

4.11 Population and Housing

4.11.1 Setting

Components of the Proposed Project would be constructed in the cities of Visalia and Farmersville in Tulare County, as well as unincorporated areas of Tulare County including the community of Lemon Cove, a census-designated place (CDP). The majority of the Proposed Project would be constructed in the County.

Population

Tulare County is located in the southern end of Central California, and over the past two decades has experienced steady growth. According to the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG), the County's population increased by approximately 27 percent in the 1980s, from 245,738 in 1980 to 311,921 in 1990. The 2000 population estimate was 368,021 persons, which further increased the population by approximately 18 percent (TCAG, 2003).

The Proposed Project is located in northern Tulare County. The incorporated cities of Visalia and Farmersville followed similar trends for population growth as the County within the same time period. Table 4.11-1 shows the United States Census Bureau (U.S. Census Bureau) 2000 population estimates and demographics for Tulare County, the cities of Visalia and Farmersville, and the community of Lemon Cove.

**TABLE 4.11-1
YEAR 2000 POPULATIONS AND DEMOGRAPHICS**

	Tulare County	Visalia	Farmersville	Lemon Cove (CDP)
Total Population	368,021	91,565	8,737	298

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

As demonstrated in Table 4.11-2, which shows historic and estimated future population growth from 1980 to 2025, the population in these communities is expected to substantially increase over the next 20 years (TCAG, 2008a).

Housing

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2000, Tulare County had approximately 119,639 total housing units with approximately eight percent of these dwelling units vacant (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Table 4.11-3 shows housing data for the cities of Farmersville, Visalia, the community of Lemon Cove, and Tulare County.

**TABLE 4.11-2
HISTORIC AND ESTIMATED FUTURE POPULATION GROWTH, 1980–2025**

Area	1980	1990	% Change 1980–1990	2000	% Change 1990–2000	2005	% Change 2000–2005	2010	% Change 2005–2010	2015	% Change 2010–2015	2025	% Change 2015–2025
Tulare County	245,738	311,921	27	368,021	18	410,393	12	466,893	14	514,910	10	629,252	22
Visalia	49,729	75,636	52	91,565	21	111,034	21	124,585	12	139,626	12	176,077	26
Farmersville	5,544	6,235	12	8,737	40	10,405	19	12,272	18	14,502	18	20,089	39
Lemon Cove (CDP)	N.D.	232	N.D.	298	28	330	11	350	6	380	9	N.D.	N.D.

N.D. = No Data Available

SOURCE: State of California, Department of Finance 2008; TCAG, 2008a.

**TABLE 4.11-3
YEAR 2000 HOUSING DATA**

	Tulare County	Visalia	Farmersville	Lemon Cove (CDP)
Total Housing Units	119,639	32,795	2,288	171
Occupied Housing Units	110,385	30,941	2,153	135
Vacant Housing Units	9,254	1,854	135	36
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	56,796	17,651	1,352	71
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	41,080	11,422	674	32

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

As demonstrated in Table 4.11-4, the number of households in the cities and communities of Tulare County is estimated to have increased from 2000 to 2003 (TCAG, 2003).

None of the cities or communities (unincorporated areas) within the study area has a large seasonal population that own second homes or vacation homes in the area.

**TABLE 4.11-4
HOUSEHOLD ESTIMATES: 2000 TO 2008**

Year	Tulare County	Visalia	Farmersville	Lemon Cove (CDP)
2000	110,385	31,027	2,151	121
2001	111,468	31,513	2,173	N.D.
2002	113,002	32,232	2,204	N.D.
2003	114,628	33,009	2,247	N.D.
2008	139,359	42,434	2,673	N.D.

N.D. = No Data Available

SOURCE: TCAG, 2003; TCAG, 2008b.

Regulatory Context

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 requires a discussion of the ways in which a project could directly or indirectly foster economic development or population growth, and how that growth would, in turn, affect the surrounding environment. The following regulatory context is provided to set forth the planning framework that is anticipated under the General Plans for Tulare County and the cities of Visalia and Farmersville.

Local

Tulare County General Plan Update (Proposed Project and Alternatives 2, 3 and 6)

The Tulare County General Plan does not include any goals, objectives, and policies related to population/housing that would be applicable to the Proposed Project or alternatives (Tulare County, 2001).

