

8.0 ENERGY AND UTILITIES

8.1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This section describes existing conditions and potential project-related impacts to energy and utilities. Energy and utilities service systems include power, natural gas, communications, water treatment and distribution, sewer and septic facilities, solid waste disposal and local and regional water supplies. Information on public service utilities and service systems were obtained from searches of local government websites and other local services information resources. Construction of the project will not have significant adverse impacts on energy or other utility services.

8.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Electrical services and natural gas in the project area is provided mainly by PG&E. Each municipality has public works departments that provide water and sewer services to their respective cities. Residences outside city limits may receive their services from a variety of providers (e.g., Valley of the Moon Water District). Sonoma County oversees waste water treatment and water throughout the county. Land-line phone service is provided by both SBC and AT&T. Cable television is provided by Comcast.

8.3 POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

8.3.1 Significance Criteria

The significance criteria are derived from Appendix G of the revised CEQA guidelines. Impacts to utilities and service systems in the project area would be considered significant if the project resulted in any of the following:

- A breach of published national, state, or local standards relating to solid waste or litter control.
- Contamination of a public water supply.
- Extension of sewer trunk line with capacity to serve new development.
- Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- The need for new or substantially altered water or wastewater treatment facilities or storm drainage facilities.
- The need for a new or expanded water supply.
- Inadequate access to landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the projects solid waste disposal needs.

8.3.2 Construction Impacts

Project construction would require the use of small amounts of water for making cement footings for the poles, dust control and drinking water. The short-term period of use would have an insignificant impact on local water supplies and create no need for water treatment facilities. Project construction would have an insubstantial impact on wastewater. Construction crews would use portable toilets. No other sources of wastewater are anticipated for construction. No changes to wastewater treatment facilities would be required because of the small amount of waste generated by crews. The project does not require construction of new water or wastewater facilities or pipelines and would not require moving of any such lines. While the project site does not include any known septic fields (except an existing septic system at the Lakeville Substation), the placement of footings for the poles is not expected to significantly alter septic field drainage should they be present. Based on initial research by PG&E, the project is not expected to displace any known existing permitted water wells nor create any substantial alteration of a well field during construction activities. However, PG&E will conduct a pre-construction records search/field survey to identify locations of any water wells or well fields (personal communication with David Thomas, PG&E November 1, 2004).

Replacement of existing wood poles would result in their being disposed of at a landfill authorized to receive them or they would be reused or recycled. If the existing wood poles are wrapped with CuNap wrap, it would need to be removed, placed in a Department of Transportation (DOT)-approved container, labeled as hazardous waste and including project information and transported back to a consolidation area on a remote waste shipping paper. The old conductor will be sold to an aluminum salvage company. Other miscellaneous non-hazardous construction materials that cannot be reused or recycled would likely be acceptable for disposal at municipal county landfills. Any hazardous materials would be recycled, treated and/or disposed of in accordance with federal, state and local laws.

Construction activities could inadvertently contact underground facilities during pole excavations that could lead to short-term service interruptions. The likelihood of such an occurrence is remote, and implementation of standard practices such as contacting Underground Service Alert before excavation, will reduce the impact to a less than significant level. Waste that is generated by the construction will be disposed of at a county dump or similar facility with adequate capacity to accept the material.

8.3.3 Operation Impacts

Operation of the proposed project will not require additional workers other than those currently employed for operation and maintenance. The project will not require additional infrastructure from other utilities to operate in the project area. The project is located primarily within existing streets

and rights-of-way. The project will not extend electrical service and utilities to new areas, or require the extension of other public services to previously unserved areas. The project does not generate a significant demand for water (new landscaping at the Sonoma Substation will require a minor amount of irrigation water to get new water efficient plants established) or generate waste water. A minor amount of solid waste would be generated over the years, such as replacement of worn or damage equipment. As a result, there will be no direct impacts to energy and utilities as a result of the proposed project.

Indirect Impacts from Growth Accommodation

As explained in Chapter 17, the project will accommodate planned growth, but will not induce population growth in the area. Growth in the area is carefully planned and regulated by city and county general plans, which contain land use policies to protect the region's vineyards, open spaces and agricultural traditions and to control urban development. Like other utilities, PG&E plans and upgrades electrical facilities incrementally based on growth projections provided by local government agencies. These growth projections reflect economic and urban developments that are planned and approved by city and county governments.

Local planning policies and zoning regulations have the biggest influence in controlling the pace and ultimate amount of growth in this area. The availability of electrical capacity by itself does not normally ensure or encourage growth within a particular area. Other factors such as economic conditions, land availability, population trends, and local planning policies have more of an effect on growth than the availability of services. Electrical energy to supply this project is immediately available and currently comes mainly from the Geysers geothermal plants, located approximately 25 miles north of Santa Rosa, with some additional supply being provided by gas-fired and hydroelectric generation. Construction of the project will not have significant adverse impacts on energy or other utility services.

8.4 REFERENCES

City of Petaluma website accessed July 15, 2004. www.ci.petaluma.ca.us

City of Sonoma website accessed July 8, 2004. www.sonomacity.org.

Sonoma County website accessed July 8, 2004. www.sonoma-county.org.

Sonoma County Water Agency website accessed July 15, 2004. www.scwa.ca.gov.

Personal communication with David Thomas, PG&E, and Kim Christensen, EDAW, November 1, 2004.

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