

4.4.5.2 CEQA Impact Assessment

In order to evaluate impacts, results from the biological impact assessment were correlated to the significance criteria set forth in Section 4.4.4.1, CEQA Significance Criteria. The results of these evaluations, including the significance level of each impact, are described below.

The following discussion of direct and indirect impacts addresses all Proposed Project components as described in Chapter 3.0, Project Description.

Direct impacts are defined as those caused by project activities, and occur at the same time and place of said activities. These impacts include initial habitat loss due to project based grading, construction, and displacement. Indirect impacts are defined as those caused by Proposed Project activities that have a foreseeable potential to occur, but do so at a different time or place from said activities. Indirect impacts incur changes such as long-term alterations to land use patterns, plant or animal population dynamics, and nutrient and water flow.

Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS?

The following discussion addresses a comprehensive assessment of all Proposed Project components, including substation modifications, 220 kV transmission lines, 66 kV subtransmission lines, 12 kV distribution lines, and telecommunication facilities, and the establishment of staging yards.

Construction Impacts, Plant Species

No threatened or endangered plant species were observed within the Project Study Area; however, as shown in Table 4.4-18, Coachella Valley Milk-Vetch Critical Habitat Maximum Potential Impacts, the Proposed Project may result in temporary impacts within up to 3.3 acres of designated Critical Habitat for the Coachella Valley milk-vetch as a result of placing temporary guard structures and providing for construction access. As noted below in Table 4.4-18 approximately 1.8 acres of the potentially impacted Critical Habitat is actually already developed or highly disturbed and would not be expected to provide potential habitat for this species. Moreover, Coachella Valley milk-vetch was not detected during focused species conducted within the Project Study Area. Also, by spanning Whitewater Canyon, permanent impacts to Coachella Valley Milk-vetch Critical Habitat impacts would be entirely avoided. However, because the Proposed Project is anticipated to undergo Section 7 consultation between the BLM and USFWS, and because it is not possible to entirely rule out the chance that the species could occur within the Proposed Project Study Area, measures to minimize impacts are appropriate. APM-BIO-1 Revegetation Plan, APM-BIO-2 Biological Monitoring, and APM-BIO-7 would minimize impacts to native plant species, and APM-BIO-8 would specifically

focus on the Coachella Valley milk-vetch. With the implementation of these APMs, impacts to the Coachella Valley milk-vetch would be less than significant.

Table 4.4-18: Coachella Valley Milk-Vetch Critical Habitat Maximum Potential Impacts

Vegetation Community	Acreage within the Project Study Area	Permanent Impacts (Acres)	Temporary Impacts (Acres)
Desert Scrub	38.6	0.0	1.5
Alluvial Scrub	47.3	0.0	0.0
Developed/Disturbed	23.9	0.0	1.8
Total Critical Habitat	109.8	0.0	3.3

Nine special-status species were observed and two have a “Moderate” occurrence potential within the Project Study Area.

Six species observed with a California Rare Plant Rank of 1B include chaparral sand-verbena (Segment 6), desert spike-moss (Segment 6), Parry’s spineflower (WRP;⁶ Segment 5), smooth tarplant (WRP; Segment 3), white-bracted spineflower (Segments 5 and 6), and Yucaipa onion (WRC⁷; Segment 4). The species observed with a California Rare Plant Rank of 2 is spiny-hair blazing star (Segment 6). The two species observed with a California Rare Plant Rank of 4 are Plummer’s mariposa lily (WRP; Segment 4) and Engelmann oak (Segment 4).

The two species with moderate potential to occur have California Rare Plant Ranks of 1B and 4, respectively: Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus (CVC;⁸ Segments 1 through 5), and Southern California black walnut (WRC; Segments 5 and 6).

Based on available information, one location of one California Rare Plant Rank 1B species, Yucaipa onion, may be affected by an access road near the eastern end of Segment 4. However additional occurrences of Rank 1B species may become apparent prior to construction, and engineering refinements may alter the impact assessment.

Direct impacts to these species include direct habitat loss or loss of individuals (i.e., crushing) due to grading, vehicles, machinery, or foot traffic. Potential construction impacts are discussed in detail in Section 4.4.5.1, Impact Assessment. Changes in vegetation composition due to potential introduction of nonnative species, changes in plant solar exposure due to changes to canopy or coverage of leaves with dust, alterations in hydrologic regime, and changes to the fire regime resulting from changes to the vegetation composition may all be potential indirect effects. Given the widely distributed nature of the impacts and since only approximately 3 percent of the Project Study Area would be permanently affected by the Proposed Project impacts to more common species of California Rare Plant Rank of 2 and 4 are not considered significant and do not require

⁶ WRP: Western Riverside County MSHCP Species: will be adequately conserved when specified requirements are met; covered under the MSHCP.

⁷ WRC: Western Riverside County MSHCP Species: covered under the MSHCP.

⁸ CVC: Coachella Valley MSHCP Species: covered under the MSHCP.

mitigation. Impacts to California Rare Plant Rank 1B species are potentially significant depending on the actual effects, which would be determined following more detailed engineering and supplemental information on the status and distribution of the potentially affected plants. Implementation of APM-BIO-7 Special Status Plants, which includes pre-construction surveys and more detailed evaluation, would reduce impacts to less than significant levels.

Construction Impacts, Animal Species

Three Federally listed threatened or endangered animal species were documented within the Project Study Area: desert tortoise, least Bell's vireo, and Stephens' kangaroo rat. In addition, as shown in Table 4.4-19, Coastal California Gnatcatcher Critical Habitat Maximum Potential Impacts, the Proposed Project passes through designated Critical Habitat for the coastal California gnatcatcher, although the species was not observed during two years of protocol surveys in suitable habitat. A total of 44 special-status species were observed and 20 special-status species have a "High" or "Moderate" occurrence potential within the Project Study Area as described in Table 4.4-6, Special-Status Wildlife Species Potentially Occurring or Known to Occur. Figure 4.4-4, Special-Status Species Observations, depicts the locations of observed special-status species. Impacts to the suitable habitat and foraging habitat associated with federally and State-listed as Threatened or Endangered, and State-listed Fully-Protected animal species, and burrowing owl, are discussed in detail in Section 4.4.5.1, Impact Assessment.

Table 4.4-19: Coastal California Gnatcatcher Critical Habitat Maximum Potential Impacts

Vegetation Community	Acreage within the Project Study Area	Permanent Impacts (Acres)	Temporary Impacts (Acres)
Coastal Sage Scrub	220.4	11.1	72.8
Grassland/Forbland	312.1	13.8	88.6
Riparian	9.6	0.1	3.0
Developed/Disturbed	81.1	3.3	22.7
Total Critical Habitat	623.2	28.3	187.1

Least Bell's vireo is a federally and State-listed endangered species. Breeding territories for this species occur throughout the riparian woodland habitat associated with San Timoteo Creek and the riparian vegetated area to the east. In 2013, a singing male least Bell's vireo was detected in suitable habitat near the western telecommunications line south of I-10 along Highland Springs Avenue. Potential impacts to the species could be direct, i.e., impacts to occupied riparian habitat, or indirect through project activities in close proximity to active nesting territories. In either case, these impacts could be considered take under the FESA, which would be considered significant in the absence of compensatory mitigation. Precise estimates of potential impacts on least Bell's vireo habitat cannot be made without more advanced engineering. However, Tables 4.4-8 and 4.4-9 identify potential permanent and temporary impacts to riparian habitat of 2.5 and 22.2 acres, respectively. Therefore, several APMs have been identified that would minimize or compensate for impacts, such that impacts would be considered less than

significant. These include APM-BIO-6 Least Bell's Vireo, which would minimize impacts and result in compensatory mitigation, and APM-BIO-1 Revegetation Plan, APM-BIO-2 Biological Monitoring, as well as WEAP training as described in Chapter 3.0, which would also serve to minimize impacts.

Desert tortoise sign, burrows, and tortoise were observed within and adjacent to the existing WOD corridor and within the access road areas. Although potentially suitable habitat for desert tortoise is extensive, the distribution of the individuals observed was uneven, and indicated that the species may be more abundant in some areas and scarce or absent in others. As with least Bell's vireo, take of a desert tortoise would be considered a potentially significant impact. Impacts within the CV-MSHCP would be considered covered, and therefore not significant if SCE becomes a PSE and implements the requirements of that plan. Coverage under the CV-MSHCP means that SCE will have contributed to conservation objectives that are intended to off-set impacts to these species by preserving and protecting habitat for them. However, there is also potential to affect the species outside of the CV-MSHCP area, which would be significant. Due to the widespread nature of desert tortoise habitat, the fact that a small percentage of the habitat in the Project Study Area would be permanently affected by the Project and the apparently sparse distribution of tortoises in the Project Study Area, the primary potential impact is the loss of individual tortoises. Applicant Proposed Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, and BIO-5 would significantly diminish the potential loss of individual tortoises. Applicant Proposed Measure BIO-1 would significantly reduce the temporary effects on habitat. The combination of these APMs would reduce the Proposed Project impacts to a level less than significant.

Stephens' kangaroo rat (one capture in 2012 and no captures in 2013 in the same area) was found within the vicinity of the access road in Segment 3, though this occurrence was outside of the Project Study Area. Potential habitat for this species is limited to grassland and grassland/scrub ecotone in Segments 1, 2, 3, and 4. Potential habitat in Segments 1 and 2 is outside of any WR-MSHCP fee areas. While no individuals of the species were found within the Proposed Project impact area, as shown in Table 4.4-20, Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Maximum Potential Impacts, approximately 528.2 acres of potentially suitable habitat occur in the Project Study Area, of which up to 29.7 acres would be permanently affected. This is not a substantial amount of habitat loss for the species in this context. However, there is a potential for take of individuals during construction of the permanent facilities, and the project's potential temporary impacts may affect up to approximately 187.9 acres of potential habitat. Therefore, this is a potentially significant impact. Applicant Proposed Measure BIO-12 included provisions for avoiding impacts to individual Stephens' kangaroo rats, as well as revegetation of temporarily affected habitat (APM-BIO-1 Revegetation Plan). Additional measures may be required through formal Section 7 consultation. When combined with APM-BIO-2 Biological Monitoring and WEAP training described in Chapter 3.0, the potential impacts would be reduced to a level less than significant.

