

II.0 LAND USE AND AGRICULTURE

II.1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes land use and agriculture in the project area and analyzes potential impacts from project construction and operation. The 7.23-mile long double-circuit 115 kV transmission line will replace an existing single-circuit transmission line along an established PG&E utility right-of-way (ROW). The project is compatible with applicable land use plans and policies adopted by local agencies responsible for land use planning in the project area. The jurisdictions crossed by the project are shown in Table 11-1 and Figure 11-1 and described in the following subsections. As one would expect given the project site's existing land use as an overhead utility corridor, land use and agricultural impacts from replacing poles and adding a second circuit to the existing line and expanding the right-of-way will be less than significant.

Various documents were reviewed to complete this land use analysis; including aerial photographs, AAA maps, city/county general plans and zoning ordinances/maps, web searches, discussions with city and county planners, and environmental impact reports for other projects in the area. In addition, field visits were conducted along the transmission line route and at the substation sites where public access was available, as well as on private parcels where access was granted. Geographic Information System (GIS) data obtained from ESRI Data 2000 were used to identify schools, hospitals, places of worship, and parks in proximity to the proposed transmission line route. Source documents are listed at the end of this chapter.

II.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

II.2.1 Jurisdictions

II.2.1.1 California Public Utilities Commission

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has sole and exclusive jurisdiction over the siting and design of the project because it authorizes the construction and maintenance of investor-owned public utility (IOU) facilities. Although such projects are exempt from local land use and zoning regulations and permitting, General Order No. 131-D, Section III.C requires “the utility to communicate with, and obtain the input of, local authorities regarding land-use matters and obtain any non-discretionary local permits.” As part of its environmental review process, PG&E considered local and state land use plans and policies, and local land use priorities and concerns.

II.2.1.2 Sonoma County

Nearly all of the 7.23-mile transmission line will traverse Sonoma County land (see Figure 11-1). At the east end of the route, only one parcel is outside of Sonoma County: the Sonoma Substation in

the City of Sonoma. Sonoma County's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance regulate proposed non-IOU development in the county.

11.2.1.3 City of Sonoma

The Sonoma Substation parcel at the east end of the route is located within the City of Sonoma (see Figure 11-1). Part of Leveroni Road (0.05-mile east of Harrington Road to Broadway) is included within the City's boundary. The transmission line poles along this stretch of Leveroni Road are under a franchise agreement with the City of Sonoma, which allows PG&E the right to place transmission line in or overhanging the city street right-of-way. The proposed project will not require changing the franchise agreement. The City of Sonoma General Plan and Zoning Ordinance regulate development in the city. The land south of Leveroni Road is under county jurisdiction.

11.2.1.4 City of Petaluma

The proposed transmission line route begins just north of the City of Petaluma, at the Lakeville Substation (intersection of Frates Road and Adobe Road), and proceeds northeast. Although the City of Petaluma is adjacent to the project area, no portion of the transmission line or substation would fall under its jurisdiction, and therefore it will not be discussed further. Figure 11-1 shows the proximity of the transmission line to the City of Petaluma.

11.2.1.5 California Department of Transportation

No portion of the proposed route crosses or parallels California state roadways.

11.2.2 Plans and Policies

This section describes the relevant goals and policies relating to land use (including applicable regulations for agriculture) for the jurisdictional agencies.

11.2.2.1 Segments 1, 2, and most of 17

The relevant land use goals and policies listed in the Sonoma County General Plan include:

- **Goal LU-4.1:** Maintain adequate public services in both rural and urban service areas to accommodate projected growth.
- **Goal LU-8:** Protect lands currently in agricultural production and lands with soils and other characteristics which make them potentially suitable for agricultural use. Retain large parcel sizes and avoid incompatible non-agricultural uses.
 - Objective LU-8.1: Avoid conversion of lands currently used for agricultural production to non-agricultural use.

**Table II-1
Properties Crossed by Transmission Line Project**

Segment	APN	Code	General Plan Land Use Designation	Zoning	Use	Williamson Act	Distance of T/L
Sonoma County							
1	017-140-010		Public/Quasi Public	Pf/sr	Lakeville Substation	N	~ 1,220 ft.
			ADOBE ROAD				~ 40 ft.
	017-130-008	541	Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA) 70	Lea/Sr/voh/b6	Irrigated vineyard	N	~ 2,800 ft.
	017-110-009	420	LEA 60	Lea/wa/voh	Irrigated vineyard	Y	~ 1,830 ft.
	017-110-010	420	LEA 60	Lea/Sr/wa	Irrigated vineyard	Y	~ 380 ft.
	017-120-001	421	LEA 60	Lea/wa/z/b6	Irrigated vineyard with residence	Y	~ 1,540 ft.
	017-120-003	541	LEA 60	Lea/sr/b6	Pasture with residence	N	~ 1,540 ft.
	017-120-011	540	LEA 60	Lea/wa/z/b6	Pasture	Y	~ 170 ft.
	017-100-007	541	LEA 60	Lea/wa/sr/z/b6	Open space with residence	Y	~ 3,330 ft.
	017-100-009	540	LEA 60	Lea/wa/z/b6/g	Open space	Y	~ 1,670 ft.
	017-100-006	540	LEA 60	Lea/b6	Pasture	N	~ 720 ft.
	142-011-004	540	LEA 100	Lea/wa/z/b6	Pasture	Y	~ 2,470 ft.
	142-011-005	541	LEA 100	Lea/sr/wa/b6/br	Pasture with residence	Y	~ 4,530 ft.
	142-031-015	422	LEA 100	Lea/voh/wa	Irrigated vineyard/primarily premium varieties	Y	~ 2,250 ft.
SEGMENT 1 Subtotal 24,490 ft. = 4.64 miles							
2	142-031-015 (continued)	422	LEA 100	Lea/voh/wa	Irrigated vineyard/primarily premium varieties	Y	~ 3,880 ft.
			FELDER ROAD				~ 50 ft.
	142-032-006	420	Rural Residential 3	Ar3/b6	Irrigated vineyard	N	~ 500 ft.
			ARNOLD DRIVE				~ 60 ft.
SEGMENT 2 Subtotal 4,490 ft. = 0.85 miles							
17			LEVERONI ROAD				~ 160 ft.
	142-032-007	420	LEA 20	Lia/b6	Irrigated vineyard	N	~ 300 ft.
	128-011-006	423	LEA 40	Lia/hd/z/voh/sr/b6	Irrigated vineyard/primarily premium varieties with residence	N	~ 4,870 ft.
			LEVERONI ROAD				~ 80 ft.
	128-301-024	423	LEA 20	Lia/hd/z/wa/f2	Irrigated vineyard/primarily premium varieties with residence	Y	~ 410 ft.
			SONOMA CREEK				~ 230 ft.

