

CH2MHILL

September 29, 2010

383194

Felicia Miller
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

Subject: Almond 2 Power Plant (09-AFC-02)
Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission Line and Substation Project, Revised
Draft Environmental Impact Report, dated July 23, 2010, Applicant's Exhibit #__

**Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission Line and Substation Project, Final
Environmental Impact Report, dated November 5, 2009, Applicant's Exhibit #__**

Dear Ms. Miller:

Please find attached 2 electronic copies (CD) of the Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission Line and Substation Project, Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report, dated July 23, 2010, Applicant's Exhibit #__ and the Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission Line and Substation Project, Final Environmental Impact Report, dated November 5, 2009, Applicant's Exhibit #__. This draft EIR is being docketed in response to a request from the Hearing Officer at the Status Conference held on September 16, 2010.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact me at (916) 286-0249 or Susan Strachan at (530) 757-7038.

Sincerely,

CH2M HILL

Sarah Madams
AFC Project Manager

Attachment

cc: S. Strachan, Strachan Consulting
B. LaFollette, Turlock Irrigation District

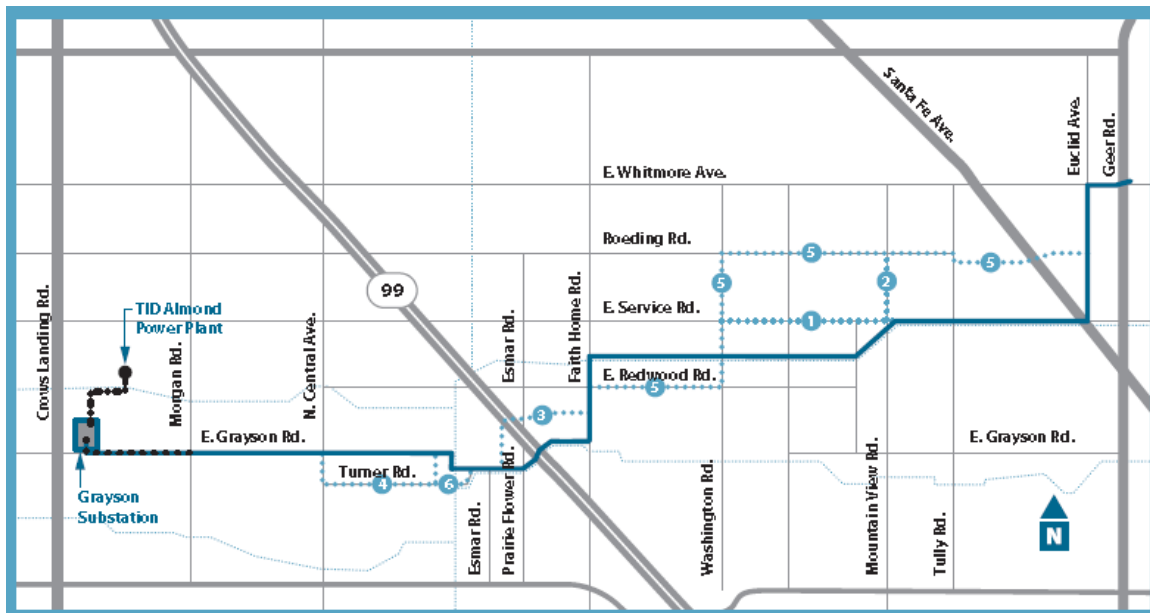
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Hughson-Grayson 115-kV Transmission Line and Substation Project

Final Environmental Impact Report

SCH #: 2009012075



Prepared for:

Turlock Irrigation
District



Prepared by:



With assistance from:



November 5, 2009

Hughson-Grayson 115-kV Transmission Line and Substation Project

Final Environmental Impact Report

SCH #: 2009012075

Prepared for:

Turlock Irrigation District

Prepared by:

Strachan Consulting

with assistance from

Parus Consulting, Inc.

November 5, 2009

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Hughson-Grayson 115 kV Transmission Line and Substation Project (SCH# 2009012075) was submitted to the State Clearinghouse and released for public review on August 11, 2009. The 45-day review period for public comment on this document closed September 25, 2009. The Lead Agency (Turlock Irrigation District [TID]) received 13 letters commenting on the Draft EIR, as well as one petition. In addition, oral comments were received at a public meeting held September 14, 2009.

This Final EIR responds to public and agency comments on the Draft EIR issued for the proposed Hughson-Grayson 115 kV Transmission Line and Substation Project. Revisions to the Draft EIR are also noted. This document must be considered by TID in its deliberations on the proposed Project. In addition to consideration of the Final EIR, TID is required to make findings of fact regarding the significant environmental impacts identified in the Final EIR, and must prepare a Statement of Overriding Considerations for significant impacts that cannot be mitigated. There are no significant impacts identified in the Final EIR that cannot be mitigated. Therefore, a Statement of Overriding Considerations need not be prepared for the Project.

Findings will be made after TID has considered the Final EIR. The Mitigation Monitoring Plan will be considered concurrently. The Findings and Mitigation Monitoring Plan, if adopted, will subsequently be included in the public record as documents separate from this Final EIR.

1.2 ORGANIZATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

The Final EIR is a stand alone document from the Draft EIR. This Final EIR has been organized into six chapters, as outlined below.

1. Executive Summary: Includes information on basic project elements, such as location and objectives. A brief description of the alternative route segments analyzed in the EIR process and a summary of environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures is also included.

2. Description of the Proposed Project: Restates the Project Description provided in Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR.

3. Minor Changes and Edits to the Draft EIR: Describes the minor changes and edits to the Draft EIR that resulted from the comments received on the Draft EIR during the 45-day review period.

4. Comment Letters and Response to Comments: Provides the names and, where appropriate, affiliations of the individuals who submitted comments on the Draft EIR. Each letter received has been assigned a number, and each comment within the letter given a reference number. Copies of each letter received are provided and immediately precede a detailed response to each comment identified.

5. List of Preparers: Provides a restatement of the list of persons responsible for the preparation of this EIR.

6. References Cited: Provides a list of the additional references used while preparing this Final EIR.

The environmental analysis for the project is included in Section 4.0 of the Draft EIR.

1.3 PROJECT LOCATION

The Hughson-Grayson 115 kV Transmission Line and Substation Project is located between the cities of Hughson and Ceres in Stanislaus County, California. The eastern endpoint of the 115 kV transmission line route would be located at the existing Hughson Substation near the corner of East Whitmore Avenue and Geer Road, east of the City of Hughson. The western terminus of the 115 kV line would be at the proposed Grayson Substation, which would be located on 7.35 acres north of East Grayson Road, near the intersection with Crows Landing Road, south of the City of Ceres.

1.4 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project would include approximately 10 miles of new 115 kV electrical transmission line from TID's existing Hughson Substation to the new Grayson Substation. Two 69 kV transmission line sections would be installed to connect the Project to TID's existing

infrastructure. A detailed description of Project components is presented in Chapter 2 of this Final EIR.

1.4.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Project would expand TID's ability to serve the growing community of Ceres and improve system reliability. The Project has been designed to accommodate current and projected demand for power distribution in TID's service territory. TID meets demand for power distribution through 69 and 115 kV systems. Currently, the Ceres area is only served by the 69 kV system, which is near capacity due to increased electrical demand and lack of expansion.

Beyond increasing supply, the proposed improvements would promote the safety and reliability of the system. Sagging transmission lines often occur when a transmission system operates at or near capacity due to increased heat resulting from high amperage in the lines. The sagging impedes the ability to maintain electrical safety clearances (i.e. the required safe distance from the line to ground or other conductors). Furthermore, a transmission system operating at or near capacity is more likely to experience local outages.

The Project would eliminate these constraints in several ways. First, the new 115 kV transmission line extending from the Hughson Substation to the Grayson Substation would enable the Ceres area to be served by TID's 115 kV transmission system, increasing system reliability and reducing the strain on the existing 69 kV transmission system. Second, the Section One 69 kV transmission line from Morgan Road to the Grayson Substation would provide a means of interconnecting the Grayson Substation to TID's existing Gilstrap-Westport 69 kV line (which extends from TID's Gilstrap Substation to its Westport Substation). This would result in additional reliability by providing another means of bringing electricity in and out of the area and would also provide voltage support to the west Ceres area to serve forecasted load growth. Third, the Section Two 69 kV transmission line from the existing Almond Power Plant to the Grayson Substation would provide another way of transmitting electricity generated by the existing TID Almond Power Plant to the Ceres Area and the TID transmission system. Finally, the Project would provide additional reliability through a dedicated crossing over State Route 99, allowing TID to move electricity east-to-west and west-to-east as system conditions dictate.

1.5 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Six alternative segment alignments to the proposed route were identified in the Draft EIR. Major characteristics of the alternatives are provided in Table 1-1 below. A detailed discussion of the impacts associated with each of these alternatives is provided in Section 5.4 of the Draft EIR.

1.5.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE ALTERNATIVE SEGMENT ALIGNMENTS

ALTERNATIVE SEGMENT 1 (EAST SERVICE ROAD ROUTE)

This alternative would parallel East Service Road between Euclid Avenue and Washington Road. Transmission structures would be located on the north side of East Service Road. At Washington Road, the line would travel south on the east side of the road to re-join the Project route. Alternative 1 would eliminate the portion of the Project that would parallel the Lateral No. 2 right-of-way.

ALTERNATIVE SEGMENT 2 (MOUNTAIN VIEW ROAD ROUTE)

This route would follow the east side of Mountain View Road, and would connect an abbreviated Alternative 5 with the Project or Alternative 1.

ALTERNATIVE SEGMENT 3 (ALTERNATIVE STATE ROUTE 99 CROSSING)

Alternative 3 turns off of the Project route on Faith Home Road. North of the Modesto Western Mobile Estates, the alternative would turn west and run along parcel boundaries, crossing perpendicular to State Route 99. West of State Route 99, the line would bisect parcels, heading south to re-join the Project route along TID Lateral No. 2. This alternative would replace the section of the Project that runs between a mobile home community and housing development in the community of Keyes.

ALTERNATIVE SEGMENT 4 (TURNER ROAD ROUTE)

This alternative would turn off the Project route approximately 650 feet west of the Ceres Main canal and head south to the eastern terminus of Turner Road. The line would follow the north side of Turner Road west to North Central Avenue, at which point it would head north to again join the Project route. Alternative 4 would place transmission infrastructure between residences and the most likely access to the properties.

ALTERNATIVE SEGMENT 5 (EUCLID TO FAITH HOME ALTERNATIVE)

This alignment would provide a route between Euclid Avenue and Faith Home Road that avoids the TID canal by traveling both north and south of the Project alignment. The route would travel west on Roeding Road, connecting to East Redwood Road via Washington Road.

ALTERNATIVE SEGMENT 6 (LATERAL NO. 2 ½ ROUTE)

This route is an option to stay along TID Lateral No. 2½, cross the Ceres Main canal, and then head north at the eastern terminus of Turner Road. This alternative avoids routing along the Ceres Main Canal.

Table 1-1 Alternative Transmission Line Segment Characteristics

Alternative	Length (Feet)	Number of Poles	Residences within 150 feet	Bisect Parcels?	Direct Effects ^A (linear feet)			Indirect Effects (linear feet)		
					Ag ^B	Res ^C	Other ^D	Ag	Res	Other
1	16,997	70	30	No	7993	8347	218	8277	8760	99
2	2,610	10	6	No	1306	1308	0	1429	1473	88
3	5741	29	31	Yes	2938	0	4859	0	3036	22
4	7,145	34	31	Yes	1173	5780	0	1625	6276	43
5	25,998	119	55	Yes	13048	15847	614	4639	16761	0
6	3,290	14	1	Yes	3964	1327	0	165	1710	0

A: Effects were determined based on aerial photograph interpretation and field reconnaissance.

B: Ag = agricultural land uses.

C: Res = residential land uses. Determination derived if homestead was evident within 150 feet of the alternative route.

D: Other land uses are those uses that do not clearly conform with typical agricultural or residential uses.

1.5.2 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

An EIR is required to identify the environmentally superior alternative from among the range of reasonable alternatives that are evaluated. Section 15126.6 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires that an environmentally superior alternative be designated, and states that if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project alternative the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among

the other alternatives. An analysis of the six alternative route segments was conducted, as presented above and discussed in detail in Chapter 5 of the Draft EIR. None of the six alternative options that were analyzed would reduce the overall impacts associated with the Project.

Under the No Project Alternative, transmission lines and substation infrastructure would not be constructed. TID's studies indicate that the transmission and distribution system may not be able to reliably serve current customers and planned development in the service area. The No Project alternative would not result in any of the impacts associated with the Project. Therefore, the No Project alternative is considered the environmentally superior alternative, but would not meet the objectives of the Project.

Among the alternative transmission line segments, the determination of an environmentally superior alternative requires the evaluation and balancing of many factors. Some of the impacts may be reduced in magnitude while, at the same time, others are increased in magnitude. In general, there would be minor differences in the magnitude of impacts between the Project and the alternatives, but all would result in the same impact significance levels within each environmental resource area. In all but one case, the Project route would impact fewer residences than the considered alternatives.

Alternative 3 would impact fewer residences, less land in sensitive uses, and have a lesser impact on aesthetics than the corresponding segment of the Project. While this option would impact fewer sensitive receptors, those that would be impacted by Alternative 3 are generally located closer to the proposed infrastructure than the residences along Project route. Alternative 3 was not selected because this segment (1) is located closer to residences than the proposed route, (2) would limit future development options in this area and bisect several agricultural parcels west of SR 99, and (3) is located in close proximity to a contamination site. In light of the analysis presented above, the Project route, with no implementation of alternative segments, has been determined to be the environmentally superior alternative.

1.5.3 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

TID has considered the relative environmental impacts of the identified alternative transmission line segments, as well as the issues related to the Project known to generate

public controversy, such as property owner concerns. As a result, TID has determined that the proposed Project route is the preferred alternative.

1.6 SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Table 1-2 presents a summary of expected environmental impacts and recommended mitigation measures that would avoid or minimize potential impacts, as well as the significance of these impacts before and after the implementation of mitigation. For detailed discussions of all expected impacts and mitigation measures, the reader is referred to the analysis presented in Chapter 4 of the Draft EIR.

1.6.1 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Detailed mitigation measures are identified throughout Chapter 4 of the Draft EIR. These measures are intended to mitigate Project effects to the extent feasible. After implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, all of the adverse effects associated with the Project would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

1.6.2 CUMULATIVE AND GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

The majority of the potential impacts associated with the Hughson-Grayson 115 kV Transmission Line and Substation Project would occur during the construction period and would, therefore, be temporary impacts. As discussed in Chapter 6 of the Draft EIR, there are several projects planned within one mile of the proposed transmission lines and substation. Impacts would, generally, occur only if construction of these projects is undertaken concurrent to one another. Assuming these conditions, all effects have been determined to not result in cumulatively significant impacts.

TID's purpose in implementing the Project is to provide increased reliability and capacity within its electrical network. While TID would provide service to new development approved by local agencies with jurisdiction over lands within TID's service area, TID does not designate the location or attributes of new developments. The Project would not induce population growth; it would accommodate growth planned in the service area. A complete discussion of this topic is provided in Chapter 6 of the Draft EIR.