Table 4.4-20: Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Maximum Potential Impacts

Vegetation Community	Acreage within the Project Study Area	Permanent Impacts (Acres)	Temporary Impacts (Acres)
Coastal Sage Scrub ¹	134.6	6.7	52.9
Grassland/Forbland	393.6	23.0	135.0
Total Potential Habitat	528.2	29.7	187.9

¹ Excluding black sage scrub

The Proposed Project would result in permanent impacts within up to 28.3 acres of designated Critical Habitat for coastal California gnatcatcher, of which not more than 11.1 acres consists of potentially suitable coastal sage scrub habitat for this species while approximately 3.3 acres is either developed/disturbed or grassland/forbland and therefore less likely or unlikely to support the species. Temporary impacts would occur within up to 187.1 acres of designated Critical Habitat, of which not more than approximately 72.8 acres is potentially suitable coastal sage scrub or alluvial scrub and approximately 22.7 acres is either developed/disturbed or grassland/forbland which is not considered suitable. Coastal California gnatcatcher was not detected in the Project Study Area during focused surveys conducted within the Project Study Area in 2012 and 2013. Refer to Table 4.4-19, Coastal California Critical Habitat Maximum Potential Impacts.

Nevertheless, there is potential for the species to occupy this habitat, and the existence of designated critical habitat, must be addressed in the Section 7 Consultation that is anticipated for the Proposed Project. Therefore, this is considered a potential significant impact. Applicant Proposed Measures BIO-1 Revegetation Plan, BIO-2 Biological Monitoring, and implementation of WEAP training would minimize direct effects on the species if it should occur within the Proposed Project Study Area. In addition, APM-BIO-10 Coastal California Gnatcatcher and Designated Critical Habitat would provide for conservation of habitat value to ensure that potential impacts would be less than significant.

In addition to the Federally listed animal species or habitat that may be directly affected by the Proposed Project, designated Critical Habitat for three listed species, the San Bernardino kangaroo rat, Santa Ana sucker, and southwestern willow flycatcher, occurs within 200 feet of various portions of the Proposed Project. All of three of these Critical Habitat Areas are associated with drainages, which provide the primary constituent elements for these species. In all cases, these habitats are separated from the Proposed Project by intervening land uses that provide some buffer between the habitat areas and the Proposed Project, and no direct impacts are expected. Applicant Proposed Measures BIO-1 Revegetation Plan, BIO-2 Biological Monitoring, implementation of WEAP training and standard use of Best Management Practices would further minimize the potential for any impacts, and implementation of BMPs as described in Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, as well as APM-BIO-9 Jurisdictional Water Permits, which would address and mitigate direct impacts to jurisdictional drainage features, would reduce impacts to the drainages associated with the Critical Habitat areas to less than significant levels.

Golden Eagle. Golden eagle individuals were observed during 2012 and 2013 wildlife surveys soaring or perched within the Project Study Area. Additionally, nests were detected in 2013 during focused golden eagle surveys within the 4-mile survey buffer of the WOD corridor. The species is known to forage in the Project Study Area, predominantly in open habitat near the communities of Banning and Cabazon (Segments 4 and 5). However, nesting habitat is lacking within the Project Study Area.

The replacement of existing transmission line within an existing transmission line ROW is expected to be equivalent to the existing condition relative to this species. Other indirect effects, such as construction impacts are temporary, and will be minor due to the wide-ranging foraging of this species.

Swainson's Hawk. Swainson's hawk migrants were observed during 2012 and 2013 surveys. Foraging and nesting habitat is present within the Project Study Area, particularly in Segments 3 and 4; however, no individuals were detected nesting or exhibiting breeding behavior, and the Project Study Area is outside the species known breeding range. Therefore, nesting is considered unlikely to occur within the Project Study Area.

Direct permanent effects to Swainson's hawk are unlikely. Foraging individuals may occur within the Project Study Area, but these individuals are expected to be transitory, easily avoiding construction areas. APM-BIO-2 will further reduce impacts, ensuring that potential impacts are not significant.

White-Tailed Kite. White-tailed kite was observed foraging in riparian habitat associated with San Timoteo Creek during 2012 surveys. Suitable foraging and nesting habitat is present within the Project Study Area, particularly in Segments 2 through 4. Even though no nesting individuals were observed in recent years, nesting populations are cyclical and determined by prey abundance; therefore, nesting could occur within the Project Study Area in the future. APM-BIO-2 Biological Monitoring, APM-BIO-3 Nesting Birds, APM-BIO-6 Least Bell's vireo (which included habitat mitigation), APM-BIO-9 Jurisdictional Water Permits (which also requires habitat mitigation), and WEAP training will reduce potential nesting and habitat impacts to this species to less than significant.

Other State-listed Species. The bald eagle, Townsend's big-eared bat, little willow flycatcher, and ringtail have a low likelihood of occurring in the Project Study Area in a manner that could lead to significant impacts. The bald eagle and Townsend's big-eared bat are not likely to occur in substantial numbers. Little willow flycatcher is likely to occur only as a transitory migrant, and the ringtail is a very secretive animal that avoids human activity. While potential impacts are not considered substantially adverse for any of these species, the following APMs will further ensure that the potential minimal impacts will be less than significant: APM-BIO-2 Biological Monitoring, APM-BIO-3 Nesting Birds, APM-BIO-6 Least Bell's Vireo (which includes habitat mitigation), APM-BIO-9 Jurisdictional Water Permits (which also requires habitat mitigation), and WEAP training.

The Project Study Area contains suitable habitat for the following special-status species: western spadefoot, red-diamond rattlesnake, burrowing owl, Cooper's hawk, Le Conte's thrasher, yellow-breasted chat, loggerhead shrike, oak titmouse, Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, yellow warbler, western yellow-billed cuckoo (foraging), western mastiff bat, Los Angeles pocket mouse, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, pallid San Diego pocket mouse, Palm Springs pocket mouse, desert woodrat, San Diego desert woodrat, and black-tailed jackrabbit with foraging habitat also present for golden eagle, Swainson's hawk, and white-tailed kite. All of these species have been observed in the Project Study Area.

The Proposed Project also contains suitable habitat for special-status terrestrial species such as coast horned lizard, orange-throated whiptail, ringtail, and American badger and there is therefore a potential impact to these species as well. The potential impact is best assessed by consideration of the potentially affected habitat in the context of the surrounding area.

Relatively small areas of habitat for these species, relative to the surrounding areas, may be modified or lost due to construction and/or removal of transmission lines, distribution lines, and telecommunication lines, establishment of temporary and permanent ancillary facilities that support these lines (e.g., guard poles, crane pads), widening of access road, and establishment of staging yards. Impacts to suitable habitat and foraging habitat for wildlife species are detailed in Section 4.4.5.1, Impact Assessment. Although construction activities may reduce habitat area or quality, modify foraging, or discourage use of the area within the vicinity of work sites, these impacts are expected to be temporary and localized within similar contiguous and extensive habitat. Direct impacts may include removal of a shelter (e.g., woodrat midden) or habitat during grading activities or disturbance during breeding time. However impacts to these species that are more common than the listed threatened and endangered species considered above have a lesser significance, particularly when the permanent impacts are less than 3 percent of the total native and naturalized land cover in the Project Study area. While the temporary impact areas are larger, actual temporary impact activities would be separated in time and space, and most animal species would be able to escape or avoid the localized work areas. Implementation of APM-BIO-1 Revegetation Plan, APM-BIO-2 Biological Monitoring, and implementation of WEAP training which would be implemented to address higher level special-status species, would also benefit these species of lesser importance, ensuring that impacts would be less than significant.

Similarly, foraging habitat for raptor species such as the golden eagle, Cooper's hawk, loggerhead shrike, northern harrier, white-tailed kite, and Swainson's hawk may be directly or indirectly impacted due to construction associated with the transmission, subtransmission, and telecommunication lines, access roads, and staging yards throughout the Proposed Project. Vegetation or tree trimming or removal due to road widening or preparation for crane pad/turnaround areas may temporarily affect raptor foraging areas and perch sites. Noise, vehicle movement, lighting and other temporary activities may discourage foraging in the work areas or the immediate vicinity; however, some construction-related activities may enhance foraging opportunities for raptor species by displacing rodents or other food items from burrows or creating new perch

locations. The Proposed Project is within large expanses of raptor foraging area within the existing WOD corridor and the limited habitat loss in the region is considered adverse, but less than significant. Occasionally, accidental collisions with construction equipment (e.g., cranes) may occur but would not be expected to appreciably affect the overall population. These impacts are considered adverse, but less than significant with implementation of avoidance and minimization measures provided in APM-BIO-1 Revegetation Plan, APM-BIO-2 Biological Monitoring, APM-BIO-3 Nesting Birds, WEAP training, and APM-BIO-4 (burrowing owls).

The Proposed Project contains suitable habitat for nesting birds and raptors. Hawk and corvid nests were regularly observed on existing structures within the ROW and on structures proposed for removal. Nesting bird species may be subject to impacts during the breeding season (generally February 1-August 31) by habitat removal or disturbance, grading, or increases in noise and/or vibration. Construction disturbance during the breeding season (generally February 1 through August 31, and starting as early as January 1 for some raptors) that results in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings, or otherwise leads to nest abandonment is considered take by USFWS under the MBTA, as well as by CDFW under FGCs 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. These potential impacts with respect to candidate, sensitive, or special-status species would be reduced to less than significant under CEQA by incorporating APM-BIO-3 Nesting Birds.