**Table II-I
Properties Crossed by Transmission Line Project**

Segment	APN	Code	General Plan Land Use Designation	Zoning	Use	Williamson Act	Distance of T/L
Sonoma County							
	128-012-002	422	LEA 20	Lia/z/r2/b6	Irrigated vineyard/primarily premium varietals	N	~ 1,550 ft.
	128-311-060	010	Rural Residential	Ar/voh	Residence	N	~ 150 ft.
	128-311-039	010	Rural Residential	Ar/Voh	Residence	N	~ 160 ft.
			PALMER AVENUE				~ 30 ft.
	128-311-010	010	Rural Residential	Ar/Voh	Residence	N	~ 70 ft.
	128-311-057	010	Rural Residential	Rr/Voh	Residence	N	~ 100 ft.
	128-311-056	010	Rural Residential	Rr/Voh	Residence	N	~ 160 ft.
			DAVID STREET				~ 30 ft.
	128-311-043	010	Rural Residential	Rr/Voh	Residence	N	~ 110 ft.
	128-311-044	010	Rural Residential	Rr/Voh	Residence	N	~ 140 ft.
	128-311-065	010	Rural Residential	Rr/Voh	Residence	N	~ 150 ft.
	128-311-008	010	Rural Residential	Rr/Voh	Residence	N	~ 160 ft.
	128-311-045	010	Rural Residential	Rr/Voh	Residence	N	~ 100 ft.
			LEVERONI ROAD				~ 30 ft.
City of Sonoma							
17	128-251-009		Public/Quasi Public	Public	Sonoma Substation		~ 160 ft.
						SEGMENT 17 Subtotal	9,150 ft. = 1.73 miles
						TOTAL	38,130 ft. = 7.22 miles*

Source: Sonoma County Parcels from PG&E GIS * +/- 0.02% accuracy (Total Route = 7.23 miles)

- Objective LU-8.2: Retain large parcels in agricultural production areas and avoid new parcels less than 20 acres in the Land Intensive Agriculture category.
 - Objective LU -8.3: Agricultural lands not currently used for farming but which have soils or other characteristics which make them suitable for farming shall not be developed in a way that would preclude future agricultural use.
- **Goal LU-9:** The uses and intensities of any land development shall be consistent with preservation of important biotic resource areas and scenic features.
 - Objective LU-9.1: Accomplish development on lands with important biotic resources and scenic features in a manner which preserves or enhances these features.

Sonoma County’s General Plan Public Facilities and Services (PF) Element includes these related goals:

- **Goal PF-2:** Assure that public utility sites are available to meet the future needs of Sonoma County residents.
 - Objective PF-2.10: Locate and design public utility transmission, distribution and maintenance facilities to minimize adverse effects on natural and scenic resources.
 - Objective PF-2s: Public utility facilities other than transmission line corridors may be designated as "public/quasi-public" on the land use map. Allow consideration for minor facilities in any land use category where they are compatible with the neighborhood character and preservation of natural and scenic resources.
 - Objective PF-2t: Review proposals for new transmission lines or acquisition of easement for new transmission lines for consistency with general plan policies. Request, wherever feasible, that such facilities not be located within areas designated as community separators or biotic resource areas. Give priority to use of existing utility corridors over new corridors.
 - Objective PF-2v: Consider requiring the under-grounding of new electrical transmission and distribution lines where appropriate in designated open space areas and in selected urban areas. Where feasible and under Public

Utility Commission (PUC) rules, convert existing overhead lines to underground facilities in urban areas.

- Objective PF-2w: Encourage consolidation of multiple utility lines into common utility corridors wherever practicable.

Sonoma County Land Use Designations

Table I I-2 below defines General Plan land use designations that are crossed by or adjacent to the project.

**Table II-2
Land Use Designations**

Sonoma County	
Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA)	Purpose: to enhance and protect lands best suited for permanent agricultural use and capable of relatively low production per acre of land; and to implement the provisions of the land extensive agriculture land use category (Section 2.7.2) of the General Plan and the policies of the agricultural resources element.
Rural Residential (RR)	Purpose: to preserve the rural character and amenities of those lands best utilized for low density residential development pursuant to Section 2.2.2 of the General Plan. Rural residential uses are intended to take precedence over permitted agricultural uses, but the district does not allow agricultural service uses. The rural residential district may also be applied to lands in other land use categories where it is desirable to use zoning to limit development.
Public/Quasi Public (Public Facilities – PF)	Purpose: to provide sites which serve the community or public need and to protect these sites from encroachment of incompatible uses. The PF district shall be applied as a base zoning district to identify existing public facilities consistent with the provisions of Section 2.5 of the general plan land use element. The PF district shall be applied as a combining district to generally indicate those areas in which a future public facility is needed.
City of Sonoma	
Gateway Commercial (CG) District.	The G-C zoning district is applied to the Four Corners [Broadway/Highway 12 & Leveroni/Napa Road intersection] area, a prominent commercial entrance into the City that requires sensitive site design. The maximum residential density is 15 dwelling units per acre. The G-C zoning district is consistent with the Gateway Commercial land use designation of the General Plan.
P (Public Facilities) District.	The P zoning district applies to areas appropriate for a variety of public and quasi-public land uses. The P zoning district is consistent with the Public land use designations of the General Plan.

Sonoma County Zoning Ordinance

County zoning districts provide more detailed regulations about the type of uses that can occur within land use designations. For example, the Sonoma County General Plan classifies electrical transmission lines as a Public/Quasi Public land use. It is regulated by the Public Facilities (PF) zone district, which is intended to “provide sites which serve the community or public need and to protect these sites from encroachment of incompatible uses.” The project crosses several other zone districts including: Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA), Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA), Agriculture and Residential (AR), and Rural Residential (RR).

County zoning regulations allow special use permits for public facilities such as transmission lines in areas zoned Agriculture and Residential (AR), “Uses permitted with a special use permit; (n) minor public service use or facilities (transmission and distribution lines...) meet the criteria of general plan Policy PF-2s and which are not otherwise exempt by state law.” Policy PF-2s says “Public Utility facilities other than transmission line corridors may be designated as ‘Public/Quasi Public’ on the land use map. Allow consideration of minor facilities in any land use category where they are compatible with neighborhood character and preservation of natural and scenic resources” (County of Sonoma 1994). This same provision is noted in the Rural Residential (RR), Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA), and Land Intensive Agriculture (LIA) zone districts.

There are several overlay “combining” zone districts in the project area, including Valley Oak Habitat (VOH), Scenic Resources (SR), Geologic Hazard (G), Combining Districts (B), Second Unit Exclusion (Z), Floodplain (F2), Biotic Resource (BR), and Historic Combining District (HD). The purpose of each of the zone districts is described below.

