

4.11 RECREATION

4.11.1 SETTING

This section discusses characteristics of recreational facilities in the vicinity of the project area that could be affected by project construction and operation. Recreational facilities (e.g., parks, campgrounds, picnic areas, beaches, playgrounds, natural reservations, bicycling and hiking trails) are typically developed and maintained by local governments, such as cities, counties and special districts, although state and federal governments also operate such facilities. Due to the programmatic nature of the project and the extensive geographic scope of the project area, all the local recreational facilities that could potentially be affected by the project are not included at this programmatic level of analysis. In addition, while the national parks in the project area are listed here, subsequent activities would likely be planned to avoid potential impacts to the larger parklands, including national parks. As part of work plans submitted by Sempra Communications for subsequent activities, the recreational facilities, if any, that could be affected by the proposed action, would be identified.

The project area includes 15 counties, including Sacramento County in the Sacramento Valley (the northern half of the Central Valley), seven counties in the San Francisco Bay Area-Central Coast region of northern California: Marin, Contra Costa, Alameda, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz; Fresno County in the San Joaquin Valley (the southern half of the Central Valley); and six counties in southern California: San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Riverside, Orange, San Diego, and Imperial.

These counties are home to neighborhood, county, and regional parks, beaches, historical parks, open space areas, and wilderness areas. The project area includes a total of 116 state parks, historic parks, museums, and recreation areas (see **Table 4.11-1**). Ten national park sites are located in the project area: the Golden Gate National Recreational Area in Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties; Point Reyes National Seashore and Muir Woods National Monument in Marin County, the John Muir National Historic Site in Contra Costa County, and Giant Sequoia National Monument and Kings Canyon National Park in Fresno County, part of Death Valley National Park and all of the Mojave National Preserve in San Bernardino County; the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in Los Angeles County, and Joshua Tree National Park in Riverside County. Fresno County includes portions of two national Forests, Sierra and Sequoia, and three national forests, Angeles, San Bernardino, and Cleveland, are located in the southern California counties. Four National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs) are located in southern California counties: Seal Beach NWR in Orange County; Cibola and Imperial NWRs in Imperial County, and Rancho San Diego NWR in San Diego County.

The project area also includes networks of regional, county and local trails. In addition, water and utility districts preserve and manage thousands of acres of watershed lands, and counties or special districts manage open space reserves in many of the counties. City-owned parks and

**TABLE 4.11-1
STATE PARKS BY PROJECT COUNTIES**

<p>Alameda County Bethany Reservoir East Shore Lake Del Valle Robert W. Crown Memorial</p>	<p>Orange County Bolsa Chica Chino Hills Corona Del Mar Crystal Cove Doheny Huntington San Clemente</p>	<p>San Francisco County Candlestick Point</p>
<p>Contra Costa County Franks Tract John Marsh Home Mount Diablo</p>	<p>Riverside County California Citrus Indio Hills Palms Lake Perris Mount San Jacinto Salton Sea</p>	<p>San Mateo County Ano Nuevo Bean Hollow Burleigh H. Murray Ranch Butano Gray Whale Cove Half Moon Bay Montara Pacifica Pescadero Pigeon Point Light Station Point Montara Light Station Pomponio Portola Redwoods San Bruno Mountain San Gregorio Thornton</p>
<p>Fresno County Millerton Lake</p>	<p>Sacramento County Brannan Island Calif. State Capitol Museum California State Railroad Delta Meadows Folsom Powerhouse Governor's Mansion Leland Stanford Mansion Old Sacramento Prairie City State Indian Museum Stone Lake Sutter's Fort</p>	<p>Santa Clara County Henry W. Coe</p>
<p>Imperial County Heber Dunes Picacho</p>	<p>San Bernardino County Providence Mountains Silverwood Lake</p>	<p>Santa Cruz County Big Basin Redwoods Castle Rock Henry Cowell Redwoods Lighthouse Field Manresa Natural Bridges New Brighton Santa Cruz Mission Seacliff Sunset The Forest of Nicene Marks Twin Lakes Wilder Ranch</p>
<p>Los Angeles County Adamson House Antelope Valley Calif. Poppy Antelope Valley Indian Mus. A. B. Ripley Desert Woodland Castaic Lake Dockweiler Kenneth Hahn Leo Carillo Los Encinos Malibu Creek Malibu Lagoon Pio Pico Placerita Canyon Point Dune Robert H. Meyer Mem'l State Saddleback Butte Santa Monica Santa Susana Pass Tomo-Kahni Topanga Verdugo Mountains Watts Towers of Simon Rodia Will Rogers (State Beach) Will Rogers (State Hist. Park)</p>	<p>San Diego County Anza-Borrego Border Field Cardiff Carlsbad Cuyamaca Rancho Leucadia Moonlight Ocotillo Wells Old Town San Diego Palomar Mountain San Elijo San Onofre San Pasqual Battlefield Silver Strand South Carlsbad Tijuana River NERR Torrey Pines (State Beach) Torrey Pines (State Reserve)</p>	
<p>Marin County Angel Island China Camp Marconi Conference Center Mount Tamalpais Olompali Samuel P. Taylor Tomales Bay</p>		

recreation facilities are operated and maintained by the respective parks and recreation departments of those cities.

