

## 3.13 Socioeconomics, Population and Housing, and Environmental Justice

This section describes the environmental setting, regulatory setting, and potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of the EITP and alternatives with respect to socioeconomics, population and housing, and environmental justice.

### 3.13.1 Environmental Setting

The EITP area comprises areas of Clark County, Nevada, and San Bernardino County, California. This area includes the community of Boulder City, Nevada, and the townships of Primm, Nevada and Nipton, California. The proposed transmission line route begins southwest of Boulder City, Nevada at the existing Eldorado Substation. The route would cross through Primm, Nevada and the Ivanpah Dry Lake and end at the proposed Ivanpah Substation in San Bernardino County (Figure 1-1) northwest of Nipton. Socioeconomic baseline data characterizing these communities is provided below.

#### 3.13.1.1 Regional Setting

The EITP would be located in the Mojave Desert of southern California and Nevada. The construction, operation, and maintenance of new and upgraded transmission facilities would span approximately 28 miles in southern Clark County and 7 miles in northeastern San Bernardino County. For the purpose of this analysis, the discussion focuses on two distinct regional areas that comprise the EITP area: (1) the Clark County Region and (2) the San Bernardino County Region. The boundaries for each of these regions are described below. In San Bernardino County, California, elements of the EITP would be constructed in the immediate vicinity of unincorporated Mountain Pass, Nipton, and Wheaton Springs. In Clark County, Nevada, elements would be constructed in Primm and southwest of Boulder City. Additional unincorporated areas that are in the EITP area include Goodsprings, Jean, Ripley (Sandy Valley), and Searchlight in Clark County, Nevada. In addition to incorporated and unincorporated county and city land, the right-of-way (ROW) for the EITP also traverses private land in both California and Nevada and land managed by the BLM.

Table 3.13-1 provides regional population and density data. Table 3.13-2 shows the demographic make-up of the two regional areas under evaluation. San Bernardino County has 24 incorporated cities and Clark County has five. To characterize population, housing, median household income, current and projected population growth, housing stock, and industry data are summarized for each regional area. The percentage of individuals below the poverty level is provided to give an indication of the socioeconomic variables needed to analyze environmental justice for the proposed project.

**Table 3.13-1 Regional Population and Density**

	Clark County, Nevada	San Bernardino County, California
Population, 2000	1,375,765	1,709,434
Population Estimate, 2008	1,865,746	2,015,355
Change in Population April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008	35.6%	17.9%
Average Annual Growth Rate (2000–2008)	4.5%	2.24%
Housing Units, 2008	810,602	687,352
Land Area (square miles), 2000	7,910.34	20,052.50
Persons per Square Mile, 2000	173.9	85.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2009

**Table 3.13-2 Regional Population Demographics 2006–2008**

Total Population	Clark County, Nevada	San Bernardino County, California
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	50.9%	50.2%
Female	49.1%	49.8%
<b>Race</b>		
White	71.8.5%	60.4%
Black	9.6%	8.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.7%	1.0%
Asian	7.1%	5.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.6%	0.3%
Persons reporting two or more races	3.3%	4.1%
Hispanic or Latino	27.7%	46.7%
White persons not Hispanic	53.2%	37.2%
<b>Disability</b>		
Persons with a disability, age 5+	264,470	302,693
<b>Socioeconomics</b>		
Median household income	\$59,954	\$56,575
Per capita income	\$28,138	\$22,243
<b>Poverty</b>		
Percentage of individuals below poverty level	10.5%	13.4%

Source: U.S Census Bureau 2009

Note: The columns do not total 100% because the total varies depending on the categories selected.

In late 2007 and early 2008 as the effects of the global financial crisis began to affect the world's economies, an economic downturn became evident in the United States. This has affected economic growth, resulting in a reduction in employment and housing development in many areas. Both Clark County and San Bernardino County have been affected by increasing unemployment and decreasing housing development and population growth.

### 3.13.1.2 Clark County

The EITP transmission line route and its alternatives would follow a BLM-designated utility corridor through the Boulder City Conservation Easement (from Milepost [MP] 0 to 7) and would continue southwest toward Primm, Nevada, and unincorporated areas in Clark County. The County encompasses 7,910.34 square miles of land area and had a population density of 173.9 persons per square mile in 2008 (U.S. Census Bureau 2009)—an increase of 26.2 percent between 2000 and 2008, from 1.4 million to 1.86 million people (U.S. Census Bureau 2009). Prior to the economic downturn, the Clark County Comprehensive Plan (CCCP) projected that the population would grow rapidly, increasing to almost 3,000,000 by the year 2020—an increase of almost 69 percent (Clark County 2006b). This projected growth implies an annual average growth rate of 3.3 percent. It is reasonable to expect that after the economic downturn the population will grow, but it is difficult to determine if growth will correspond with CCCP projections.

### **Population and Housing Characteristics: Clark County, Nevada**

The following section describes additional population and housing characteristics in the Clark County region. Table 3.13-3 compares population and housing trends in the Clark County region from 2000 to 2030. The information presents current population estimates and projections for Clark County and for cities (both incorporated and unincorporated) within the proposed project area. The following data were extracted from the CCCP and the Clark County 2030 Population Forecast developed by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Center for Business and Economic Research. The estimated population increase for Clark County is expected to be approximately 58 percent

1 between 2000 and 2010, an approximate average annual growth rate of 5.8 percent. Projections for growth were not  
2 available for the smaller jurisdictions of Boulder City, Jean, and Primm.

3

**Table 3.13-3 Projected Population Trends, Clark County Region 2000–2030**

	2000 Census	2010 Projection	Projected Growth, 2000–2010 Change		2020 Projection	Projected Growth, 2010–2020 Change		2030 Projection	Projected Growth, 2020–2030 Change	
			(Number of People, %)	(Number of People, %)		(Number of People, %)	(Number of People, %)			
Clark County, NV	1,375,765	2,253,000	877,235	64%	2,978,000	725,000	32%	3,454,000	476,000	16%
Boulder City, NV	15,551	18,000	2,449	16%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Jean, NV	600	915	315	53%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Primm, NV	261	1,060	799	306%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Sources: University of Nevada, Las Vegas (Center for Business and Economic Research); Clark County 2006b; Nevada Small Business Center, Nevada State Demographer 2009.