Valley Oak Habitat: To protect and enhance valley oaks and valley oak woodlands and to implement the provisions of Section 5.1 of the general plan resource conservation element.

Scenic Resources: To preserve the visual character and scenic resources of lands in the county and to implement the provisions of Sections 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 of the General Plan Open Space Element.

Geologic Hazard: To reduce unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of damage or injury from earthquakes, landslides and other geologic hazards in the Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone and to implement the provisions of Section 2.3 of the General Plan Public Safety Element.

Combining Districts: To specify residential density and/or minimum parcel or lot size for a particular parcel, lot, or area.

Second Unit Exclusion: The purpose of this district is to provide for the exclusion of second units in the following areas:

- (a) Areas where there is an inadequate supply of water for drinking or firefighting purposes;
- (b) Areas where there are inadequate sewer services or danger of groundwater contamination;
- (c) Areas where the addition of second units would contribute to existing traffic hazards or increase the burden on heavily impacted streets, roads or highways; and
- (d) Areas where, because of topography, access or vegetation, there is a significant fire hazard.

Floodplain: To provide for the protection from hazards and damage from flood waters.

Biotic Resource: To protect biotic resource communities including critical habitat areas and riparian corridors for their habitat and environmental value and to implement the provisions of Sections 3.1 and 3.2 of the General Plan Open Space Element.

Historic Combining District: To protect those structures, sites, and areas that are remainders of past eras, events and persons important in local, state, or national history, or which provide significant examples of architectural styles of the past, or which are unique and irreplaceable assets to the County and its communities.

Sonoma County Development Code notes that Public Utility Equipment is a permitted use within Commercial and Special Purpose Zoning Districts. The Scenic Resources (SR) overlay “combining” district is discussed in Chapter 15 Visual Resources. Land use designations and zoning districts crossed by the project are listed in Table 11-1.

11.2.2.2 Segment 17 – Sonoma Substation

The Sonoma Substation, at the end of segment 17, is within the jurisdiction of the City of Sonoma. Part of the transmission line along Leveroni Road is under “franchise” with the City of Sonoma, as it is located within or overhangs the city’s street right-of-way. The relevant goals and policies noted in the City of Sonoma General Plan include:

Goal Community Development Element (CDE) 1: Establish and maintain a definitive urban boundary beyond which only uses compatible with preserving agriculture and open space resources shall be allowed.

- **Policy 2:** Utility extensions shall not occur outside the sphere of influence except in cases of a public health emergency or in conformance with a specific plan developed for Eighth Street East.

- **Policy 26:** The following locations shall be designated as gateways and shall be developed and improved with landscaping and other improvements to clearly mark the entrances to Sonoma:
 - Broadway/Leveroni/Napa Road (Four Corners)
 - Leveroni Road/Sonoma Creek

Goal Public Safety Element (PSE) 4: Ensure that essential emergency and public services will function effectively in a disaster.

City of Sonoma Zoning Ordinance

The Sonoma Substation is currently zoned Public (pers. comm. with City of Sonoma Planning Manager, David Goodison, 2004). The Public zoning district applies to areas appropriate for a variety of public and quasi-public land uses. Substation modifications would be contained within the existing substation footprint. The Public zoning regulation for this parcel will be adhered to by PG&E.

The Sonoma Substation is adjacent to the “Four Corners” gateway into the City of Sonoma (i.e., the Broadway/Highway 12 & Leveroni/Napa Road intersection). This area is zoned Gateway Commercial District (CG): The CG zoning district is applied to the Four Corners area, a prominent commercial entrance into the city that requires sensitive site design. One of the “four corners”, the southeast corner, is actually within Sonoma County’s jurisdiction, but the City of Sonoma claims it within their “sphere of influence” (i.e., as an area that may be annexed by the city in the future).

The City of Sonoma is updating its 1995–2005 General Plan and is in the process of developing Land Use and Design Guidelines for specific areas. The “Four Corners” gateway is one of them. A preliminary “Land Use and Design Options” workbook (City of Sonoma, September 2004) has been prepared for public review, but the design guidelines and General Plan update have not been finalized or adopted. Preliminary land use and design ideas for the Four Corners include mixed residential, office and commercial land uses, as well as streetscape improvements, building façade guidelines, canopy trees, planters, and utility undergrounding. With the exception of one pole (no. 119) at the very edge of the planning area, the transmission line and Sonoma Substation are outside of the Four Corners planning area boundary. The substation and transmission line are 300 feet away from the intersection. Thus, the project does not appear to be in conflict with the design intent of the Four Corners plan.

11.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project is located in Sonoma County and the City of Sonoma, approximately 40 miles north of San Francisco. In the year 2000, Sonoma County was home to approximately 458,614 people. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) projects that the county's population in 2005 will be 497,800, representing an 8.5 percent growth from 2000. Sonoma County encompasses over one million acres of land and water. Open space and agricultural lands account for a great majority of Sonoma County acreage. The county has approximately 20,230 acres of surface water area, 8,580 of which are bay waters. Two cities in the project vicinity are Petaluma and the City of Sonoma. As noted in Table 11-3, there are a wide range of land uses in Sonoma County; however, it is most well known for its agriculture and vineyards specifically. Most of the transmission line route travels across the coastal hills of Sonoma County.

**Table 11-3
Land Use**

Type of Use	% of Total
Commercial & Industrial	4.4
Residential	21.7
Agricultural*	65.0
Recreational	0.6
Government	7.0
Other	1.3

** Includes active and inactive agricultural lands, agricultural preserves, and open space contracts.*

Source: Sonoma County Assessor's Office <http://www.sonoma-county.org/citizens/environment.htm>

The previous Table 11-1 lists project parcels that are currently in a Williamson Act contract with Sonoma County. The Williamson Act (California Government Code Section 51200 *et seq.*) is a state law that established a program to preserve agricultural land. Under this program, the owner of an agricultural parcel may enter into a contract with the county in which the owner agrees to maintain agricultural operations on the parcel. In exchange, the county assesses the property based solely on the agricultural value of the parcel, lowering the property tax obligation of the owner. The contracts are valid for a ten-year period and are automatically renewed unless the property owner files for non-renewal. If an application for non-renewal is filed, the contract terminates at the conclusion of the ten-year term. Cancellations can only occur under limited circumstances. Several parcels within the project area are currently under Williamson Act contract, as described below and in Table 11-1.

The City of Sonoma is a small historic community (approximately 2.2 square miles) with 9,284 residents and 4,665 housing units. The term "open space" in the City of Sonoma General Plan includes a variety of land categories: agriculture, hillsides, creeks and riparian corridors, parks and

small pockets of land with less intensive uses. The adjacent hillsides and agricultural lands provide a natural greenbelt.