Fresno County General Plan (Proposed Project and Alternatives 2, 3 and 6)

The Fresno County General Plan does not include any goals, objectives, and policies related to population/housing that would be applicable to the Proposed Project or alternatives (Fresno County, 2000).

City of Visalia General Plan (Proposed Project and Alternatives 2, 3 and 6)

The City of Visalia General Plan does not include any applicable goals, objectives, and policies related to population/housing that would be applicable to the Proposed Project or alternatives (City of Visalia, 1996).

City of Farmersville General Plan (Proposed Project)

The City of Farmersville General Plan does not include any applicable goals, objectives, and policies related to population/housing that would be applicable to the Proposed Project or alternatives (City of Farmersville, 2002).

4.11.2 Significance Criteria

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, an impact resulting from the Proposed Project would be considered significant if it would:

- a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)
- b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere
- c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere

4.11.3 Applicant Proposed Measures

No Applicant Proposed Measures have been identified by SCE for reducing impacts to population and housing.

4.11.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Approach to Analysis

This impact analysis considers the potential effects on population and housing from activities associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of the Proposed Project.

a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).

Impact 4.11-1: The Proposed Project could induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly. *Less than significant (Class III)*

Construction of the Proposed Project is needed to allow SCE to continue to provide safe and reliable electrical service in its Electrical Needs Area (see Figure 2-1 in Chapter 2, *Project Description*), and to increase transmission capacity to mitigate existing overload conditions. Therefore, the Proposed Project is designed to increase reliability and accommodate existing and planned electrical load growth, rather than to induce growth.

Growth is anticipated in the project area, as described above in Section 4.11.1. This growth is planned and regulated by applicable local planning policies and zoning ordinances and the Proposed Project's provision of electrical service is consistent with development anticipated by plans and zoning in the jurisdictions that the Proposed Project would serve. 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.

After construction is complete, the Proposed Project facilities would not be manned and would receive only occasional routine maintenance or emergency repairs. Implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in any additional long-term staffing increases at any of the substations where activities would occur. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not induce long-term population growth, either directly or indirectly, in the project area. There would be no impacts related to long-term population growth in the project area.

Construction activities in the project area are expected to last approximately nine to 12 months, beginning in October 2011 and concluding in late 2012. During peak construction activities, approximately 50 crew members per day would be required. This includes the seven-person crews anticipated for the proposed modifications at the Springville, Vestal, and Big Creek 3 Substations. It is expected that at least 30 to 40 of the craft personnel would be from the contractor's pool of experienced personnel, with the remaining construction personnel coming from local sources.

As discussed in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, construction crews would be based out of a variety of locations that may include, but not be limited to, SCE's Santa Clarita and/or San Joaquin Valley facilities, SCE's Alhambra and/or Fullerton facilities, and the San Joaquin Valley or adjacent areas. This would result in some need for temporary accommodations during construction. However, there are numerous hotels and motels within the City of Visalia, greater Tulare County, and Fresno County to accommodate the need. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project is not expected to result in any significant increase to the local population or housing market, and would not indirectly induce growth by creating new opportunities for local industry or commerce. As such, there would be less than significant impacts related to short-term population growth in the project area.

Mitigation: None required.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Impact 4.11-2: The Proposed Project could displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. *Less than significant* (Class III)

The Proposed Project's transmission lines would be constructed within 1.1 miles of existing SCE right-of-way (ROW), as well as 17.4 miles of new ROW, generally paralleling local, county and State roads as well as traversing open space and agricultural areas. Construction of the Proposed Project would displace one residential housing unit, located adjacent to Structure #38. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have an impact with regard to the displacement of existing housing; however, it would not be substantial. Moreover, because Tulare County has an almost eight percent residential unit vacancy rate (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006), it is anticipated that construction of replacement housing elsewhere would not be necessary.

Mitigation: None required.

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Impact 4.11-3: The Proposed Project could displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. *Less than significant* (Class III)

As noted above, the Proposed Project would displace one existing housing unit. It would consequently displace the resident(s) of this housing unit. From a CEQA perspective, this does not rise to the level of displacement of substantial numbers of people. Moreover, as stated above, construction of the Proposed Project would not eliminate other housing or any other structures

that are currently used by people. Therefore, because Tulare County has an almost eight percent residential unit vacancy rate, it is anticipated that construction of replacement housing elsewhere would not be necessary.