4

5

6 As discussed above in Section. 3.13.1.1, both home sales and values have been trending downwards in the region in  
7 the last two years. Table 3.13-4a presents existing housing market information for the EITP area for 2000. More  
8 recent values (2006–2009) were obtained from the Nevada Association of Realtors for the greater Las Vegas  
9 metropolitan area; these trends are shown in Table 3.13-4b.

10

11

**Table 3.13-4a Clark County Housing, 2000**

Location	Total Housing Units, 2000	Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes, 2000	Vacancy Rates <sup>1</sup> , 2000	Housing Units, 2008 (Clark County) Total Units
Clark County	559,799	\$139,000	6.15	784,688
Boulder City	6,385	\$172,500	5.8	6,787
Jean, NV	0	N/A	N/A	0
Primm, NV	684	N/A	N/A	684

Source: U.S. Census 2000, Clark County 2006c

Note:

<sup>1</sup> Census data average of homeowner and rental vacancy rates for Clark County (2.6% to 9.7%, average 6.15%) and Boulder City (2.1% to 9.5%, average 5.8%).

12

13

**Table 3.13-4b Recent Trends in Median Single Family Home Prices in the Greater Las Vegas Metropolitan Area**

Year	Median Home Price
2006	\$317,400
2007	\$297,700
2008	\$220,500
2009 (1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter)	\$141,800
2009 (Boulder City, NV)	\$153,282
<b>Percent Change in Median Home Sales Prices</b>	
Jan 2008–May 2009	-39.7%
Jan 2008–May 2009 (Boulder City)	-12.37%

Source: Nevada Association of Realtors

**Local Economy and Workforce Characteristics: Clark County, Nevada**

Table 3.13-5 provides Bureau of Labor Statistics’ employment data for Clark County. In September 2009, the region as a whole had more than 1,011,538 workers. Construction, leisure and hospitality, retail trade, and services are the largest employment sectors for the region. The region has been severely affected by the recent economic recession and the Clark County unemployment rate increased from 6.6 percent in 2008 to 12.1 percent in November 2009.

**Table 3.13-5 Clark County Employment Characteristics in 2008**

Industry	Employment
Agriculture (private)	124
Construction (private)	92,364
Manufacturing (private)	25,363
Wholesale trade (private)	23,893
Retail trade (federal, private)	100,118
Transportation and warehousing (federal, private)	37,477
Information (local, private)	11,827
Finance, insurance (federal, private)	26,630
Professional and business services (federal, private)	111,680
Educational and health services (federal, state, private)	77,818
Leisure and hospitality (federal, state, private)	269,806
Other services (except public administration)	20,738
Public administration (federal, state, local)	39,451
Total employed, all industries	905,267
Unemployment (November)	118,986 (12.1%)

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008

**3.13.1.3 San Bernardino County**

San Bernardino County extends from the Nevada border on its eastern boundary to Los Angeles County on the western boundary. This area includes the EITP segments that would traverse parts of the unincorporated areas of Mountain Pass and the town of Nipton. San Bernardino County encompasses 20,052.50 square miles of land and has a population density of 85.2 persons per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau 2009). The western part of San Bernardino County is more densely populated than the eastern part, which includes the EITP area; the EITP area of the county is more rural.

**Population and Housing Characteristics: San Bernardino County, California**

The population of San Bernardino County was projected to increase by 35.6 percent between 2000 and 2010, from 1.7 million in 2000 to 2.1 million in 2010, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The San Bernardino County General Plan (San Bernardino County 2007) also projects population growth, to over 2,830,000 by the year 2020, an increase of almost 60 percent. Although this projected growth rate has clearly been affected by the economic downturn of the

1 last two years, it is anticipated that population growth will resume as the economy recovers and will eventually match  
2 current projections. Tables 3.13-6 and 3.13-7 provide population and housing demographic data for San Bernardino  
3 County.

4

**Table 3.13-6 San Bernardino County Projected Population Trends, 2000–2030**

2000 Census	2010 Projection	Projected Growth, 2000–2010 Change (Number of People, %)		2020 Projection	Projected Growth, 2010–2020 Change (Number of People, %)		2030 Projection	Projected Growth, 2020–2030 Change (Number of People, %)	
<b>Regional Population and Growth Projections</b>									
1,709,434	2,133,377	423,943	25%	2,456,089	322,712	15	2,762,307	296,218	12
<b>Household Projections</b>									
1,664,402	2,008,900	344,498	21%	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available

Source: CDF 2007, U.S. Census 2009

5

6

**Table 3.13-7 San Bernardino County Housing, 2000 and 2008**

U.S. Census (2000) Total Housing Units	Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes	Vacancy Rates	CDF (2008) Total Units
667,836	\$150,000*	11.5%	778,245

Source: U.S. Census 2009 (based on data from 2000), CDF 2009

Notes:

CDF = California Department of Finance

\* Value is from the California Association of Realtors Median Price of Existing Single-Family Homes October 2009 data set. The value is 26.2% lower than in October 2008 (\$203,211).

7

8 For the purposes of the analysis, the population growth projections of Mountain Pass and Nipton are considered as  
9 unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County and included in the San Bernardino County population. The  
10 Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) projects a total increase in population from 2010 to 2030  
11 equal to 775,704 or a 35.5 percent increase.

12

13 Current housing conditions within the San Bernardino County Region are shown in Table 3.13-7. There were 667,836  
14 total housing units with 76,801 of these units vacant, creating a vacancy rate of 11.5 percent.