Table 1-2 Mitigation Summary Table

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
4.1 LAND USE			
Impact 4.1-1: Physically divide an established community.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.1-1: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.1-2: Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.1-2: As a duly formed irrigation district, TID has plenary authority over the siting, construction, and operation of its transmission facilities. Given this, local jurisdictions do not issue permits to TID for the construction of its electrical facilities, including transmission lines, poles, and substations. Therefore, no mitigation would be required.	Less than significant
Impact 4.1-3: Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.1-3: No mitigation required	Less than significant

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
Impact 4.1-4: Convert Farmland to non-agricultural use.	Significant	Mitigation 4.1-4: TID shall minimize the number of transmission poles and ground disturbance that would occur to land in agricultural production. As necessary, TID shall coordinate with landowners to determine pole placement that would result in minimal disruption to agricultural operations. TID shall obtain easements for private agricultural land that may be used along the proposed route and compensate landowners for loss of crops, up to the provisions of law. Agricultural land used for laydown activities and pole placement shall be re-tilled to offset compaction caused by heavy material storage and construction activities, as requested by the landowner.	Less than significant
Impact 4.1-5: Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.1-5: No mitigation required	Less than Significant
4.2 AESTHETICS			
Impact 4.2-1: Damage scenic resources within a State scenic highway.	No impact	Mitigation 4.2-1: No mitigation required	No impact
Impact 4.2-2: Substantially affect a scenic vista.	No impact	Mitigation 4.2-2: No mitigation required	No impact

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
Impact 4.2-3: Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality along the Project route.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.2-3: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.2-4: Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the Grayson Substation site, or along the 69 kV transmission lines.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.2-4: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.2-5: Create new sources of light and glare affecting views in the area.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.2-5: No mitigation required	Less than significant
4.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Impact 4.3-1: Have a substantial adverse effect on sensitive or special-status species.	Potentially significant	Mitigation 4.3-1: Either (1) vegetation removal associated with the proposed construction activities on the property shall be conducted outside of the nesting-bird season, which extends from February 15 to August 31; or (2) a qualified biologist shall conduct a nesting bird survey to identify any potential nesting activity within five days of proposed construction activities. Should construction activities occur during the nesting season for Swainson's hawk (March 1 through October 31), a survey should be conducted by a qualified biologist along the Project alignment, and within a 250-foot buffer. The surveys should follow the guidance of the Recommended Timing and Methodology For Swainson's	Less than significant

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
		<p>Hawk Nesting Surveys in California’s Central Valley (SWTAC 2000). If an active nest is identified, a 0.5-mile buffer shall be established around the nesting location. Construction activities may commence within the buffer area at the discretion of, and in the presence of, the biological monitor, along with consultation and coordination the CDFG.</p> <p>If passerine birds are found to be nesting, or there is evidence of nesting behavior within 250 feet of the impact area, a 250-foot buffer shall be required around the nests. For raptor species, this buffer should be 500 feet. A qualified biologist should monitor the nests, and construction activities may commence within the buffer area at the discretion and presence of the biological monitor.</p> <p>Although not detected on along the transmission line routes or the Grayson Substation site, measures should be taken to avoid potential impacts to burrowing owl. Prior to ground disturbance activities, a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey for burrowing owl. If burrowing owls or their sign are determined to be present on the on the transmission line routes or the Grayson Substation site, mitigation measures for potential impacts to owls should follow the guidelines outlined by the Burrowing Owl Consortium (1993), including passive relocation.</p> <p>Finally, a qualified biologist shall conduct</p>	

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
		preconstruction surveys for San Joaquin kit fox in all portions of the project located within the published species' range (USFWS 1997a). If occupied kit fox dens are found, DFG shall be consulted to develop and implement take avoidance measures before construction in the vicinity commences (USFWS 1997b).	
Impact 4.3-2: Impact riparian habitat or wetlands.	No impact	Mitigation 4.3-2: No mitigation required	No impact
Impact 4.3-3: Interfere with wildlife migration or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites.	No impact	Mitigation 4.3-3: No mitigation required	No impact
Impact 4.3-4: Conflict with an adopted habitat conservation plan.	No impact	Mitigation 4.3-4: No mitigation required	No impact
4.4 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY			
Impact 4.4-1: Violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.	Significant	Mitigation 4.4-1: TID shall prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and implement best management practices.	Less than significant
Impact 4.4-2: Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.4-2: No mitigation required	Less than significant

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
Impact 4.4-3: Alter stormwater runoff patterns in a manner that contributes to erosion, siltation, or flooding.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.4-3: TID shall implement stormwater runoff best management practices	Less than significant
Impact 4.4-4: Increased runoff leading to localized or downstream flooding.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.4-4: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.4-5: Otherwise degrade water quality.	No impact	Mitigation 4.4-5: No mitigation required	No impact
Impact 4.4-6: Place houses within a 100-year floodplain.	No impact	Mitigation 4.4-6: No mitigation required	No impact
Impact 4.4-7: Place structures within a 100-year floodplain.	No impact	Mitigation 4.4-7: No mitigation required	No impact
Impact 4.4-8: Expose people or structures to risk of flooding.	No impact	Mitigation 4.4-8: No mitigation required	No impact
Impact 4.4-9: Result in inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.	No impact	Mitigation 4.4-9: No mitigation required	No impact
4.5 AIR QUALITY			
Impact 4.5-1: Impact air quality in the area as a result of construction.	Significant	Mitigation 4.5-1: All disturbed areas, including storage piles, which are not being actively utilized for construction purposes, shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water, chemical stabilizer/suppressant, covered with a tarp or other suitable cover or vegetative ground cover. All on-site unpaved roads and off-site unpaved access	Less than significant

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
		<p>roads shall be effectively stabilized of dust emissions using water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant.</p> <p>All land clearing, grubbing, scraping, excavation, land leveling, grading, and cut and fill, activities shall be effectively controlled of fugitive dust emissions utilizing application of water or by presoaking.</p> <p>When materials are transported off-site, all material shall be covered, or effectively wetted to limit visible dust emissions, and at least six inches of freeboard space from the top of the container shall be maintained.</p> <p>All operations shall limit or expeditiously remove the accumulation of mud or dirt from adjacent public streets at the end of each workday. (The use of dry rotary brushes is expressly prohibited except where preceded or accompanied by sufficient wetting to limit the visible dust emissions.) (Use of blower devices is expressly forbidden.)</p> <p>Following the addition of materials to, or the removal of materials from, the surface of outdoor storage piles, said piles shall be effectively stabilized of fugitive dust emissions utilizing sufficient water or chemical stabilizer/suppressant.</p> <p>Within urban areas, trackout shall be immediately removed when it extends 50 or more feet from the site and at the end of each workday.</p> <p>These enhanced and additional measures shall be instituted when Project conditions warrant:</p>	

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 mph. • Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways from sites with a slope greater than one percent. • Suspend excavation and grading activity when winds exceed 20 mph*. • Limit area subject to excavation, grading, and other construction activity at any one time. <p>*Regardless of wind speed, an owner/operator must comply with Regulation VIII's 20 percent opacity limitation.</p>	
Impact 4.5-2: Impact air quality in the area as a result of operation.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.5-2: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.5-3: Create objectionable odors that would affect a substantial number of people.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.5-3: No mitigation required	Less than significant
4.6 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS			
Impact 4.6-1: Conflict with the goal of reducing greenhouse gas.	Potentially Significant	Mitigation 4.6-1: Circuit breakers shall be alarmed and continuously monitored to minimize release of sulfur hexafluoride, a greenhouse gas.	Less than significant
Impact 4.6-2: Impact global climate change.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.6-2: No mitigation required	Less than significant

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS			
Impact 4.7-1: Exposure to geologic hazard.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.7-1: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.7-2: Erosion resulting from grading.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.7-2: TID shall develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan that shall identify Best Management Practices to be used to protect stormwater runoff and minimize erosion during construction.	Less than significant
Impact 4.7-3: Unstable geologic conditions.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.7-3: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.7-4: Expansive soil.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.7-4: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.7-5: Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks.	No impact	Mitigation 4.7-5: No mitigation required	No impact
Impact 4.7-6: Mineral resources.	No impact	Mitigation 4.7-6: No mitigation required	No impact
4.8 CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Impact 4.8-1: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.8-1: No mitigation required	Less than significant

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
Impact 4.8-2: Cause an adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource.	Significant	Mitigation 4.8-2: Inadvertent discovery measures shall be implemented during all construction activities. Measures will include: (1) a worker education course for all construction personnel; and (2) procedures for discovery of cultural and paleontological resources, including human remains, during construction or ground-disturbing activities.	Less than significant
Impact 4.8-3: Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site.	Significant	Mitigation 4.8-3: A worker education course for all construction personnel will be conducted immediately prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities for each project phase.	Less than significant
Impact 4.8-4: Disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.	Significant	Mitigation 4.8-4: Under Mitigation Measure 4.8-2, during the worker education course for all construction personnel each worker will learn the proper procedures to follow in the event cultural resources or human remains/burials are uncovered during construction activities, including work curtailment or redirection and to immediately contact their supervisor.	Less than significant
4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS			
Impact 4.9-1: Transport of Hazardous Materials and Releases of Hazardous Substances.	Potentially significant	Mitigation 4.9-1: Prior to initiating Project construction, the construction contractor shall be trained regarding the identification and handling of hazardous materials (including PCB-containing transformers) and spill containment and agency notification procedures. Should any known or suspected release of PCB-containing oil occur during Project construction or operation, the spills	Less than significant

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
		<p>would be immediately addressed and the affected soils would be containerized and tested to determine the appropriate disposal options.</p> <p>TID shall notify agencies and perform the required remediation if there is a release of reportable (or otherwise significant) quantities of hazardous materials. In the event of a fuel spill, SCDER would be notified and clean-up would be accomplished under the guidance of regulatory oversight, as required.</p> <p>The construction contractor shall prepare a Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures (SPCC) Plan that describes the methods for working with hazardous materials during construction. The SPCC Plan shall describe methods for avoiding spills as well as the required response if a spill occurs.</p>	
<p>Impact 4.9-2: Exposure to Health Hazards.</p>	<p>Potentially significant</p>	<p>Mitigation 4.9-2: TID shall survey the selected substation site and transmission line route to ascertain if there is any observable evidence of a chemical release (such as staining of surface soils or areas of stressed or dead vegetation). Where Project facilities would traverse previously developed properties, the potential for chemical releases or other recognized environmental hazards shall be ascertained through Phase I or Phase II environmental assessment activities.</p> <p>TID shall also conduct a limited soil sampling and analysis program in representative agricultural or grazing land areas (in close proximity to proposed construction</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
		<p>areas) to determine if organochlorine, orthophosphorous, or arsenical pesticides or constituents are present at or above health-based risk criteria (such as the USEPA Preliminary Remediation Goals (PRGs) or California Human Health Screening Levels (CHHSLs). If PRGs or CHHSLs are exceeded, then TID shall develop a Construction Soil Management Plan to minimize worker exposure and determine appropriate soil handling procedures.</p> <p>If evidence of potential hazardous materials or contamination of soils or groundwater is encountered during transmission line or substation construction, TID shall cease digging, notify the right-of-way owner, and follow applicable requirements of Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act and the CCR Title 22 regarding the disposal of wastes. TID shall relocate transmission line poles, wherever feasible, to avoid digging in areas of known soil contamination.</p>	
<p>Impact 4.9-3: Increased risk of wildfires.</p>	<p>Potentially significant</p>	<p>Mitigation 4.9-3: TID facility designs shall conform to applicable regulations with respect to required safety features and setbacks between energized facilities and vegetation or other flammable materials. TID shall institute a program of regular inspection along the transmission line route to assure that plant growth subsequent to installation does not prevent conformance with applicable regulations as they apply to required</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
		setbacks from vegetation or other flammable materials.	
4.10 NOISE			
Impact 4.10-1: Result in a substantial temporary noise impact that could affect adjacent and project residences.	Significant	Mitigation 4.10-1: Construction shall be limited to the hours between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays. Construction equipment and haul trucks shall be properly maintained and operated (including adherence to speed limit requirements) and equipped with mufflers. Construction staging and parking areas shall be located away from existing residences.	Less than significant
Impact 4.10-2: Increase ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the Project.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.10-2: No mitigation required	Less than significant
4.11 TRANSPORTATION			
Impact 4.11-1: Impair ability to adapt transit systems.	Potentially significant	Mitigation 4.11-1: The location of proposed utility infrastructure shall be made available to the Stanislaus County Department of Public Works for review and comment prior to construction, and Hughson's <i>Street Master Plan</i> shall be considered when designing pole placement.	Less than significant

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
Impact 4.11-2: Increase local traffic volumes.	Potentially significant	Mitigation 4.11-2: Implement temporary traffic controls to minimize the potential for construction activities to result in traffic disruptions. Traffic controls within Stanislaus County’s right-of-way shall be submitted to Stanislaus County Public Works for approval.	Less than significant
Impact 4.11-3: Substantially increase hazards.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.11-3: TID shall consult with county officials in the field regarding the proper placement of poles at intersections on a case-by-case basis. Visibility strips shall be placed on the poles to reduce potential hazards to motorists.	Less than significant
Impact 4.11-4: Result in inadequate emergency access.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.11-4: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.11-5: Result in inadequate parking.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.11-5: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.11-6: Conflict with the operation of local railways or State Route 99.	Potentially significant	Mitigation 4.11-6: Appropriate Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Union Pacific Railroad, and Caltrans procedures shall be followed, including work notification and permit acquisition.	Less than significant
Impact 4.11-7: Conflict with adopted programs supporting alternative transportation.	Potentially significant	Mitigation 4.11-7: TID shall make construction plans and alignment detail available to local agencies to future roadway and bikeway path upgrades.	Less than significant

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
4.12 PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES			
Impact 4.12-1: Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provisions of new or physically altered government facilities.	No impact	Mitigation 4.12-1: No mitigation required	No impact
Impact 4.12-2: Impact existing schools.	No impact	Mitigation 4.12-2: No mitigation required	No impact
Impact 4.12-3: Adversely affect existing utilities.	Potentially significant	Mitigation 4.12-3: TID shall coordinate with applicable utility providers to ensure that no damage is implemented on existing facilities. Underground Service Alert shall be notified at least two working days prior to any digging. TID shall provide 48 hours advance notice to customers along the transmission line of any temporary disruptions in service that may result from project construction.	Less than significant
Impact 4.12-4: Conflict with utility construction policies.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.12-4: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.12-5: Be served by a landfill with sufficient capacity to accommodate the Project's solid waste needs.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.12-5: No mitigation required	Less than significant
Impact 4.12-6: Exceed wastewater treatment requirements or require construction of new facilities.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.12-6: No mitigation required	Less than significant

Impact	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance With Mitigation
Impact 4.12-7: Have insufficient water supplies.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.12-7: No mitigation required	Less than significant
4.13 SOCIOECONOMICS			
Impact 4.13-1: Induce population growth or concentration.	No impact	Mitigation 4.13-1: No mitigation required.	No impact
Impact 4.13-2: Displace substantial numbers of existing people or residences.	No impact	Mitigation 4.13-2: No mitigation required.	No impact
Impact 4.13-3: Impact property values.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.13-3: No mitigation required.	No impact

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

This chapter of the Final EIR is a restatement of the project description presented in the Draft EIR. The text includes Chapter 3 of the Draft EIR in its entirety.

2.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Hughson-Grayson 115 kV Transmission Line and Substation Project (the Project) would consist of a new 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line, two 69 kV transmission line sections, the Grayson Substation, and related facilities. The 115 kV transmission line feature of the Project would be approximately 10 miles in length and span the distance between the cities of Hughson and Ceres in Stanislaus County, California. Along much of this distance, existing power lines would be consolidated onto the newly constructed poles.

The eastern endpoint of the 115 kV transmission line route would be located at the existing Hughson Substation near the corner of East Whitmore Avenue and Geer Road, east of the City of Hughson. The western terminus of the 115 kV line would be at the proposed Grayson Substation, which would be located on East Grayson Road, near the intersection with Crows Landing Road, south of the City of Ceres. Existing 12 kV distribution lines would be underbuilt on the 115 kV line in most locations, and would interconnect at the Grayson Substation. The Project also includes the construction of two 69 kV transmission line sections that would both terminate at the Grayson Substation. Section One of the 69 kV transmission line would be located along the last mile of the 115 kV transmission line route on East Grayson Road, and the second 69 kV transmission line section (Section Two) would connect the Grayson Substation to TID's existing Almond Power Plant. A new bus expansion and circuit breaker would be installed at the power plant to accommodate the transmission line.