This greenbelt not only serves as a visual amenity but plays an important role in defining the City's small town character. The vast majority of residences in the City of Sonoma are located in the downtown core (north of Leveroni Road). The Sonoma Substation is within the city boundaries and part of the transmission line is in "franchise" along Leveroni Road where it is located within or overhangs the City of Sonoma's street right-of-way

11.3.1 General Plan Land Use Designations and Existing Land Uses

The previous Table 11-3 notes the General Plan land use designations that are crossed by the project.

11.3.1.1 Lakeville Substation

The Sonoma County General Plan currently designates the Lakeville Substation parcel as Public/Quasi Public. The Lakeville Substation lies on an approximately 5-acre site with the Adobe Creek Golf course to the south and west, agricultural land to the east, and open space to the north. No public access to the substation is allowed for purposes of security and public safety.

11.3.1.2 Segment I

Segment I, Route Overview

Of the 7.23 mile transmission line, 4.64 miles are included in segment I. Segment I will involve the replacement of existing single circuit wood poles with distribution lines underneath some of the poles, to a new double circuit TSP with similar distribution underbuild. Taller poles will require some expansion of the existing PG&E right-of-way easements, depending on the length of spans between poles and CPUC safety requirements. The terrain crossed by segment I is rural, consisting mainly of the coastal hills of the Sonoma Mountains. The land uses that are traversed include both agriculture (vineyard) and open space.

Segment I, Detailed Land Use Description:

Segment I will affect mostly open space and some vineyards (see Figure 11-2 and Table 11-1). Vineyards are at the beginning and at the end of the segment (mileposts 0.4 – 1.5; and 4.2 – 4.6). Adobe Road is paralleled by the transmission line for approximately 0.3 miles.

As noted on Table 11-1, the transmission line will cross parcels with rural residences on them, but none are within 250 feet of the proposed transmission line. The nearest residential structure is

located at milepost 0.7 and is part of an agricultural complex. A total of eight of the possible twelve parcels in segment 1 are currently under a Williamson Act contract with the County. These parcels are noted on Table 11-1.

11.3.1.3 Segment 2

Segment 2, Route Overview

Segment 2 encompasses approximately 0.85 mile of the 7.23 mile transmission line. Existing wood poles would be replaced with new double circuit TSP (some with distribution underneath). The existing PG&E right-of-way would be utilized for new pole placement, with the exception of a small realignment of the centerline at Felder Creek (poles 80 through 87 would be moved up to a maximum of 20 feet south of existing poles). Segment 2 is located on east face, sloping vineyard land.

Segment 2, Detailed Land Use Description

The land uses affected by segment 2 are agricultural and rural residential. This segment is located west of Arnold Drive in a vineyard that is on flat land for 0.6 mile and on the east sloping hillside for 0.25 mile. Approximately 0.6 miles of segment 2 are paralleled by Felder Road, south of Felder Creek. Several residences are located north of segment 2, off of Felder Road, less than 100 feet from the proposed transmission line (see Figure 2-4(c) Mid-East). The sole rural residential parcel that segment 2 affects is located immediately west of the intersection of Arnold Drive and Leveroni Road; however, no residences on this parcel are within approximately 350 feet of the transmission line. The Temelec senior-living residential subdivision is located to the south of segment 2 (across a vineyard) at distances between 1,130 feet and 1,660 feet (0.214 and 0.314 miles, respectively). The vast majority of segment 2 is under a Williamson Act contract, as noted on Table 11-1.

11.3.1.4 Segment 17

Segment 17, Route Overview

Segment 17 begins at the intersection of Arnold Drive and Leveroni Road, parallels Leveroni Road for approximately 1.75 miles, and terminates at the Sonoma Substation. The transmission line would be located along the northern side of Leveroni Road until it reaches a point west of Sonoma Creek (pole 106). At this point, the transmission line would cross over to the southern side of Leveroni Road (following the same alignment as the existing transmission line). The line continues along the southern side of Leveroni Road until it reaches the Sonoma Substation, where it would once again cross Leveroni Road to terminate in the substation. The existing single-circuit wood pole with distribution underbuild would be replaced with new double-circuit wood poles with distribution underbuild for the majority of segment 17.