15

**16 Local Economy and Workforce Characteristics: San Bernardino County, California**

17 As discussed in Section 3.13.1.1, employment and population growth have been trending downwards within the  
18 region in the last two years. The San Bernardino County unemployment rate increased from 8 percent in 2008 to  
19 13.8 percent in September 2009. The labor force characteristics of the EITP regional area for San Bernardino County  
20 are part of the Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.  
21 Table 3.13-8 provides employment data for San Bernardino County based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics  
22 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. In September 2009, the region as a whole had 867,057 workers in its  
23 labor force.

24

**Table 3.13-8 San Bernardino Employment Characteristics in 2008**

Industry	Employment
Agriculture (private)	2,816
Construction (private)	35,973
Manufacturing (private)	58,144
Wholesale trade (private)	34,607
Retail trade (federal, private)	85,884
Transportation and warehousing (federal, private)	44,863
Information (local, private)	7,543
Finance, insurance (private)	15,662
Professional and business services (federal, local, private)	79,093
Public administration (federal, state, local)	36,190
Total employed, all industries	649,531
Unemployment (November)	120,453 (13.8 %)

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics 2008

### 3.13.1.4 Environmental Justice: Racial Composition and Minority Populations

Executive Order 12898, “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations,” mandates that each federal agency ensure that achieving environmental justice is part of its mission by identifying and addressing as appropriate “disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low-income populations” (Council on Environmental Quality [CEQ] 1997). In accordance with guidance from the CEQ, the demographic assessment for the EITP identifies minority or low-income populations or both within a 5-mile radius of the proposed route. CEQ states that “minority populations should be identified where either: (a) the minority population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent, or (b) the minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis” (CEQ 1997). Although not required under CEQA, environmental justice is assessed for purposes of BLM’s analysis of the EITP under NEPA.

The racial composition of each county, municipality, and census tract near the EITP was assessed to determine whether these communities were composed of significantly higher proportions of minority and low-income populations compared with surrounding areas. According to Environmental Justice: Guidance under the NEPA, minority individuals are defined as members of the following ethnic groups: American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, African American, not of Hispanic Origin, or Hispanic.

The purpose of this analysis of environmental justice is to determine whether there is disproportionate representation of minority or low-income populations within a potentially affected the EITP area. The EITP would cause environmental justice impacts if it were to cause disproportionately high and adverse impacts on an existing minority or low-income population. This analysis was conducted in accordance with the document, “Final Guidance for Incorporating Environmental Justice Concerns,” in “U.S. EPA’s National Environmental Policy Act Compliance Analysis” (Unites States Environmental Protection Agency April 1998). For this analysis, populations were defined as “minority” if:

- The minority population of the affected area is greater than 50 percent of the affected area’s general population; or
- The percentage of minorities in the area’s population is meaningfully greater than the percentage of the minority population in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographical analysis.

The steps recommended by the above-mentioned guidance documents to assure compliance with the Executive Order are: (1) outreach and involvement; (2) screening-level analysis to determine the existence of a minority or low-

1 income population; and (3) if warranted, a detailed examination of the distribution of impacts on segments of the  
2 population. Implementation of this environmental justice analysis demonstrates a concerted effort to comply with the  
3 Executive Order.

4  
5 Demographic data were gathered for census tracts that would be crossed by the transmission line and also those  
6 within a 2-mile radius of the Ivanpah Substation. The census tract was determined to be an appropriate geographic  
7 unit because the presence of distinct minority communities would not be concealed or diluted by this level of  
8 aggregation. To assess the composition of the communities in immediate proximity to the transmission line, census  
9 tract, minority population proportions, and poverty indicators were reviewed. For the EITP, the total populations  
10 evaluated within the regional study areas were extrapolated from large U.S. Census blocks, which are approximately  
11 65 miles wide and have captured populations extending throughout Clark County to include Boulder City and the  
12 southern Las Vegas. The only population along the proposed route is located at the Desert Oasis Apartment  
13 Complex in Primm, Nevada. The income and racial characteristics of this complex have not been identified; however,  
14 it does house casino and other service employees. Table 3.13-9 provides regional population demographics.

15  
16 Environmental justice guidance defines “low-income population” using statistical poverty thresholds as defined by the  
17 U.S. Census Bureau. Poverty levels indicate the percentage of the population that has income below that necessary  
18 for basic necessities, such as adequate housing, food, transportation, energy, and health care. Table 3.13-9 shows  
19 the poverty level of the populations of San Bernardino and Clark counties for both counties and also by census tract.  
20 To determine whether the proposed project would affect low-income populations, the percentage of individuals in the  
21 areas affected by the proposed project is compared with county and state averages.

22  
23 Table 3.13-9 shows the minority community proportion of the total population increasing toward the northeast within  
24 census tracts along the proposed transmission line route. The plot shows that some communities where the  
25 transmission line would be located have minority population aggregations that are in fact lower than county averages.  
26 The table also shows the county averages compared with the constituent census tracts.

27  
28 In the State of California, approximately 14.2 percent of the population is below the U.S. Census Bureau’s defined  
29 poverty level. In Clark County, approximately 10.5 percent of the population is below the U.S. Census Bureau’s  
30 defined poverty level. In San Bernardino County, approximately 13.4percent of the population is below the U.S.  
31 Census Bureau’s defined poverty level. Within three of the census tracts in Clark County that could be affected by the  
32 proposed project, more than 20 percent of the population is below the defined poverty level, double the Clark County  
33 average of 10.5 percent.

### 34 35 **3.13.1.5 Tourism**

36  
37 Las Vegas is a premier tourist destination, and McCarran International Airport has become a major aviation  
38 transportation hub in the southwestern U.S., necessitating future expansion in the form of the proposed Southern  
39 Nevada Supplemental Airport, which would be located between Jean and Primm. The communities of Primm and  
40 Nipton also derive income from tourism in the region as border cities between the states of Nevada and California.  
41 Primm attracts visitors to its casinos and shopping attractions and also benefits from tourism revenue generated by  
42 visitors to the Ivanpah Dry Lake. Nipton, also an unincorporated community, is considered a historic Mojave Desert  
43 town and is highly frequented by visitors to the Mojave National Preserve.