2.2 BASIC PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Project is necessary to accommodate current and future populations. TID utilizes its 69 kV and 115 kV transmission systems to distribute power to substations throughout its service territory. Currently, the Ceres area is only served by the 69 kV system, which is near capacity. However, the existing 69 kV system has not been expanded in over 20 years, and

over that time the Ceres area has experienced increased electrical demand. There is a need to provide voltage support to the west Ceres area to serve forecasted load growth.

Beyond increasing supply, the proposed improvements would increase the safety and reliability of the existing system. When a transmission system operates at or near capacity, the conductors sag due to increased heat resulting from high amperage in the lines. The sagging impedes the ability to maintain electrical safety clearances (i.e. the required safe distance from the line to ground or other conductors), which can result in reliability and safety concerns. A transmission system operating at or near capacity is more likely to experience local outages. To remedy this issue, TID currently has to institute operating limitations to prevent overloading the 69 kV transmission system in Ceres. These operating limitations include, for example, operating the existing Almond Power Plant when it may be uneconomical to do so in order to reduce the amount of electricity traveling through the 69 kV transmission lines to the Ceres area.

The Project would eliminate these constraints in several ways. First, the new 115 kV transmission line extending from the Hughson Substation to the Grayson Substation would enable the Ceres area to be also served by TID's 115 kV transmission system, increasing system reliability. The 115 kV system and the 69 kV system would interconnect at the Grayson Substation, enabling electricity to flow through either transmission system. This would reduce strain on the existing 69 kV transmission system and increase reliability. Second, the Section One 69 kV transmission line from Morgan Road to the Grayson Substation provides a means of interconnecting the Grayson Substation to TID's existing Gilstrap-Westport 69 kV line (which extends from TID's Gilstrap Substation to its Westport Substation). This provides additional reliability to the TID system by providing another means of bringing electricity in and out of the area. It will also provide voltage support to the west Ceres area to serve forecasted load growth. Third, the Section Two 69 kV transmission line from the existing Almond Power Plant to the Grayson Substation would provide another way of transmitting electricity generated by the existing TID Almond Power Plant to the Ceres area and the overall TID transmission system. Furthermore, the Project would provide additional reliability through a dedicated crossing over State Route (SR) 99, allowing the District to move electricity east-to-west and west-to-east as system conditions dictate.

In summary, TID has developed this Project to increase the reliability of the TID system and relieve congestion on TID's existing 69 kV transmission system. The specific objectives of the Project include:

- Capacity for future load growth;
- Increased reliability on TID's transmission system;
- Relieving load and congestions on the existing 69 kV transmission system;
- Providing voltage support to the west Ceres area by tying in the existing 69 kV transmission network to serve forecasted load growth in the Ceres area; and
- Providing an additional dedicated transmission crossing of SR 99.

TID has determined the need for the Project by conducting electrical system studies. These studies address electrical load flows, outage contingencies, load growth, and substation loads.

2.3 BACKGROUND

TID was organized under the Wright Act, and operates under the provisions of the California Water Code as a Special District. The Water Code authorizes TID to “provide for the acquisition, operation, leasing, and control of plans for the generation, transmission, distribution, sale, and lease of electric power.” Section 22475 grants the districts “the right to construct and operate in a manner affording security for life and property electric light and power lines along, over, or under any road.”

TID's generation resources include large and small hydroelectric plants, wind generating plants, and three natural gas-fired turbine generating plants. As an irrigation district, TID has access to low cost hydroelectric power and does not produce a profit or pay stockholders. Irrigation districts, such as TID, are managed locally and are unaffected by many federal and state policies.

2.3.1 TURLOCK IRRIGATION DISTRICT WATER AND POWER SERVICES

TID was the first irrigation district formed in the State of California. It was organized in 1887 and began delivering water from the Tuolumne River to farmers through a small irrigation system in 1900. Presently, TID has a 307-square-mile irrigation service area that lies east of

the San Joaquin River, between the Tuolumne and Merced rivers, encompassing approximately 6,500 individual parcels. The TID irrigation system includes approximately 250 miles of canals and laterals owned by the district and more than 1,600 miles of ditches and pipelines owned by improvement districts and individual growers.

TID entered the retail electric industry with the construction of the original Don Pedro Dam and Powerhouse in 1923. Today, TID provides electricity to a 662 square mile service area that spans portions of Stanislaus and Merced counties. The 2007 Annual Report for the district indicates that TID served 98,423 accounts at year end.

2.3.2 TID POWER GENERATION SYSTEM

TID derives the bulk of the energy it generates from hydroelectric and natural gas resources. TID has a 139 megawatt (MW) entitlement to the Don Pedro powerhouse and a 250 MW natural gas fired power plant (The Walnut Energy Center). TID also owns smaller hydroelectric sources at La Grange and along its canal system, and additional natural gas-fired turbine generating plants. It also recently purchased a 137 MW wind project in Klickitat County, Washington. As a Balancing Authority, TID integrates resource plans ahead of time, maintains load-interchange-generation balance within its Balancing Authority Area, and supports interconnection frequency in real time.

2.3.3 TURLOCK IRRIGATION DISTRICT'S TRANSMISSION SYSTEM

TID has a 230 kV transmission system that ties into the high voltage California grid, a 115 kV transmission system that runs through the district and connects to other utilities north and south, and a 69 and 115 kV transmission system that distributes power to substations within the district.

The 230 kV Intertie was built in 1974 as a joint project by TID and the Modesto Irrigation District (MID). The Intertie connects the districts to the 230 kV lines that run north-south through the State of California at the Westley Switchyard. Here, the TID-MID 230 kV system can obtain power through the Western Area Power Administration Tracy Substation and the Pacific Gas and Electric Company 230 kV substations at Tesla and Los Baños.

TID's existing 115 kV transmission system interconnects TID's Oakdale Switching Station with the City and County of San Francisco's Hetch-Hetchy System. The 115 kV system also serves MID's Pioneer Substation south of the Merced River, thereby delivering power to the Merced System. The 115- kV system ties into TID's Westley and Walnut 230 kV Intertie Switching Stations. In total, TID's internal 115 kV system supports seven 115 kV distribution stations, while its 69 kV transmission system distributes power to 16 local distribution substations within the District. The 69 kV stations were the original power delivery system within TID.

2.4 PROJECT LOCATION

The Project is located in Stanislaus County, within California's Central Valley. In general, the Project would be located south of the City of Modesto and north of the City of Turlock, between the cities of Hughson and Ceres. A small segment of the Section Two 69 kV transmission line would be located in the City of Ceres.

2.5 PROPOSED PROJECT ROUTE

2.5.1 115 kV TRANSMISSION LINE ROUTE

The route for the 115 kV transmission line would begin at the Hughson Substation, connecting to an existing triple-deadend structure. The transmission line would extend west on the north side of East Whitmore Avenue for approximately 200 feet, crossing over the existing 69 kV line located on the west side of Geer Road. A 90 degree deadend structure would be placed at the corner of this intersection. An angled structure would be placed at the corner of this intersection to accommodate crossing from the north to the south side of East Whitmore Avenue. From the south side of East Whitmore Avenue, the line would proceed west to the intersection with Euclid Avenue. From here, the line would proceed approximately one mile south along the east side of Euclid Avenue.

At the intersection of Santa Fe Avenue, Euclid Avenue, and East Service Road, the route would cross Santa Fe Railroad at a perpendicular angle and continue along the TID Lateral No. 2 right-of-way, which it would follow to the west for a total of approximately 3.8 miles. The Project would be placed in line with an existing 69 kV transmission line on the north

side of the irrigation canal. At Tegner Road, the line would cross to the south side of Lateral No. 2 and continue to Faith Home Road for approximately two miles.

At Faith Home Road, the route would head south on the east side of the road. At TID Lateral No. 2½, just south of the Modesto Western Mobile Estates, the transmission line would follow the canal to the west, crossing SR 99. On the west side of SR 99, the transmission line route would continue to follow TID Lateral No. 2½ until it bends south, west of Esmar Road. At this point the line would continue west to the Ceres Main canal, crossing under TID's existing 230 kV transmission line. The route would parallel the west side of the canal for approximately 650 feet, and then turn west. The line would reach East Grayson Road by traveling along the northern boundaries of the parcels that front the north side of Turner Road. At East Grayson Road, the route would continue west, initially on the northern side of the roadway. Approximately 100 feet east of South Blaker Road, the line would traverse to the south side of East Grayson Road to avoid tree and residence conflicts and continue to the Grayson Substation site, located approximately ¼ mile east of Crows Landing Road on assessor's parcel number (APN) 041-007-004.

From the Hughson Substation to Euclid Avenue, the existing 12 kV line on the north side of East Whitmore Avenue would not be relocated and the Project would not include a 12 kV underbuild. An irrigation pipe was recently constructed adjacent to the existing 12 kV line which would preclude installing 115 kV poles in that area. For the remainder of the transmission line route, all existing 12 kV lines would be consolidated onto the Project's transmission poles, allowing for removal of those existing 12 kV poles. Similarly, where the 115 kV line would parallel TID Lateral No. 2, the existing 12 and 69 kV lines would both be co-located onto the new structures. Due to the added weight resulting from the consolidation of the 12 kV, 69 kV, and 115 kV lines onto a single pole, the Project's poles would be constructed of steel. A fiber optic communication cable would also be installed on the 115 kV poles for the entire route. The cable would be located below the conductors. The Project's 115 kV transmission line, the Grayson Substation, and other Project features are depicted in Figure 3.2.

2.5.2 69 kV TRANSMISSION SECTIONS

In order to provide for enhanced reliability, a new 69 kV double circuit transmission line (Section One) would extend from the intersection of Morgan Road and East Grayson Road approximately one mile west on East Grayson Road to the Grayson Substation. The Section One 69 kV line would be located on the north side of East Grayson Road and would accommodate a 12 kV underbuild. At the Morgan Road/East Grayson Road intersection, a tubular steel deadend structure would be installed to interconnect the new 69 kV transmission line to the existing 69 kV line that runs north-south on the east side of Morgan Road.

Similarly, to enhance reliability and to serve the Ceres load, a second 69 kV transmission line (Section Two) would extend north from the east side of the Grayson Substation and would serve to connect the Project to the existing Almond Power Plant. The single circuit 69 kV line would proceed north from the substation site approximately 0.4 miles before turning east, south of TID Lateral No. 2. The line would parallel the canal for 0.25 miles, crossing the railroad tracks, and would then turn north to the existing 69 kV switchyard at the Almond Power Plant, crossing the railroad tracks once more. A new bus expansion and circuit breaker would be added to the existing Almond Power Plant switchyard to accommodate the Project. The Section Two 69 kV transmission line would be co-located on poles with a 115 kV transmission line which would serve TID's proposed Almond 2 Power Plant.

2.5.3 PROPOSED TRANSMISSION POLES AND STRUCTURES

The Project would use wood or steel tangent poles, tubular steel angle structures, and tubular steel deadend structures. These transmission structures would generally be approximately 70 feet in height, increasing in height to approximately 100 feet at the SR 99 crossing. The 115 kV line would be designed for a 12 kV underbuild. Where the 115 kV line would parallel TID Lateral No. 2, steel poles would be used to allow for 69 kV underhanging as well as the 12 kV. The steel poles are required to accommodate the loadings of the transmission lines. In most cases along the route (except for from the Hughson Substation to Euclid Avenue) existing 12 kV distribution would be relocated onto the Project's transmission poles to reduce aesthetic impact. Under these circumstances, the existing poles, transformers, cutouts, and other apparatuses would be relocated. Telephone lines may be relocated onto the

Project's infrastructure as well, at the discretion of the local provider. Figure 3.3 illustrates the Project's pole designs.

The 115 kV transmission line would require an estimated total of 45 tubular steel angle poles and 215 tangent poles, placed approximately every 250 feet. Of the 45 tubular steel angle poles, approximately 30 of them would be steel deadends. Deadend structures are used when 90 degree turns are required along the route or when structures are required that can support full line tension from either direction, such as length of conductor string. The steel angle structures would be bolted to concrete foundations typically 4.5 feet in diameter and 18 feet in depth. Tangent poles would typically be buried at 10 percent of their length plus two feet, and backfilled with three-quarter inch crushed rock. The tangent pole diameter would be roughly 26 inches. Therefore, a 30 inch hole would be augured to set the wooden poles. For 90 degree tubular steel deadend structures, the typical foundation would be six feet in diameter and 30 feet in depth. The 115 kV transmission circuit would consist of 954AA magnolia aluminum conductor, while the 69 kV transmission circuits would be 636AA orchid aluminum conductor. All pole design, conductor spacing, and ground clearances would conform to California Public Utilities Commission General Order 95 and National Electric Safety Council requirements.

The 115 kV transmission line would be constructed within existing or acquired electrical easements (not within the road rights-of-way). Along county road rights-of-way, a 10 foot wide easement adjacent to, and contiguous with, the existing road right-of-way would be established. In open fields, through orchards, or along property lines not near a county road, a 30 foot wide easement would be acquired. Along the canals, TID would use its existing easement (prescriptive or fee title) or obtain a 20 foot wide electrical easement in particular portions of the route.

Where private easements are obtained, TID would consult with applicable landowners concerning pole placement. In these circumstances, landowners would be compensated for the use of their property by TID. Compensation would be commensurate with the provisions of the law.

2.5.4 GRAYSON SUBSTATION

The Grayson Substation would be located on a 7.35 acre site in unincorporated Stanislaus County on APN 041-007-004. The substation dimensions would be approximately 564 feet by 436 feet. The Grayson Substation site is depicted in Figure 3.4.

The substation would be located on East Grayson Road approximately 835 feet east of the Crows Landing Road/East Grayson Road intersection. The facilities at the Grayson Substation would consist of two 25 megavolt amperes (MVA) 115/12 kV transformers. Each transformer would contain approximately 5,000 gallons of cooling oil. The substation would also have one 167 MVA 69/115 kV transformer, which would contain approximately 20,000 gallons of cooling oil. All transformer oil would be mineral oil that is free from polychlorinated biphenyl compounds. Secondary containment would be provided around the transformers. In addition to the power transformers, the Grayson Substation would have smaller station service transformers, containing approximately 15 gallons of cooling oil.

The Grayson Substation would also be equipped with eleven 115 kV circuit breakers, four 69 kV circuit breakers, and eleven 12 kV circuit breakers. The 115 kV and 69 kV circuit breakers would be insulated with approximately 60 pounds of sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆). Gas pressure would be continuously monitored (via alarms for pressure change) to minimize accidental release of SF₆. The 12 kV circuit breakers would be operated under vacuum and are SF₆ free. Figure 3.5 includes a site plan of the Grayson Substation.

The substation would also be equipped with two control buildings, one with a restroom for maintenance workers who would be on-site approximately once a month. A one-horsepower, single phase groundwater well would be constructed to provide water for domestic purposes. A small septic tank would also be installed. TID would have a geotechnical report prepared for the Grayson Substation site. All substation foundations and equipment supports would be designed to meet the seismic requirements of California Code of Regulations Title 24 and the 2007 California Building Code in accordance with the requirements of the Uniform Building Code.

The substation would have a seven foot high chain link fence around the perimeter. The fence would have vinyl slats to screen views of the equipment. Barbed wire or razor wire would be installed along the top of the fence to preclude unauthorized access to the

substation. Security lighting would be installed at the substation. The lights would be shielded and directed downward to prevent offsite light scatter to the extent possible. The substation would be lined with gravel and either a French drain or stormwater detention pond would be installed to contain stormwater runoff within the substation boundaries.