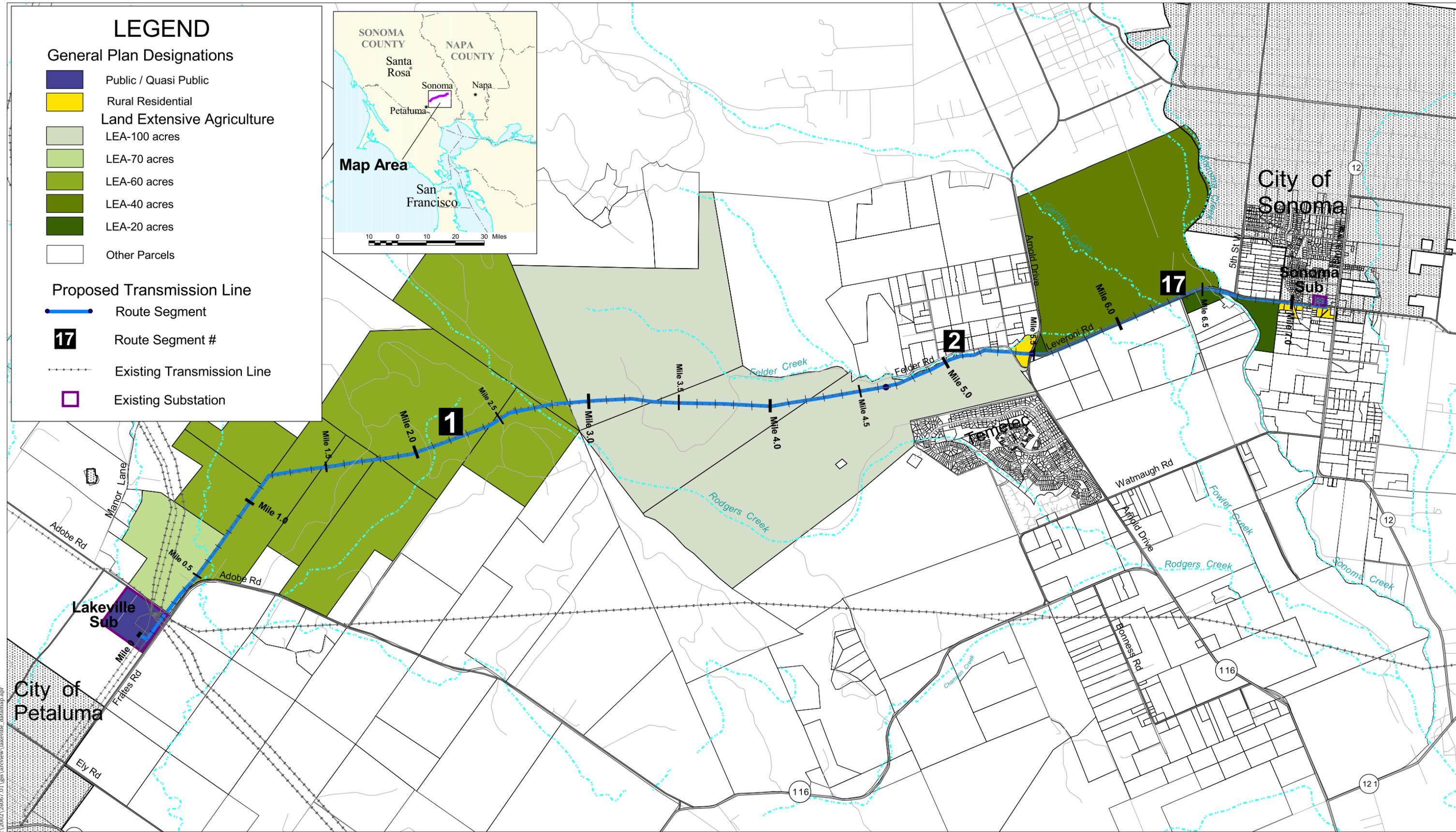
LEGEND

General Plan Designations

- Public / Quasi Public
- Rural Residential
- Land Extensive Agriculture**
- LEA-100 acres
- LEA-70 acres
- LEA-60 acres
- LEA-40 acres
- LEA-20 acres
- Other Parcels

Proposed Transmission Line

- Route Segment
- 17 Route Segment #
- Existing Transmission Line
- Existing Substation



Source: Sonoma County / PG&E GIS / EDAW, Inc. 2004

Lakeville-Sonoma 115 kV Transmission Line Project



Scale 1 : 31,680
1" = 1/2 mile

FIGURE 11-2

Segment 17, Detailed Land Use Description

Land uses that are adjacent to the proposed (and existing) transmission line include agricultural, open space and residential. Almost all of segment 17 is located within Sonoma County. City of Sonoma land is located to the north of Leveroni Road, crossed by the transmission line only where it enters the Sonoma Substation. As noted in Table 11-1, the affected Sonoma County parcels are designated as Land Extensive Agriculture. For the western portion of segment 17 (west of Sonoma Creek), the nearest residence to the transmission line is approximately 350 feet to the south, at milepost 5.6. East of Sonoma Creek, the proposed transmission line is bordered by more heavily developed residential land. East of Sonoma Creek (mile 6.7 – 6.95), vineyards are located to the south of Leveroni Road and residences to the north. East of mile 7.0 are residences to both the north and south of Leveroni Road (see Figure 2-4 [d]). The proposed transmission line would be located within the existing PG&E right-of-way, along Leveroni Road. Only one parcel (APN 128-301-024) in segment 17 is under a Williamson Act Contract.

11.3.1.5 Sonoma Substation

The City of Sonoma General Plan shows the Sonoma Substation parcel designated as Gateway Commercial land use, but the Zoning Ordinance (and City of Sonoma Planner, David Goodison) notes that it is Public. The Sonoma Substation occupies a 1.8-acre footprint, which is not proposed to be expanded. The land uses that surround the Sonoma Substation include residential (single family and apartments) to the north, west and south, as well as commercial (a hotel) to the east. The City of Sonoma properties at the Four Corners intersection of Leveroni/Napa Road and Broadway/Highway 12 are designated as Gateway Commercial land uses.

11.3.2 Planned and Proposed Development

11.3.2.1 Segment 1

Adobe Creek Vineyard, which is located about ½-mile east of the transmission line route, is planning to build a new tasting room / hospitality center at the vineyard (personal communication with Peggy Phelan, Cline Vineyards, 2004). Because of the distance between the tasting room site and the transmission line route, the proposed project would not conflict with this planned facility.

11.3.2.2 Segment 2

No future development plans are known of adjacent to the transmission line that would conflict with the project along segment 2 (personal communication with Scott Hunsperger, Sonoma County Planner, 2003 and 2004).

11.3.2.3 Segment 17

No future development plans are known of adjacent to the transmission line that would conflict with the project along segment 17. The project is not expected to conflict with a proposed telecommunications tower planned on the south side of Leveroni Road at the Arnold Road intersection (APN 142032005, 20600 Leveroni Road), as the transmission line is on the north side. Only small amounts of future development are proposed in the vicinity of segment 17 (see Table 11-4), according to filed permit applications and personal communications with City of Sonoma Planner David Goodison and Sonoma County Planner Scott Hunsperger (2003 and 2004). The majority of projects listed on Table 11-4 are located in the northern portion of the City of Sonoma; while the project is located along the southern border.

Other large scale developments and infrastructure projects in the study area are listed in Tables 11-5 and 11-6, but none are anticipated to conflict with the proposed project.

11.4 POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

11.4.1 Significance Criteria

Significance criteria for land use impacts were derived from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Impacts to land use or agricultural resources would be significant if they result in:

- Physical division of an established community.
- Substantial conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project.
- Conflicts with an applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.
- Conversion of land designated as prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance to non-agricultural use.
- Conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use or Williamson Act contract.
- Changes to the environment resulting in conversion of designated farmland to non-agricultural use.

11.4.1.1 Overview of Impact Analysis

The proposed transmission line would be located within or adjacent to an established PG&E right-of-way. Some expansions to the width of the right-of-way would be needed for the proposed project. PG&E is currently working with affected land owners to discuss existing right-of-way easements and any expansions that might be needed. Land use impacts created because of construction efforts would be mitigated by returning the land to as close to the pre-construction condition as possible, or as agreed upon with property owners.