APM-BIO-3 Nesting Birds, would ensure that bird nests are identified prior to construction and that a sufficient construction avoidance buffer is established around active and/or raptor nests so that construction activities would not impact nest viability. In addition, as described in APM-BIO-2 Biological Monitoring, a biological monitor would be present during construction activities to monitor and document the status of nesting activities. APM-BIO-3 would also ensure compliance with relevant State and federal regulations administered by and under the purview of these resource agencies (CDFW, USFWS) with respect to those avian species that are not candidate, sensitive, or special-status for which potential impacts are not considered significant under CEQA.

Nesting/denning sites for non-avian species are present and maternity colony sites may be present within the Project Study Area for western canyon bat, desert tortoise, coyote, ringtail, American badger, brush rabbit, Stephens' kangaroo rat, black tailed jack rabbit, San Diego wood rat, two-striped garter snake, rosy boa, coast horned lizard, northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, pallid San Diego pocket mouse, Dulzura kangaroo rat, and red-diamond rattlesnake. Coyote dens were detected within the existing WOD corridor, but they occur primarily in canyons and along slopes where construction activities are limited, so direct disturbance is unlikely. Project implementation may temporarily impact use of nesting, breeding, or maternity sites if work occurs in the vicinity of a unique site (e.g., den, burrow, or snag/tree/palm) or removes the site entirely. Due to the limited amount of permanent habitat loss (i.e., less than 4%) relative to the local abundance of similar habitat, the temporary nature of the construction activities, and use of the existing WOD corridor for nearly all permanent features, impacts to these non-listed species would be considered less than significant with implementation of avoidance and minimization measures included in APM-BIO-1 Revegetation Plan, APM-BIO-2

Biological Monitoring, and APM-BIO-12 Los Angeles Pocket Mouse; Palm Springs Pocket Mouse, along with implementation of WEAP training.

In summary, to avoid both direct and indirect construction impacts on the above and other special-status species, APMs to avoid impacts would be implemented. If avoidance is not possible, impact would be minimized through the implementation of APMs for revegetation and restoration.

Operation Impacts, Plant and Animal Species

Normal operation of the lines would be controlled remotely through SCE control systems, and manually in the field as required. SCE inspects the transmission, subtransmission, telecommunications and distribution overhead facilities in a manner consistent with CPUC GO 165, a minimum of once per year via ground and/or aerial observation. Maintenance would occur as needed and could include activities such as repairing conductors, washing or replacing insulators, repairing or replacing other hardware components, replacing poles and structures, tree trimming, brush and weed control, and access road maintenance. Most regular operations and maintenance activities of overhead facilities are performed from existing access roads with no surface disturbance. Repairs to existing facilities, such as repairing or replacing existing poles and structures, could occur in undisturbed areas. All future O&M would be similar to current O&M activities on the existing lines, including temporary impacts due to road maintenance; therefore, O&M of the Proposed Project is not anticipated to have a significant impact on candidate, sensitive, or special-status species compared to the existing condition. In the future, take avoidance or authorization would be accomplished in accordance with SCE's standard O&M programs, as now occurs under the existing condition.

Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS?

The following discussion addresses all Proposed Project components, including substation modifications, 220 kV transmission lines, 66 kV subtransmission lines, 12 kV distribution lines, and telecommunication facilities, and the establishment of staging yards. Acreage and linear feet estimates of potential impact to riparian and/or wetland vegetation are shown in Table 4.4-10, Maximum Potential Permanent Impacts to Jurisdictional Drainage Features, and Table 4.4-11, Maximum Potential Temporary Impacts to Jurisdictional Drainage Features. The distribution of these impacts is discussed throughout the description of project components by location.

Construction Impacts

Riparian habitat types, including alluvial scrub in the desert communities that may be subject to USFWS and/or CDFW jurisdiction, were identified within the Project Study Area, particularly in Segment 4 (San Timoteo Creek) and Segment 5 (San Gorgonio River). Many of the temporary and permanent components of the Proposed Project cross

through or are immediately adjacent to drainage features; therefore, many of the construction activities have the potential to affect Federal and/or State waters, including associated wetlands and riparian vegetation. In addition, the riparian habitat associated with these drainage features may be affected by tree trimming or removal and modification to the streambeds or stream banks during construction of the Proposed Project.

Construction access impacts would be temporary. Vegetation within riparian areas subject to temporary disturbance is expected to reestablish due to the fast-growing nature of many riparian plant species and their ability to recolonize disturbed areas. Modifications to soil (bed and bank) are less likely to recover and are subject to erosion and future disturbances. Erosion control measures, as described in Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, would reduce impacts associated with erosion.

Three sensitive land cover types were identified within the Project Study Area: alluvial scrub, coastal sage scrub, and riparian woodland. Alluvial scrub, a sensitive plant community as defined by CDFW and USFWS, was found in Segments 4 through 6. Coastal sage scrub, a sensitive plant community as defined by CDFW, was found in Segments 1 through 5. Coastal sage scrub within the Poultry Staging Yard consists partly of the chaparral beardtongue (*Keckiella antirrhinoides*) alliance (rated G3/S3 by the CDFW, denoting that it is considered vulnerable and at moderate risk of extinction) Riparian woodland, a sensitive plant community by CDFW, USFWS, and USACE, was found in Segments 3 and 4. Locations for these vegetation communities are shown on Figure 4.4-3, Land Cover. Construction work would occur within these vegetation communities, and individual plants or trees would be impacted during tree trimming or removal along proposed or existing access roads or as part of the installation of the transmission lines, distribution lines, and telecommunication lines, construction of the temporary and permanent constituents that support these lines (e.g., guard poles, crane pads, turnaround areas), and/or staging yard preparations.

The Proposed Project is being designed to avoid or minimize impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive land cover types to the extent practicable. Project design combined with compliance with applicable Federal and State permits (e.g., CWA Section 404, Fish and Game Code Section 1602) and implementation of BMPs, as described in Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, would reduce impacts to riparian habitat and other sensitive land cover types to less than significant levels. In addition, implementation of APM-BIO-1 and APM-BIO-9 would reduce impacts to a level less than significant.

Operation Impacts

Normal operation of the lines would be controlled remotely through SCE control systems, and manually in the field as required. SCE inspects the transmission, subtransmission, telecommunications and distribution overhead facilities in a manner consistent with CPUC GO 165, a minimum of once per year via ground and/or aerial observation. Maintenance would occur as needed and could include activities such as repairing conductors, washing or replacing insulators, repairing or replacing other hardware components, replacing poles and structure, tree trimming, brush and weed

control, and access road maintenance. Most regular O&M activities of overhead facilities are performed from existing access roads with no surface disturbance. Repairs to existing facilities, such as repairing or replacing existing poles and structures, could occur in undisturbed areas.

Operations-related activities would involve periodic inspections of transmission lines, structures, substations, and ancillary facilities. Periodic maintenance may require shrub or tree trimming or removal to ensure safety along roads and around substations and transmission structures for routine and emergency maintenance. Maintenance would also involve routine grading or vegetation removal to enable safe vehicular road access or clearance from around structures. These activities would occur on already established access roads and would not result in substantial impacts to riparian habitat or any other sensitive natural community. Routine grading of roadways may impact emergent riparian habitat immediately adjacent to the road edge/berm, but these impacts are limited in size, regularly/routinely occurring, and habitat would likely recover rapidly. Normal inspection activities include use of light-duty vehicles (pickup truck) for roadway inspections, which would typically not have any adverse effects on riparian habitat or other sensitive communities. Therefore, operation of the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact on riparian habitat or any other sensitive natural community when compared to the existing condition.

Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, and coastal) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

The following discussion addresses all Proposed Project components, including substation modifications, 220 kV transmission lines, 66 kV subtransmission lines, 12 kV distribution lines, telecommunication facilities, and the establishment of staging yards.

Construction Impacts

A routine jurisdictional delineation has not been completed for the Proposed Project; however, a drainage assessment was prepared for the project as a tool to minimize impacts through design and to assess the potential need for permit authorizations from the USACE, the CDFW, and the RWQCB. The BRTR (Appendix N) depicts the results of the drainage assessment and Table 4.4-10, Maximum Potential Permanent Impacts to Jurisdictional Drainage Features, and Table 4.4-11, Maximum Potential Temporary Impacts to Jurisdictional Drainage Features, depict the maximum estimated drainage impacts for drainage length (linear feet) and riparian vegetation (acres).

The drainage assessment concluded that impacts are likely to occur to features that are under the jurisdiction of USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW. As stated above in Section 4.4.3.2, Results, the potential wetland areas identified in the drainage assessment represent an estimation of the existence and extent of potential wetland areas until a routine jurisdictional delineation of these drainages is conducted. Permanent and Temporary impacts to potentially jurisdictional drainages are described in Section

4.4.5.1, Impact Analysis, and are presented in Table 4.4-10, Maximum Potential Permanent Impacts to Jurisdictional Drainage Features, and Table 4.4-11, Maximum Potential Temporary Impacts to Jurisdictional Drainage Features.

The drainage assessment identified drainage features by location, but did not determine the width and drainage area (e.g., acreage) for linear features. Polygons were mapped only for substantial riparian habitat associated with the drainages. As detailed above, under Section 4.4.3.2, Results, approximately 26 out of the approximately 498 total drainage areas identified were determined to have potential to satisfy the three criteria necessary to meet the USACE definition of a wetland (i.e., hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology). These features are detailed in the BRTR (Appendix N) and discussed in further detail in Section 4.4.5, Impact Analysis.

