

CHAPTER 6

CEQA Statutory Sections

6.1 Growth-Inducing Effects

CEQA requires a discussion of the ways in which a proposed project could be an inducement to growth. Section 15126.2 (d) of the CEQA Guidelines, identifies a project to be growth-inducing if it fosters economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. New employees hired for proposed commercial and industrial development projects and population growth resulting from residential development projects represent direct forms of growth. Other examples of projects that are growth-inducing are the expansion of urban services into a previously unserved or under-served area, the creation or extension of transportation links, or the removal of major obstacles to growth. It is important to note that these direct forms of growth have secondary effects of expanding the size of local markets and attracting additional economic activity to the area.

Typically, the growth-inducing potential of a project would be considered significant if it fosters growth or a concentration of population above what is assumed in local and regional land use plans, or in projections made by regional planning authorities. Significant growth impacts could also occur if the project provides infrastructure or service capacity to accommodate growth levels beyond those permitted by local or regional plans and policies.

6.1.1 Growth Caused by Direct and Indirect Employment

As described in Chapter 1, Section 1.5, Issues Considered and Found Not to be Significant, Subsection 1.5.3, Population and Housing, impacts from construction and operation of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not increase the local population or housing.

The total number of construction crew members for the Proposed Project and the Weed Segment is estimated to be between 30 and 35 crew members, including PacifiCorp and contracted construction personnel. Of these construction crew members, about 20 percent would reside locally. The Proposed Project and Weed Segment construction activities would be temporary, estimated to be approximately one month for the Proposed Project approximately eight months for the Weed Segment, depending on weather. Project operation requires minimal staffing which would be handled by current PacifiCorp employees; therefore, no new jobs would be created.

Some of the construction personnel may commute from outside of the project area and stay at existing local hotels during construction. There is an adequate supply of hotels and motels in the

project area that could be utilized by the out-of-town personnel. Therefore, no growth in residential services would occur. Over the long term, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would have no impact on population growth, as no long-term growth employment would result from project operations.

6.1.2 Growth Related to Provision of Additional Electric Power

Construction of the Proposed Project is needed to meet electric system demand and ensure transmission system reliability in the Yreka-Weed area. Construction of the Weed Segment is needed to handle projected increases in load and provide transmission capacity. Therefore, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment are designed to increase reliability and accommodate existing and planned electrical load growth, rather than to induce or accommodate growth.

Growth in the project area is planned and regulated by applicable local planning policies and zoning ordinances. The provision of electricity is not considered an obstacle to growth, as noted in the City of Weed's General Plan (City of Weed, 2004). Additionally, 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, availability of water supply or sewer services and local planning policies have a more direct effect on growth. Therefore, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not indirectly induce growth by creating new opportunities for local industry or commerce.

6.2 Significant Irreversible Changes

Sections 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR identify significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the Proposed Project and Weed Segment. These changes may include, for example, uses of nonrenewable resources, or provision of access to previously inaccessible areas, as well as project accidents that could change the environment in the long-term. Development of the Yreka-Weed 115kV Transmission Line Project, Southern Portion would require a permanent commitment of natural resources resulting from the direct consumption of fossil fuels, construction materials, the manufacture of new equipment that largely cannot be recycled at the end of the project's useful lifetime, and energy required for the production of materials. Furthermore, construction of the transmission line would necessitate a small amount of permanent wetland loss (0.001 acres of jurisdictional wetlands) and a 0.06 acres loss of Eastside Pine habitat from installation of a new permanent road, as evaluated in Section 4.4, Biological Resources. Assuming implementation of the mitigation measures recommended in this EIR, permanent loss of biological resources would be less than significant and confined to small areas along and adjacent to the Proposed Project and Weed Segment ROW.

During the project's operational phase, the transmission line would allow for the efficient transport of additional electrical power generated from nonrenewable resources. However, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not require the future use of specific amounts of nonrenewable resources.

6.3 Cumulative Impacts

This section present the analysis of the potential for the Proposed Project and Weed Segment to create cumulative effects when the impacts of projects listed in Table 3-11 are considered together with the impacts of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment.

6.3.1 Aesthetics

As discussed above, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not result in significant effect on visual resources. The Proposed Project and Weed Segment, in conjunction with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, including: various renovations/improvements to local roadways in the vicinity, as well as the introduction of a steam driven 15 MW cogeneration system to be built at an existing industrial facility located near the intersection of Alamo Avenue and Highway 89, about a half mile south of the Weed Substation. In addition a limited amount of new development including a church to be located near the Weed Junction Substation and a four-parcel residential subdivision near the Weed Segment are anticipated. Mitigation Measures AES-PPWS-1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4a, 4b, 5, and 6 would ensure that the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would be less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., because with mitigation the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not substantially alter the existing visual conditions and aesthetic character that is currently found in the study area, and would thereby reduce its contribution to the cumulative impact). Therefore, the effects of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment on visual resources, in combination with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable projects, would not be cumulatively considerable (Class II).