2.5.5 ALMOND POWER PLANT

The Almond Power Plant began operation in 1995. The power plant is run on natural gas, and capable of generating approximately 48 MW. To accommodate the Section Two 69 kV transmission line, a new bus expansion and circuit breaker would be added to the existing Almond Power Plant switchyard. The Section Two 69 kV line would connect the Grayson Substation to the Almond Power Plant via the new circuit breaker in the switchyard.

2.6 PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

2.6.1 TRANSMISSION LINES

Construction of the 115 kV and two 69 kV transmission line segments would likely include such activities as: drilling, concrete and crushed rock placement, framing structures, setting structures, stringing, and clipping. Transmission line structures, insulators, conductor, and other equipment would be placed along the transmission line right-of-way as it is needed. Construction crews would deliver the poles and other equipment from the staging area to individual pole locations when needed. In most locations, the poles could be placed on the side of the public road, canal, and agricultural roads. Where the poles would be placed within fields without existing roads (between Ceres Main Canal and North Central Avenue) temporary access would be needed for the Project's pole locations. Construction vehicles would follow a route prearranged with the landowner, and construction crews would restore the field, as necessary, after construction is complete. At most, four to five vehicles would need to use this access route to erect the poles.

Equipment utilized in the process of constructing the transmission lines would likely include the following: a 240 horsepower (hp) Sterling Boom Truck, a 240 hp Watson 3000 drill, a 240 hp auger truck, a 240 hp aerial line truck, a 79 hp tractor/loader/backhoe, a 250 hp reel truck, a 9.5 yard concrete truck, a one ton service truck, and a 65 ton crane. Pole construction

typically requires a temporary closure of one lane of traffic where placement is adjacent to the right-of-way of public roads. An area of approximately 50 feet by 20 feet may be temporarily disturbed at each pole site adjacent to public right-of-way. Where poles would be located away from existing roadways and canals; the temporary disturbance area is estimated at 100 feet by 30 feet. During conductor stringing operations, a payout/pulling/tension station will require a temporary disturbance area of approximately 150 feet by 30 feet. There would be approximately 11 of these stringing stations necessary during construction, spaced approximately one mile apart along the line.

An approximately three acre staging area would be required during construction. The specific location has not yet been determined. However, it would be on a site which has been previously disturbed.

2.6.2 GRAYSON SUBSTATION

Construction of the Grayson Substation would consist of grading and site preparation, excavation and concrete pouring, equipment delivery and installation, and wiring and testing. The substation site is large enough to provide laydown area for substation construction materials and equipment. Stormwater control best management practices such as berms, silt fence, or fiber rolls would be installed around the perimeter of the substation site to control stormwater runoff. Construction of the Grayson Substation would require use of the following, or similar, equipment: a 174 hp grader, a 79 hp tractor/loader/backhoe, a 114 hp roller, a 9.5 yard concrete truck, a Condor manlift, a one tone service truck, a 190 hp 70 ton crane, and a Ditch Witch trencher. Equipment and materials for substation construction would be delivered and stored in a designated area. Hazardous materials such as paints, epoxies, grease, and compounds would be stored in lockers or covered containers within these areas. Transformer oil and caustic electrolyte (battery fluid) would be delivered after the electrical equipment is in place. A crew of approximately 16 workers would be required to construct the substation.

2.7 PROPOSED PROJECT SCHEDULE

2.7.1 CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

Construction is estimated to last approximately one year and would consist of the activities described below. Construction of the transmission lines and substation would occur simultaneously.

Table 2-1 Assumed Construction Schedule

Activity	Duration (Total Number of days)
Construct New Transmission Line	
Pour Foundations for Angle	37
Spot Structures	35
Frame Structures	51
Set Structures	58
String Conductor	58
Clip Conductor	52
Energize	0
Total Duration	214
Construct New Grayson Substation	
Land Preparation	25
Site Fencing	23
Conduit Installation	28
Concrete Pour	26
Structure Erection	60
Equipment Erection	60
Electrical	60
Testing	27
Total Duration	250

2.8 PROPOSED OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Once energized, the Project's facilities would be in virtually continuous operation. Operation of electrical transmission systems is essentially inert and automatic, requiring only periodic inspection to maintain reliable operation. Annual or bi-annual inspections would be implemented for the Project's infrastructure.

Maintenance to the Project's infrastructure would be performed as deemed necessary through inspections or in response to acute events. Equipment damaged would be replaced. Trees and other vegetation would be trimmed to prevent interference with the conductors. Emergency

maintenance, such as repairing downed wires during storms and correcting unexpected outages, would also be performed. The electrical equipment and poles are anticipated to have a lifetime of approximately 40 to 50 years.

Transmission lines often do not require maintenance for several years. Substations are also low maintenance facilities and require only routine inspection and occasional washing to prevent build-up of dust. After an extended period of operation, the transformer oil would be filtered. The impurities in the filtrate would be removed and either recycled or disposed in accordance with federal and state requirements.

3.0 MODIFICATIONS TO THE DRAFT EIR

Changes to the text of the Draft EIR are presented below.

1. Introduction

1.1. Project Background

No modifications to this section are required.

1.2. Purpose and Intended Uses of This Draft Environmental Impact Report

No modifications to this section are required.

1.3. Draft Environmental Impact Report Scope and Methodology

No modifications to this section are required.

1.4. Agency Roles and Responsibilities

No modifications to this section are required.

1.5. Terminology Used in this Environmental Impact Report

No modifications to this section are required.

2. Executive Summary

2.1. Project Elements

No modifications to this section are required.

2.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

No modifications to this section are required.

2.3. Cumulative and Growth Inducing Effects

No modifications to this section are required.

2.4. Areas of Controversy, Issues Raised, and Areas Resolved

No modifications to this section are required.

2.5. Approval Process

No modifications to this section are required.

The following is inserted into Table 2-1 (page 2-10):

Impact 4.1-3: Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.	Less than significant	Mitigation 4.1-3: No mitigation required	Less than significant
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------------------------	-----------------------

The Impact and Mitigation labeled 4.1-3 in Table 2-1 in the Draft EIR are modified as follows:

Impact 4.1-34: Convert Farmland to non-agricultural use.	Significant	Mitigation 4.1-34: TID shall minimize the number of transmission poles and ground disturbance that would occur to land in agricultural production. As necessary, TID shall coordinate with landowners to determine pole placement that would result in minimal disruption to agricultural operations. TID shall obtain easements for private agricultural land that may be used along the proposed route and compensate landowners for loss of crops, up to the provisions of law. Agricultural land used for laydown activities and pole placement shall be re-tilled to offset compaction caused by heavy material storage and construction activities, as requested by the landowner.	Less than significant
--------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------

The Impacts and Mitigations labeled 4.9-1 and 4.9-2 under the heading “4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials” in Table 2-1 of the Draft EIR (pages 2-19 through 2-20) are modified as follows:

Impact 4.9-1: Result in a substantial temporary noise impact that could affect adjacent and project residences.	Significant	Mitigation 4.9-1: The following mitigation measures would ensure compliance with the Stanislaus County and the City of Ceres Noise Ordinances, as well as further reduce construction-related noise impacts. Construction shall be limited to the hours between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and	Less than significant
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------

		<p>legal holidays.</p> <p>Construction equipment shall be properly maintained and operated and equipped with mufflers. Haul trucks shall be operated in accordance with posted speed limits.</p> <p>Construction staging and parking areas shall be located away from existing residences. Maximizing the distance between construction related activities and residences would minimize construction related noise impacts on these sensitive receptors.</p>	
<p>Impact 4.9-2: Project operations could increase ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>	<p>Mitigation 4.9-2: No mitigation required</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>
<p>Impact 4.9-1: <u>Transport of Hazardous Materials and Releases of Hazardous Substances.</u></p>	<p><u>Potentially significant</u></p>	<p>Mitigation 4.9-1: <u>Prior to initiating Project construction, the construction contractor shall be trained regarding the identification and handling of hazardous materials (including PCB-containing transformers) and spill containment and agency notification procedures. Should any known or suspected release of PCB-containing oil occur during Project construction or operation, the spills would be immediately addressed and the affected soils would be containerized and tested to determine the appropriate disposal options. TID shall notify agencies and perform the required remediation if there is a release of reportable (or otherwise significant) quantities of hazardous materials. In the event of a fuel spill, SCDER would be notified and clean-up would be</u></p>	<p><u>Less than significant</u></p>

		<p><u>accomplished under the guidance of regulatory oversight, as required.</u></p> <p><u>The construction contractor shall prepare a Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures (SPCC) Plan that describes the methods for working with hazardous materials during construction. The SPCC Plan shall describe methods for avoiding spills as well as the required response if a spill occurs.</u></p>	
<p><u>Impact 4.9-2:</u> <u>Exposure to Health Hazards.</u></p>	<p><u>Potentially significant</u></p>	<p><u>Mitigation 4.9-2:</u> <u>TID shall survey the selected substation site and transmission line route to ascertain if there is any observable evidence of a chemical release (such as staining of surface soils or areas of stressed or dead vegetation). Where Project facilities would traverse previously developed properties, the potential for chemical releases or other recognized environmental hazards shall be ascertained through Phase I or Phase II environmental assessment activities.</u></p> <p><u>TID shall also conduct a limited soil sampling and analysis program in representative agricultural or grazing land areas (in close proximity to proposed construction areas) to determine if organochlorine, orthophosphorous, or arsenical pesticides or constituents are present at or above health-based risk criteria (such as the USEPA Preliminary Remediation Goals (PRGs) or California Human Health Screening Levels (CHHSLs). If PRGs or CHHSLs are exceeded, then TID shall develop a Construction Soil Management Plan to minimize worker exposure and determine appropriate soil</u></p>	<p><u>Less than significant</u></p>

		<p><u>handling procedures.</u> <u>If evidence of potential hazardous materials or contamination of soils or groundwater is encountered during transmission line or substation construction, TID shall cease digging, notify the right-of-way owner, and follow applicable requirements of Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act and the CCR Title 22 regarding the disposal of wastes. TID shall relocate transmission line poles, wherever feasible, to avoid digging in areas of known soil contamination.</u></p>	
<p><u>Impact 4.9-3:</u> <u>Increased risk of wildfires.</u></p>	<p><u>Potentially significant</u></p>	<p><u>Mitigation 4.9-3:</u> <u>TID facility designs shall conform to applicable regulations with respect to required safety features and setbacks between energized facilities and vegetation or other flammable materials. TID shall institute a program of regular inspection along the transmission line route to assure that plant growth subsequent to installation does not prevent conformance with applicable regulations as they apply to required setbacks from vegetation or other flammable materials.</u></p>	<p><u>Less than significant</u></p>

3. Project Description

3.1. Introduction

No modifications to this section are required.

3.2. Basic Project Objectives

No modifications to this section are required.

3.3. Background

No modifications to this section are required.

3.4. Project Location

No modifications to this section are required.

3.5. Proposed Project Route

No modifications to this section are required.

3.6. Proposed Transmission Poles and Structures

No modifications to this section are required.

3.7. Proposed Construction Activities

No modifications to this section are required.

3.8. Proposed Project Schedule

No modifications to this section are required.

3.9. Proposed Operation and Maintenance

No modifications to this section are required.

4. Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

4.1. Land Use

No modifications to this section are required.

4.2. Aesthetics

No modifications to this section are required.

4.3. Biological Resources

No modifications to this section are required.

4.4. Hydrology and Water Quality

Revisions to Section 4.4, Mitigation Measure 4.4-3 (page 4.4-11) are made as follows:

~~No mitigation required~~

TID shall implement stormwater runoff BMPs.

4.5. Air Quality

Revisions to Section 4.5 (page 4.5-13) are made as follows:

“Impact 4.2-1” is revised to read “Impact 4.5-1”

4.6. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

No modifications to this section are required.

4.7. Geology and Soils

Revisions to Section 4.7.2 (page 4.7-8) are made as follows:

The California Building Code (CBC) is based on the Uniform Building Code (~~UBC~~ now the International Building Code), used widely throughout the United States, and

has been modified for California's conditions with numerous more detailed and/or more stringent regulations.

4.8. Cultural Resources

No modifications to this section are required.

4.9. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Revisions to Section 4.9 are made as follows:

(Page 4.9-15) "Impact 4.12-1" is revised to read "Impact 4.9.1"

(Page 4.9-16) "Mitigation Measure 4.12-1" is revised to read "Mitigation Measure 4.9.1"

(Page 4.9-17) "Impact 4.12-2" is revised to read "Impact 4.9.2"

(Page 4.9-21) "Mitigation Measure 4.12-2" is revised to read "Mitigation Measure 4.9.2"

(Page 4.9-22) "Impact 4.12-3" is revised to read "Impact 4.9.3"

(Page 4.9-23) "Mitigation Measure 4.12-3" is revised to read "Mitigation Measure 4.9.3"

4.10. Noise

Revisions to Section 4.10 (page 4.10-18) are made as follows:

"Mitigation Measure 4.9-2" is revised to read "Mitigation Measure 4.10-2"

4.11. Transportation

Revisions to Section 4.11 of the Draft EIR (page 4.11-7) are made to the Draft EIR as follows:

CITY OF HUGHSON

The City of Hughson *Street Master Plan* (Fehr and Peers 2007a) documents programmed and planned roadway improvements already identified by the city or county, provides conceptual cost estimates for roadway improvements, and identifies possible funding sources to pay for roadway improvements. The City of Hughson, in conjunction with the Stanislaus Council of Governments, has produced ~~is currently producing~~ a Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (~~Fehr and Peers 2007b~~ Alta 2008).

~~The Administrative Draft of this plan does not indicate any current or proposed bikeways within the 115 kV transmission line route, beyond the stretch of East Whitmore Road identified by StanCOG. This plan proposes the addition of Class II bikeways to Whitmore Road and Euclid Avenue in the vicinity of the proposed 115 kV transmission line route.~~

Additional information is added to page 4.11-9, as follows:

Published planning documents indicate that future expansion projects are proposed along the 115 kV transmission line route ~~on East Whitmore Avenue and Euclid Avenue~~. These intended upgrades and proposed future classifications are presented below in Table 4.11-3. Additionally, according to the City of Hughson *Street Master Plan* (2007), Stanislaus County has proposed to signalize and widen the intersection of East Whitmore Avenue and Euclid Avenue.

Table 4.11-3 Potential Expansion Projects

Road Name	Potential Expansion Projects	Future Classification Proposed
East Whitmore Avenue	<p>The City of Hughson <i>Street Master Plan</i> has identified the stretch of East Whitmore Avenue that the Project would parallel as an area that should be widened to four lanes (Fehr & Peers 2007a).</p> <p><u>StanCOG’s Regional Transportation Plan (2007) proposes a new four to five-lane expressway from Geer Road to the City of Ceres boundary.</u></p>	<p>Four-lane Arterial/<u>Four to Five-lane Expressway</u></p>
Euclid Avenue	<p>The City of Hughson has proposed re-routing of Euclid Avenue to intersect with Santa Fe Avenue north of the current location. This would permit reconfiguring of the five-arm intersection at East Service Road, Euclid Avenue, and Santa Fe Avenue to a standard four-arm, signaled intersection.</p> <p>The Project would be constructed along the current alignment of Euclid Avenue from East Whitmore Avenue to the Santa Fe Avenue/East Service Road intersection.</p>	<p>Major Collector</p>

Road Name	Potential Expansion Projects	Future Classification Proposed
<u>Faith Home Road</u>	<u>The StanCOG Regional Transportation Plan (2007) proposes expansion to a six-lane expressway between SR 99 and Hatch Road.</u>	<u>Four-lane Expressway (Class B)</u>
<u>East Grayson Road</u>	<u>The StanCOG Regional Transportation Plan (2007) proposes widening of East Grayson Road from a two-lane arterial to a four-lane arterial.</u> <u>Extension along the northern boundaries of the Turner Road properties from Central Avenue to Mitchell Road to the east of SR 99 is also proposed in the county's Transportation Plan.</u>	<u>Four-lane Arterial</u>
<u>Central Avenue</u>	<u>The StanCOG Regional Transportation Plan (2007) proposes widening of Central Avenue to a four-lane arterial from Industrial Avenue to Grayson Avenue.</u>	<u>Four-lane Arterial</u>

Within the City of Hughson, streets identified for upgrade to Major Collectors will require an 80 foot right-of-way. This requirement has been developed to accommodate projected traffic demand, to facilitate the movement of large trucks, and/or to improve safety due to limited visibility or other safety hazards. Four-lane arterials, the classification to which East Whitmore Avenue is proposed for upgrade, require 100 feet of right-of-way. The *Street Master Plan (2007)* indicates that the expansion of East Whitmore Avenue will require the acquisition of additional right-of-way.