Although several nonjurisdictional ponding features were identified within the Project Study Area, none of the seasonally ponded depressions found during the vernal pool assessment survey conducted between November 2011 and May 2013 met the USACE wetland criteria (i.e., hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology) or the WR-MSHCP criteria for vernal pools. These features are detailed in the BRTR (Appendix N) and discussed in further detail in Section 4.4.5, Impact Analysis.

Adverse impacts may result from the placement of fill material in wetlands during tower removal or construction, access road construction or improvement activities, or the establishment of staging yards. A formal jurisdictional delineation would be performed within the boundaries of the Project Study Area once final engineering for the location of project-specific features is complete and prior to construction. The delineation would identify where the Proposed Project may not avoid impacts to various jurisdictional drainage features. Potential impacts to jurisdictional drainages would be minimized through the incorporation of APM-BIO-1 Revegetation Plan and APM-BIO-9 Jurisdictional Water Permits and compliance with the conditions set forth in the Federal or State permits (Cal. Fish & Game Code Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement, CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification, and CWA Section 404 Nationwide or Individual Permit).

The Proposed Project is being designed to avoid or minimize impacts to wetlands and jurisdictional drainages in general to the extent practicable. Project design combined with compliance with applicable Federal and State permits (e.g., CWA Section 404, Fish and Game Code Section 1602) and implementation of BMPs, as described in Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, in addition to implementation of APM-BIO-1 Revegetation Plan and APM-BIO-9 Jurisdictional Water Permits would reduce impacts to wetlands and jurisdictional drainages to less than significant levels.

Operation Impacts

Normal operation of the lines would be controlled remotely through SCE control systems, and manually in the field as required. SCE inspects the transmission, subtransmission, telecommunications and distribution overhead facilities in a manner consistent with CPUC GO 165, a minimum of once per year via ground and/or aerial

observation. Maintenance would occur as needed and could include activities such as repairing conductors, washing or replacing insulators, repairing or replacing other hardware components, replacing poles and structures, tree trimming, brush and weed control, and access road maintenance. Most regular O&M activities of overhead facilities are performed from existing access roads with no surface disturbance. Repairs to existing facilities, such as repairing or replacing existing poles and structures, could occur in undisturbed areas.

Normal inspection activities are expected to have negligible effects on wetlands. Long-term access and spur road maintenance may require the replacement of culverts or other infrastructure elements that could minimally affect federally protected wetlands. Any such work would be permitted by the appropriate regulatory agency(ies) (i.e., the USACE and/or RWQCB), as part of the permits for the construction described above. The adverse impacts to federally protected wetlands during operations would be reduced through implementation of SCE's existing environmental compliance program for O&M activities and compliance with conditions of applicable Federal and State permits covering activities in wetlands. Therefore, impacts to federally protected wetlands would be less than significant with implementation of APM-BIO-9 Jurisdictional Water Permits.

Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridor, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

The following discussion addresses all Proposed Project components, including substation modifications, 220 kV transmission lines, 66 kV subtransmission lines, 12 kV distribution lines, and telecommunication facilities, and the establishment of staging yards.

Construction Impacts

The Project Study Area is within a flyway for migratory bird species and is also used by bat species. For example, the use of the San Gorgonio Pass by migrating birds has been documented for 100 years (Grinnell and Swarth 1913). The low pass serves as a connection between coastal lowlands and Colorado Desert lowlands for many species of land birds that normally travel at night, as well many species of water birds that travel by day or night. Migrating bats are believed to follow the same pattern. Spring is the most critical time for migration in the Project Study Area, as the Coachella Valley and surrounding ranges serve to funnel northbound animals to the northwest and west through the pass.

Construction activities would result in localized hindrance of movement by native resident or migratory wildlife species due to temporary noise, lighting, dust, and human activity in a work area. In most cases in the Proposed Project Study Area, such movement is associated with daily activities involving reproduction, foraging for food, and sheltering. Construction would not interfere substantially with the long-term movement of any native resident or migratory species because impacts would be temporary and localized to different work areas within the Project Study Area for the duration of

construction. Helicopter work would generally be short-term and localized, and naturally avoided by birds and local wildlife. As described in Section 4.4.1.2, Regional Context, the Project Study Area is within a vast area of habitat that provides a critical connection for the deserts, lowlands, and mountains throughout Southern California.

Native resident or migratory fish are not known to occur within the Project Study Area, but some fish species may occur in San Timoteo Creek and Whitewater River, both of which are perennially flowing waterways. Although temporary construction impacts to fish in perennial water bodies would not be expected, any impacts would be minimized through the implementation of BMPs that reduce erosion and siltation in water bodies and compliance with conditions of applicable Federal and State permits covering activities in wetlands, which include standard conditions to minimize effects on flowing water.

Operation Impacts

Normal operation of the lines would be controlled remotely through SCE control systems, and manually in the field as required. SCE inspects the transmission, subtransmission, telecommunications and distribution overhead facilities in a manner consistent with CPUC GO 165, a minimum of once per year via ground and/or aerial observation. Maintenance would occur as needed and could include activities such as repairing conductors, washing or replacing insulators, repairing or replacing other hardware components, replacing poles and structures, tree trimming, brush and weed control, and access road maintenance. Most regular O&M activities of overhead facilities are performed from existing access roads with no surface disturbance. Repairs to existing facilities, such as repairing or replacing existing poles and structures, could occur in undisturbed areas.

All transmission facilities would be designed to be avian-safe, following the intent of the Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: the State of the Art in 2006 (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee 2006). All transmission facilities would be evaluated for potential collision risk and, where determined to be high risk, lines would be marked with collision reduction devices in accordance with Reducing Avian Collisions with Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2012 (Avian Power Line Interaction Committee 2012).

The Proposed Project is within a flyway for migratory bird species and is also used by bat species, as described above. Existing transmission lines, wind turbines, and other structures currently exist throughout the San Gorgonio Pass area. The east-west alignment of the Proposed Project reduces its impact somewhat because it is parallel to the typical flight pattern through the San Gorgonio Pass. Permanent aboveground improvements are proposed within or adjacent to existing SCE or public ROW, or at existing substations. In addition, the Proposed Project involves the upgrade and replacement of existing facilities (e.g., structures, access roads, existing substation modifications and staging areas); therefore, wildlife movement conditions for the Proposed Project would be similar to existing conditions. The operation of the Proposed Project is not expected to interfere substantially with the long-term movement of any

native resident or migratory species, including bats. The impacts of the Proposed Project to the movement of migratory and bat species would be essentially the same as the existing conditions and less than significant.

Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

The following discussion addresses all Proposed Project components, including substation modifications, 220 kV transmission lines, 66 kV subtransmission lines, 12 kV distribution lines, and telecommunication facilities, and the establishment of staging yards.

Construction Impacts

The Proposed Project is located within the following cities that have a tree protection and/or preservation policy or ordinance: Banning, Beaumont, Calimesa, Colton, Grand Terrace, Loma Linda, and Redlands. With the exception of oak tree protection in the City of Calimesa, these ordinances apply to street trees and require replacement of trees removed. If any street trees are removed as result of implementation of the Proposed Project, these trees would be replaced by SCE in accordance with the applicable ordinance, and no significant impact would result.

The City of Calimesa has adopted an Oak Tree Preservation Ordinance (*Chapter 18.80 Tree Preservation*) that is designed to ensure that no oak trees are removed unless:

A reasonable and conforming use of property justifies the removal, cutting, pruning, and/or encroachment into the protected zone of an oak tree, heritage oak tree, or protected stand of oak trees;

Adequate mitigation, including the planting of replacement trees or acorns or the payment of replacement costs to the city for each tree removed; and

An oak tree pruning permit (18.80.060) and/or an oak tree removal permit (18.80.070) issued by the director of community development must be obtained before oak tree pruning or removal is undertaken.

Segment 4 construction activities conducted in the City of Calimesa near San Timoteo Canyon would require trimming and/or removal of oak trees to develop a new access road and crane pad/turnaround area, and structures. It is anticipated that trees would be potentially impacted at approximately six individual structure site locations and along portions of the existing access roads. Several oaks found along existing access or spur roads may require trimming, much of which is not expected to be greater than normally occurs during routine maintenance of these roads consistent with CPUC G.O. 95, Rule 35 and California Pub. Res. Code Sections 4292 and 4293. SCE would identify any trees that would interfere with construction of the Proposed Project and would consult with local municipalities prior to any tree alteration or removal. Construction impacts to local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources would be less than significant.

Operation Impacts

Normal operation of the lines would be controlled remotely through SCE control systems, and manually in the field as required. SCE inspects the transmission, subtransmission, telecommunications and distribution overhead facilities in a manner consistent with CPUC GO 165, a minimum of once per year via ground and/or aerial observation. Maintenance would occur as needed and could include activities such as repairing conductors, washing or replacing insulators, repairing or replacing other hardware components, replacing poles and structures, tree trimming, brush and weed control, and access road maintenance. Most regular O&M activities of overhead facilities are performed from existing access roads with no surface disturbance. Repairs to existing facilities, such as repairing or replacing existing poles and structures, could occur in undisturbed areas.

Maintenance activities would require trimming of trees to ensure safe operation of the subtransmission lines and to ensure access for routine and emergency maintenance. This maintenance work would be conducted consistent with CPUC G.O. 95, Rule 35 and California Public Resources Code Sections 4292 and 4293, and as presented above, would not conflict with the locally-adopted tree ordinances and local policies listed in Table 4.4-1, Local Land Use Documents Applicable to Biological Resources. Operation of the Proposed Project would essentially be same as under existing conditions and would have no significant impacts to local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?

