

Section 4.14

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4.14 RECREATION

This section describes existing conditions and the potential recreational impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Proposed Project and alternatives. The section identifies recreational facilities that could be adversely affected by the Proposed Project.

4.14.1 Significance Criteria

Impacts to recreation are considered potentially significant if the project would:

- Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment

4.14.2 Applicant Proposed Measures

The following APM would be implemented for recreation resources.

REC-1. Recreation Area Closures. When temporary short-term closures to recreational areas are necessary for construction activities, SCE would coordinate those closures with recreational facility owners. To the extent practicable, SCE would schedule construction activities to avoid heavy recreational use periods (e.g., holidays or tournaments). SCE would post notice of the closure onsite 14 calendar days prior to the closure.

4.14.3 Environmental Setting

There are several recreational areas within the project area. Figure 4.14: Parks and Open Spaces depicts the locations of these parks and recreational areas.

The City of Palm Springs owns approximately 130 acres of park land. Six city parks are maintained by the Parks and Recreation Division of the City's Public Works Department. Among these, Desert Highland Park, Victoria Park, and Ruth Hardy Park fall within the Farrell-Garnet Project Area. In addition to the local parks, there are many public and private golf courses in the vicinity of the project area. The Palm Springs Country Club, including a golf course, is located within the Farrell-Garnet Project Area, just west of Gene Autry Trail, in the community near the Proposed Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Subtransmission Line (Route 1). Portions of Escena Golf Club and Desert Princess Country Club (golf course), located east of Gene Autry Trail, also are within the Farrell-Garnet Project Area.

The Thousand Palms Community Park, a community center and park operated by the Coachella Valley Recreation and Park District, is located on Roberts Road, in Thousand Palms, and is within the Mirage-Santa Rosa Project Area. Additional community trails are proposed within the community of Thousand Palms. The Tri-Palm Golf Course and the Ivey Ranch Country Club golf course are both located within the Mirage-Santa Rosa Project Area (see Figure 4.14: Parks and Open Spaces).

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians operates the nearby Murray, Andreas, and Palm Canyon recreation sites in the area. Indian Canyons Heritage Park is located at the junction of the canyons. Hiking and equestrian trails are located in the Palm Canyon area, in the southern portion of Palm Springs. Other nearby recreation sites include the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, in northern Palm Springs, the Santa Rosa Mountains, and the Mount San Jacinto State Park, near Idyllwild.

The Nature Conservancy's Coachella Valley Preserve occupies approximately 13,000 acres near Thousand Palms. The Living Desert Nature Preserve is located in the City of Palm Desert. The Coachella Valley Preserve occupies approximately 20,000 acres and is located 10 miles east of Palm Springs and north of I-10. The Willow Hole Preserve, in nearby Cathedral City, and the Whitewater River Floodplain Preserve, located south of I-10, and east of Indian Avenue, also are located near the project area. The preserves offer protected habitat for the threatened Coachella Valley Fringe-toed Lizard and other sensitive species.

Other recreational opportunities in the vicinity of the project area include the Salton Sea State Recreation area, south of the Coachella Valley, which provides camping, boating, fishing, swimming, hiking, and picnicking areas. Lake Cahuilla County Park, in the City of La Quinta, provides camping, swimming, fishing, hiking/equestrian trails, and boating opportunities. Joshua Tree National Monument is located north of Palm Springs and Thousand Palms.

4.14.4 Impact Analysis

4.14.4.1 Construction Impacts

The majority of the Proposed Project would not be constructed adjacent to or within recreational areas. However, construction of the Proposed Project would occur within existing SCE ROWs through a portion of the Tri-Palm Golf Course, where the Proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Subtransmission Line (Route 4) would be built adjacent to two existing 115 kV subtransmission lines. Construction activities might cause temporary impacts to recreational users utilizing this area. For safety reasons, golf course users would be prohibited from the work areas intermittently during project construction (APM REC-1). Construction activities occurring within the recreation areas would follow applicable safety measures and traffic controls to ensure public safety during construction. Construction impacts would be temporary in nature and would be considered less than significant.