4.11.2 REGULATIONS, APPROVALS, AND PERMITS APPLICABLE TO RECREATION -

Approximately one-third of the cities and 40 percent of the counties in the state have adopted parks and recreation elements as part of their general plans (OPR, 1998). These elements, as well as the land use and open space and conservation elements in general plans without recreation elements, may include a range of policies and standards regarding park and recreational facilities. These plans may also include local definitions of recreational value that differ from that of CEQA. Because of the number and diversity of recreational facilities that could potentially be affected by future actions tiered off of this Program EIR by Sempra Communications, the relevant planning polices would be identified when more detailed information pertaining to a subsequent action is identified in the work plan submitted to the CPUC for final approval. For any construction or other actions associated with project implementation within state park units, the State Department of Parks and Recreation would require, at a minimum, a Right of Entry Permit to be issued by the State Parks. As noted in the setting discussion, subsequent activities would likely be planned to avoid potential impacts to national parks. If any future action tiered off of this Program EIR were to potentially impact any national park, the applicable policies of that park and the National Park Service generally would need to be identified. No other local, state, or federal regulations applicable to recreational resources have been identified at this level of analysis.

4.11.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The analysis of the significance of project impacts is based on the CEQA Environmental Checklist criteria (CEQA Guidelines Appendix G): a project would be deemed to have a significant effect on recreation facilities if it would increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks and facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated, or if the project included recreational facilities or required construction that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. In addition, for the purposes of this analysis, the project would be considered to have a significant environmental impact if it would substantially disrupt the use of existing recreational facilities to the extent that it would affect the recreational value of such facilities.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The proposed project involves the installation of fiber optic cable facilities, either underground or overhead, and construction of regeneration or OP-AMP stations. Fiber optic cable facilities would be installed underground primarily within existing roadway, utility, or railroad rights of

way, and would be installed overhead on existing utility poles and electric transmission towers. The project would not include construction of any new recreational areas or the permanent alteration of existing facilities. Because the project would not result in any direct increases in population, it would not contribute to long-term increases in the use of existing recreational facilities, which could lead to or accelerate their deterioration, or contribute to increased demand for new recreational facilities. Consequently, the project would be unlikely to have long-term impacts on recreational facilities.

Impact REC-1: Use of recreational facilities as staging or other work areas could cause or accelerate the physical deterioration of the facility. (Potentially Significant)

The use of recreational facilities such as park parking lots or open space areas as staging or other work areas could accelerate the deterioration of the facility. Implementation of the following measure would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure REC-1a: Sempra Communications shall avoid impacts on recreational facilities.

Sempra Communications shall avoid impacts on recreational facilities caused by their use as staging or other work areas by maintaining all work areas within existing utility or roadway rights-of-way, unless required or otherwise authorized by the local city or county parks department or equivalent government entity. If work within a recreational facility is authorized, cleanup and repair of the facility will follow the requirements of the governing agency, in addition to the requirements of this Program EIR.

Significance after Mitigation: Less than significant.

Impact REC-2: The project could intermittently and temporarily disrupt existing nearby recreational facilities for the duration of construction. (Less than Significant)

Construction associated with subsequent activities could temporarily disrupt the use of adjacent or nearby recreational facilities that are adjacent or close to recreational facilities. This could effectively decrease the availability or value of some recreational opportunities, albeit temporarily. In addition, the temporary disruption of access to or use of recreational facilities during construction of proposed activities could temporarily shift demand to other facilities in the vicinity, contributing to the deterioration of those facilities. The project would employ several construction techniques for installing conduit overhead or underground, as described in the Project Description. Typical construction activities for conduit installation would proceed at a rate of 100 to 300 feet per day depending on the type of surface (for underground conduit) and method of construction being employed. Therefore, the disruption of any particular recreational facilities would likely be limited to a matter of days or weeks.

Project construction would not directly affect or alter any recreational facility. Because subsequent activities have not been determined, the specific parks and recreation areas that could be affected are not identified in this Program EIR.

Although construction could be visible and audible from some recreational areas, implementation of construction-related air quality and noise mitigation measure in the Air Quality and Noise sections of this Chapter, respectively, would ensure that construction would not substantially impair the use or value of any such facility and that construction-related nuisance effects on nearby park users would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measure: No mitigation measures are required.

REFERENCES – Recreation

Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), *General Plan Guidelines*, November 1998.
<http://www.opr.ca.gov/GeneralPlanning/shtml>.