6.3.2 Agriculture Resources

The construction, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment, in addition to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future development could result in cumulative impacts to agricultural resources. If cumulative impacts to agriculture were to occur in Siskiyou County and the City of Weed, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment's contribution to those impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable because the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not result in a permanent change to agricultural land (i.e. impacts would be spread over many parcels and would not permanently convert an entire parcel from agricultural use) or conflict with agricultural zoning. Additionally, implementation of Mitigation Measures AG-PPWS-1 would ensure that any impact from the temporary reduction of agricultural lands is temporary and the duration is minimized to less than significant. Therefore, the effect to agricultural resources from the Proposed Project and Weed Segment, in combination with the other past, present and reasonable foreseeable projects would not be cumulatively considerable.

6.3.3 Air Quality

Siskiyou County is in attainment or unclassified status for all of the NAAQS and CAAQS. Therefore, the existing conditions are not significantly degraded. Long term operations of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would result in negligible emissions, which would not be cumulatively considerable. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project and Weed

Segment, as described in Section 4.3.3, could have a temporary impact on local air quality through short-term increases in criteria pollutant exhaust emissions (e.g., NO_x, ROG, CO, SO₂, and PM₁₀) and fugitive dust, which could be cumulatively significant when combined with other projects. However, Mitigation Measure AIR-PPWS-1 would ensure that the Proposed Project and Weed Segment's temporary air quality construction impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., because the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would be required to mitigate, and thereby reduce, its contribution to the cumulative impact). Temporary emissions of CO₂ would also be generated during construction activities; however, given the short-term nature of construction activities, these GHG emissions would not be cumulatively considerable. As a result, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not have a significant cumulative air quality impact (Class II).

6.3.4 Biological Resources

The Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not result in significant, unmitigable effects on biological resources. In conjunction with past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects there would be a cumulative increase in the loss of habitats locally. Within 200 feet of the Weed Segment, a housing subdivision is planned on 120.5 acres. The majority of the projects are associated with existing infrastructure (i.e. repair/upgrade of roads and bridges). The very small amount of permanent impact from the Proposed Project and Weed Segment is not sufficient to alter plant or wildlife species abundance or distribution. Additionally, Mitigation Measures BIO-PPWS-1 through BIO-PPWS-7, described in Section 4.4.3 would further ensure that the Proposed Project and Weed Segment's biological impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable. Therefore, the impact of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment, in combination with other reasonable foreseeable projects, would not be cumulatively considerable (Class II).

6.3.5 Cultural Resources

Section 4.5.3 includes several mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to cultural resources during construction of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment (i.e., accidental damage or destruction of previously unknown archaeological sites) to a less than significant level. The study area contains a significant archaeological and historical record that, in many cases, has not been well documented or recorded. Thus, there is the potential for future development projects in the vicinity to disturb landscapes that may contain known or unknown cultural resources. However, future projects with potentially significant impacts to cultural resources would be required to comply with federal, state, and local regulations and ordinances protecting cultural resources through implementation of similar mitigation measures during construction. Therefore, the potential construction impacts of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment in combination with other projects in the area would not contribute to a cumulatively significant impact on cultural resources (Class II).

6.3.6 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Construction activities would increase the hazard potential in the Proposed Project and Weed Segment areas. However, it is unlikely that the Proposed Project or Weed Segment, with the other

projects, would contribute to a cumulative hazards or hazardous materials related impact. Mitigation Measures HAZ-PPWS-1a through HAZ-PPWS-1e and HAZ-PPWS-2 identified in Section 4.6.3 would ensure that the Proposed Project and Weed Segment's construction-related hazards and hazardous materials impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., because the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would mitigate its contribution to any potential cumulative impact). As a result, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would have no cumulatively considerable impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials (Class II).

6.3.7 Hydrology and Water Quality

Implementation of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment in conjunction with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects would result in a cumulative increase in the local amount of impervious surfaces and stormwater generation. Within 200 feet of the Weed Segment, a housing subdivision is planned on 120.5 acres. The majority of the projects are associated with existing infrastructure (i.e., repairs and/or upgrades of local roads and bridges). The total increase in the permanent footprint from the project, resulting from pole installation would be approximately 128 square feet; however, this total is comprised of the incremental increase of many individual pole footprints spread out over the length of the PacifiCorp Option 4 alternative. Furthermore, the mitigation measures described above would ensure that the Proposed Project and Weed Segment's impacts to hydrologic resources and water quality would be less than cumulatively considerable. Therefore, the impact of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment, in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects, would be less than significant (Class III).

6.3.8 Land Use and Planning

The construction, operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment, in addition to other reasonably foreseeable future development would not result in cumulative land use impacts. Development and its cumulative effects are considered in the development of the Siskiyou County and the City of Weed General Plans, and as previously discussed above, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not result in a conflict with the adopted General Plans and their applicable land use designations and policies adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects.