As discussed below, these future plans are not reasonably foreseeable and are speculative at this time. CEQA requires a review of only reasonably foreseeable projects, and these improvements are not reasonably foreseeable. Even if the future improvements are considered reasonably foreseeable, there may be no conflict between the Project and those potential future projects. A potential inconsistency alone is not a significant effect under CEQA. Improvements to Faith Home Road, East Grayson Road, and Central Avenue would likely also require the acquisition of right-of-way; however, plans for these improvements have not yet been developed. The potential expansion of Faith Home Road could occur on the opposite side of the

roadway from the utility corridor established through implementation of the proposed Project. The Project would not likely interfere with the expansion of Central Avenue because the increased right-of-way would end at Grayson Avenue, and the 115 kV transmission line would cross on the northern side of this intersection.

The project may complicate future plans to expand Grayson Road, since transmission infrastructure would be located on both the north and south sides of the roadway between the proposed Grayson Substation and Morgan Road. However, to the extent that such a conflict could arise in the future, the conflict may be resolved through the relocation of the Project's then-existing poles (i.e., moving the Project poles to the north or south). The Project would not conflict with extension of Grayson Road between Central Avenue and the Mitchell Road. The proposed roadway could be developed along the transmission corridor established with the proposed Project, although re-location of the proposed transmission line may be necessary depending on the ultimate location of the road.

The 2007 *Regional Transportation Plan* identifies projects in three tiers. Tier 1 projects are funded projects that are expected to move forward according to an identified schedule. Tier 2 projects, though needed, have no forecasted funding with which to move forward. Tier 1a projects are priorities for local agencies and, although not fully funded, are in some stage of development. Therefore, for consideration under CEQA, only projects in Tier 1 and Tier 1a are considered reasonably foreseeable projects. Improvements to East Whitmore Avenue, Faith Home Road, Central Avenue, and Grayson Road are Tier 2 projects. Conflicts with proposed plans on these roadways are not considered significant impacts under CEQA.

4.12. Public Services and Utilities

Modification is made to Section 4.12 as follows:

UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE/UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE AND CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS

Federal regulations and standards relating to fire protection are based upon the International Fire Code and the International Building Code. ~~contained in the Uniform Fire Code and the UBC. The UBC has~~ These codes have been modified to

reflect California's conditions and ~~is~~ are implemented as the CBC in the California Code of Regulations (CCR).

4.13. Socioeconomics

No modifications to this section are required.

5. Alternatives Analysis

5.1. Introduction

No modifications to this section are required.

5.2. Potential Alternatives Eliminated From Further Analysis

The following is added to the end of Section 5.2.1 on page 5-4 of the Draft EIR.

Furthermore, routing the transmission line down Geer Road is complicated by the presence of existing 12 kV and 69 kV lines along the west side of the roadway. In conformance with the stated TID objectives, these lines would be co-located. Placing the 12, 69, and 115 kV lines together on poles (resulting in five electrical circuits on each pole) adjacent to a heavily traveled corridor would expose a large number of lines to vehicle collisions, which could result in wide-spread electrical outages. Therefore, this alternative would not meet the project objective of improving system reliability.

5.3. Alternatives Considered for the Project

No modifications to this section are required.

5.4. Impacts of the Alternative Segment Alignments

No modifications to this section are required.

5.5. Environmentally Superior Alternative

No modifications to this section are required.

6. Cumulative and Growth Inducing Impacts

6.1. Cumulative Impacts

No modifications to this section are required.

6.2. Growth Inducing Impacts

No modifications to this section are required.

6.3. Significant and Irreversible Commitment of Resources

No modifications to this section are required.

6.4. Significant and Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

No modifications to this section are required.

7. Persons Responsible for Preparation of this Environmental Impact Report

No modification necessary. Please refer to Chapter 5 of this Final EIR.

8. References

Please refer to Chapter 6 of this Final EIR for a list of references supplemental to those provided for the Draft EIR.

4.0 COMMENT LETTERS AND RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

This chapter provides a copy of the comments received on the Draft EIR and provides responses. Comments have been numbered in accordance with the letters for ease of response. A summary of the comments received is provided in Table 4-1. Copies of the comment letters are provided on the following pages, with responses to the comments provided after each letter.

Table 4-1 Comments Received on the Draft EIR

Letter Number	Individual or Signatory	Affiliation	Date	Comments Contained
1	Scott Morgan	Governor's Office of Planning and Research	September 28, 2009	1-1
2	David Chase	City of Hughson	August 20, 2009	2-1 to 2-7
3	Chris Vierra	City of Ceres	September 25, 2009	3-1 to 3-7
4	Chris Vierra	City of Ceres	September 14, 2009	4-1
5	Alfred Black	resident	unknown	none
6	Thomas Ching	resident	August 13, 1009	6-1
7	Patricia Cousins	resident	September 21, 2009	7-1
8	Joseph and Barbara Belsito	resident	August 18, 2009	8-1
9	Gary Marchy	Marchy Dairy	September 11, 2009	9-1 to 9-3
10	Sam Pickles	resident	August 17, 2009	10-1
11	Ronald Rosenquist	resident	August 19, 2009	11-1 to 11-2
12	Gari Sperry	resident	September 11, 2009	12-1
13	Mathew Pacher	Damrell, Nelson, Schrimp, Pallios, Pacher & Silva	September 11, 2009	13-1 to 13-6
14	several	residents	September 14, 2009	14a-1 to 14f-1
15	several	residents	September 16, 2009	15-1

4.1 LETTER 1



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
GOVERNOR

September 28, 2009

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of PLANNING AND RESEARCH
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AND PLANNING UNIT



CYNTHIA BRYANT
DIRECTOR

Greg Tucker
Turlock Irrigation District
P.O. Box 949
Turlock, CA 95381-0949

Subject: Hughson-Grayson 115-kV Transmission Line & Substation Project
SCH#: 2009012075

Dear Greg Tucker:

1-1

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Draft EIR to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on September 25, 2009, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

for: Scott Morgan
Acting Director, State Clearinghouse

1400 10th Street P.O. Box 3044 Sacramento, California 95812-3044
(916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

4.1.1 RESPONSE TO SCOTT MORGAN (GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH)

RESPONSE 1-1

Comment noted. No revisions to Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.2 LETTER 2

PUBLIC WORKS/ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
7012 Pine Street, P.O. Box 9
Hughson, CA 95326
(209) 883-0811 Fax (209) 883-9725



David M. Chase, P.E.
Director of Public Works/City Engineer
209-883-4054

August 20, 2009
Mr. Greg Tucker, Electrical
Engineering Department Manager
Turlock Irrigation District
P.O. Box 949
Turlock, CA 95381-0949

RE: Comments on TID Transmission Project Draft EIR

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR for the proposed TID Transmission Project. The City of Hughson has a number of concerns with the routing, visual impacts, and process of this EIR.

- 2-1 1. Impact 4.2-3: Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality along the Project route. The City of Hughson does not believe this impact is less than significant without mitigation. The proposed route of multiple 75 foot tall poles is directly through the middle of our future growth area on Euclid Avenue. We reiterate our request to underground the facilities or move them to Geer Road.
- 2-2 2. The northeast corner of Whitmore and Euclid is in the City limits. There is a 75 ft. metal pole planned for that location. No provision for considering the impact of this encroachment into the Hughson city limits has been included.
- 2-3 3. Both intersections of Whitmore and Euclid, as well as Service and Euclid are designated as Gateways in the City's General Plan. See attached Figure LU-2. Hughson's General Plan Land Use Element contains the following language regarding gateways.
"Gateways are entries to the city along major roadways. Creating aesthetically pleasing gateways is an important component of land use planning and community design that contributes to a city's character and sense of place. Gateway design treatments can include fountains, attractive signage or natural features such as rows of trees. The Hughson Botanical Gardens has indicated to the City that as part of the Gardens' improvement plan, it would like to partner with the City to create a gateway along Whitmore Avenue from Geer Road".
Protection of City Gateways is an effort we intend to vigorously pursue.
- 2-4 4. The City of Hughson, as well as the StanCOG, has adopted the Non-Motorized Master Plan that includes a Class II bikeway on Euclid. The EIR needs to address the preservation of all future local and regional bikeway routes.
- 2-5 5. Hughson's adopted Plan Lines show a Euclid Avenue cross section of 80 feet. In developing these plan lines, comments and input were solicited from TID, Stanislaus County and the BNSF Railroad. The Draft EIR says the poles will be located in accordance with Hughson's

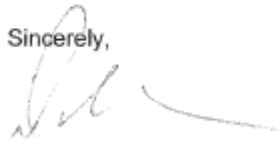
2-5 (Cont.) Street Master Plan. This placement would not allow Hughson the cross section needed to complete this street without moving the poles.

6. It is noted that the Draft EIR is already considering making findings of overriding considerations (P.2-8). Please be aware that CEQA requires a lead agency to *mitigate to the fullest extent possible before adopting* overriding considerations. The Draft states that; "TID can approve or conditionally approve the Project, if it chooses, even if significant impacts are identified". This is true only if mitigation to the fullest extent possible occurs first.

2-7 7. Page 4.12-3. The Uniform Fire Code and Uniform Building Code do not exist and have not existed for some years. Codes adopted in the California Code of Regulations are based on the International Fire Code and International Building Code respectively.

Again thank you for this opportunity to comment, and we look forward to receiving TID's written response to these comments in accordance with Section 15088 of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 209-883-4054.

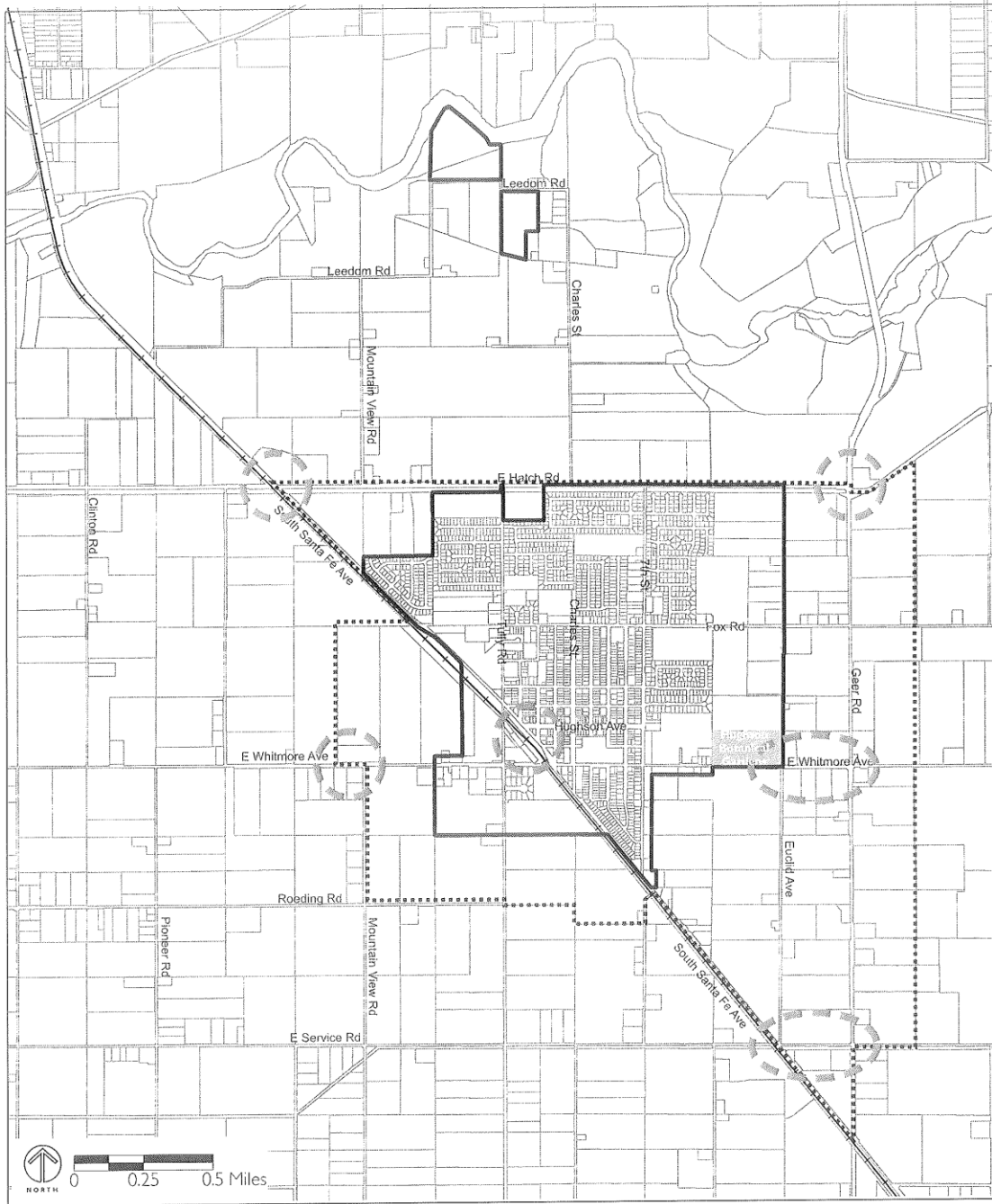
Sincerely,



David M. Chase, P.E.,
Director of Public Works, and City Engineer

ENCLOSURE: Figure LU-2 Gateways (Source: City of Hughson General Plan)

cc: Thomas Clark, Director of Planning and Building
City of Hughson Planning Commission



Data Source: Stanislaus County GIS

FIGURE LU-2



GATEWAYS

CITY OF HUGHSON
GENERAL PLAN

4.2.1 RESPONSE TO DAVID CHASE (CITY OF HUGHSON)

RESPONSE 2-1

The commenter's concerns regarding the potential degradation of the visual character of Euclid Road are acknowledged. The portion of Euclid Avenue that the proposed route would follow is in the city's Sphere of Influence. The *Hughson General Plan* identifies the land to the east of the route as Urban Reserve, and the land to the west of Euclid Road as Low Density Residential. The General Plan does not state that transmission infrastructure is inconsistent with either of these land use designations. Indeed, electrical infrastructure is necessary to serve residential and other uses in the vicinity.

Further, lands within the City of Hughson's Sphere of Influence remain governed by Stanislaus County zoning designations until such time as they are annexed into the city. As provided in Land Use Section 4.1 of the Draft EIR and depicted in Figure 4.13, lands on either side of Euclid Road are zoned A-2, Exclusive Agriculture. Impact 4.1-2 discusses the Project's consistency with relevant land use designations. Specifically, it states that "overhead transmission lines and poles are an allowable use in agricultural districts." The visual impact analysis for the Project is provided in Section 4.2 of the Draft EIR. Conclusions presented for Impact 4.2-3 are based on analysis of existing visual resource conditions and land use. Placing the transmission lines underground was considered for this project, but was dismissed for economic and environmental reasons. Refer to Section 5.2.4 of the Draft EIR. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 2-2

Section 3.5.1 (page 3-7) of the Draft EIR provides a detailed description of the proposed 115 kV transmission line route. The description of the portion of the route in question reads as follows:

"The transmission line would extend west on the north side of East Whitmore Avenue for approximately 200 feet, crossing over the existing 69 kV line located on the west side of Geer Road. A 90 degree deadend structure would be placed at the corner of this intersection. An angled structure would be placed at the corner of this intersection to accommodate crossing from the north to the south side of East Whitmore Avenue. From the south side of East Whitmore Avenue, the line would proceed west to the intersection with Euclid Avenue. From here, the line

would proceed approximately one mile south along the east side of Euclid Avenue.”

