

D. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

D.1 Introduction to Environmental Analysis

D.1.1 Introduction/Background

Section D of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) provides discussion and full public disclosure of the significant environmental impacts of the Proposed Project and alternatives, including the No Project Alternative. This section examines the potential environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Project as they relate to the following 16 areas of environmental analysis:

D.2	Aesthetics	D.10	Land Use and Planning
D.3	Agricultural Resources	D.11	Mineral Resources
D.4	Air Quality	D.12	Noise
D.5	Biological Resources	D.13	Population and Housing
D.6	Cultural and Paleontological Resources	D.14	Public Services and Utilities
D.7	Geology and Soils	D.15	Recreation
D.8	Public Health and Safety	D.16	Transportation and Traffic
D.9	Hydrology and Water Quality	D.17	Climate Change.

Analysis within each issue area includes consideration of the following components of the Proposed Project:

- Construction of a new 230/69-kilovolt (kV) substation at the proposed Bay Boulevard Substation site.
- Dismantling of the existing 138/69 kV South Bay Substation.
- Construction of utility interconnections to the proposed Bay Boulevard Substation consisting of the following components:
 - 230 kV Loop-In – Construction of a 230 kV loop-in, an approximately 1,000-foot-long underground interconnection, and an approximately 300-foot-long overhead interconnection of the existing 230 kV tie-line, located east of the proposed Bay Boulevard Substation.
 - 138 kV Extension – A 138 kV extension of an approximately 3,800-foot underground and approximately 200-foot overhead span from one new steel cable pole to an existing steel lattice structure.

- 69 kV Relocation – Relocation of six 69 kV transmission lines and associated communication cables to the proposed Bay Boulevard Substation, requiring the relocation of approximately 7,500 feet of overhead line and the construction of approximately 4,100 feet of underground line.

Within each of the environmental areas listed above (EIR Sections D.2 through D.17), the discussion of project impacts is provided in the following format:

- Environmental setting for the proposed project
- Applicable regulations, plans, and standards
- Environmental impacts and mitigation measures for the Proposed Project
- Environmental setting, impacts, and mitigation measures for project alternatives
- Mitigation monitoring, compliance, and reporting.

D.1.2 Environmental Assessment Methodology

D.1.2.1 Environmental Baseline

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15125[a]), the environmental setting used to determine the impacts associated with the Proposed Project and alternatives is based on the environmental conditions that existed in the project area in July 2011 at the time the Notice of Preparation was published.

D.1.2.2 Environmental Consequences

The EIR evaluates the environmental consequences and potential impacts that the Proposed Project and the alternatives would create. The impacts identified were compared with predetermined, specific significance criteria, based on CEQA Guidelines, and were classified according to the significance criteria listed in each issue area. The same methodology was applied systematically to each alternative. A comparative analysis of the Proposed Project and the alternatives is provided in Section E of this EIR.

Once a significant impact was identified, diligent effort was taken to identify mitigation measures that would reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. The mitigation measures recommended by this study are identified in the mitigation monitoring, compliance, and reporting tables at the end of each area of environmental analysis (Sections D.2 through D.17). For a discussion of the mitigation monitoring, compliance, and reporting program (MMCRP), refer to Section G.

D.1.2.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

In the Proponent's Environmental Assessment (SDG&E 2010), San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) identified a total of 21 applicant proposed measures (APMs) that would be implemented to avoid or reduce potential impacts from the Proposed Project. During the preparation of this EIR, these measures were assumed to be part of the Proposed Project and are not considered as California Public Utility Commission (CPUC)-recommended mitigation measures. However, SDG&E's APMs would be monitored by the CPUC as they will be compiled with the CPUC-recommended mitigation measures into the final MMCRP, which will be completed upon adoption of the Final EIR. Table B-13 in Section B, Project Description, provides a complete list of SDG&E's APMs.

D.1.2.4 Impact Significance Criteria

While the criteria for determining the significance of an impact are unique to each area of the environmental analysis, the following classifications were uniformly applied to each identified impact:

- Class I:** Significant; cannot be mitigated to a level that is less than significant
- Class II:** Significant; can be mitigated to a level that is less than significant
- Class III:** Less than significant; no mitigation required.
- Class IV:** Beneficial impact
- No Impact:** No impact identified.

D.1.3 References

14 CCR 15000–15387 and Appendix A–L. Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, as amended.

SDG&E (San Diego Gas & Electric). 2010. Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA) for the South Bay Substation Relocation Project. Submitted to the CPUC June 2010.

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