The following discussion addresses all Proposed Project components, including upgrades to substations, 220 kV transmission lines, 66 kV subtransmission lines, 12 kV distribution lines, and telecommunication facilities, and the establishment of staging yards associated with construction impacts. The discussions below apply to both construction and operation impacts.

Western Riverside County MSHCP

Riverside County adopted the WR-MSHCP in 2004, as discussed in Section 4.4.2.3, Regional Regulatory Setting. Approximately one half of the total Proposed Project length (Segments 3, 4, and non-Reservation lands in the western portion of Segment 5) of the Proposed Project is located within the WR-MSHCP planning area, specifically within two Area Plans: the Pass Area, which encompasses the area east of San Timoteo Creek within the cities of Beaumont, Banning, and Calimesa; and the Reche Canyon/Badlands Area, which encompasses the area within Riverside County west of San Timoteo Creek and includes the steep badland slopes. SCE is not a signatory to the WR-MSHCP; however, SCE intends to participate as a PSE for the Proposed Project.

SCE is not a signatory to the WR-MSHCP; however SCE intends to apply for PSE status for the Proposed Project. If it's a PSE, SCE would receive take authorization of listed species within the Plan Area. Take authorization is granted to a PSE provided they comply with the requirements set forth in Section 11.8 of the WR-MSHCP Implementing Agreement. These requirements include the following:

- Application containing a detailed description of the proposed activity;
- Map indicating location of proposed activity;
- Analysis of potential impacts to Covered Species and their habitats and the WR-MSHCP Conservation Area;
- Results of species surveys and mapping, as required pursuant to Sections 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.1.4, and 6.3.2 of the WR-MSHCP;
- Fees or other actions agreed upon by the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) and the Wildlife Agencies (USFWS and CDFW) for permanent impacts; and
- Fees or other appropriate measures as agreed upon by the RCA and the Wildlife Agencies for temporary impacts.

The Proposed Project is located within WR-MSHCP Survey Areas for the following species:

- San Bernardino kangaroo rat;
- Los Angeles pocket mouse;
- Burrowing owl;
- Nevin's barberry;
- Smooth tarplant;
- Round-leaved filaree;
- Marvin's onion; and
- Many-stemmed dudleya.

The Proposed Project is not located within WR-MSHCP designated survey areas for amphibians, small mammals (including Stephens' kangaroo rat), or plant species. Regardless, focused surveys were conducted within all suitable habitat for the above-listed species. As part of compliance as a PSE, appropriate mitigation for potential impacts to any focal species would be described in a report titled *Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP)*, which would be approved by the RCA and Wildlife Agencies. If the Proposed Project chooses to participate in the WR-MSHCP, a habitat suitability assessment for the above species would be required within the designated survey area. Focused surveys were conducted within all suitable habitat for the above-mentioned species. In order to demonstrate compliance with the Western Riverside County MSHCP, any species observed during the focused surveys within the MSHCP survey area for that species would be identified. Appropriate

mitigation would then be presented in a report titled Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation, which would be approved by the Western Riverside County RCA and Wildlife Agencies (USFWS and CDFW).

The Proposed Project passes through existing and proposed WR-MSHCP Conservation Areas, including Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) lands and Criteria Cell Areas. These proposed core conservation areas and habitat linkages include land associated with the Badlands and San Timoteo Creek and are proposed to provide large blocks of conservation areas and connections to other core conservation areas. The Proposed Project would permanently affect up to 23.9 acres of PQP lands and temporarily affect up to 161.8 acres of PQP lands that are already designated for conservation. In addition, the Proposed Project may permanently affect up to 21.9 acres of ARLs and temporarily affect up to 143.6 acres of ARLs. The majority of these lands are within Segments 3 and 4. The Proposed Project would also be required to comply with Urban Wildland Interface Guidelines to minimize indirect effects to any adjacent conservation areas. Additionally, as it relates to each of the project components and the potential impacts to surface lands, the Project Description utilizes very conservative ground disturbance assumptions based on preliminary engineering to estimate surface area disturbance. This expanded surface area disturbance is provided for the purpose of ensuring the environmental analysis included in Chapters 4.0 through 6.0 sufficiently analyzes the potential environmental impacts of very conservative ground disturbance assumptions. The actual surface area disturbance is expected to be reduced following completion of final engineering.

Additional conservation lands are to be acquired from the “Criteria Area.” The Proposed Project passes through 21 criteria cells. The Proposed Project would permanently affect 74.8 acres within 18 criteria cells and would temporarily affect 417.3 acres within 21 criteria cells. The Proposed Project would be required to prepare a WR-MSHCP Consistency Analysis in order to demonstrate compliance with criteria cell requirements, survey species requirements, and to disclose how impacts to PQP Lands and existing ARLs would be compensated by purchase and/or dedication of additional lands into the MSHCP Conservation Area.

The Western Riverside County MSHCP provides a planning framework for future new or upgrade/replacement utility facility projects within the Criteria Area. This type of project designation (Electric Utility Facility) provides WR-MSHCP coverage for utilities and other facilities within the Criteria Area, as long as these facilities are necessary to support planned development. The Proposed Project is not addressed specifically in the Future Facilities section of the WR-MSHCP; however, coverage for this electric utility project is provided under Section 7.3.9 of the Plan:

“Future facilities are facilities that are necessary to support planned Development. Certain future facilities have been preliminarily identified by the agencies responsible for their construction, operation and maintenance, while others have not been or cannot be identified and/or located at present. Future facilities that are carried out by a Permittee, Participating Special Entities and/or Third Parties Granted Take Authorization would be considered Covered Activities. The process for mitigation

and/or contribution to Reserve Assembly for future facilities is described in Section 6.1.6 of the Western Riverside County MSHCP.

There are three general categories of future facilities that may need to be located within either Criteria Area, due to the fact that such facilities are linear, or involve engineering constraints that make avoidance of Criteria Areas not Feasible. Such constraints may also require location of these facilities within Public/Quasi-Public Lands. If such is the case, all of the conditions described in this section for coverage of future facilities apply, with the addition of a requirement that impacts to Habitats within existing Public/Quasi-Public Lands and ARLs shall be compensated by purchase and dedication into the MSHCP Conservation Area of land that is in addition to the Additional Reserve Lands.”

While the WR-MSHCP provides coverage for most covered species in the plan, additional conservation of certain resources may be required. For example, unavoidable impacts to Riparian/Riverine habitats must be compensated for as described above under Riparian Impacts and would also be mitigated, to the extent these resources are also subject USACE, CDFW, and RWQCB regulatory authority, by implementing APM-BIO-9 Jurisdictional Water Permits.

Similarly, for a property subject to WR-MSHCP review, 90 percent of the habitat that is of long-term conservation value for the Los Angeles pocket mouse, within the Proposed Project limits, should be conserved. Alternatively, demonstration of equivalent conservation elsewhere in the Project Study Area can satisfy this requirement. Because it has been determined that the WR-MSHCP does not yet provide adequate coverage for this species, i.e., without additional conservation that has not yet been accomplished, the Proposed Project may be in conflict with the WR-MSHCP if it would preclude conservation of Los Angeles pocket mouse habitat that is consistent with the goals of the WR-MSHCP. The actual implementing measures for this requirement would be developed through discussions with the WR-MSHCP implementing agencies.

In summary, with the applicable APMs, the Proposed Project does not conflict with the WR-MSHCP, which was designed to achieve the identified habitat conservation goals through a flexible system of land purchase and dedication in conjunction with existing PQP Lands. Most of the Proposed Project is within ROW that was in existence at the time the WR-MSHCP was developed, and the WR-MSHCP recognizes the need for infrastructure projects such as the Proposed Project. There is no requirement for SCE to comply with the conditions of the MSHCP unless it becomes a PSE. Nevertheless, the survey requirements of the Western Riverside County SHCP have been satisfied or exceeded by the surveys for the Proposed Project. SCE intends to seek PSE status. It should be noted that regardless of MSHCP participation, Section 7 Consultation would be required, and incidental take authorization outside of the MSHCP areas may be required.

Coachella Valley MSHCP

The CV-MSHCP received is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in the Coachella Valley region of Riverside County. The overall goal of the CV-MSHCP is to maintain

and enhance biological diversity and ecosystem processes within the region while allowing for future economic growth. The CV-MSHCP covers 27 special-status plant and wildlife species (“covered species”), as well as 27 land cover types. Covered species include both listed and non-listed species that are adequately conserved by the CV-MSHCP. The overall provisions for the plan are subdivided according to specific resource conservation goals that have been organized according to geographic areas defined as Conservation Areas. These areas are identified as Core, Essential, or Other Conserved Habitat for special-status plant, invertebrate, amphibian, reptile, bird, and mammal species, Essential Ecological Process Areas, and Biological Corridors and Linkages. Each Conservation Area has specific Conservation Objectives that must be satisfied.

The CV-MSHCP received final approval in 2007. Approximately 22 linear miles (approximately 40 percent) of the Proposed Project traverses the CV-MSHCP area. SCE is not a signatory to the CV-MSHCP and, therefore, SCE is not required to comply with conditions of the MSHCP, unless SCE requests to become a PSE.

SCE intends to apply for PSE status in the CV-MSHCP in order to receive take authorization of threatened or endangered species within the Plan Area for otherwise lawful actions, such as development, that may result in “take.” Take authorization is granted to the PSE provided that they comply with the requirements set forth in the CV-MSHCP Implementation Agreement. These requirements include the following:

- Compliance with Conservation Area requirements set forth in Section 4.0 of the CV-MSHCP (comply with local acquisition obligations and survey requirements);
- Compliance with the applicable Land Use Adjacency Guidelines set forth in Section 4.5 of the CV-MSHCP;
- Compliance with the Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures in Section 4.4 of the CV-MSHCP;
- Compliance with the Species Conservation Goals and Objectives in Section 9 of the CV-MSHCP;
- Fees or other actions agreed upon by the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission and the Wildlife Agencies for permanent impacts; and
- Fees or other appropriate measures as agreed upon by the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission and the Wildlife Agencies for temporary impacts (impacts that generally last for less than 5 years) and disturbance, plus appropriate administrative fees to process the application.