Mitigation: None required.

4.11.5 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic context for the cumulative impacts associated with population and housing issues are the cities and unincorporated communities of western Tulare County, which assumes full build-out of the Proposed Project, in combination with build-out of the projects listed in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*. Tulare County is expected to undergo substantial growth over the next two decades. By 2025, the population of Tulare County is expected increase over 53 percent from 2005 levels to 629,252 persons (TCAG, 2008a). The projects listed in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects*, include numerous phased subdivisions for single- and multi-family residences, as well as the Yokohl Ranch Project, a master planned community that would include phased development of 10,000 residential units, approximately 550,000 square feet of mixed use commercial space, public/quasi public areas, and infrastructure such as roads and utilities. These projects, as well as other future development, would be subject to the applicable city and/or County planning process, as well as environmental review on a project-by-project basis. As such, build-out of the projects listed in Section 3.6, *Cumulative Projects* would not be likely to result in the inducement of substantial direct or indirect population growth in the area beyond what is planned. Furthermore, the Proposed Project is designed to increase reliability and accommodate existing and planned electrical load growth, rather than to induce growth. Therefore, the Proposed Project represents no incremental contribution to a potential growth impact and would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact in regards to population and housing (Class III).

4.11.6 Alternatives

No Project Alternative

Under the No Project Alternative, the Proposed Project would not be implemented; therefore, no population or housing impacts would occur (No Impact).

Alternative 2

As with the Proposed Project, implementation of Alternative 2 would increase reliability and accommodate existing and planned electrical load growth, rather than induce growth. Operation

and maintenance activities associated with Alternative 2 would be the same as under the Proposed Project. Compared to the Proposed Project, Alternative 2 requires the removal of an additional 158 existing towers and the construction of an additional 44 towers and poles. As such, total project construction of Alternative 2 is estimated to be approximately 20 months, which is eight months longer than the Proposed Project. However, the additional construction time necessary for Alternative 2 would not induce substantial population growth directly or indirectly; therefore, impacts related to population and housing would be the same as under the Proposed Project. Moreover, Alternative 2 would avoid displacing any housing units or people, including the one residential housing unit located adjacent to Proposed Project Structure #38, which would be displaced by the Proposed Project. Impacts to population and housing under Alternative 2 would be less than significant and require no mitigation (Class III).

Alternative 3

As with the Proposed Project, implementation of Alternative 3 would increase reliability and accommodate existing and planned electrical load growth, rather than induce growth. Operation and maintenance activities associated with Alternative 3 would be the same as under the Proposed Project. Alternative 3 would require the removal of an additional 216 existing towers and the construction of an additional 79 towers and poles, compared to the Proposed Project. Consequently, total project construction of Alternative 3 is estimated to be approximately 24 months, which is 12 months longer than the Proposed Project. However, the additional construction time necessary for Alternative 3 would not induce substantial population growth directly or indirectly; therefore, impacts related to population and housing would be the same as under the Proposed Project. Moreover, Alternative 3 would avoid displacing any housing units or people, including the one residential housing unit located adjacent to Proposed Project Structure #38 that would be displaced by the Proposed Project. Impacts to population and housing under Alternative 3 would be less than significant and require no mitigation (Class III).

Alternative 6

As with the Proposed Project, implementation of Alternative 6 would increase reliability and accommodate existing and planned electrical load growth, rather than induce growth. Operation and maintenance activities associated with Alternative 6 would be the same as under the Proposed Project. Compared to the Proposed Project, it is estimated that Alternative 6 would require the removal of more existing towers and the construction of more poles, though it would require the construction of fewer towers. Total project construction of Alternative 6 is estimated to be approximately 16 months, which is four months longer than the Proposed Project. However, the additional construction time necessary for Alternative 6 would not induce substantial population growth directly or indirectly; therefore, impacts related to population and housing would be the same as under the Proposed Project. Moreover, Alternative 6 would avoid displacing any housing

units or people, including the one residential housing unit located adjacent to Proposed Project Structure #38 that would be displaced by the Proposed Project. Impacts to population and housing under Alternative 6 would be less than significant and require no mitigation (Class III).

References – Population and Housing

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