1

**Table 3.13-9 Racial Composition of Census Tracts Along the Proposed Project Route (2000)**

From Milepost	To Milepost	Census Tract	Minority <sup>a</sup> (%)	White (%)	Black or African American Only (%)	American Indian and Alaska Native Only (%)	Asian Only (%)	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Only (%)	Some Other Race Only (%)	Hispanic or Latino (%)	Two or More Races (%)	Below Poverty Level <sup>b</sup> (%)
<b>San Bernardino County</b>			53.5	44.0	8.8	0.6	4.6	0.3	0.2	39.2	2.5	13.4
82.88	87.08	012100	22.9	74.3	5.2	1.1	1.7	0.1	0.2	14.7	2.8	11.1
87.08	88.65	011900	30.8	66.9	2.3	1.3	1.3	0.3	0.3	25.3	2.3	13.3
89.45	96.69	011600	19.3	77.9	2.2	0.6	1.6	0.1	0.1	14.8	2.8	4.6
96.69	195.05	010300	37.8	57.7	12.8	1.2	2.3	0.8	0.3	20.5	4.5	3.6
<b>Clark County</b>			37.1	60.2	8.8	0.6	5.2	0.4	0.1	22.0	2.7	10.5
195.05	212.04	005703	33.6	64.4	13.4	0.6	5.0	0.2	0.0	14.4	2.0	17.6
212.04	223.63	005710	10.5	88.2	1.5	0.4	3.2	0.1	0.0	5.2	1.3	19.6
223.63	226.40	002815	15.8	82.6	1.8	0.6	5.7	0.4	0.4	6.8	1.6	17.9
226.40	229.76	005816	10.6	87.8	1.2	0.4	1.0	0.2	0.1	7.7	1.6	21.3
229.76	231.57	002963	10.7	87.0	1.7	0.8	1.8	0.0	0.1	6.2	2.3	20.4
231.57	233.46	002962	16.7	81.2	5.3	0.7	2.5	0.4	0.1	7.9	2.0	26.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000a

Notes:

<sup>a</sup> Minority aggregation includes the sum of Black, Asian, American Indian and Alaskan Native, Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and some other races.

<sup>b</sup> Taken from the 2006–2008 U.S. Census Bureau 3-year estimates.

2

3

1  
2 The local economy in the vicinity of the transmission route depends primarily on the arts, entertainment, and  
3 recreation industries as sources of employment and tax revenues to support public services. The most recent data  
4 show that the region employed 28.8 percent of the labor force in hotel and gaming related activities (LVCVA 2008).  
5 Combined employment for resorts/casinos totaled 51,250, or 5.5 percent of the county total of 933,200 in 2008 (Clark  
6 County 2006a). About 39 million visitors came to the area in 2007. Tourists accounted for 33 million of this total (84  
7 percent) while the remaining 6.2 million were convention delegates (16 percent). Visitors provide a substantial  
8 economic stimulus to the region through secondary effects from spending on goods and services. Visitors to Las  
9 Vegas contributed nearly \$41.6 billion to the area economy in 2007. Gaming revenues alone were \$11 billion in 2007  
10 (LVCVA 2008).

### 11 12 **3.13.2 Applicable Laws, Regulations, and Standards**

13  
14 The following section summarizes federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and standards that are applicable to  
15 socioeconomics, population and housing, and environmental justice in the proposed project area.

#### 16 17 **3.13.2.1 Federal**

18  
19 A general description of NEPA requirements is provided in Section 3.1. Details of NEPA impact assessment criteria  
20 for socioeconomics, population, and housing are provided in Section 3.13.3.1.

#### 21 22 **Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice)**

23 Executive Order 12898, Federal Action to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income  
24 Populations (59 FR 7629) and the CEQ regulations (CEQ 1997) apply to projects that may have potential adverse  
25 impacts on low-income and minority populations. The Executive Order requires that impacts on minority or low-  
26 income populations be analyzed for the geographical area in which the project would be located to determine if there  
27 would be a disproportionately high and adverse impact on minority and/or low-income populations. If the  
28 demographic analysis reveals that disproportionately high and adverse impacts would occur, mitigation steps must  
29 be proposed to address the effects, pursuant to federal regulation. Standard approved methods for evaluation of  
30 environmental justice impacts are included within the CEQ document, "Environmental Justice Guidance under the  
31 National Environmental Policy Act" (1997). These methods were used for the evaluation of the proposed project that  
32 is described in this section.

#### 33 34 **BLM H-16010-1 Land Use Planning Handbook – Appendix D, Section IV Environmental** 35 **Justice Requirements**

36 This document provides guidance for assessing potential impacts on population, housing, and employment as they  
37 relate to environmental justice. It also describes variables such as lifestyles, beliefs and attitudes, and social  
38 organizations with respect to environmental justice. These variables were not evaluated in this analysis, as they are  
39 cannot be readily quantified for the purposes of impact assessment and do not provide any additional analytical value  
40 in terms of evaluating potential environmental justice impacts.

#### 41 42 **3.13.2.2 State**

43 There are no specific state regulations pertaining to socioeconomics, population, and housing other than CEQA. A  
44 description of CEQA requirements is provided in Section 3.1. CEQA impact assessment criteria pertaining to  
45 socioeconomics, population, and housing are provided in Section 3.13.3.2.

1 **3.13.2.3 Regional and Local**

2  
3 **San Bernardino County**

4 The 2007 General Plan for San Bernardino County, California, outlines standards and policy for unincorporated  
5 territory within the county (San Bernardino County 2007). The plan defines three county planning regions (Valley,  
6 Mountain, and Desert). The proposed project is within the Desert Planning Region, which includes all of the  
7 unincorporated area of San Bernardino County lying north and east of the Mountain Planning Region. The Desert  
8 Planning Region, the largest of the three, includes a significant portion of the Mojave Desert and contains  
9 approximately 93 percent (18,735 square miles) of the land but less than 25 percent of the current population in San  
10 Bernardino County.