The CV-MSHCP requires focused surveys for certain plant and animal species for project sites located within Conservation Areas. For projects located outside of these Conservation Areas, there are few specific survey requirements for covered species. The Project Study Area passes through the following Conservation Areas (from west to east); Cabazon, Stubbe and Cottonwood Canyons, Whitewater Canyon, and Upper Mission Creek/Morongó Canyon.

In Segment 5, the Project Study Area passes through the Cabazon Conservation Area. The Cabazon Conservation Area consists of the San Gorgonio River and several tributaries in the western most part of the Plan Area, and portions of the San Jacinto Mountains and the San Bernardino Mountains, which function as a sand source area. The Proposed Project would permanently affect 1.2 acres and temporarily affect 44.2 acres of the Cabazon Conservation Area.

In Segment 6, the Project Study Area section passes through three conservation areas: Stubbe and Cottonwood Canyons, Whitewater Canyon Conservation Area, and Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon. The Stubbe and Cottonwood Canyons Conservation Area encompasses the area north of I-10 and west of Whitewater Canyon, including Stubbe Canyon and Cottonwood Canyon and portions of their alluvial fans down to I-10. The Proposed Project would permanently affect 23.2 acres and temporarily affect 174.3 acres of the Stubbe and Cottonwood Canyons Conservation Area. The Whitewater Canyon Conservation Area encompasses the Whitewater River and its watershed north of I-10. The Proposed Project would permanently affect 1.8 acres and temporarily affect 25.2 acres of the Whitewater River Conservation Area. The Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area encompasses the Mission Creek and Big Morongo Canyon watersheds and the portions of the Mission Creek flood control channel and Morongo Wash within the City of Desert Hot Springs. The Proposed Project would permanently affect 8.8 acres and temporarily affect 84.7 acres of the Upper Mission Creek/Big Morongo Canyon Conservation Area.

In general, participation as a PSE reduces the need for focused surveys, especially outside Conservation Areas. However, surveys for habitat suitability followed by focused surveys according to CV-MSHCP guidelines within the four conservation areas are required for the following species:

- Coachella Valley Jerusalem cricket;
- Desert tortoise;
- Western burrowing owl;
- Least Bell's vireo;
- Le Conte's thrasher;
- Southwestern willow flycatcher;
- Summer tanager;
- Yellow-breasted chat;
- Yellow warbler; and
- Palm Springs pocket mouse.

For each conservation area, conservation objectives and required measures are described for conserving core habitat for covered species, essential ecological processes necessary to maintain habitat viability, biological corridors and linkages as needed, and the less

common conserved land cover types. An MSHCP consistency report would be prepared to evaluate compliance with the Coachella Valley MSHCP.

If SCE elects to become a PSE, documentation that the Proposed Project is in compliance with the CV-MSHCP would be required, according to the Implementation Agreement, as discussed above. Because the Proposed Project is within CVMSHCP conservation areas, the Proposed Project would be subject to Joint Project Review process with the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission. The purpose of the Joint Project Review is to allow the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission to facilitate and monitor implementation of the CV-MSHCP.

In summary, the Proposed Project does not conflict with the CV-MSHCP. Most of the Proposed Project is within ROW that was in existence at the time the CV-MSHCP was developed. There are approximately 3 miles of new transmission corridor proposed in Segment 5, however, the new ROW is primarily located on the Reservation and is not subject to CV-MSHCP requirements. Furthermore, the CV-MSHCP recognizes the need for infrastructure projects such as the Proposed Project. There is no requirement for SCE to comply with the conditions of the CV-MSHCP unless it becomes a PSE. Nevertheless, the survey requirements of the CV-MSHCP have essentially been satisfied or exceeded by the surveys for the Proposed Project. SCE intends to seek PSE status. It should be noted that regardless of MSHCP participation, Section 7 Consultation would be required, and incidental take authorization outside of the MSHCP areas may be required.

Potential effects to lands within the CDCA would occur in Segments 5 and 6 of the Project Study Area due to the implementation of the Proposed Project. In Segment 5, temporary effects may occur to up to 0.1 acre of Unclassified Lands,⁹ while in Segment 6, permanent effects may occur to up to 57.9 acres of Unclassified Lands; temporary effects may also occur within Unclassified Lands. Uses in Unclassified Land are evaluated by the BLM on a project-by-project basis. The utilization of existing utility corridors is specifically addressed in the California Desert Plan.

4.4.5.3 NEPA Impact Assessment

Based on the analysis performed, it is anticipated that the Proposed Project would not result in significant effects under NEPA.

4.4.6 Applicant Proposed Measures

The following table includes all of the Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) to reduce potentially significant impacts. Identified APMs are only included to address potentially significant impacts.

⁹ Scattered and isolated parcels of public land in the CDCA that have not been placed within multiple-use classes are Unclassified Land. These parcels would be managed on a case-by-case basis, as explained in the Land Tenure Adjustment Element.

APM-BIO-1

Revegetation Plan. Prior to starting construction, a draft revegetation plan would be prepared to guide the revegetation of areas that are not included within either the WR-MSHCP or CV-MSHCP, and where dominant land cover consists of native vegetation. The objective of revegetation would be to reestablish vegetation back to pre-construction conditions (e.g., by maintaining roughly equivalent or comparable native to non-native dominance patterns) with consideration of adjacent community composition. Prior to completing construction activities, the revegetation plan would be finalized to address site-specific conditions, methodology and technique, implementation schedule, monitoring and maintenance, and success criteria.

A proposal to perform revegetation would also be prepared to direct revegetation of temporarily impacted native-dominated vegetation areas located in the WR-MSHCP and the CV-MSHCP plan areas consistent with MSHCP standards and pursuant to any agreements negotiated between SCE and the MSHCP management entities (e.g., RCA and CVCC) regarding SCE's obligations as a PSE receiving coverage for impacts to various resources. If SCE does not gain PSE status under either MSHCP, then a revegetation plan to reestablish native-dominated vegetation back to pre-construction conditions (as noted above) would be prepared prior to construction.

The revegetation plan would be submitted to the CPUC and applicable wildlife agencies for approval after completion of final engineering and prior to the start of construction.

APM-BIO-2

Biological Monitoring. Where special-status species (e.g., reptiles, birds, mammals, and bat roosts) or unique resources (defined by regulations and local conservation plans) are known to occur, biologists would monitor construction activities, unless otherwise mitigated for or as appropriate actions are described in species-specific APMs.

APM-BIO-3

Nesting Birds. SCE would prepare and implement a Nesting Bird Management Plan to address nesting birds undertaken in collaboration with the CDFW, USFWS, and BLM. The Plan would be an adaptive management plan that may be updated as needed if improvements are identified or conditions in the field change. The Plan would include the following: nest management and avoidance, field approach (survey methodology, reporting, and monitoring), and the Project avian biologist qualifications. The avian biologist would be responsible for oversight of the avian protection activities including the biological monitors.

In order to minimize impacts to nesting birds during nesting season, preconstruction surveys and regular sweep surveys of

active construction areas by a qualified biologist would focus on breeding behavior and a search for active nests within 500 feet of the project disturbance areas where survey access is not limited.

- (a) For vegetation clearing that needs to occur during the typical nesting bird season (February 1 to August 31; as early as January 1 for raptors) qualified biologists would conduct nesting bird surveys. If an active nest (e.g., nests with eggs or chicks) was located, the appropriate avoidance and minimization measures from the management plan would be implemented. If it is determined that removal of an active nest is required, the project avian biologist will evaluate the appropriate level of consultation with CDFW, USFWS, and BLM;
- (b) During the typical nesting bird season, SCE would conduct pre-construction clearance surveys no more than 14 days prior to initial start of construction and in accordance with the adaptive management plan, to determine the location of nesting birds and territories;
- (c) Nest monitoring would be conducted by Project biological monitors with knowledge of bird behavior under the direction of a BLM and/or CDFW approved avian biologist;
- (d) Nesting deterrents (e.g. mooring balls, netting, etc.) could be used for inactive nests where appropriate at the direction of the Project avian biologist;
- (e) A Project avian biologist would determine the appropriate buffer area around active nest(s) and provisions for buffer exclusion areas (e.g. highways, public access roads, etc.) along with construction activity limits. Unless restricted by the Project avian biologist, construction vehicles would be allowed to move through a buffer area with no stopping or idling. The Project avian biologist would determine, evaluate, and modify buffers as appropriate based on species tolerance and behavior, the potential disruptiveness of construction activities, and existing conditions; and,
- (f) The Project biological monitor would observe and document implementation of appropriate buffer areas around active nest(s) during project activities. The active nest site and applicable buffer would remain in place until nesting activity concluded. Nesting bird status reports would be submitted according to the management plan.

APM-BIO-4

Burrowing Owl. A preconstruction, focused burrowing owl survey would be conducted no more than 30 days prior to commencement of ground-disturbing activities within suitable

habitat to determine if any occupied burrows are present. If occupied burrows are found, adequate buffers shall be established around burrows. Adequate buffers would be determined by a Project Avian biologist based upon field conditions and resource agency guidelines for wintering burrows and breeding season burrows.

SCE would develop a Burrowing Owl Management Plan for the Project. The Plan would include information related to construction monitoring, avoidance and minimization measures, relocation strategy, exclusionary devices, and reporting requirements.