**Table 11-4
Proposed City of Sonoma Development**

Project	Location	SF Res. Units	MF Res. Units	Live-Work Units	Second Units	Cong. Care Units	Hotel Units	Restaurant Seats	Comm. Sq. Ft.
Growth Management Allocations Received									
O'Donnell	Sonoma Highway		14						
Norrborn	590 West Napa Street		23						
Peterson	254 First Street East		39						
Subtotal		0	76	0	0	0	0	0	0
Application Filed									
Miller	317 Second Street East		3						
Burbank Housing	404 Napa Road		34						
Montini/O'Brien	Fifth Street West	26							
Ledson/Merlo	165-179 West MacArthur St.		30						
Detert	165 East Spain Street		10				34		
Subtotal		26	77	0	0	0	34	0	0
Approved Applications									
Ryder/Starr	Fifth Street East	20							
Giannis Mixed Use	19315 Sonoma Highway		8						4,020
McKenna Mixed Use	1254 Broadway		10						4,400
Mc Taggart/Pinnacle	432 East Napa Street	13			3				
Sanders Mixed Use	19957 Broadway		6						1,760
Conforti Mixed Use	966 Broadway		8						4,800
Pipgras Alzheimer's Facility	91 Napa Road					87			
Heritage Court II	865 First Street West	1	4						
Albertson Subdivision	254 West MacArthur Street	2							
Carneros Parks Lofts	649 First Street West			30					9,000
Detert Apartments	117 East Napa Street		2						
Chiapallone Fourplex	1141-1143 Broadway		4						
Pendergast Subdivision	685 Fano Lane	1							

Table 11-4 Proposed City of Sonoma Development										
Project	Location	SF Res. Units	MF Res. Units	Live-Work Units	Second Units	Cong. Care Units	Hotel Units	Restaurant Seats	Comm. Sq. Ft.	
Subtotal		37	42	30	3	87	0	0	23,980	
Under Construction										
Titus Subdivision	865 E. Napa St	21	3		2				1,350	
Mehew Mixed Use	720 Broadway	1	13		1					
Fichtenberg/Wood PUD	333 West MacArthur	2	14						4,200	
Moore Subdivision	370 Napa Road									
Carneros Village	623 First Street West									
Eastside Estates III	20305 Fifth Street East	54	9		3		6		1,900	
Weiler B&B	156, 168 East Napa St.								18,000	
Wagner Office Bldg.	193 10 Sonoma Highway									
Litchfield Second Unit	360 Fifth Street West				1					
Curusis Subdivision	20095 Fifth Street West	3								
Toscano/Cummings PUD	1113-1127 Broadway		8							
Strindberg PUD	184 Leveroni Road		8							
Subtotal		81	55	0	7	0	6	0	25,450	
TOTAL		144	250	30	10	87	40	0	49,430	

Source: pers. comm. with David Goodison, City of Sonoma Planner January 9, 2003 to May 13, 2004.

**Table II-5
Proposed Sonoma County Developments
(large scale developments only)**

APN / Project Name	Type of Project	Location	Source	Other Information
APN 017070003	Small winery with new building	3062 Adobe Rd (near City of Petaluma)	Sonoma County	
APN 128422068	Existing buildings converted to auto repair and metal gate fabrication	22690 Broadway (near City of Sonoma)	Sonoma County	
APN 142032005	Telecommunications tower	20600 Leveroni Rd (near City of Sonoma)	Sonoma County	
APN 128422062	Expand existing mini-storage facility	22684 Broadway (near City of Sonoma)	Sonoma County	
APN 017070003, MJS 00-0001, MJS01-0003	Subdivision	3062 Adobe Rd (near City of Sonoma)	Sonoma County	Subdivide into 6 lots
APN 128352019	Private elementary and high school	21254 Broadway (near City of Sonoma)	Sonoma County	
APN 128412019	Small winery with no public tasting	21708 Broadway (near City of Sonoma)	Sonoma County	
APN 128451054	Large winery expansion with new buildings and public tasting	602 Bonneau Rd (near City of Sonoma)	Sonoma County	
APN 128422068	Two new metal storage buildings	22690 Broadway (near City of Sonoma)	Sonoma County	
20-acre office / industrial complex	Office / industrial buildings	Corner of Hwy 121 + East 8 th Ave	Sonoma County	300,000 square feet of buildings
Warehouse	Warehouse	East 8 th Ave at Napa Road	Sonoma County	80,000 square feet of buildings
Self-storage facility	Self-storage buildings	Hwy 121 east of Hwy 116 intersection	Sonoma County	85,000 square feet of buildings, 480 units
Adobe Creek Vineyard Tasting Room/Hospitality Center	Winery Tasting Room/Hospitality Center	North of Adobe Road and east of Frates Road	Sonoma County Peggy Phelan, Cline Vineyards	Early planning stage

Source: pers. comm. with Steve Padovan, Sonoma County Planner, August 24, 2004, and Scott Hunsperger, Sonoma County Planner September 2004.

**Table II-6
Other Planned Infrastructure Projects**

APN / Project Name	Type of Project	Location	Source	Other Information
Plaza Landscaping Plan Implementation	Park Project	No. 1 Plaza (between First St. East, First St. West, Napa St. and Spain St.	City of Sonoma	Approved in CIP for 2004/05
Plaza Duck Pond / Fish Pond Improvement	Park Project	No. 1 Plaza (between First St. East, First St. West, Napa St. and Spain St.	City of Sonoma	Approved in CIP for 2004/05
Retrofit Drain Inlets with Storm Water Fossil Fuel Filters	Street Project	Throughout City	City of Sonoma	Approved in CIP for 2004/05
First Street W – MacArthur to Newcomb	Road Resurfacing Project	First Street West	City of Sonoma	Approved in CIP for 2004/05
Sidewalk Repair / Curb Ramps	Street Improvement Project	Throughout City	City of Sonoma	Approved in CIP for 2004/05
First West Newcomb to MacArthur	Road Resurfacing Project	First Street West	City of Sonoma	Approved in CIP for 2004/05
First St W Spain Street to Bike Path	Road Resurfacing Project	First Street	City of Sonoma	Approved in CIP for 2004/05
Church St. Third St. W. to Fourth Street	Road Resurfacing Project	Church Street	City of Sonoma	Approved in CIP for 2004/05
Studley St. Fifth St. W to Seventh St. W	Road Resurfacing Project	Studley Street	City of Sonoma	Approved in CIP for 2004/05
Church St Third W to Fifth W Water Main	Water Improvement Project	Church St (b/t Third W and Fifth W)	City of Sonoma	Proposed in CIP for 2005/06
Plumb Tree Court Service Lines	Water Improvement Project	Plumb Tree Court	City of Sonoma	Proposed in CIP for 2005/06
Cordilleras Drive Service Lines	Water Improvement Project	Cordilleras Drive	City of Sonoma	Proposed in CIP for 2005/06
Evans Ave. Berryessa Dr. La Quinta Ln Service Lines	Water Improvement Project	Evans Street, Berryessa Drive, La Quinta Ln.	City of Sonoma	Proposed in CIP for 2005/06
Easton Dr., Ray Ct, Davilla Ct Service Lines	Water Improvement Project	Easton Dr., Ray Ct., Davilla Ct.	City of Sonoma	Proposed in CIP for 2005/06
Brockman, Denmark Service Lines	Water Improvement Project	Brockman, Denmark	City of Sonoma	Proposed in CIP for 2005/06