11  
12 The proposed project area falls within the planning jurisdictions covered by the SCAG, and also the San Bernardino  
13 Associated Governments region (San Bernardino Associated Governments 2010, SCAG 2008). For SCAG planning  
14 purposes, the growth management chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide contains policies related  
15 to improving the regional standard of living (SCAG 2008). Policies that are relevant to assessing how the proposed  
16 project would influence the region’s standard of living, regional quality of life, and goals to provide social, political,  
17 and cultural equity are reproduced in their entirety below (SCAG 2008).

18  
19 ***Regional Standard of Living***

20 *3.05 Encourage patterns of urban development and land use which reduce costs on*  
21 *infrastructure construction and make better use of existing facilities.*

22 *3.09 Support local jurisdictions’ efforts to minimize the cost of infrastructure and public*  
23 *service delivery, and efforts to seek new sources of funding for development and*  
24 *the provision of services.*

25 *3.10 Support local jurisdictions’ efforts to minimize red tape and expedite the*  
26 *permitting process to maintain economic vitality and competitiveness.*

27  
28 ***Regional Quality of Life***

29 *3.11 Support provisions and incentives created by local jurisdictions to attract housing*  
30 *growth in job-rich sub-regions and job growth in housing-rich sub-regions.*

31 *3.13 Encourage local jurisdictions’ plans that maximize the use of existing urbanized*  
32 *areas accessible to transit through infill and redevelopment.*

33 *3.14 Support local plans to increase density of future development located at strategic*  
34 *points along the regional commuter rail, transit systems, and activity centers.*

35  
36 ***Social, Political, and Cultural Equity***

37 *3.27 Support local jurisdictions and other service providers in their efforts to develop*  
38 *sustainable communities and provide, equally to all members of society,*  
39 *accessible and effective services such as: public education, housing, health care,*  
40 *social services, recreational facilities, law enforcement, and fire protection.*

41  
42 **Clark County**

43 The Clark County Comprehensive Plan outlines standards and policies for unincorporated territory within Clark  
44 County, Nevada (Clark County 2006a). This plan covers the Las Vegas Valley Community District Area and four  
45 Rural Planning Areas (Northeast, Northwest, South, and Laughlin). Most of the proposed project would be within the  
46 South County Rural Planning Area (Goodsprings, Jean, Primm, Ripley [Sandy Valley], and Searchlight). This  
47 planning area’s population is approximately 3,950 (Clark County 2006a). The EITP would also lie within the Boulder  
48 City Annexation area, which is within the Las Vegas Valley Community District Area. The population of Boulder City

1 itself is 15,367 (Clark County 2006a), but this does not represent the population within the Boulder City Annexation  
2 area.

### 4 **Boulder City**

5 The Boulder City Master Plan includes goals, policies, and programs used in making land use decisions for the future  
6 of Boulder City, Nevada (Boulder City 2003).

### 8 **3.13.3 Impact Analysis**

9  
10 This section defines the methodology used to evaluate impacts on socioeconomic conditions, including CEQA impact  
11 criteria. The definitions are followed by an analysis of each alternative, including a joint CEQA/NEPA analysis of  
12 impacts. At the conclusion of the discussion is a NEPA impact summary statement and CEQA impact determinations.  
13 For mitigation measures, refer to Section 3.13.4.

#### 15 **3.13.3.1 NEPA Impact Criteria**

16  
17 The following NEPA analysis determines whether direct or indirect effects on socioeconomic conditions would result  
18 from the proposed project and explains the significance of those effects in the proposed project area (40 CFR  
19 1502.16). Although NEPA does not provide specific thresholds of significance for socioeconomic impact assessment,  
20 *significance*, as defined by Council on Environmental Quality regulations, requires consideration of the context and  
21 intensity of the change that would be introduced by the project (40 CFR 1508.27). In addition, 40 CFR 1508.8(b)  
22 states that indirect effects may include those that are growth-inducing and those that are related to induced changes  
23 in the pattern of land use, population density, or growth rate. In the following analysis, impacts are describes in  
24 proportion to their significance (40 CFR 1502.2[b]). To facilitate the comparison of alternatives, the significance of  
25 environmental changes is also described in terms of temporal scale, spatial extent, and intensity.

26  
27 Under NEPA, the proposed project would affect socioeconomic conditions if it would:

- 28 a. Affect regional economies by causing changes in expenditures for goods and services and infrastructure  
29 spending or aggregate short-term or long-term impacts on incomes within the project area;
- 30 b. Cause aggregate short-term or long-term impacts on employment by increasing or decreasing the  
31 employment level within the project area;
- 32 c. Result in disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations; or
- 33 d. Result in both short- and long-term impacts to levels of tourism within the study area.

#### 36 **3.13.3.2 CEQA Impact Criteria**

37  
38 CEQA Guidelines Section 15131(a) states that “economic or social effects of a project shall not be treated as  
39 significant effects on the environment. An EIR may trace a chain of cause and effect from the proposed decision on a  
40 project through anticipated economic or social changes resulting from the project to physical changes caused in turn  
41 by the economic or social changes. The intermediate economic or social changes need not be analyzed in any detail  
42 greater than necessary to trace the chain of cause and effect. The focus of the analysis shall be on the physical  
43 changes.” In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15131 states, “Economic or social information may be included in an  
44 EIR, or may be presented in whatever form the agency desires,” and Section 15131 (b) states, “Where an EIR uses  
45 economic or social effects to determine that a physical change is significant, the EIR shall explain the reason for  
46 determining that the effect is significant.”

1 Under CEQA, the EITP would have a significant impact if it would:  
2

- 3 a. Substantially change the current and projected population level of the study area or induce substantial  
4 population growth in an area either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or  
5 indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure);
- 6 b. Increase demand for permanent and temporary housing resources that could not be absorbed by the  
7 existing housing stock (i.e., increase the demand for new housing); or
- 8 c. Displace a substantial number of existing residences within the community, necessitating the construction of  
9 replacement housing elsewhere.