As discussed, there would not be a pole placed at the northeast corner of the intersection of Euclid and Whitmore Avenues. The pole would be placed on the southeast corner, outside of the City of Hughson limits. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 2-3

TID is aware of the city’s Gateway designation. The Project is consistent with this element of the city’s General Plan. The policies of the *Hughson General Plan* do not specifically exclude power structures from the gateways, and the presence of power structures would not preclude the development of visually pleasing gateways. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 2-4

Discussion of the Stanislaus County *Non-Motorized Transportation Plan* contained in Section 4.11 of the Draft EIR (page 4.11-7) has been revised to reflect the Class II bikeway on Euclid Avenue proposed in this plan. Revisions have been made to the Draft EIR as presented in Chapter 3 of this Final EIR. Since Class II bikeways are located on the street, as discussed under Impact 4.11-7 of the Draft EIR, placement of power poles, lines, and other structures outside of the roadway easement would have no impact on these proposed bikeways, and no further modification to the Draft EIR is required.

RESPONSE 2-5

The 2007 *Street Master Plan* identifies Euclid Avenue as a two-lane major collector, which, according to the plan, would require an 80 foot right-of-way. Therefore, utility placement in accordance with the Street Master Plan would allow the proposed Plan Lines described in this comment. The 115 kV transmission line poles would be located outside of the 80 foot right-of-way. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 2-6

Findings of overriding considerations are only applicable where a significant unavoidable impact has been identified. Since no significant unavoidable impacts were identified in the Draft EIR,

this provision of CEQA is not applicable, and serves as contextual information only. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 2-7

The commenter request for clarification on Uniform Fire Code, Uniform Building Code, the California Code of Regulations, the International Fire Code, the International Building Code, and related matters are acknowledged. Section 4.12 has been clarified as presented in Chapter 3 of this Final EIR.

4.3 LETTER 3



Office of the Mayor
2720 Second Street
Ceres, CA 95307
209-538-5754
Fax 209-538-5780

September 25, 2009

CITY COUNCIL

Anthony Carmella, Mayor
Chris Vieira Ken Lane
Guillermo Ochoa Bret Durossette

Greg Tucker
Turlock Irrigation District
P.O. Box 1049
Turlock, CA 95381

RE: Draft EIR for the Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission Line & Substation Project

Dear Mr. Tucker:

3-1 The City of Ceres appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the Draft EIR for the Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission Line & Substation Project. The City of Ceres sent a comment letter during the NOP process, which was dated March 11, 2009. It is City Council's opinion, after reviewing the Draft EIR, that the EIR does not adequately address some of the City comments that were submitted during the NOP process. Please see below our questions/comments regarding the Draft EIR, in addition to commentary below each question/comment.

1. **Why has the EIR failed to address future right-of-way and development of Faith Home Road, Central Avenue and Grayson Road, which are shown in the Ceres General Plan and the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan? Why is there a 69kV line and 115kV lines proposed on the north and south sides of Grayson Road west of Morgan Road? Can't these lines be co-located to reduce the impact to this corridor?**

3-2

3-3 We understand through the review of the EIR that the proposed transmission lines will be placed outside of existing County right-of-way; however, there is no mention or consideration for the future ultimate development of these roadways. City of Ceres General Plan Figure 2.1 in the Transportation and Circulation chapter illustrates ultimate roadway classifications within the General Plan area. According to Figure 2.1, Faith Home Road is classified as an expressway while Central Avenue and Grayson Road are classified as arterials. Furthermore, the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan that was developed by StanCOG in association with Stanislaus County and all cities within the County identified important transportation corridors and the three roadways noted above as components to region/countywide transportation system. Additionally, the City of Ceres City Council adopted an updated Public Facility Fee program on November 24, 2008. In Table 9.2a: Planned Roadway Improvements of the Public Facility Fees Nexus Study, it identifies Faith Home Road, Central Avenue and Grayson Roads as facilities that the City shall collect fees for to improve and expand those roadways at some future date. As such, placing the proposed transmission line outside of existing County right-of-way is not adequate for the future development of these roadways and is contrary to the regional transportation planning efforts

noted in the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan and the updated City of Ceres Public Facility Fee program.

The City of Ceres has developed portions of Faith Home Road near Hatch Road and the west half of the roadway to an overall 134' right-of-way, which is consistent with an expressway standard. As such, the proposed transmission lines along Faith Home Road should be placed beyond 70' from centerline so that will be outside of the future expansion of Faith Home Road.

3-3 (Cont.)

A similar circumstance will be encountered along Central Avenue and Grayson Road, which are designated as arterials and are expected to have a 110'-120' right-of-way. This issue of placing the proposed transmission line outside the future 110'-120' right-of-way becomes even more crucial along Grayson Road, with the development of the Service/Mitchell Road Interchange. The last phase of that project will extend Mitchell Road under State Route 99 and swing west to connect to Grayson Road. It is expected that when this portion of the Service/Mitchell Road Interchange project is complete, Grayson/Mitchell Roads will be a major corridor for the movement of goods throughout Stanislaus County. As indicated in the Draft EIR, west of Morgan Road the project proposes 69kV lines on the north side of Grayson and 115kV on the south. Placement of these transmission lines, consistent with the proposal outlined in the Draft EIR, will significantly impact the City's ability to develop Grayson Road to its expected arterial standard and would not be consistent with the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan. These 69kV and 115kV transmission lines should be co-located on existing facilities within the TID canal systems and/or placed outside of the future right-of-ways for Faith Home Road, Central Avenue and Grayson Roads.

2. Why was the alternative line segment for Geer Road dismissed in the Alternatives Section of the Draft EIR due to potential expansion of that roadway but the same consideration was not given to the potential expansion of Faith Home Road, Central Avenue and Grayson Road?

On Page 5.4, a discussion is present on Alternative Segment Alignments. In that section it states:

"The potential to follow Geer Road from Whitmore Road to East Service Road was also evaluated. The City of Hughson's *Street Master Plan (2007)* identifies Geer Road; including the section from Whitmore Road to East Service Road, as a road to be expanded from two to six lanes. Given the potential for expansion of the road is this area and the magnitude of the expansion, this alternative was dismissed".

3-4

The EIR states the Geer Road alternative was dismissed because of the future expansion of the roadway. This statement is warranted for Faith Home Road, Central Avenue and Grayson Road as they will all be expanded and developed to right-of-ways that will conflict with the proposed 115kV transmission line. Figure 2.1 of the Ceres General Plan indicates that Faith Home Road will be developed as an expressway and Central Avenue and Grayson Roads as arterials. Additionally, the 2007 Regional Transportation Plan identifies the future need for expansion and development of these roadways and the City of Ceres is collecting fees for these improvements. As such, the placement of the transmission line, as proposed, does not account for the future development of these roadways and this should be addressed in the Draft EIR.

- 3. The EIR does not provide an adequate explanation as to why the proposed transmission lines can not be placed within existing TID canal right-of-ways along either TID Lateral #2 or TID Lateral #2½. Why was TID Lateral #2½ not even analyzed as an alternative line segment? Can the 115kV transmission lines be co-located on the existing 230kV lines that exist along Lateral #2?**

On Page 5.4 a discussion is presented on Alternative Segment Alignments. In that section it states:

“The potential to follow TID Lateral No. 2 from Faith Home Road west to State Route (SR) 99, and along Mitchell and Gondring Roads to the Almond Power Plant after crossing SR 99, was investigated. This alternative was dismissed from further analysis because, west of SR 99, existing high voltage power lines in the vicinity would preclude construction of the proposed 115-kV line.”

3-5

The statement: “would preclude construction of the proposed 115kV line” is not an adequate EIR response. The EIR should address the technical reason(s) as to why the proposed line can not be placed within the existing right-of-way on Lateral #2. Cost should not be the reason why this alternative was not fully explored or analyzed.

Additionally, TID Lateral #2½ was not even considered as an alternative line segment, when in fact this line segment may be the superior alternative. Generally, Lateral #2½ does not parallel roadways, which may eliminate some issues with future development of rights-of-way. Lateral #2½ would also impact the least number of residences along that corridor west of State Route 99 and because the transmission line would be developed in existing TID right-of-way, it would reduce the need and cost to acquire private easements compared to the proposed route included in the Draft EIR.

- 4. What is the proposed setback distance from property line or center line of Grayson Road at the proposed substation? Will the setback of the substation include the future development of Grayson Road to an arterial standard and the required setback distance for the anticipated M-2, General Industrial zoning designation?**

Figure 3.5 within the Draft EIR is an illustration of the Grayson Road substation; however, it is not a scaled exhibit nor does it have dimensions. As such, staff could not determine during the review of the EIR how far this proposed facility would be setback from the street. As noted in question 1, it does not appear that the substation is being placed outside of the ultimate Grayson Road right-of-way, which may be 110'-120'. Further, the Ceres General Plan designation for this property where the substation will be built is Industrial Reserve. When the property is annexed into the City, that Industrial Reserve designation would likely be changed to the M-2, General Industrial zoning designation, which requires a 25-foot setback from property line along Grayson Road. As such, if we assume that Grayson Road will be developed to a 110' right-of-way, then the fencing for the substation should be placed 80' from the center line of that roadway (55' north half of Grayson Road + 25' front yard setback M-2 zoning designation). The City also requires setback areas, even within industrial zones, to be landscaped.

3-6

5. What is the proposed impact to properties designated LDR, Low Density Residential in the Ceres General Plan, and west of State Route 99 with this project? What would be the setback or distance requirement for new residential development adjacent to the proposed 115kV Transmission Lines?

In 2007, the City of Ceres took necessary steps to begin the process for a master plan and annexation within the Ceres General Plan area, which would have been adjacent to the proposed transmission line route west of State Route 99. However, the project proponent, for economic reasons, decided not to proceed with the project. That currently stalled planning effort would have expanded the City of Ceres limits south to Grayson Road from State Route 99 to Blaker Road. When the economy recovers, the City expects that this area could once again be a desirable location for future annexation and development of the City of Ceres. The proposed 115kV transmission line would impact the future development of those properties that have a current LDR designation in the Ceres General Plan.

3-7

The LDR properties north of Grayson Road and west of State Route 99 are already impacted by transmission lines along TID Lateral # 2. The 230kV lines generally are adjacent to TID Lateral # 2 and are south of the canal, which bisects future residential properties in the vicinity of Central Avenue. Placing a second transmission corridor along Grayson Road and the future extension of Grayson Road could place an unnecessary burden for the future planning and development by the City of Ceres and property owners of those residential designated properties as there would be transmission corridors on the north and south sides to address.

When this area ultimately annexes and develops, the Ceres Unified School District will be developing schools within the area. By placing the proposed route along Grayson Road this may limit the school's ability to be near an arterial roadway. Furthermore, the proposed route along Grayson Road creates a second utility corridor within the area that will restrict the siting of those future schools.

As noted in the questions/comments above, if an alternative route or co-location on existing facility were proposed for the 115kV transmission line, that will reduce or eliminate the future impact to the LDR properties along the proposed route. Moreover, co-location of these facilities actually would enhance the aesthetics of the area as these new 115kV facilities would be placed on an existing transmission corridor in lieu of developing a new and second transmission corridor in the area.

6. Is TID aware that the City of Ceres has an approximately 11 +/- mile sewer force main that begins at the City of Ceres Waste Water Treatment Plant and ends at the City of Turlock's Waste Water Treatment Plant and portions of that force main are in roadways adjacent to the proposed transmission line? Why has mitigation measure 4.12-3 failed to mention this existing facility?

3-8

In 2003, the City of Ceres began construction of a sewer force main to the City of Turlock's Waste Water Treatment Plant and construction was complete in July 2004. According to construction documents, this line is placed within existing County right-of-way and should not be impacted by the transmission line as proposed. However, while reviewing Section 4.12 Public

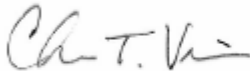
Services and Utilities, the City did not see reference to the existing sewer force main that is adjacent to portion of the proposed route for the 115kV transmission line. As such, the force main was not included in Mitigation Measure 4.12-3.

3-8
(Cont.)

We respectfully submit these questions/comments regarding the Draft EIR for the Hughson-Grays on 115kV Transmission Line & Substation project. The City Council is excited that TID is upgrading its delivery system but feels these questions should be address and appropriate alternatives considered prior to project approval. The questions and comments noted above are to support the development of that electric delivery system but to also meet the future development needs of the City of Ceres and potential development areas within the City of Ceres General Plan.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,



Vice Mayor
City of Ceres

xc: Mayor Anthony Cannella
Council Member Ken Lane
Council Member Guillermo Ochoa
Council Member Bret Durossette
Brad Kilger, City Manager
Phil Scott, Director of Public Works
Glen Gebhardt, Interim Development Services Director/City Engineer
Tom Westbrook, Interim City Planner
Susan Strachan, Strachan Consulting

TW/lr

4.3.1 RESPONSE TO CHRIS VIERRA (CITY OF CERES)

RESPONSE 3-1

The commenter's views, commentary, and opinions regarding the adequacy of the EIR are acknowledged. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 3-2

The commenter's questions regarding Faith Home Road, Central Avenue, and Grayson Road are acknowledged. Responses to the questions posed follow in Response 3-3. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 3-3

With regard to the City's comments on the potential future changes in the classification of Grayson Road, Central Road, and Faith Home Road, these projects are not "reasonably foreseeable projects" as that term is used in CEQA statute and case law. Accordingly, the EIR is not required to analyze the potential direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts associated with the Project and the named roads. Assuming that the Grayson Road, Central Road, and Faith Home Road future improvements were reasonably foreseeable, the Project is not inconsistent with those potential future developments. Further, if present, the mere inconsistency is not enough to constitute a significant effect under CEQA.

Activities that do not constitute a project are "the creation of government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities which do not involve any commitment to any specific project."¹ Environmental review is required when there is a binding commitment to spend funds in a particular manner.² Significantly, only reasonably probable future projects need to be discussed, and "mere awareness of proposed expansion plans or other proposed development does not necessarily require the inclusion of the proposed project in the EIR."³ The most recent guidance provided by the California courts on the subject of probable future projects provides the following insight: a future project is "reasonably probable" when it is undergoing environmental review, or where the project "applicant has devoted significant time and financial resources to

¹ Remy et. al, Guide to CEQA (11th Edition), p. 77.

² *Id.*, 79.

³ *Gray v. County of Madera*, 167 Cal. App. 4th 1099, 1127 (Oct. 24, 2008).

prepare for regulatory review.”⁴ Information that is “reasonable, feasible, and practical to include” must be provided in order to “afford the fullest possible protection to the environment.”⁵

With respect to the Ceres General Plan, Faith Home Road is identified in the General Plan as an expressway that can be improved “as the city grows,” that may have four to six lanes (and a right of way range from 100-158 feet), with a primary function to move traffic.⁶ While Grayson Road and Central Avenue are classified as arterials (arterials usually have four to six lanes, and a lower right of way range: 90-120 feet), no mention is made in the General Plan for specific development of those roads such as a specific number of lanes. A general statement that the road can be developed as necessary is inconsistent with the assertion that the road is a reasonably foreseeable probable future project. Furthermore, a general statement of policy to encourage development of Faith Home Road does not qualify as a “binding commitment” that would have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, although the potential expansion is identified as a future goal for the City of Ceres, it does not constitute a project within the meaning of probable future project.