APM-BIO-5

Desert Tortoise. In desert tortoise habitat in Segments 5 and 6, from Deep Creek Road east to the Devers Substation, project personnel in non-desert tortoise exclusion fenced areas would be required to inspect for desert tortoises under vehicles prior to moving the vehicle. If a desert tortoise is found beneath a vehicle, the vehicle would not be moved until the tortoise leaves on its own accord, or if necessary, the tortoise may be moved by an Authorized Biologist. If a vehicle must be moved in the event of an emergency, placing a tortoise in harm's way, a USFWS Authorized Biologist may move the tortoise to an appropriate location.

All burrows suitable for desert tortoise found during clearance surveys within project ground disturbance areas within desert tortoise habitat, whether occupied or vacant, that would be subject to construction-related disturbance, would be excavated by a Biologist authorized by USFWS, and collapsed or blocked to prevent desert tortoise reentry.

All desert tortoise handling, including excavations of nests, would be conducted by a Biologist authorized by USFWS, in accordance with USFWS-approved protocol in compliance with appropriate regulatory permits.

Desert tortoise exclusion fencing shall be installed around staging yards within suitable, occupied habitat according to USFWS recommended specifications (USFWS, 2005) and in compliance with appropriate regulatory permits.

Trash and food items would be contained in closed containers during construction to discourage attracting opportunistic predators such as ravens.

APM-BIO-6

Least Bell's Vireo, Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, & Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo. *Pre-construction:* In areas of potentially suitable riparian habitat for the least Bell's vireo (or other listed riparian birds), which occurs in Segment 3 and may

occur in limited areas in Segment 4, SCE would conduct non-protocol preconstruction surveys no more than 7 days prior to commencing construction activities to determine the location of nests and territories. Survey areas would include potentially suitable habitat within a 500-foot buffer around project disturbance areas unless property access is not allowed.

Buffer: If active least Bell's vireo (or other listed riparian bird) nesting activity is identified, SCE's avian biologist would establish a buffer area where construction activities are prohibited around active least Bell's vireo nest(s) and would monitor construction activities to evaluate the adequacy of the buffer. The buffer would be established and may be subsequently adjusted based on construction activities, noise and disturbance levels in the area not attributable to construction, and observed behavior of individual vireos (or as specified by conditions established under a Biological Opinion issued by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service or as directed by provisions established under the WR-MSHCP if SCE obtains PSE status).

As SCE intends to apply for PSE status, if granted, potential impacts to the least Bell's vireo would be mitigated by participation in the WR-MSHCP. SCE's participation would include following provisions and measures outlined in the WR-MSHCP. SCE would prepare a Determination of Biological Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) that would include conservation recommendations similar to those that would be established under a Biological Opinion. The Riverside Conservation Authority (RCA) would request USFWS and CDFW concurrence with the MSHCP "findings of consistency," as well as DBESP approval. Subsequent coordination on any biological issues would be handled through consultation with the RCA. The RCA would determine the need for additional consultation with the USFWS and CDFW.

If SCE does not participate in the WR-MSHCP, then any temporary and permanent impacts to least Bell's vireo and its habitat that may occur in Segments 3 and 4 would be mitigated by obtaining an incidental take authorization under the Federal and State Endangered Species Acts and implementing relevant permit conditions.

APM-BIO-7

Special Status Plants. Preconstruction surveys for plant species assigned a State Rare Plant Rank of 1B would be performed during the appropriate season and observed populations compared to impact area limits associated with final design. If substantial adverse impacts to a population are unavoidable then replacement or translocation of equivalent numbers of plants would be planned and implemented. (Substantially adverse impacts are defined as

damage or loss of at least 20 percent of the total number of individuals in a local population within the Project Area or 20 percent of the total area occupied by a population of special status plants. Potential impacts to species ranked 2 or 4 would not be considered significant but may still be avoided to the extent practicable).

Special status plants designated on List 1B that are substantially adversely affected would be salvaged and relocated. SCE will prepare plan to accomplish salvage and relocation/replacement that states methods of salvage, storage, and replacement planting of seeds or plants, and to identify receptor sites, set target numbers to be established, describe monitoring methods, and define requirements for maintenance and annual monitoring reports.

List 1B species observed in project area include: Yucaipa onion, smooth tarplant, Parry's spineflower, white-bracted spineflower, and chaparral sand verbena.

APM-BIO-8

Coachella Valley Milk-vetch. Focused surveys for Coachella Valley milk-vetch would be conducted during the appropriate season within designated Critical Habitat along the Whitewater River during the season immediately preceding proposed construction activities in that area.

This species was not found during focused surveys conducted in 2011 and 2012. If this species is located and occurs within areas potentially subject to impacts during construction, a plan to avoid impacts, protect specimens in place, and/or salvage and replace affected specimens would be developed in consultation with the CVCC, USFWS, and CDFW.

APM-BIO-9

Jurisdictional Water Permits. Jurisdictional waters permits would be obtained from CDFW under Cal. Fish & Game Code Section 1602, and from USACE, and the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Boards in accordance with Sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act, to address unavoidable impacts to State and Federal jurisdictional waters. Impacts would be mitigated based on the terms of the permits.

The applicant would develop a Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) for affected jurisdictional areas within established riparian areas, as needed, for review and approval by the USACE, CDFW, and the Regional Boards as appropriate. The plan would describe measures to accomplish restoration, provide criteria for restoration success, and specify compensation ratios. Monitoring and reporting requirements and the duration of post-construction monitoring would be specified. A copy of the final HMMP would be provided to the CPUC, USACE and CDFW.

Regarding any affected Riparian/Riverine drainages and habitat areas in Segments 3 and 4 in Western Riverside County, if SCE participates in the WR-MSHCP, SCE would prepare a DBESP that would include mitigation measures consistent with the HMMP as previously described. The RCA would request USFWS and CDFW concurrence with the MSHCP “findings of consistency,” as well as DBESP approval. Subsequent coordination on any biological issues would be addressed through consultation with the RCA. The RCA would determine the need for additional consultation with the USFWS and CDFW.

APM-BIO-10

Coastal California Gnatcatcher and Designated Critical Habitat. In San Bernardino County, SCE would develop construction minimization measures and habitat conservation measures to be incorporated into Section 7 consultation, with the intent to obtain take authorization for the expected minimal impact (based on negative surveys to date), as well as a finding of no adverse modification to Critical Habitat. Expected measures would include: preconstruction protocol surveys to identify the locations of any gnatcatchers; monitoring of all vegetation clearing in coastal sage scrub habitat or designated Critical Habitat in San Bernardino County; restoration of temporarily impacted coastal sage habitat; and additional restoration of degraded areas within the SCE right-of-way as compensation for permanent impacts to coastal sage scrub habitat, such that there is no net loss of habitat value for coastal California gnatcatcher in San Bernardino County.

APM-BIO-11

Stephens’ Kangaroo Rat. For portions of the Proposed Project within SKR habitat in Segments 2 and 3, from the San Bernardino Junction to the Riverside County line, avoidance and mitigation measures would be incorporated into conditions established in a Biological Opinion issued through Section 7 consultation with USFWS, which would be required to obtain incidental take authorization for the expected minimal impact (based on surveys to date). Expected measures would include: preconstruction protocol surveys to identify the locations of any SKR present and delineate extent of suitable habitat; monitoring by a qualified biologist during all vegetation clearing and ground disturbance in suitable habitat; flagging of potential burrows for avoidance where possible; covering all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches more than 2 feet deep at the close of each working day with plywood or provide one or more escape ramps constructed of earth fill or wooden planks to prevent entrapment of SKR during construction; thorough inspection of construction pipes, poles, culverts, or similar structures with a diameter of 1.5 inches or greater stored at a construction site for one or more overnight periods shall be done by a qualified biologist for the presence of SKR before the construction pipes, poles, culverts, or similar

structures is subsequently buried, capped, or otherwise used or moved in any way; where construction traffic over identified burrows is unavoidable, covering burrows during daytime operations with 1-inch plywood or steel plates to avoid collapsing burrow; restoration of all temporarily affected areas within suitable habitat; and additional restoration of degraded areas within the SCE right-of-way as compensation for permanent impacts to suitable habitat, such that there is no net loss of habitat value for SKR, as agreed upon by USFWS.

APM-BIO-12

Los Angeles Pocket Mouse; Palm Springs Pocket Mouse. SCE would develop construction minimization measures and habitat conservation measures, as necessary through MSHCP participation, or, in the absence of such participation, in consultation with USFWS and CDFW. Habitat mitigation measures would be a combination of revegetation of temporarily impacted areas (see APM-BIO-1) and restoration of degraded areas as necessary to conserve the equivalent of 90 percent of the long-term conservation value habitat for LAPM, as determined by the RCA and/or USFWS and CDFW.

4.4.7 Alternative Project

The Alternative Project would include relocation of an approximate 3-mile section of Segment 5 of the existing WOD corridor pursuant to an agreement between SCE and the Reservation. Both the Proposed Project and Alternative Project include the same common elements outside of Segment 5 (including the same modifications to existing substations, the same 66 kV subtransmission line relocations in Segment 1, and the same modifications to the telecommunications system). This section focuses on the differences between the Proposed Project and Alternative Project portions of Segment 5. For a complete description of the Alternative Project, refer to Chapter 3.13, Project Alternatives.

The removals for Segment 5 would remain the same for the Proposed Project and the Alternative Project; however, the Alternative Project is 0.13 mile longer, and there are some minor differences regarding installation. For example, the Alternative would require two additional double-circuit LSTs and commensurate additional length in circuit (4 miles), conductor length (25 miles), and optical ground wire (OPGW) length (2 miles). The length of new access roads for the Alternative Project at 5.3 mile would be only 0.1 mile longer than the Proposed Project. The number of double circuit TSP would be the same for each project.