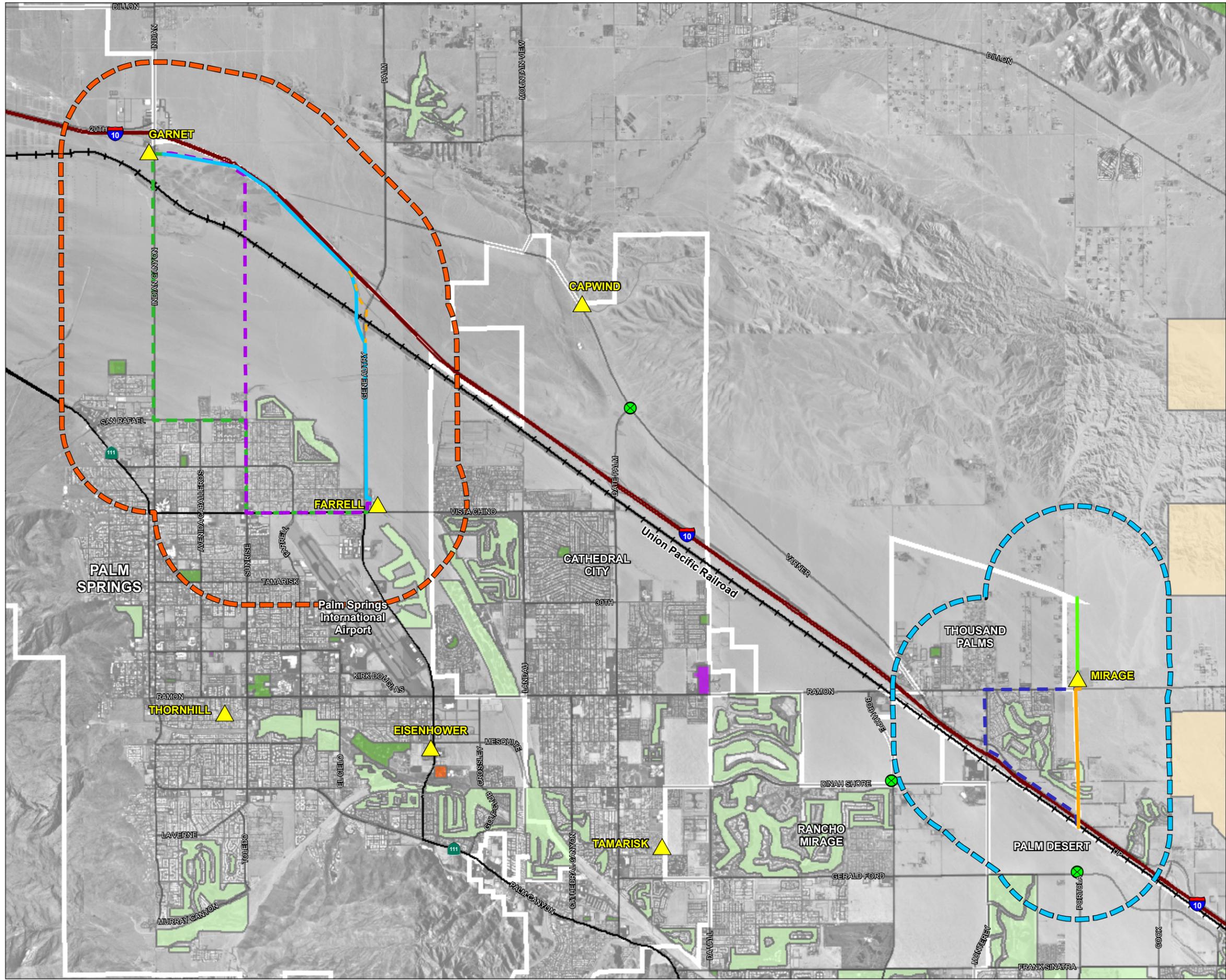
Because the construction work force would consist primarily of local workers, construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would not increase the use of parks or recreational facilities, nor would the project result in the need to construct or expand recreational facilities in the area.

In summary, impacts to recreation due to project construction would be less than significant.

4.14.4.2 Operational Impacts

The Proposed Project components would operate as unattended facilities and would not increase the local population. The project components would operate within existing SCE

**Figure 4.14
Parks and Open Spaces**



- LEGEND**
- Farrell - Garnet Project Area
 - Mirage - Santa Rosa Project Area
 - Proposed Project**
 - SCE Substations - Proposed Modification
 - Subtransmission Line Reconfiguration
 - Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Route #1
 - Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Route #4
 - Devers-Coachella 220 Kv Loop-In
 - Alternative Subtransmission Line Routes**
 - Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Route #1 Option A
 - Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Route #2
 - Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Route #3
 - Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Route #5
 - Transportation (TBM, 2006)**
 - Interstate Highway
 - State Highway
 - Major Road
 - Railroad
 - Parks and Open Space**
 - Amusement Park
 - Cemetery
 - Ecological Preserve/Estuary
 - Golf Course
 - Park
 - City/Community Boundary



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ROWs and franchise locations and would not result in a loss of parkland or recreational facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not increase the use of existing parks or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities.

In summary, the operation of the Proposed Project would not impact recreation.

4.14.5 Alternatives

The construction work force would consist primarily of local workers, and the alternative 115 kV subtransmission line routes would operate as unattended facilities. Construction and operation of the alternatives would not result in the increased use of city parks or other recreational facilities or cause the deterioration of these facilities. Furthermore, the alternatives would not include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. In summary, there would be no impact to recreation due to the construction and operation of the subtransmission line route alternatives.

4.14.6 References

City of Palm Desert Comprehensive General Plan. City of Palm Desert. March 2004.

City of Palm Springs General Plan. <http://www.psplan.org>. November 2006.

City of Palm Springs General Plan Update. 2006. <http://www.psplan.org>. November 2006.

Riverside County. 2003. General Plan. <http://www.rctlma.org/generalplan/index.html>. November 2006.

Western Coachella Valley Area Plan. <http://www.rctlma.org/generalplan/ap2/wcvap.html>. October 2006.

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