

4.14 Recreation

This section presents the environmental setting and impact analysis related to study area parks and other recreational resources.

4.14.1 Setting

The Proposed Project and alternatives would be located in Coachella Valley in central Riverside County. Riverside County incorporates a wide range of open space, parks, and recreational areas. The parks and recreational areas within the County also serve residents and visitors in the western portion of the County, as well as in the desert, mountain, and Colorado River regions (Riverside County, 2003). The discussions below provide descriptions of the recreational resources in the vicinity of the Farrell-Garnet and Mirage-Santa Rosa study areas that would be within one mile of the Proposed Project and alternatives.

Farrell-Garnet Study Area

The Palm Springs Country Club golf course extends from a location east of Sunrise Way, near San Rafael Road, down to a location west of Gene Autry Trail, near East Verona Road. This golf course is located approximately 0.25 mile to the west of the proposed Farrell-Garnet subtransmission line alignment and is approximately 500 feet east of the Alternative 2 and 3 alignments. In addition, a portion of the Escena Golf Club is located east of Gene Autry Trail, approximately 0.25 mile southeast of the Farrell Substation and approximately 800 feet south of the Alternative 6 and 7 alignments. The Desert Princess Country Club golf course is located adjacent to the Alternative 6 and 7 alignments and approximately 0.75 mile east of Farrell Substation. The Cimmaron Resort golf course is located approximately 0.7 mile south of the Alternative 6 alignment and approximately 200 feet from the Alternative 7 alignment at its southernmost edge. The Cathedral Canyon Country Club golf course, Outdoor Resort and Country Club golf course, and Tahquitz Creek golf course are located 600 feet south, 0.4 mile east, and 0.5 mile southeast of the Alternative 7 alignment, respectively.

Ruth Hardy Park is located approximately 0.75 mile southwest of the Alternative 2 and 3 alignments. Victoria Park is located approximately 0.5 mile south of the Alternative 3 alignment and 0.75 mile west of the Alternative 2 alignment. The Desert Highland Park is located approximately 0.4 mile west of the Alternative 3 alignment. Panorama Park, located in Cathedral City, is approximately 0.4 mile south of the Alternative 6 alignment and approximately 0.4 mile east of the Alternative 7 alignment. Century Park and the Desert Memorial Park Cemetery are both located approximately 0.9 mile east of the Alternative 7 alignment. The Big League Dreams Sport Park is located approximately 0.3 mile southeast of the Alternative 7 alignment.

Mirage-Santa Rosa Study Area

Recreational resources within the vicinity of the proposed subtransmission and transmission alignments and sites in the Mirage-Santa Rosa study area include the Coachella Valley Preserve,

the Tri-Palm Golf Course, and the Ivey Ranch Country Club golf course. The Coachella Valley Preserve is open space used for conservation purposes and is located approximately one mile east of the proposed subtransmission and transmission line alignments.

The proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa alignment would traverse in a north-south orientation through the eastern portion of the Tri-Palm Golf Course within an existing SCE right-of-way (ROW). The existing pole behind the tee box for the course's eighth hole would be replaced and three poles would be replaced that are adjacent to the fairway of the tenth hole. The Alternative 5 alignment would be located approximately 700 feet south of the Tri-Palm Golf Course.

The Ivey Ranch Country Club golf course is approximately 0.7 mile east of the southern end of the proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa subtransmission line alignment and the Alternative 5 alignment. The Westin Mission Hills Resort (Pete Dye Course) and Mission Hills County Club are less than 0.25 mile southwest of the proposed line reconfiguration site at Bob Hope Drive and Dinah Shore Drive and the Marriott Shadow Ridge Golf Club golf course is located approximately 0.5 mile southwest of the proposed line reconfiguration site at Portola Avenue and Gerald Ford Drive.

Regulatory Setting

Riverside County

The following Riverside County General Plan policies that relate to recreation may be applicable to the Proposed Project and alternatives (Riverside County, 2003):

Policy OS 20.2: Prevent unnecessary extension of public facilities, services, and utilities, for urban uses, into Open Space-Conservation designated areas.

Policy OS 20.3: Discourage the absorption of dedicated park lands by non-recreational uses, public or private. Where absorption is unavoidable, replace park lands that are absorbed by other uses with similar or improved facilities and programs.

Policy OS 20.6: Require new development to provide implementation strategies for the funding of both active and passive parks and recreational sites.

Policy LU 19.5: Require that new development meet the parkland requirements as established in the Quimby Act and County enabling ordinances.

Policy C 16.4: Identify all existing rights-of-way which have been obtained for trial purposes though the land development process.

City of Indian Wells

The City of Indian Wells General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element provides the following policies that would be applicable to the Proposed Project (City of Indian Wells, 1999):

Policy IIIA1.1: Designate and preserve the City's open space resources, including hillside open space, watercourse open space, golf courses, and public parks.