APN / Project Name	Type of Project	Location	Source	Other Information
Easton Dr., Ray Ct, Davila Ct.	Resurfacing Project	Easton Dr., Ray Ct., Davilla Ct.	City of Sonoma	Proposed in CIP for 2005/06
Malet St, First St W to Holden Subdivision	Resurfacing Project	Malet St., First St W.	City of Sonoma	Proposed in CIP for 2005/06
Recycled Water Pipeline Phase I Project No. 9995	< 4 mile (~20,000 foot) pipeline (20-inch diameter)	From 4400 Lakeville Hwy to Rooster Run Golf Course (2301 E Washington St, Petaluma).	City of Petaluma Water Resources and Conservation Dept.	Just completed
2004 Oxidation Pond Dike Repair Project No. C500405	Repair eroded dike and embankment to existing oxidation pond	4400 Lakeville Hwy	City of Petaluma Water Resources and Conservation Dept.	Just completed
Napa Road HES	Widen and reconstruction of roadway	Napa Road	Sonoma County Public Works Dept.	Waiting for Notice to Proceed, likely completed within next 3 years
Napa Road at Eighth St. East Phase II Stormdrain	Constructing stormdrain facilities	Napa Road @ 8 th St.	Sonoma County Public Works Dept.	Waiting for Notice to Proceed, likely completed within next 3 years
Highway 12 Curb Correction / Bridge Replacement	Highway improvements	Sonoma County	Caltrans	Anticipated in 2007
Highway 12 widening	Road widening	Highway 12 south (and possibly north) of Leveroni / Napa Road	Caltrans	This project is not listed on Caltrans' current projects website, but PG&E planners have heard that this may happen in the future.
Fulton Capacitor Bank	Install capacitor banks	Inside Fulton Substation	PG&E	To provide reactive support to the area
Pueblo Voltage Support	Install STATCOM device	Inside Pueblo Substation	PG&E	To prevent voltage drops.
Fulton 230 kV Transmission Line	230 kV line	From Lakeville Substation to Fulton Substation	PG&E	Reconfiguring existing lines (no new lines)

Source: pers. comm. with Carole Cooper, LAFCO Planner May 17, 2004; and pers. comm. with Marco Rios, PG&E Transmission Planner May 2004; pers. comm. with Cordel Stillman, Sonoma County Water Agency, August 18, 2004; pers. comm. with Fleming Nguyen, City of Petaluma Department of Water Resources and Conservation August 24, 2004; pers. comm. with Steve Castaldo, City of Petaluma Public Facilities and Services Department, August 24, 2004; pers. comm. with Al Bandur, City of Sonoma Public Works Department August 23, 2004.

11.4.2 Construction Impacts

11.4.2.1 Substations

Substation modifications would occur within the existing boundary and fence line of the substations as described in Chapter 2, and would not interfere physically with surrounding developments or land uses. As a result, construction of the project at the substations would not impact land use.

11.4.2.2 Transmission Line



Impact 11.1 Temporary Removal of Farmland from Agricultural Use.

Because the construction staging areas, pull sites and crane pads, and new access roads are located on agricultural land (vineyard, grain crops, and grazing land), project construction would temporarily reduce the amount of land available for agricultural purposes by about 30 acres. Due to the large amount of land available for, and currently supporting, agricultural purposes in the immediate project vicinity, and because PG&E's use of this land for transmission line construction would be temporary, property owners would be compensated, and most of the lands¹ will be reclaimed and can be returned to agricultural production or grazing land after construction, the impact would be less than significant.

11.4.2.3 Staging Areas



Impact 11.2 Staging Areas.

Two staging areas are proposed for the project; one located off of Adobe Road near the Lakeville Substation, and the other near the east end of the project, adjacent to Sonoma Creek. Construction pull sites are located throughout the project area, along the transmission line (see Figures 2-4 [a] through [d]). The parcels to be used for the staging areas have Land Extensive Agriculture land use designations and are currently planted with grain. PG&E would lease the property temporarily from the land owners. The change in land use would be temporary (construction will last about 19 months) and the land can be replanted with grain after construction. Thus, there will be a less than significant impact.

11.4.3 Operation Impacts

11.4.3.1 Substation

Because these substations are already in operation, and the additional equipment will be installed within the existing property line, there will be no changes in land use and therefore no impacts on land use. Development of facilities within the substation would be slightly more intense than at present.

¹ Except for about 2.43 acres that will be needed for permanent dirt access roads and the additional 1,500 square feet (0.03 acre) that will be taken up by the concrete footings on tubular steel poles.

11.4.3.2 Transmission Line

Operation of the proposed project along the same corridor as the existing line will not physically divide any community, or create conflicts with applicable regulations or conservation plans. The existing PG&E right-of-way will not require substantial expansion, and maintenance will occur within the established PG&E right-of-way.



Impact 11.3 Converting agricultural land under a Williamson Act contract, or designated as Prime or Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance).

In total, an additional² 1.84 acres of Williamson Act³ land will be used for pole foundations and permanent access roads. Government Code 51238 states that electrical facilities are a compatible Williamson Act use. The placement of transmission poles on land currently under Williamson Act contract will not remove the land from Williamson Act contract status. Thus, there will be no impact related to Williamson Act status.

The project has been designed to avoid farmland to the extent possible. Like the existing transmission line, the project will consume a very small amount of prime agricultural land for the pole foundations and short segments of permanent access roads. About one-third acre (0.316-acre) of additional land designated as “prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance” will be converted for the project, mainly for short segments of permanent dirt access roads leading up to the poles. There are large amounts of prime farmland in the vicinity of the project, as well as in Sonoma County overall, and the County has strong agriculture preservation policies in its General Plan. The small reduction in the amount of prime farmland (about one-third of an acre) due to this project is negligible when seen in this context. PG&E would compensate the property/farm owners for the small amounts of agricultural crops and grapevines that will be removed because of this project.

The project will not cause conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses, as the transmission line allows for many agricultural uses under and adjacent to the line. The project will not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, as it will replace an existing transmission line in an existing utility corridor. The Sonoma County General Plan classifies electrical transmission lines as a Public/Quasi Public land use. It is regulated by the Public Facilities (PF) zone district, which is intended to “provide sites which serve the community or public need and to protect these sites from

² This is in addition to Williamson Act land that is already being used for the existing transmission line and existing access roads.

³ 29.47% of Sonoma County has a Williamson Act contract associated with the agricultural land use.