With regard to the *Regional Transportation Plan*, Grayson Road and Central Avenue are not within the current corporate boundaries of the City of Ceres or its Sphere of Influence. Faith Home Road is in the City’s Sphere of Influence, but outside of the city limits along the portion of the roadway that the proposed transmission line would follow. The 2007 *Regional Transportation Plan* identifies projects in three tiers. Tier 1 projects are funded projects that are expected to move forward according to an identified schedule. Tier 2 projects, though needed, have no forecasted funding with which to move forward. Tier 1a projects are priorities for local agencies and, although not fully funded, are in some stage of development. Therefore, for consideration under CEQA, only projects in Tier 1 and Tier 1a are considered reasonably foreseeable projects.

Tier 2 projects are not under fiscal constraint (i.e. sufficient funds to implement the proposed transmission system improvements have not been demonstrated [DOT 2008]). Improvements to

⁴ *Id.* At 1127, 1128.

⁵ *San Franciscans for Reasonable Growth v. City and County of San Francisco*, 151 Cal. App. 3d 61, 81 (Jan. 24, 1984)

⁶ City of Ceres General Plan, p. 2-2, 2-7,

Faith Home Road, Central Avenue, and Grayson Road are Tier 2 projects. Aside from identifying these roadways as potential areas for development, the cities and counties have not undertaken environmental review, acquired rights-of-way, or expended funds for engineering or construction.

At the western end of the Project, along Grayson Road between the proposed substation and Morgan Road where transmission infrastructure would be located on both the north and south sides of the roadway, the proposed Project would present an obstacle to the expansion of East Grayson Road presented in the *Regional Transportation Plan*. Locating transmission infrastructure on both sides of Grayson Road would not result in a significant impact under CEQA because expansion of Grayson Road in this area is not a reasonably foreseeable project.

The *Public Facility Fee Nexus Study for the City of Ceres* identifies the improvements to Faith Home Road, Grayson Avenue, and Central Avenue as planned roadway improvements. These improvements are funded, at least partially, by traffic impact fees assessed on new development within the city. The projects have been determined by the city as necessary to accommodate build-out and maintain a Level of Service D or better (PMC 2008).

The fee schedule (Table 9.5) contained in the Nexus Study was adopted by the City of Ceres City Council on January 24, 2008. This fee schedule was developed based on the planned roadway improvements (Table 9.2a) and other facilities needed to accommodate projected growth. Although the city has adopted a fee schedule for the collection of monies to perform updates to its transportation system, this schedule does not expressly limit or define the disposition of collected funds to the project identified in the Nexus Study.

Moreover, collection and distribution of these funds is limited to within the city limits. Therefore, acquiring funds, and use of funds outside of the current city limits is dependent upon annexation of these areas into the city. Speculative expansion of East Whitmore Avenue, Faith Home Road, East Grayson Road, and Central Avenue are not considered probable future projects under CEQA and consideration of potential impacts are not required.

In sum, the Public Facility Fees Nexus Study specifically identifies portions of Central Avenue and Grayson Road that are to be expanded from two to four lane roads. Faith Home Road is identified in the Public Facilities Fees Nexus Study as requiring improvement, but no specific plans for expansion are noted. While the Fee Nexus Study identifies the specific costs required to

pay for the projects, and the amount of costs that will have to be borne by the City of Ceres (funded by a Traffic Impact Fee) it does not identify whether funds have been allocated to the specific improvements. An identification of costs does not seem to qualify as a “binding commitment” that would have a significant effect on the environment. Thus, the improvements do not constitute a “project” that would be within the purview of the prior CEQA guideline even though they are identified in a General Plan.

Further, the CEQA Guidelines require that lead agencies “discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans and regional plans” such as regional transportation plans.⁷ Both the existing physical conditions at the time the NOP is published and “potential future conditions discussed in the plan” must be examined; however, lead agencies are required only to evaluate inconsistencies between the proposed project and relevant plans, not consistencies.⁸

Further as stated in the Draft EIR (page 3-9) the purpose of the Section 1 69 kV is to improve system reliability. Placement of the 69 kV transmission line with a 12 kV underbuild on the same structures as the 115 kV transmission line would result in a transmission system that relies too much on one resource. This would increase the possibility of a large scale power outage, affecting many customers, should a traffic collision with a pole, or other event causing infrastructure damage, occur.

The project is not inconsistent with the *Regional Transportation Plan*. However, the project may complicate future plans to expand Grayson Road, since transmission infrastructure would be located on both the north and south sides of the roadway between the proposed Grayson Substation and Morgan Road. To the extent that such a conflict could arise in the future, the conflict may be resolved through the relocation of the Project’s then-existing poles (i.e., moving the Project poles to the north or south). The Project would not conflict with extension of Grayson Road between Central Avenue and the Mitchell Road. The proposed roadway could be developed along the transmission corridor established with the proposed Project, although relocation of the proposed transmission line may be necessary depending on the ultimate location of the road.

⁷ CEQA Guidelines § 15125(d).

⁸ CEQA Guidelines § 15125(e); *City of Long Beach v. Los Angeles Unified School District*, 176 Cal. App. 4th 889, 918 (2009).

In addition, the project is not in conflict with the significance questions presented in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Potential impacts would not be considered significant under CEQA and no modification of the Draft EIR is necessary.

RESPONSE 3-4

The 2007 *Regional Transportation Plan* identifies projects in three tiers, as described above in Response 3-3. The proposed improvements to Geer Road are defined by the plan as Tier 1a, Non-fiscally Constrained Project. Improvements to Faith Home Road, Central Avenue, and Grayson Road are Tier 2 projects, and are therefore considered speculative under CEQA. See Response 3-3 above for a discussion regarding whether these improvements are reasonably foreseeable future projects. Expansion of Geer Road, however, is a reasonably foreseeable project.

In addition, while the 1997 Ceres General Plan identifies Faith Home Road as an expressway, and Central Avenue and Grayson Roads as arterials, there are no specific plans for expansion identified in the Ceres General Plan. Instead, the Ceres General Plan notes that expressways “may have four to six travel lanes,” arterials “usually have four to six travel lanes,”⁹ but does not identify particular plans for expansion. This information cannot guide consideration of potential expansions beyond a vague idea of the number of lanes that the roads may or may not be expanded to include, meaning the projects are not reasonably foreseeable.

No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 3-5

The CEQA Guidelines, Article 9 Section 15126.6, state that an “EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.” The EIR is not required to explore an exhaustive list of alternatives. The guidelines state that “it must only consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation.”

⁹ City of Ceres 1997 General Plan 2-2 & 2-3

The proposed Project meets the project sponsors' objectives and would result in no significant unavoidable impacts under CEQA; therefore, it is not necessary to address the alternative routes identified in Comment 3-5. In accordance with Section 15126.6c of the CEQA Guidelines, factors that may eliminate an alternative from detailed consideration include: 1) failure to meet most of the basic objectives of the project; 2) infeasibility; and 3) inability to avoid significant environmental effects. The alternatives selected for detailed analysis were developed by TID, following established siting criteria.

An existing 230 kV transmission line that is jointly owned by TID and MID parallels Lateral No. 2. It is not possible to maintain safe horizontal electrical clearances in conformance code requirements if the lines were co-located on these jointly-owned towers. See also Response 13-10 related to Lateral 2 and Lateral 2 ½. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 3-6

According to the city's letter, there is an anticipated right-of-way for Grayson Road of 110 feet and a setback requirement of 25 feet. The overall requirement would be to construct the substation 80 feet north of the centerline of Grayson Road. The proposed Grayson Substation is located in the unincorporated portion of Stanislaus County, and is not within the City of Ceres' existing boundaries or Sphere of Influence. Therefore, county planning guidance applies.

According to personnel in the Public Works Department of Stanislaus County, the proposed, ultimate right-of-way of Grayson Road east of Crows Landing Road is 100 feet. The existing right-of-way for Grayson Road, according to the county, is 40 feet. Therefore, TID would be subject to a 30 foot wide road dedication on the parcel of land acquired for the proposed Grayson Substation. Beyond this dedication, TID will maintain a minimum setback of 20 feet, in accordance with the guidance received from the county (Fontana 2009).

Yard, or setback, requirements would, therefore, follow county guidance. As stated in 21.20.070 of the Zoning Code, front yard requirements along majors are as follows:

- Buildings must be setback more than 70 feet from the centerline of the street, or 15 feet from a planned street line, whichever is greater. The vehicle opening of any

building shall be no closer than twenty feet to the property line toward which the opening faces.

There are no landscaping requirements imposed by the county in the areas zoned A-2.

The proposed Grayson Substation would be constructed to meet Stanislaus County zoning requirements. Therefore, the substation setback would be consistent with the potential expansion of Grayson Road, but not the City of Ceres' proposed M-2 General Industrial zoning that would apply if this area is annexed into the city. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 3-7

The Project would have no impact on the properties west of the Ceres Main canal and east of Blaker Road that are designated as Low Density Residential in the *City of Ceres General Plan*. These lands are within the city's Phase 2 Urban Growth Area, as identified in Figure 1-1 of the General Plan, and are subject to Stanislaus County zoning. The city anticipates growth in this area, but has not made any commitment to develop the area. In *Pala Band of Indians v. County of San Diego*¹⁰, the court found that approval of a plan that includes tentative reservation of lands for a specific development does not make development of any site under that plan reasonably foreseeable.

Furthermore, development of the area north of Turner Road was not considered in the cumulative analysis in the Draft EIR because future development plans are not reasonably foreseeable and thus do not provide a basis for an analysis of potential cumulative impacts. In *Gray v. County of Madera*, the county was aware of several proposed projects. However, because no environmental review had been instigated for these projects, the projects were not considered by the court to be "probable future projects."¹¹ See Response 3-3 above for more on reasonable foreseeability.

Considering the scenario of development as Low Density Residential, the *City of Ceres General Plan* does not identify any conflicts between the Low Density Residential land use designation and power infrastructure. Therefore, there would not be a conflict if the area is

¹⁰ *Pala Band of Mission Indians v. County of San Diego*, 68 Cal. App. 4th 556, at p. 577 (1998).

¹¹ *Gray v. County of Madera*, 167 Cal. App. 4th 1099, at p. 1127 (2008).

developed for Low Density Residential use in the future. Also, no potentially significant impacts are identified by the comments. Setback distances vary according to preference and specific land use; however, the California Department of Education requires a setback of 100 feet. This distance could be used as a conservative estimate of the setbacks that may be required for this potential development.

The project does not conflict with the current Stanislaus County zoning or the somewhat speculative development of the area in accordance with the City of Ceres' Low Density Residential designation. When there is not substantial evidence that an impact will occur, and an impact is not reasonably foreseeable, an agency is not required to analyze this impact. No modification to the Draft EIR is required.

For a discussion of the potential for co-locating the proposed 115 kV line on the existing 230 kV line along Lateral No. 2, please refer to Response 3-5. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

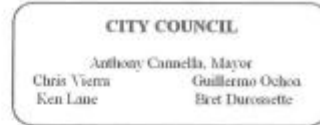
RESPONSE 3-8

TID is aware of the sewer issues identified in this comment. As indicated in Mitigation Measure 4.12-3, TID plans to identify local utilities during the design process and to work through Underground Service Alert during construction. Specifically, the mitigation measure states:

TID shall coordinate with applicable utility providers to ensure that no damage is implemented on existing facilities. Underground Service Alert shall be notified at least two working days prior to any digging. TID shall provide 48 hours advance notice to customers along the transmission line of any temporary disruptions in service that may result from project construction.

No specific utilities were identified in Section 4.12 for this reason. The information provided in this comment will be passed on to the TID team and decision-makers. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.4 LETTER 4



City of Ceres
2720 Second Street
Ceres, CA 95307
209-538-5755
209-538-5650 (Fax)

September 14, 2009

TID Board of Directors
333 East Canal Drive
Turlock, CA 95380

Re: *Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission and Substation Project /
Draft Environmental Impact Report*

Dear Board of Directors:

4-1

I am the Vice Mayor of the City of Ceres and sit on the Ceres City Council. I have reviewed with interest the DEIR prepared by TID's consultant in connection with the Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission and Substation Project. Overall, I am a strong advocate of the Project which will help expand TID's ability to serve the growing community of Ceres. While our City staff has not yet completed their review and our City Council has not yet taken a formal position on this item, I have some concerns about a portion of the new route and its potential impact on future development plans for the City. Specifically, I am concerned about the new route from the east end of East Grayson Road to the Ceres Main Canal.

As you may know, the City anticipates that in the foreseeable future, Grayson Road will be extended east to Mitchell Road. The extension to Grayson Road is proposed to be four lanes wide. Unlike the routes initially proposed by TID, the DEIR shows the 115kV line and towers going directly on the path of the anticipated extension of Grayson Road.

4-2

4-3

I also observed that this new route will be adjacent to hundreds of acres of land that are designated on Ceres' 2008 General Plan as Low Density Residential. That is, the City also anticipates that this new route also has the potential to have a significant impact on the future development of this portion of the City into Low Density Residential housing, or to even eliminate such development.

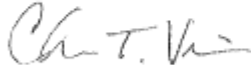
Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission
And Substation Project
September 14, 2009

In order to address the dual concerns about the compatibility of the lines with the City's plans to extend Grayson Road, and the impact of the lines on the development of this portion of the City into Low Density Residential housing, I urge you, as an individual Councilmember, to reconsider the selection of Alternate 4 described in the DEIR and move the lines.

4-4

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Very truly yours,



Chris Vierra,
Vice Mayor and Councilmember,
City of Ceres

cc: Ceres City Councilmembers

4.4.1 RESPONSE TO CHRIS VIERRA (CITY OF CERES VICE MAYOR)

RESPONSE 4-1

The commenter's views and concerns regarding the project and its potential effect on future development plans for the City of Ceres are acknowledged. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 4-2

The commenter's concerns regarding compatibility of the Project with the city's indicated plans to extend Grayson Road are acknowledged. The Project's consistency with applicable land use laws, ordinances, regulations and standards are discussed in Section 4.1 of the Draft EIR. The City of Ceres' land use documents are discussed in Section 4.1-2, starting at page 4.1-11. The Impact Analysis (pages 4.1-16 to 4.1-18), finds the Project consistent with the applicable requirements of the City of Ceres and finds no significant impacts.

Transportation issues are discussed in Section 4.11 of the EIR. Table 4.11-3 acknowledges the City's comments regarding the possible future expansion of Grayson Road. Impact 4.11-6, Mitigation Measure 4.11-6, Impact 4.11-7, and Mitigation Measure 4.11-7 all reflect that the EIR acknowledge and complies with applicable ordinances, regulations and standards of the City of Ceres. The commenter is also referred to Responses 3-3 through 3-8 for a discussion of these concerns. No modifications, other than those described in the referenced Responses, are required.