City of Palm Desert

The City of Palm Desert General Plan provides the following goal and program that may be applicable to the Proposed Project (City of Palm Desert, 2004):

Goal 1: The designation, conservation and management of open space areas to protect environmental resource, guard against environmental hazards, and provide enhanced recreational opportunities and enhanced aesthetic character for the City.

Program 1.B: Evaluate all development proposals adjacent to or in the vicinity of open space lands and identify their impact upon and compatibility with designated open space and conservation lands.

City of Palm Springs

The City of Palm Springs General Plan includes the following policies that may be applicable to the Proposed Project and alternatives regarding recreation policy guidance (City of Palm Springs, 2007):

Policy LUI.11: Sensitively integrate into the community required land uses such as transportation corridors, flood control systems, utility corridors and recreational corridors.

Policy LUI.12: Ensure that land uses maintain and expand parks, recreational trails, bikeways, and pedestrian corridors and linkage throughout the City and between Palm Springs and adjacent municipalities.

City of Cathedral City General Plan

The City of Cathedral City General Plan provides the following policy that would be applicable to the Proposed Project and alternatives (City of Cathedral City, 2002):

Policy 3: The City shall explore and exploit all legitimate and appropriate opportunities to secure and protect valuable open space and conservation lands for the benefit of the entire community.

City of Rancho Mirage General Plan

The City of Rancho Mirage General Plan contains the following policies and program that would be applicable to the Proposed Project (City of Rancho Mirage, 2005):

Policy 2: To the extent feasible, the City shall provide at least three acres of local and community parkland per 1,000 in population, which includes park facilities for all age segments of the population.

Policy 9: Through coordination with the local utilities, service providers and the Coachella Valley Water District, the City shall maximize the use of flood control and utility easement areas for inclusion in a multi-use trail system providing alternative transportation links to park and open space areas.

Programs 9.A: Confer and coordinate with the Coachella Valley Water District and utility purveyors to integrate, as practical, a multiple use trail system that links City parks with open space and conservation area.

4.14.2 Significance Criteria

A project would normally have a significant effect on recreational resources if it would:

- a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or
- b) Disrupt recreational activities, which would adversely affect the recreational value of an existing facility.

4.14.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

SCE has committed to implementing the following applicant proposed measure (APM) related to recreation resources:

APM REC-1. Recreation Area Closures. When temporary short-term closures to recreational areas are necessary for construction activities, SCE would coordinate those closures with recreational facility owners. To the extent practicable, SCE would schedule construction activities to avoid heavy recreational use periods (e.g., holidays or tournaments). SCE would post notice of the closure onsite 14 calendar days prior to the closure.

4.14.4 Recreation Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The potential for adverse impacts on recreational services has been evaluated against the significance criteria, considering current recreational service information and taking into account the goals, policies, and regulations adopted by the various jurisdictions in which the components of the Proposed Project fall.

a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.

Increases in demand for recreational facilities are typically associated with substantial increases in population. The Proposed Project would not contain a residential component that would result in increased usage of existing recreational facilities once operational. The construction work force would consist primarily of local workers; therefore, construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would not increase the use of parks or recreational facilities, nor would the project result in the need to construct or expand recreational facilities. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in demand for recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the existing facilities would occur or be accelerated (No Impact).

b) Disrupt recreational activities, which would adversely affect the recreational value of existing facilities.

Impact 4.14-1: Construction of the proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Subtransmission line would temporarily disrupt operations of the Tri-Palm Golf Course. *Less than significant* (Class III)

Construction of the proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa subtransmission line would occur within a portion of SCE's existing ROW that traverses the Tri-Palm Golf Course. Construction activities associated with the Mirage-Santa Rosa subtransmission line would require a number of pole replacements on the golf course including a pole that is located behind the tee box for the eighth hole and three poles that are adjacent to the fairway of the tenth hole. Construction activities at these locations would require the closure of holes eight and ten for at least one day each. Poles would also be replaced in the vicinity of three other holes; however, it is anticipated that work in these areas would only require the golfers to take a different route around the construction area to the next available hole.

Construction activities would cause temporary interruptions to the operations of the golf course, which would impact the golfers utilizing the course. However, pursuant to APM REC-1, SCE would coordinate course hole closures with the manager/owner of the golf course, would schedule construction activities to avoid heavy use periods (e.g., holidays or tournaments), and would post notice of the closure at the golf course 14 calendar days prior to the closure. Disruptions to the operations of the Tri-Palm Golf Course would be short-term and temporary in nature; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation: None required.

4.14.5 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of cumulative impacts is the regional recreational facilities in the project area, generally located within Riverside County and the cities of Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, Indian Wells, and Palm Desert.

As described above, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in demand for recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the existing facilities would occur or be accelerated. Implementation of new projects as described in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, would include residential developments which may increase demand on existing recreational facilities and/or result in the need for new recreational facilities within the project vicinity. However, since the Proposed Project would not have an individual incremental impact on demand for recreational facilities once construction is complete, it would not contribute to cumulative demand associated with other reasonably foreseeable projects (No Impact).