### 10 11 **3.13.3.3 Methodology** 12

13 The following analysis uses baseline conditions established in Section 3.13.1 and evaluates the potential for impacts  
14 associated with the EITP and alternatives. Construction and operation activities associated with the EITP and  
15 alternatives were identified based on the PEA provided by the applicant. Impacts were analyzed to determine  
16 whether the proposed project would significantly affect socioeconomic resources through an evaluation of the context  
17 and intensity of potential changes that would be introduced by the proposed project.  
18

### 19 **3.13.3.4 Applicant Proposed Measures** 20

21 The applicant has not included any applicant proposed measures (APMs) related to socioeconomic, population and  
22 housing, or environmental justice for the EITP.  
23

### 24 **3.13.3.5 Proposed Project / Proposed Action** 25

26 The EITP would require approximately 190 workers (SCE 2009), about 34 of which would be local. The proposed  
27 project would take about 18 months to complete. No new employment would be created by operation of the proposed  
28 project because it primarily would involve the replacement of an existing transmission line. Construction of the EITP  
29 and alternatives is not anticipated to induce substantial population growth (Section 6.3, "Growth-Inducing Effects") or  
30 result in impacts on population and housing. As shown in Tables 3.13-4 and 3.13-7, a considerable construction  
31 workforce is available within the proposed project region. The applicant states that work crews would commute daily  
32 from Boulder City, the Las Vegas area, or San Bernardino County and temporarily need accommodations, which are  
33 widely available in the area. Most EITP construction workers are expected to originate from the regional labor pool  
34 and would not generate a permanent increase in population level or result in a decrease in permanent housing  
35 availability.  
36

## 37 **Regional Economy**

### 38 **Construction**

39 The construction phase is anticipated to have a short-term beneficial impact on the region's economy. EITP  
40 construction spending would be beneficial to the regional economy, as it would contribute to increased expenditures  
41 on goods and services in an area that has been significantly affected by the recent economic decline (Section  
42 3.13.1.1). As a large-scale transmission and telecommunication line infrastructure project, the EITP would also  
43 provide jobs and tax revenue to local communities. EITP materials and equipment would be sourced locally or  
44 regionally wherever possible, which would also provide benefit to the local economy.  
45

### 46 **Operation & Maintenance**

47 During EITP operation, direct spending associated with the permanent workforce and the transmission line's annual  
48 operational and maintenance expenditures are expected to have a negligible impact on the local economy.

Operational and maintenance expenditures, payroll, and wages are expected to be similar to those associated with operation of the existing lines currently operating between Eldorado and Ivanpah.

### **Regional Employment Levels**

#### **Construction**

The EITP is expected to have a short-term beneficial impact on the region's economy, labor force, and employment opportunities. The number of construction workers required is small relative to the available work force and unemployment is high (Tables 3.13-4 and 3.13-7), so most workers would come from the local area or surrounding region. Few if any workers would relocate to the area. Construction activities would also benefit associated regional industries, such as manufacturers of construction materials and equipment.

By applying a local hiring estimate of 18 percent (as described in the applicant's response to data gaps), it can be approximated that 34 direct local jobs could be generated within the local economy during construction of the EITP. The workforce that would temporarily migrate to the area would stimulate spending in the region through per diem spending on food, lodging, gas, and entertainment that would temporarily benefit communities near the proposed project. In addition, direct spending by construction workers on consumables, supplies, and equipment would also have a positive short-term impact on the regional and local economies.

#### **Operation and Maintenance**

The permanent operational staff would have a negligible impact on the regional labor force as it is expected that the total number of permanent jobs created would be similar to the jobs required to operate the current transmission lines in operation between Eldorado and Ivanpah substations. No permanent staff would be required to relocate to the area for proposed project operation.

### **Environmental Justice Considerations**

Based on the EITP design and the location of the majority of the transmission and telecommunication lines parallel to an existing ROW, it is unlikely that the construction and operation of the EITP would have a disproportionately high, adverse impact on minority populations in the vicinity. Three census tracts in the vicinity of the EITP corridor comprise low-income populations more than double the county average (see Table 3.13-9); however, the only potential impacts that would affect these populations include the short-term, minor increases in noise and traffic associated with construction; therefore, no disproportionately high, adverse impact would occur. Most of the proposed project is in an existing ROW in a rural area. The Desert Oasis Apartment Complex, which contains mobile homes as well as apartments, is within 0.01 miles of the proposed transmission line.

#### **Construction**

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would be limited to an 18-month period. As the transmission line would be constructed in a linear fashion, only sections of the transmission line corridor would be under construction at any one time, reducing the duration of potential construction impacts in any one area. The noise levels at the Desert Oasis Apartment Complex would increase for the 2.5 weeks that construction would occur in this area. Noise impacts would be temporary and less than significant. Changes to visual resources resulting from the installation of taller, more visible transmission towers in this area would be minor, localized, and long term because the visual landscape already includes several other transmission lines.

#### **Operation and Maintenance**

Operation of the EITP would comprise servicing and maintaining transmission line components on an annual and as-needed basis. Similar to current procedures, these activities would be short term and conducted in the immediate vicinity of the transmission line; therefore, minority and low-income populations would not experience disproportionately high, adverse impacts.

1 **Tourism**

2 **Construction**

3 Local tourist destinations in the construction area include the Primm Valley Golf Course and Ivanpah Dry Lake as  
4 well as numerous casinos in and around the town of Primm. Noise modeling confirmed that there would not be any  
5 significant construction noise impacts at either of these locations. This is discussed further in Section 3.10, "Noise."  
6 Nuisance dust and noise from construction would have a negligible, localized, and short term impact that would be  
7 limited to daytime hours. Additional discussion of impacts on recreational resources is provided in Section 3.12,  
8 "Recreation." Construction crews would lodge in local accommodations, which would have a nominal beneficial  
9 impact on tourism in the area.

