

B.3.14 Public Services

PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

B.3.14.1 Setting

The community and local municipalities supervise fire and police departments as well as school districts, parks and recreational areas, and other public services. Table B.3.14-1 lists applicable public service providers by jurisdiction.

The Kern County and San Bernardino County fire departments serve the Project area. The Kern County Fire Department administers Fire Stations 73 (Inyokern), 74 (Ridgecrest), and 77 (Ridgecrest Heights), and the North Desert Division of the San Bernardino County Fire Department includes 20 stations that serve the communities of the Searles Valley and Trona.

The Kern County Sheriff's Department and the Ridgecrest Police Department provide police protection to the Project site and the surrounding area. The County's Ridgecrest Substation is located 1.7 miles from the existing Downs Substation, and the Ridgecrest Police Department is located one mile from the substation.

Local parks are administered by the parks and recreation departments of Kern County and the city of Ridgecrest. In addition, regional recreational resources are managed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service and the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

Other public facilities in the Project area include the Ridgecrest Library administered by Kern County Library, and United State Post Office locations in Inyokern, Ridgecrest, and Trona.

Table B.3.14-1. Service Providers
Fire Protection – Kern County Fire Department, San Bernardino County Fire Department
Police Protection – Kern County Sheriff's Office, Ridgecrest Police Department
Hospitals – Ridgecrest Regional Hospital
Schools – Sierra Sands Unified School District, Trona Unified School District

Sources: KCFD, 2011; SBCFD, 2011; KCSO, 2011; and RPD, 2011

B.3.14.2 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain

acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

a) Fire protection?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Construction activities associated with the proposed substation expansion, the modifications to the 115-kV subtransmission line, and the fiber optic telecommunication system upgrades are not anticipated to increase the demand for fire protection services in a way that would result in the need for new or altered facilities. Fire risk would not be greater than at any other construction site. Following construction, operation of the substation could result in instances requiring fire protection services. However, the California Fire Code and Uniform Building Code require the Proposed Project to include fire protection features, including unobstructed access, as shown in the Project Description Figure B-6. Fire risk would be comparable to that from other existing electrical infrastructure in the area, and this would not create the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities. The substation would not affect the ability of fire personnel to respond to fires, nor affect response time or other service performance. No additional fire risks would be introduced with the 115-kV subtransmission line segments or for the new fiber optic telecommunication system upgrades. The Proposed Project would have less-than-significant impacts with regard to fire protection.

b) Police Protection?

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Construction activities associated with the proposed substation expansion, the modifications to the 115-kV subtransmission line, and the fiber optic telecommunication system upgrades are not anticipated to increase the demand for police protection services in the area. An eight-foot-high chain-link fence would enclose the proposed Downs Substation expansion area on all sides, which would help reduce the demand for police protection. Five strands of barbed wire would be affixed to the top of the fence. The remaining parcel would be enclosed on all sides by an eight-foot-high chain-link fence without barbed wire. As with fire services, the construction and operation of the Proposed Project would not result in a need for additional police facilities nor would it affect response times or other service performance. The result would be a less-than-significant impact with regard to police protection.

c) Schools?

NO IMPACT. Construction of the Proposed Project would last for nine months and would require 15 to 25 workers during peak activity. These construction personnel would likely commute to the site from within Kern County or San Bernardino County and would not create a permanent change in local population. Upon completion, the expanded Downs Substation would be automated and would not require additional SCE employees for operations and maintenance activities. No additional personnel would be required for the 115-kV subtransmission line segments or for the new fiber optic telecommunication cables. Since the Proposed Project would not increase the local population, no increase in demand for school facilities would occur, and no new school facilities would be required. No impacts to schools would occur.

d) Parks?

NO IMPACT. As described in Section B.3.13.2(c) above regarding schools, the Proposed Project, which includes the proposed substation expansion, the modifications to the 115-kV subtransmission line, and the fiber optic telecommunication system upgrades, would not increase the region's population. Consequently, the Project would not increase long-term demands on existing parks in the project area, and no new or expanded park facilities would be required because of the Proposed Project. No impacts

to parks would occur. See Section B.3.14, Recreation, for a complete discussion the Proposed Project's potential impacts to parks and other recreational facilities.

e) Other Public Facilities?

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project, which includes the proposed substation expansion, the modifications to the 115-kV subtransmission line, and the fiber optic telecommunication system upgrades, would not increase population and would therefore not affect other governmental services or public facilities or require new or expanded facilities to be developed. Therefore, no impact on other public facilities would occur.