If cumulative land use impacts were to occur in Siskiyou County and the City of Weed, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment's contribution to those impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable because the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not result in a change to existing land use or conflict with adopted plans at the Proposed Project and Weed Segment sites or surrounding area. Implementation of Mitigation Measure LU-PPWS-1 would reduce the impact of any conflicts with the Siskiyou County General Plan physical constraints to less than cumulatively considerable levels (i.e., because the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would mitigate its contribution to any potential cumulative impact).

All potential Proposed Project and Weed Segment land use impacts resulting from temporary construction activities, including temporary increases in noise and dust, decreased air quality from construction vehicles, odors from construction equipment, safety issues, loss of vegetation,

and access issues, are analyzed in the corresponding sections of this EIR (see Sections 4.1, *Aesthetics*, 4.3, *Air Quality*, 4.4, *Biological Resources*, 4.9, *Noise* and 4.11, *Transportation and Traffic*). As a result, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not have a significant cumulative impact to land use (Class II).

6.3.9 Noise

Equipment used during construction activities would temporarily increase short-term noise levels in the Proposed Project and Weed Segment areas. However, it is unlikely that the Proposed Project or Weed Segment, in conjunction with the other projects, would have the potential to contribute to a cumulative noise impact because construction of the cumulative projects would not likely occur in the immediate area or at the same time as the Proposed Project or Weed Segment. Therefore, since construction noise associated with the various projects would not likely overlap geographically or temporally, no cumulative noise impact would occur. Even if construction of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment were to occur simultaneously with the various other projects, implementation of Mitigation Measures NOI-PPSW-1a and NOI-PPSW-1b identified in Section 4.9.3 would ensure that the Proposed Project and Weed Segment's construction-related noise impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., because the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would mitigate its contribution to the cumulative impact). As a result, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not have a significant cumulative noise impact (Class II).

6.3.10 Public Services

The Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not result in significant effects on the ability of service providers to provide adequate police services, fire protection and emergency medical services, public schools and parks and recreation facilities to the study area. The Proposed Project and Weed Segment, in conjunction with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects could result in a cumulative increase in the demand for fire protection and emergency medical services, police protection, schools, parks and recreational facilities. The project site is located in an area already served by local public services providers that meet their service demands in the project area. The development of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment and other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the study area would be incremental and not by itself trigger the need for the expansion of public services facilities or adversely impact response times for police, fire and emergency medical services as a direct result of project development. Furthermore, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment and other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects would be required to comply with all federal, state, and local regulations and ordinances protecting public services. Additionally, Mitigation Measures PS-PPWS-1a, 1b, 2, 3a, 3b, and 3c would ensure that the Proposed Project and Weed Segment's temporary public service impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., because the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would be required to mitigate, and thereby reduce, its contribution to the cumulative impact). Therefore, the effect of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment on public services provisions, in combination with other past, present and reasonable foreseeable projects, would not be cumulatively considerable (Class II).

6.3.11 Transportation and Traffic

Proposed Project and Weed Segment construction activities, as described in Section 4.11.3, could have a temporary construction-related impact on local traffic flow in the Proposed Project and Weed Segment areas as street and lane closures may be required. In conjunction with other construction projects, potential cumulative impacts could occur. For example, Roseburg Forest Products has proposed to construct a cogeneration power plant in the same general vicinity of the staging area associated with the Proposed Project. If these two projects were to occur at the same time, a cumulative traffic impact could result at the access locations to the site. However, as identified above, Mitigation Measure TRA-PPWS-1b requires PacifiCorp to prepare a Traffic Management Plan prior to construction and Mitigation Measure TRA-PPWS-1c requires PacifiCorp to coordinate with appropriate agencies to minimize the cumulative effect of simultaneous construction activities. These measures would ensure that the Proposed Project and Weed Segment's contribution to transportation and traffic-related cumulative impacts would not be cumulatively considerable (Class II).

6.3.12 Utilities and Services Systems

Construction, operation, and maintenance activities associated with the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would not result in significant impacts that would affect the ability of Siskiyou County, the City of Weed, and other service providers to effectively deliver public water supply, sanitary sewer (wastewater), solid waste, and other utility services in the service area. It is unlikely that Proposed Project and Weed Segment demand for utility services with the demand anticipated from other projects would contribute to a cumulative impact. The Proposed Project, Weed Segment, and other reasonably foreseeable future development would be located in areas already served by existing utility infrastructure, and new or expanded off-site utility facilities would not be required as a result of the Proposed Project and Weed Segment. Furthermore, the Proposed Project, Weed Segment, and other reasonably foreseeable future development would be required to comply with all federal, state, and local regulations and ordinances protecting utility services, including complying with all standards of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, as well as water conservation measures and waste minimization efforts in accordance with Siskiyou County and City of Weed requirements. Mitigation Measures USS-PPWS-1 identified in Section 4.12.3 would ensure that the Proposed Project and Weed Segment's utility service impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., because the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would be required to mitigate, and thereby reduce, its contribution to the cumulative impact). As a result, the Proposed Project and Weed Segment would have no cumulatively considerable impacts related to utilities and service systems (Class II).