There are a number of other reasonably foreseeable development projects within the vicinity of the Tri-Palm Golf Course; however, none of these projects would actually be constructed in the

golf course and would therefore not impact operation of the course. Since there are no reasonably foreseeable projects that would impact the golf course simultaneously with construction of the Proposed Project, short-term impacts associated with the proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa subtransmission line would not be cumulatively considerable and cumulative impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.14.6 Alternatives

No Project Alternative

For the purposes of this analysis, the No Project Alternative includes the following two assumptions: 1) the project would not be implemented and the existing conditions in the study area would not be changed; and 2) new subtransmission and transmission lines and/or additional power generation would be constructed in or near the study area to supply power to the Electrical Needs Area. Given the highly speculative nature of the No Project Alternative assumptions, this analysis is qualitative.

Under the No Project Alternative, none of the facilities or infrastructure upgrades associated with the Proposed Project evaluated in this EIR would be constructed by SCE. However, SCE would be required to design a new project in order to satisfy the objectives of the Proposed Project. Any project that would satisfy the objectives of the Proposed Project would not likely result in impacts related to increased use of existing parks or recreational facilities (No Impact).

If the No Project Alternative required SCE to acquire new ROW or would be constructed through or immediately adjacent to a recreational facility, there would be a potential that the alternative could result in impacts to recreation resources. However, it is likely that either an applicant proposed measure similar to APM REC-1 would be effective in reducing recreation impacts to less than significant (Class III).

Alternative 2

As with the proposed Farrell-Garnet subtransmission line, the Alternative 2 subtransmission line would not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities; no impact would occur (No Impact).

The nearest recreational facilities to the Alternative 2 alignment include the Palm Springs Country Club golf course, approximately 500 feet east of the alignment, as well as Rudy Hardy Park and Victoria Park, located 0.75 mile southwest and west of the alignment, respectively. However, construction and operation of the Alternative 2 subtransmission line would not disrupt activities at any of these facilities; no impact would occur (No Impact).

Alternative 3

As with the proposed Farrell-Garnet subtransmission line, the Alternative 3 subtransmission line would not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities; no impact would occur (No Impact).

The nearest recreational facilities to the Alternative 3 alignment include the Palm Springs Country Club golf course, approximately 500 feet east of the alignment, and the Desert Highland Park located approximately 0.4 mile east of the alignment. The Alternative 3 subtransmission line would also be located within 0.75 mile of Rudy Hardy Park and within 0.5 mile of Victoria Park. However, construction and operation of this alternative would not disrupt activities at any of these facilities; no impact would occur (No Impact).

Alternative 5

As with the proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa subtransmission line, Alternative 5 would not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities; no impact would occur (No Impact).

The nearest recreational facilities to the Alternative 5 alignment would include the Tri-Palm golf course, approximately 700 feet north of the alignment, and the Ivey Ranch Country Club golf course located approximately 0.7 mile east of the alignment. Unlike the proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa subtransmission line, construction of this alternative would not disrupt activities at any of these facilities, including the Tri-Palm Golf Course, which would be disturbed during construction activities that would be associated with the proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa subtransmission line; no impact would occur (No Impact).

Alternative 6

As with the proposed Farrell-Garnet subtransmission line, the Alternative 6 subtransmission line would not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities; no impact would occur (No Impact).

The Alternative 6 alignment is located immediately adjacent to the Desert Princess Country Club along Vista Chino. This alternative would involve pole replacement within existing SCE ROW, and therefore encroachment on the golf course would not be expected during construction. However, implementation of APM REC-1 would ensure that impacts to the golf course would be less than significant (Class III).

Alternative 7

As with the proposed Farrell-Garnet subtransmission line, the Alternative 7 subtransmission line would not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities; no impact would occur (No Impact).

The Alternative 7 alignment is located immediately adjacent to the Desert Princess Country Club along Vista Chino and Landau Boulevard. This alternative would involve pole replacement within existing SCE ROW, and therefore, encroachment on the golf course would not be expected during construction. However, implementation of APM REC-1 would ensure that impacts to the golf course would be less than significant (Class III).

References – Recreation

- City of Cathedral City. 2002. City of Cathedral City General Plan. Adopted July 31, 2002.
- City of Indian Wells. 1999. City of Indian Wells General Plan. Adopted February 1, 1999.
- City of Palm Desert. 2004. City of Palm Desert General Plan. Adopted March 2004.
- City of Palm Springs. 2007. City of Palm Springs 2007 General Plan. Adopted October 2007.
- City of Rancho Mirage. 2005. City of Rancho Mirage General Plan. Adopted November 2005.
- Riverside County. 2003. *Riverside County General Plan*. Adopted October 7, 2003. Accessed website (<http://www.rctlma.org/generalplan/index.html>) during June 2008.