved from http://scagrtpscs.net/Documents/2016/draft/d2016RTPSCS_DemographicsGrowthForecast.pdf
- Southern California Association of Governments. (2017). *Profile of the City of Riverside*. Retrieved from <http://www.scag.ca.gov/Documents/Riverside.pdf>