In comparison, the Alternative Project may have up to less than 10 acres of additional permanent and temporary impacts. Specifically, the Proposed Project may have temporarily disturbed lands up to 453.6 acres to be restored with up to 37.1 acres of permanently disturbed land, while the Alternative Project may have up to 7.6 acres more (461.2 acres) temporarily disturbed land to be restored with up to 0.8 acre more (37.9

acres) permanently disturbed lands. Refer to Chapter 3.2.3, Transmission and Substation Line Installation, Table 3.2-E2, Transmission Approximate Land Disturbance (Segment 5) and Chapter 3.13, Project Alternative, Table 3.13-C, Transmission Approximate Land Disturbance (Segment 5 Alternative) for the specific acreage impact details.

Based on the results of the biological studies, three special-status plant species have a moderate to high potential to occur: white-bracted spineflower, Parry's spineflower, and Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus. Furthermore, observed special-status animal species include burrowing owl and northwestern San Diego pocket mouse, while potentially occurring special-status animal species include desert tortoise, golden eagle (foraging), loggerhead shrike, Los Angeles pocket mouse, and pallid San Diego pocket mouse. The potential occurrences are based on the findings within the Segment 5 Proposed Project since the land cover conditions (vegetation types) are similar; however, during recent surveys in 2013, only the two special-status animal species were detected in the Alternative Project Study Area.

As described above, the biological resource impacts would not be substantively different compared to the Proposed Project due to similar temporary and permanent impacts, construction activities, and existing and potential biological resources. Similarly, while the Alternative Project alignment would result in the construction of transmission infrastructure in a location where there is none now, the Alternative Project also includes removal of the existing infrastructure; therefore, the overall biological impacts of the Alternative Project would be similar to those of the Proposed Project.

4.4.8 No Project Alternative

The No Project Alternative would not result in construction or operation of the Proposed Project. No new impacts to biological resources would result; impacts from existing and ongoing operations and maintenance activities within the ROW would continue. There would be no impact to biological resources with the No Project Alternative.

4.4.9 References Cited

AMEC Environmental and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC) 2012a. West of Devers Upgrade Project. Focused Surveys for Desert Tortoise. January. Prepared for Southern California Edison.

AMEC Environmental and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC) 2012b. West of Devers Upgrade Project. Focused Surveys for Sensitive Herpetofauna. June. Prepared for Southern California Edison.

AMEC Environmental and Infrastructure, Inc. (AMEC) 2012c. West of Devers Upgrade Project. Draft Habitat Assessments and Focused Surveys for Special-status Invertebrates. June 4. Prepared for Southern California Edison.

Atwood, J.L. and J.S. Bolsinger. 1992. Elevational distribution of California gnatcatchers in the United States. *Journal of Field Ornithology* 63: 159-168.

- Avian Power Line Interaction Committee. 2006. Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: the State of the Art in 2006.
- Avian Power Line interaction Committee. 2012. Reducing Avian Collisions with Power Lines: The State of the Art in 2012.
- Banning-Beaumont Patch*. May 8, 2013. UPDATE: Fire Crews Work Through Night, First Aircraft Up at Sunrise to Fight Banning Blaze. Accessed at: <http://banning-beaumont.patch.com/groups/police-and-fire/p/wind-driven-wildfire-burning-in-banning-area-smoke-vi560fbf790b>.
- BioResource Consultants, Inc. 2013. Botanical Resources of the West of Devers Project, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California. Ojai, California. Prepared for LSA Associates, Inc., Irvine, California. Prepared on behalf of Southern California Edison Company, Monrovia, California.
- Bureau of Land Management. 2008. BLM Special-Status Species Management Manual 6840.
- CALFIRE. 2012. California Statewide Fire Map. <http://www.fire.ca.gov/general/firemaps.php>.
- California Department of Fish and Game. 1993. Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation.
- California Department of Fish and Game. 2012.
- 2012a. Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. Note: The California Department of Fish and Game changed its name as of January 1, 2013, to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- 2012b. California Natural Diversity Data Base.
- California Department of Fish and Game. October 1986. *Preliminary Description of the Terrestrial Natural Communities of California*. Robert F. Holland. Accessed at <http://www.cal-ipc.org/ip/inventory/pdf/HollandReport.pdf>.
- California Energy Commission and California Department of Fish and Game, Swainson's hawk survey protocols, impact avoidance, and minimization measures for renewable energy projects in the Antelope Valley of Los Angeles and Kern Counties, California. State of California, 2010.
- California Fish and Game Code Sections 1900–1913.
- California Fish and Game Code Sections 2050–2089.
- California Invasive Plant Council, 2013.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- City of Banning. 2006. *City of Banning General Plan*, adopted January 31.
- City of Beaumont. 2007. *City of Beaumont General Plan*, adopted March.
- City of Calimesa. 1994. *City of Calimesa General Plan*, adopted April 4.
- City of Grand Terrace. 2010. *City of Grand Terrace General Plan*, adopted April 27 by Resolution No. 2010-10.
- City of Loma Linda. 2009. *City of Loma Linda General Plan*, adopted May 26.
- City of Palm Springs. 2007. *City of Palm Springs General Plan*.
- City of Redlands. 1997. *City of Redlands 1995 General Plan*, adopted August 1995, as amended on December 12, 1997.
- City of San Bernardino. 2005. *City of San Bernardino General Plan*.
- City of Yucaipa. 2004. *City of Yucaipa General Plan*.
- Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CV-MSHCP) 2007. Final Recirculated Coachella Valley MSHCP. <http://www.cvmshcp.org/Plan%20Documents/10.%20CVAG%20MSHCP%20Plan%20Section%203.0.pdf>. September.
- Code of Federal Regulations 50. 21.11.
- County of Riverside. 2003. *County of Riverside General Plan*.
- County of Riverside. 2003. Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.
- County of Riverside. 2008. *County of Riverside General Plan*.
- County of San Bernardino. 2009. *County of San Bernardino General Plan*, adopted May 26.
- Federal Endangered Species Act, § 3(19).
- Garcia and Associates, Inc. (GANDA). 2011c. West of Devers Project Habitat Assessment Report. Prepared for SCE. November 23.
- Google, Brushfires in Southern California, updated May 5, 2013, <https://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&t=m&source=embed&oe=UTF8&msa=0&msid=217678256806529707236.0004dbb01c72c9add4536>.
- Grinnell, J., and H.S. Swarth. 1913. An account of the birds and mammals of the San Jacinto area of southern California. University of California Publications in Zoology 10: 197-406.

- Kochert, M.N., K. Steenhof, C.L. McIntyre, and E.H. Craig. 2002. Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*). *The Birds of North America Online* (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Accessed at: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/684>.
- Kus, B. 2002. Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*). In *The Riparian Bird Conservation Plan: a strategy for reversing the decline of riparian-associated birds in California*. California Partners in Flight. http://www.prbo.org/calpif/htmldocs/riparian_v-2.html.
- LSA Associates, Inc. (LSA). 2010. Biological Assessment: Morongo Relocation South of Interstate 10 Alternatives Project, Riverside County, California. Submitted to SCE. January. LSA (Irvine) Project No. SCE0702CS.
- Phone conversation between Ms. Cleary-Rose, Stan Spencer of LSA, and Roger Overstreet of SCE, on November 28, 2011.
- Piaggio, A. 2005. Proceedings of the Western Bat Working Group workshop on ecology, conservation and management of western bat species – updated species account, Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*). March 31–April 2, 2005. Portland, Oregon. Original account by R. Sherwin, 1998.
- Poulin, Ray, L. Danielle Todd, E.A. Haug, B.A. Millsap, and M.S. Martell. 2011. Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*), *The Birds of North America Online* (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Accessed at: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/061doi:10.2173/bna.61>.
- Rundel, W. Philip, and Robert Gustafson. 2005. *Introduction to the Plant Life of Southern California, Coast to Foothills*. University of California Press.
- Sawyer, J.O., T. Keeler-Wolf, and J.M. Evans. 2009. *A Manual of California Vegetation*. Second Edition. California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, California
- State of California 2010. California Energy Commission (CEC) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), Swainson's hawk survey protocols, impact avoidance, and minimization measures for renewable energy projects in the Antelope Valley of Los Angeles and Kern Counties, California.
- Swainson's Hawk Technical Advisory Committee (SHTAC). 2000. Recommended timing and Methodology for Swainson's Hawk Nesting Surveys in California's Central Valley. May 31.
- United States Code 16. 703–712, as amended.
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service. 1997. Coastal California Gnatcatcher Presence/Absence Survey Protocol. Unpublished paper. Revised July 28.
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service. 2001. Least Bell's Vireo Survey Guidelines. Ecological Services Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, California.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

United States Fish and Wildlife Service. 2006.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service. 2010.

2010a. Preparing for any action that may occur within the range of the Mojave desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), 2010 Field Season. 18 pp. Accessed at: http://www.fws.gov/ventura/speciesinfo/protocols_guidelines/.

2010b. Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Protocol.

2010c. Interim Golden Eagle Inventory and Monitoring Protocols. Pagel et al.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service. 2011. *Draft Eagle Conservation Plan Guidance*. Gould and Schmidt.

United States Geological Survey (USGS). 2010. *A Natural History Summary and Survey Protocol for the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher*. Chapter 10, Section A *Biological Science, Book 2 Collection of Environmental Data*.

Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (Western Riverside MSHCP). 2003. Joint Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement. <http://www.rctlma.org/mshcp/volume4/index.html>.

Wheeler, B.K., and W.S. Clark. 2003. *A Photographic Guide to North American Raptors*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.