(http://www.csac.counties.org/legislation/williamson_act/williamson_act_county_acreage.pdf) Of the 1,026,060 acres mapped in Sonoma County, 42 percent was categorized as grazing land, 17 percent as farmland, 32 percent as “other” land and seven percent as urbanized land. “Other” land includes wetlands, low-density “ranchettes” and brush or timberlands unsuitable for grazing. (http://www.consrv.ca.gov/index/news/2002%20News%20Releases/NR2002-36_Sonoma_County_FMMP.htm)

encroachment of incompatible uses.” Agriculture is generally a compatible land use with utility corridors. Expansion of the right-of-way easements will not change or conflict with existing agricultural zoning under or adjacent to the transmission line. For these reasons, the project is considered to have a less than significant impact on prime, unique or farmland of statewide importance.

 **Impact 11.4 Converting Other Farmland from Agricultural Use.**

The project would use a minimal amount (39 square feet) of additional “other” farmland (i.e., local farmland not designated as prime, unique or of statewide importance). Property / farm owners would be provided with monetary compensation. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

 **Impact 11.5 Access Roads.**

The operation of the project would require short segments of additional permanent dirt access roads to be constructed (about 2.43 acres) (see Figures 2-4 [a] through [d]). The land uses that would be removed because of the new access roads would be agriculture or open space. As noted above, about one-third acre (0.316-acre) of farmland will be converted for the project, mainly for short segments of permanent dirt access roads leading up to the poles. All new access roads will be gated and locked at fence lines and will have a “No Trespassing” sign posted at their entrance from a public roadway. Thus, access road impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

 **Impact 11.6 Land Use Compatibility and Right-of-Way Easements.**

Right-of-way easements for transmission lines do limit some land uses within the right-of-way corridor for safety purposes. Buildings or other major structures are typically not allowed, but compatible land uses such as agriculture, nursery plants, grazing and roads may be allowed. Fences, signs, irrigation lines, and other structures may be allowed if properly designed to avoid conflicts with the transmission line (e.g., induction hazards)⁴. As there is already an existing line, land uses under and adjacent to the line would not change significantly.

PG&E currently owns right-of-way easements along the existing single-circuit 115 kV transmission line. However, the addition of a second 115 kV circuit and taller poles with greater spans between poles will require PG&E to adjust easements to account for slight deviations from the existing alignment or acquire additional easements. Taller poles will require some expansion of the existing PG&E right-of-way easements, depending on the length of spans between poles and CPUC safety requirements.

⁴ For further discussion about induction hazards, see Chapter 16 Corona and Induce Current Effects, including Mitigation Measure 16.1.

Along Adobe Road, just north of the Lakeville Substation, and along Leveroni Road, some new right-of-way easements and overhang rights may need to be acquired from private property owners, as some existing pole locations will be moved and the existing alignment will be adjusted slightly for the new transmission line. These minor adjustments will not create significant land use impacts or require changing adjacent land use designations or zoning. Property owners will be compensated for the value of the right-of-way easements. New right-of-way easement agreements will note any building restrictions or set-backs required from the transmission line, but this is not expected to cause significant land use impacts as structures can usually be placed elsewhere on property, especially as the parcels along the transmission line corridor tend to be relatively large rural / agricultural parcels. Existing residential and commercial structures on some of the smaller parcels along Leveroni Road would not need to be removed or relocated.

The expansion of existing easements is not expected to conflict substantially with current land uses since the present and foreseeable land uses for the project are primarily open space, vineyard, and cattle grazing, and because the portions of the route that pass through residential and commercial areas are adjacent to existing roads. Thus, the project would not substantially conflict with existing or surrounding land uses and the impact would be considered less than significant.

The transmission line poles along a stretch of Leveroni Road (0.05-mile east of Harrington Road to Broadway) are under a “franchise” agreement with the City of Sonoma, which allows PG&E the right to the place transmission line in or overhanging the city street right-of-way. The proposed project will not require changing the franchise agreement.

11.4.3.3 Consistency with Local General Plans and Policies

The proposed project would replace an existing transmission line in an established utility corridor, thus avoiding the need to create a new utility corridor in scenic open space or greenbelt areas. Thus the project is consistent with Sonoma County and City of Sonoma General Plan policies related to public utilities, including:

Sonoma County General Plan

- **Land Use Element Goal PF-2:** Assure that public utility sites are available to meet the future needs of Sonoma County residents.
 - Objective PF-2.10: Locate and design public utility transmission, distribution and maintenance facilities to minimize adverse effects on natural and scenic resources.
 - Objective PF-2t: Review proposals for new transmission lines or acquisition of easement for new transmission lines for consistency with general plan policies. Request, wherever feasible, that such facilities not be located within

areas designated as community separators or biotic resource areas. Give priority to use of existing utility corridors over new corridors.

- Objective PF-2v: Consider requiring the under-grounding of new electrical transmission and distribution lines where appropriate in designated open space areas and in selected urban areas. Where feasible and under Public Utility Commission (PUC) rules, convert existing overhead lines to underground facilities in urban areas.
- Objective PF-2w: Encourage consolidation of multiple utility lines into common utility corridors wherever practicable.

As discussed in Chapter 15 Visual Resources, the project is consistent with Sonoma County and City of Sonoma general plan policies related to scenic resources and utility corridors. It does not conflict with existing zoning, as the project meets the criteria of general Plan Policy PF-2s. Installation of incrementally taller poles in an existing utility corridor will not substantially degrade the visual character of the existing environment. Visual impacts on City of Sonoma gateways and the scenic vista, as well as on Sonoma County scenic landscape units and scenic corridors, will be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Undergrounding the new transmission line would pose other environmental impacts (such as habitat disturbance, tree loss from root damage caused by trench excavation, more prolonged traffic lane closures) and would cost significantly more to construct, which would ultimately be paid for by PG&E customers / ratepayers. The project was designed to minimize visual impacts by co-locating the new circuit with an existing transmission line and modifying existing substations, rather than building new facilities or creating a new utility corridor.

The City of Sonoma is updating its 1995–2005 General Plan and is in the process of developing Land Use and Design Guidelines for specific areas, including the “Four Corners” gateway. A preliminary “Land Use and Design Options” workbook (City of Sonoma, September 2004) has been prepared for public review, but the design guidelines and General Plan update have not been finalized or adopted. Preliminary land use and design ideas for the Four Corners include mixed residential, office and commercial land uses, as well as streetscape improvements, building façade guidelines, canopy trees, planters and utility undergrounding. With the exception of one pole (no. 119) at the very edge of the planning area, the transmission line and Sonoma Substation are outside of the Four Corners planning area boundary. The substation and transmission line are 300 feet away from the intersection. Thus, the project does not appear to be in conflict with the design intent of the Four Corners plan.

Finally, the project will not conflict with an applicable government-adopted habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. For more information about natural habitats in the project area, please see Chapter 6 Biological Resources.

11.5 REFERENCES

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