10  
11 **Operation and Maintenance**

12 Operation and maintenance of the EITP would not adversely impact local tourism but would provide benefits by  
13 indirectly supporting regional tourism through facilitating transmission of renewable energy to meet current and future  
14 energy demands in California and increasing the use of renewable energy in California (Chapter 1, "Purpose and  
15 Need").

16  
17 **NEPA Summary**

18 There would be a negligible, short-term, beneficial impact on the region's economy during construction and a  
19 negligible impact on area incomes during operation of the EITP. In addition, the proposed project would have a  
20 localized, negligible, short-term, beneficial impact on the region's labor force and employment during construction  
21 and a negligible impact on labor during operations. Impacts on minority and low-income populations would be  
22 negligible, as would impacts on the tourism industry.

23  
24 **CEQA Significance Determinations**

25 **NO IMPACT. Induced population growth.** The proposed project would have growth-inducing potential if it fostered  
26 growth or a concentration of population above what is assumed in local and regional land use plans or in projections  
27 of regional planning authorities. Construction of the EITP would temporarily require approximately 156 non-local  
28 construction workers for 12 to 18 months (SCE 2009), a negligible increase compared with the size of the regional  
29 population, and no impact would result. Permanent employees required for operation and maintenance activities  
30 would be similar to current levels of staffing for the existing line; therefore, no impact would result under this criterion.

31  
32 **NO IMPACT. Increased demand for permanent and temporary housing.** Construction, operation, and  
33 maintenance of the EITP would not require the construction of additional housing. Some workers would be hired from  
34 the existing labor force in the proposed project area, and adequate accommodations exist in the proposed project  
35 area to house the migratory workers needing temporary housing during construction. For example, Primm alone  
36 currently has 2,579 hotel rooms, with many more available in Las Vegas; this capacity would be sufficient to  
37 accommodate all construction workers, if needed. The EITP construction would not substantially increase the  
38 demand for housing or directly or indirectly induce population growth in the area. The small permanent workforce for  
39 operation and maintenance activities would be similar to the workforce needed for current operation and  
40 maintenance procedures and no new housing would be required; therefore, there would be no impacts under this  
41 criterion.

42  
43 **NO IMPACT. Displace existing residences.** The EITP construction activities would occur at various locations along  
44 the transmission line routes over an approximately 18-month period. Construction of the EITP would not displace  
45 existing housing or people, or necessitate relocation or the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Similarly,  
46 operation and maintenance activities would not displace existing residences. Therefore, there would be no impact  
47 under this criterion.

1 **3.13.3.6 No Project / No Action Alternative**  
2

3 The No Project Alternative assumes that the existing transmission line system would continue to be operational at its  
4 maximum feasible capacity and that additional energy production would be provided to the market from other  
5 sources. Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed project would not be constructed and there would be no  
6 changes to socioeconomic conditions in the proposed project area. Therefore, implementation of the No Project  
7 Alternative would result in no impact.  
8

9 In addition, based on current growth projections for the region, electricity demands may eventually exceed the  
10 applicant's ability to meet that demand if another means of increasing the electrical capacity in the area is not  
11 instituted. If electricity demands in the region cannot be met in the future, this could result in constraints to projected  
12 regional growth and development.  
13

14 **3.13.3.7 Transmission Alternative Route A**  
15

16 Transmission Alternative Route A would bypass a segment of the proposed project route that runs north and south  
17 near MP 2 along a line parallel to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power transmission corridor (Figure 1-  
18 1). Socioeconomic conditions are similar in this area to those discussed for the proposed project route. This  
19 alternative would not directly induce substantial population growth, displace existing residents or housing, result in  
20 disproportionately high, or adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations, or necessitate the construction of  
21 housing, and no impacts would result.  
22

23 **3.13.3.8 Transmission Alternative Route B**  
24

25 Transmission Alternative Route B would require 5.3 miles of new transmission line ROW, of which 0.83 miles would  
26 be constructed within the City of Boulder. Socioeconomic conditions are similar in this area to those associated with  
27 the proposed project, and construction and operation of this alternative within the City of Boulder would not be  
28 expected to result in any additional adverse socioeconomic impacts or result in project-induced growth. This  
29 alternative would not induce substantial population growth, displace existing residents or housing, result in  
30 disproportionately high, or adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations, or necessitate the construction of  
31 housing, and no impacts would result.  
32

33 **3.13.3.9 Transmission Alternative Route C**  
34

35 Transmission Alternative Route C would require 5.3 miles of new 130-foot ROW north of the Ivanpah Dry Lake and  
36 Primm, Nevada. Socioeconomic conditions and impacts resulting from this alternative would be similar to those  
37 associated with the proposed project. Transmission Alternative Route C would circle northwest around Primm. The  
38 existing setting for Transmission Line Alternative C is the same as described for the proposed transmission route  
39 except for the distance from the Desert Oasis Apartment Complex, which is 0.67 miles from Transmission Alternative  
40 Route C, and impacts on this complex would be less than impacts from the proposed project. This alternative would  
41 not directly induce substantial population growth, displace existing residents or housing, result in disproportionately  
42 high, or adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations, or necessitate the construction of housing, and no  
43 impacts would result.  
44

45 **3.13.3.10 Transmission Alternative Route D and Subalternative E**  
46

47 Transmission Alternative Route D and Subalternative E would match the footprint of an existing transmission 500-kV  
48 ROW to the extent possible across the Ivanpah Dry Lake. Ivanpah Dry Lake is a popular recreation destination for  
49 several kinds of recreational activities, including long-distance archery, kite bugging, and kite demonstrations. Use  
50 of Ivanpah Dry Lake for these activities contributes to the local economy. Reducing the transmission line footprint  
51 across the Ivanpah Dry Lake would lessen EITP's impact on recreation, but any impact on the local economy would

1 be negligible. The socioeconomic conditions and impacts resulting from these alternatives would be similar to those  
2 for Transmission Alternative Route C. These alternatives would not induce substantial population growth, displace  
3 existing residents or housing, necessitate the construction of housing, or result in disproportionately high or adverse  
4 impacts on minority or low-income populations, and no impacts would result.

### 6 **3.13.3.11 Telecommunication Alternative (Golf Course)**

7  
8 The Golf Course Telecommunication Alternative includes underground construction to reduce visual impacts of the  
9 telecommunication line. The proposed over-ground and underground wiring from the town of Nipton to the proposed  
10 Ivanpah Substation would parallel the northern boundary of the Mojave National Preserve. This alternative would  
11 incur increased costs associated with underground construction, which requires a longer construction period. The  
12 applicant would coordinate with the owners of the Primm Golf Course to minimize disruption to golf operations. This  
13 alternative would not directly induce substantial population growth, displace existing residents or housing, result in  
14 disproportionately high, or adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations, or necessitate the construction of  
15 housing, and no impacts would result.

### 17 **3.13.3.12 Telecommunication Alternative (Mountain Pass)**

18  
19 The Mountain Pass Telecommunication Alternative would locate portions of the telecommunication line underground  
20 and out of line-of-sight from Nipton to Mountain Pass and the proposed Ivanpah Substation. In general,  
21 socioeconomic impacts would be similar to those of the proposed project. This alternative would not induce  
22 substantial population growth, displace existing residents or housing, result in disproportionately high or adverse  
23 impacts on minority and low-income populations, or necessitate the construction of housing, and no impacts would  
24 result.

## 26 **3.13.4 Mitigation Measures**

27  
28 No mitigation measures are required to reduce impacts on socioeconomic conditions.

## 30 **3.13.5 Whole of the Action / Cumulative Action**

31  
32 Below is a brief summary of information related to socioeconomic in the ISEGS Final Staff Assessment / Draft  
33 Environmental Impact Statement (FSA/DEIS) prepared by the California Energy Commission (CEC) and the BLM.  
34 This section focuses on differences in the ISEGS setting and methodology compared with the setting and  
35 methodology discussed above for the EITP. This section also discloses any additional impacts or mitigation imposed  
36 by the CEC for ISEGS.

### 38 **3.13.5.1 ISEGS Setting**

39  
40 The ISEGS project would be constructed in the Ivanpah Basin of San Bernardino County, California, 4.5 miles  
41 southwest of Primm, Nevada, adjacent to the Ivanpah Dry Lake. The ISEGS project is approximately 3,672 acres in  
42 three sectional portions on a contiguous property in an area with socioeconomic conditions similar to those described  
43 above in Section 3.13.1.1 for the EITP. The ISEGS project, however, would be located only in California. It would not  
44 extend into Nevada.

### 46 **Employment Characteristics and Fiscal Revenue**

47 The metropolitan statistical areas for Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario and Las Vegas-Paradise were analyzed for  
48 the ISEGS project. The analysis concluded that the largest employment sectors of the ISEGS study area were  
49 construction and services. For the FSA/DEIS, ISEGS provided available fiscal data for San Bernardino County and  
50 the City of Las Vegas to describe revenues and expenditures for fiscal year 2006. An analysis of the impact on public

1 services was also provided including police protection, schools, and hospitals. The ISEGS analysis for these services  
2 is addressed in Section 3.11, “Public Services and Utilities.”  
3

#### 4 **Applicable Laws, Regulations, and Standards**

5 The same laws, regulations, and standards apply to both the EITP and ISEGS except ISEGS would be developed  
6 solely within California and on BLM land. Only federal and California regulations would apply.  
7

#### 8 **3.13.5.2 ISEGS Methodology**

9  
10 In the ISEGS FSA/DEIS, BLM and CEC staff reported on existing conditions and assessed potential impacts to  
11 socioeconomic resources. Using CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, this analysis sought to determine whether the  
12 project would have a significant effect. The following impact criteria were used:  
13

- 14 • Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly;
- 15 • Displace substantial numbers of people and/or existing housing, necessitating the construction of  
16 replacement housing elsewhere;
- 17 • Cause a substantial change in revenue for local business or government agencies; or
- 18 • Adversely impact acceptable levels of service for law enforcement, schools, and hospitals.  
19

20 Note: The EITP impact criteria (Section 3.13.3.5) did not address changes in local revenue structures that could  
21 result from construction, operation, and maintenance of the EITP.  
22

#### 23 **3.13.5.3 ISEGS Impacts**

24 The BLM and CEC determined that construction, operation, and decommissioning activities of the ISEGS project  
25 could have a beneficial impact to tax revenues. The two agencies published the impacts described below related to  
26 socioeconomics for the ISEGS project.  
27

#### 28 **Construction Impacts**

29  
30 The two-year ISEGS project anticipates a daily construction workforce of approximately 474 workers with peaks of  
31 959 workers, contingent on the type of work and time period. Workers would commute from their respective  
32 communities, limiting the need for immigration as a result of project-related construction activities.  
33

#### 34 **Operation Impacts**

35 Maintenance workers would commute approximately 1 hour. Workers identified for the ISEGS project would come  
36 from the existing construction population of the local available labor force. No significant impacts were determined to  
37 result for the operations of the project.  
38

39 CEC staff anticipates the generation of approximately \$2.2 million per year from assessed property tax values, with  
40 allocations of these funds in San Bernardino County, which has an annual operational and maintenance budget of  
41 \$340,500.  
42

#### 43 **Closure and Decommissioning Impacts**

44 The ISEGS project is scheduled to occur in a phased sequential order across the three segmented units at different  
45 locations. The workforce that has been proposed for use in closure and decommissioning activities will be drawn  
46 from the local labor pool, with residence in the surrounding areas. Because work from the project would be  
47 temporary, a determination was made of no significant impact on the study area population and employment base.  
48

1 **3.13.5.4 ISEGS Conditions of Certificate / Mitigation Measures**

2  
3 The BLM and CEC determined that there would be no significant impact on socioeconomic resources caused by  
4 ISEGS. No mitigation measures were imposed by the CEC for the ISEGS project.  
5