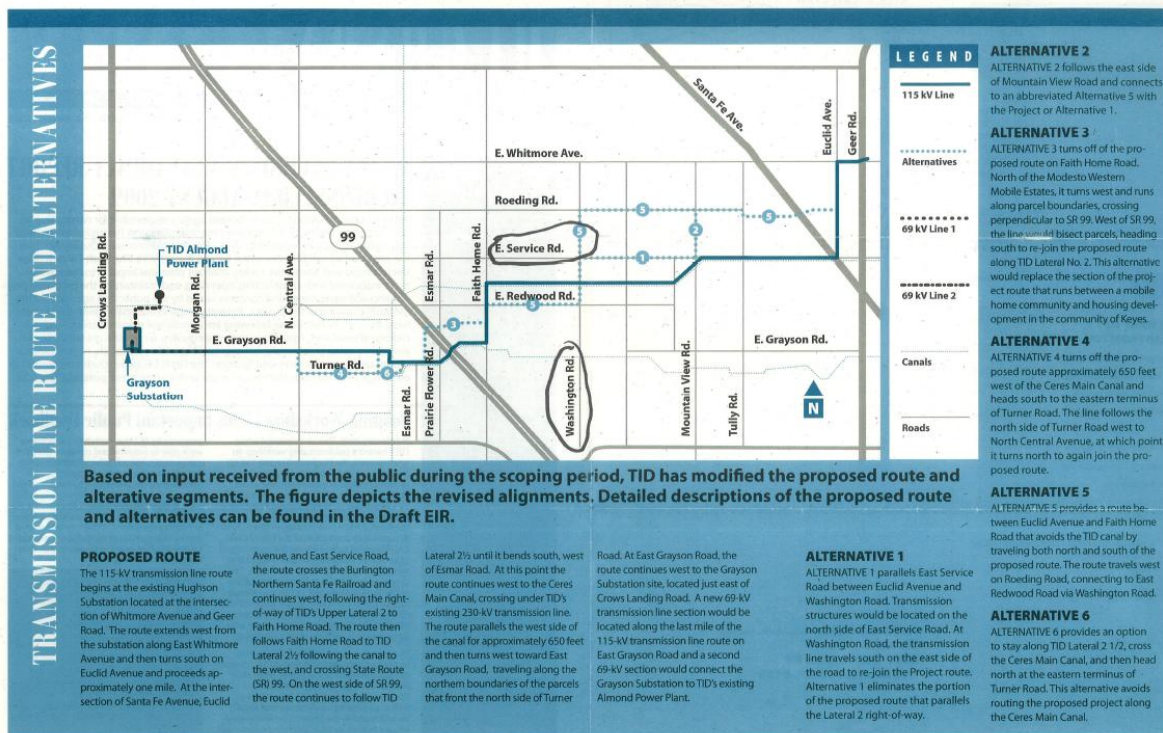
RESPONSE 4-3

The commenter's concerns regarding the potential impacts on the development of Low Density Residential Housing are acknowledged. See Response 3-7. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 4-4

The commenter's concerns regarding compatibility of the Project with the City's indicated plans to extend Grayson Road and the potential impacts on the development of Low Density Residential Housing are acknowledged. The commenter is referred to Responses 3-3 through 3-8 and 4-1 through 4-3 for a discussion of these concerns. No modifications, other than those described in the referenced Responses, are required.

4.5 LETTER 5



4.5.1 RESPONSE TO ALFRED BLACK

RESPONSE

The commenter's circling of two roads, Washington Road and East Service Road is noted. No other written comments are provided with this submission. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.6 LETTER 6

THOMAS CHUNG
37283 ACORN PLACE
NEWARK, CA 94560

OAKLAND CA 946
13 AUG 2009 PM 5 T



TID
THE HUGHSON-GRAYSON 115KV TRANSMISSION
AND SUBSTATION PROJECT
ATTN: GREG TUCKER
PO BOX 949
TURLOCK, CA 95381-0949

95381-0949



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YOUR COMMENTS:

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Your views are important to us. Please return this form if you have any comments, suggestions, or questions about the proposed project. Your concerns will be considered throughout the planning process.

6-1

THE PROPOSED ROUTE WOULD BRING NUISANCE IN FRONT OF OUR PROPERTY AT 4888 FAITH HOME ROAD AND BRING DOWN PROPERTY VALUES INCLUDING SUBDIVISION ON HOLLYWOOD DRIVE. WE STRONGLY SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE FINAL ROUTE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.

TID
THE HUGHSON-GRAYSON 115KV TRANSMISSION
AND SUBSTATION PROJECT
ATTN: GREG TUCKER
PO BOX 949
TURLOCK, CA 95381-0949



Ching Thomas Chin-Chun & Lin Fenny Yuheng
37283 Acorn Pl
Newark CA 94560-3333

4.6.1 RESPONSE TO THOMAS CHING

RESPONSE 6-1

The commenter's preference of Alternative 3 is acknowledged. Since all of the potential impacts are mitigated to a less-than-significant level, there will be no significant impacts associated with the Environmentally Superior Alternative (See Section 5.5 of the Draft EIR), and thus no nuisance associated with the project. Alternative 3 would not avoid or minimize any potentially significant impacts. Further, as discussed with regard to Impact 4.13-3 and Mitigation Measure 4.13-3 (pages 4.13-6 through 4.13-7 of the Draft EIR), the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on property values. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.7 LETTER 7

about:blank

From:
Patricia M. Cousins
3865 Roeding
Ceres, CA 95307
Sept. 20, 2009

To:
Mr. Greg Tucker, P.E.
Electrical Engineering Department Manager
Turlock Irrigation District
P.O. Box 1049
Turlock, CA 95381-0949

Please leave our rural Roeding neighborhood out of your electrical plans.

7-1

The purpose of this note is to object to the stated plans of TID to route down Roeding Rd. portions of its proposed Hughson-Grayson transmission lines. If I understand correctly your Notice in the Modesto Bee of Sunday, September 13, 2009 on page B4, either a first choice route or some part of an alternative route will/might? cross Santa Fe Ave. and the Santa Fe Railroad Tracks where Roeding Rd. would be if it continued that far east rather than stopping as it does at Tully Rd. New industrial development is directly to the north of this proposed Roeding route.

Please protect our rural Roeding neighborhood from your potentially dangerous and certainly unsightly proposed electrical plans.

Early in the 20th Century when the communities of Ceres and Hughson were laid out, Roeding was known as Smyrna Park Rd., at least in its portion in Ceres and for two or three miles east of Ceres. Smyrna Park Road/Roeding Road did not and still does not connect to Highway 99 or to Santa Fe. Instead, it intersects by "T" intersections with connecting roads, Tully in the area relevant to this transmittal. Roeding is only about five miles long (excluding Denair portion) and does not connect with major roads. Therefore, beginning about 1900, rural residents of Roeding, especially at its eastern end, built their Ceres/Hughson homes near the edges of the narrow roadway and felt safe in so doing because of little traffic. The road was never going anywhere, right? Leave it that way. Don't destroy our rural way of life.

7-2

Go south from Hughson. Go to Grayson Rd. near where it joins Tully. Go across fields. Leave the people in their houses free of your invasion. Better, charge us all more for power and mothball the project. What happened to the plans to build a huge transmission line from Northern California south should happen to this project too.

Sincerely,



Patricia M. Cousins

4.7.1 RESPONSE TO PATRICIA COUSINS

RESPONSE 7-1

The commenter's views and concerns regarding routing the proposed transmission line along Roeding Road, as analyzed under Alternative 5 in the Draft EIR, are acknowledged. This alternative would not be constructed under the proposed Project, as presented in the Draft EIR. Specifically, while there are no significant unmitigated impacts associated with Alternative 5, the EIR concludes that a comparison between Alternative 5 and Discussion Segments A, B, and C of the Project's 115 kV route suggests that Segments A, B, and C would impact fewer residences. (See Section 5 of the EIR in general, and discussions on pages 523 to 5-25, 5-30 to 5-34, and 5-37 to 5-39.) Since all of the potential impacts of the Project are mitigated to a less-than-significant level, there will be no potential impacts or harm associated with the Project. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 7-2

The commenter's opinion and the description of the commenter's understanding of the history of the Roeding Road, as described in the comments, are acknowledged. The commenter's descriptions of other routing options are acknowledged. The commenter's views and concerns regarding the no project alternative are acknowledged. The DEIR addresses these issues in Sections 2.1.1, 3.2, and 5.1.2 related to Basic Project Objectives and in the Project Description in Section 3. The commenter's opinions on other projects are acknowledged. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.8 LETTER 8

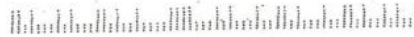
Joe & Barbara
3805 Brando Dr
Ceres Ca 95307

STOCKTON/STAN
CA 952 4 L
18 AUG 2009 PM



TID
THE HUGHSON-GRAYSON 115kV TRANSMISSION
AND SUBSTATION PROJECT
ATTN: GREG TUCKER
PO BOX 949
TURLOCK, CA 95381-0949

95381+0949



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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Your views are important to us. Please return this form if you have any comments, suggestions, or questions about the proposed project. Your concerns will be considered throughout the planning process.

8-1

YOUR COMMENTS:

Transmission lines crossing between the mobile home park and the housing development south of the park and parallel to the lateral canal doesn't seem beneficial to the residences at all. No on alternative 3.

TID
THE HUGHSON-GRAYSON 115kV TRANSMISSION
AND SUBSTATION PROJECT
ATTN: GREG TUCKER
PO BOX 949
TURLOCK, CA 95381-0949



Belsito Joseph M & Belsito Barbara S
3805 Brando Dr
Ceres CA 95307-6724

27

4.8.1 RESPONSE TO JOSEPH AND BARBARA BELSITO

RESPONSE 8-1

The commenter's views and concerns regarding Alternative 3 related to potential impacts on a mobile home park and residences are acknowledged. Alternative 3 would not be constructed under the proposed Project, as presented in the Draft EIR. Specifically, while there are no significant unmitigated impacts associated with this routing, Alternative 3 was not selected because this segment is located closer to residences than the proposed route, would limit future development options in this area and bisect several agricultural parcels west of SR 99, and is located in close proximity to a contamination site (See EIR, pp. 5-40 to 5-41.). No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.9 LETTER 9

Marchy Dairy
943 E. Grayson Road
Ceres, CA 95307
(209) 537-0630

September 11, 2009

Mr. Greg Tucker, P.E.
Electrical Engineering Dept Mngr.
Turlock Irrigation District
P.O. Box 1049
Turlock, CA 95381-0949

Regarding: Hughson-Grayson 115-kV Transmission & Substation Project

Dear Greg Tucker,

My name is Gary Marchy, & on behalf of our company, Marchy Dairy, I am writing to express my objection to the Hughson-Grayson 115-kV transmission line route that runs along our property. Our property is located on Grayson Road, between Morgan Road & Crowslanding Road. This proposed route will require us to give up a 10' easement of land we own on both sides of Grayson Road for transmission lines.

9-1 Even though these poles take up a small amount of space we are still losing additional acreage and loss of crop production because we have to work around these poles with large equipment.....a big hazard and nuisance! Moreover, it is my understanding from Dave Falkenberg, Survey, Right-Of Way Manager at TID, that there will be a building & height restriction imposed which would limit our ability to construct cattle housing, and restrict us from planting any orchard type crops under these easements. In addition, these electrical lines would create a hazard and reduce our commodity/feed storage area as our silage piles would be extremely close to these electrical power lines. This easement, along with restrictions imposed will definitely limit our ability to utilize our land to the fullest, not only from the stand point of loss of crop production, but taking away our rights to utilize our land as we see fit. Overall, we see a negative affect to our dairy operation by granting this easement, and a loss of value to our property.

Another concern and fear of ours is the stray voltage from these stronger power lines, and how it could negatively affect our livestock. The transmission line route will run directly into our corrals where our cattle are housed. We have hired an electrical specialist who will perform an analysis pre and post installation to establish a base line of the potential affects to our animals. We will hold TID accountable for any loss of milk production or livestock and any type of retrofitting costs.

9-3 Overall, we strongly appose the transmission line route along our property, and would prefer that the electrical lines go under ground or change the route along the north side of the TID Lateral #2.

Respectfully,

Marchy Dairy


Gary Marchy
Managing Partner

4.9.1 RESPONSE TO GARY MARCHY

RESPONSE 9-1

While the proposed Project may limit the ability to utilize land within the easement, as addressed in the Draft EIR (as discussed in Section 4.1) this is not an unmitigated significant impact under CEQA. Impact 4.1-4 and Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 (pages 4.1-18 to 4.1-21) address these issues. TID will minimize the number of transmission poles and ground disturbance occurring to land in agricultural production. As necessary, TID shall coordinate with landowners to determine pole placement that would result in minimal disruption to agricultural operations. TID shall obtain easements for private agricultural land that may be used along the route and compensate landowners for loss of crops, up to the provisions of law. Agricultural land used during construction shall be re-tilled to offset compaction caused by heavy material storage and construction activities, as requested by the landowner. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 9-2

Potential effects associated with electromagnetic fields, which are less than significant, are discussed in Section 4.9 of the Draft EIR. Impact 4.9-2 (previously identified as 4.12-2 in the Draft EIR and corrected in the FEIR) and Mitigation Measure (pages 4.9-17 to 4.9-21) address these concerns. Electromagnetic field measurements were taken at several locations (See Figure 4.9-1) and the results of those measurements studied and presented in Tables 4.9-2, 4.9-3, and 4.9-4 (pages 4.9-19 to 4.9-21.) Although TID is not regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission, the Project would employ practicable design criteria, as mandated by the California Public Utilities Commission for new and upgraded electrical facilities, for electromagnetic field reduction. These include:

- Increasing the distance between the conductors and the ground;
- Reducing the spacing between the conductors;
- Minimizing the current in the line; and
- Arranging current flow to maximize the cancellation effects from interacting of conductor fields.

With implementation of these design requirements, no further mitigation is required. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 9-3

The commenter's opposition to Project routing and the commenter's preference for lines underground or on the north side of Lateral No. 2 are acknowledged. See Responses 9-1 and 9-2 on the routing issues. The alternative of undergrounding lines was considered in the Draft EIR in Section 5.2.4, and rejected for the reasons set forth in that section. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.10 LETTER 10

SAM PICKLES
PO. BOX 242
TURLOCK CA 95351

STOCKTON/STAN
CA 952 47
17 AUG 2009 PM



TID
THE HUGHSON-GRAYSON 115KV TRANSMISSION
AND SUBSTATION PROJECT
ATTN: GREG TUCKER
PO BOX 949
TURLOCK, CA 95381-0949

95381 0949 8007



PLEASE FOLD IN THIRDS (MAKING SURE OUR ADDRESS IS ON THE OUTSIDE), FASTEN WITH TAPE, AND RETURN TO US, THANK YOU.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Your views are important to us. Please return this form if you have any comments, suggestions, or questions about the proposed project. Your concerns will be considered throughout the planning process.

YOUR COMMENTS:

N. CENTRAL AVE IS NAMED JUST CENTRAL AVE - N. CENTRAL STARTS AT WHITMERE AVE GOING NORTH & S. CENTRAL STARTS AT FULKEYS GOING SOUTH. I REQUEST ALT 4 & 6 BE REJECTED AS CENTRAL AVE HAS A LOT OF AHEAD, FUTURE TRAFFIC. I.E., FUTURE 4 LANES, PLUS A CENTER LANE TO KEYS RD WHICH TID MAY HAVE TO MOVE POLES (ADDED COSTS). IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS YOU CAN CALL MESAAM AT PH. 768-0027

4.10.1 RESPONSE TO SAM PICKLES

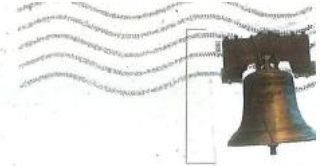
RESPONSE 10-1

The comment about the name of “Central Avenue” is acknowledged. The commenter’s opposition to Alternatives 4 and 6 are acknowledged. The discussion of Alternatives in Section 5 of the Draft EIR addresses these issues. Specifically, while there are no significant unmitigated impacts associated with Alternatives 4 and 6, the EIR concludes that neither Alternative 4 nor 6 would avoid or minimize any significant environmental impacts of the proposed Project.

Potential impacts to traffic are not significant, as discussed in Section 4.11. The commenter’s opinions on future traffic issues are speculative and such impacts are not reasonably foreseeable. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.11 LETTER 11

STOCKTON/STKN
CA 952 4 T
19 AUG 2009 PM



TID
THE HUGHSON-GRAYSON 115KV TRANSMISSION
AND SUBSTATION PROJECT
ATTN: GREG TUCKER
PO BOX 949
TURLOCK, CA 95381-0949

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Your views are important to us. Please return this form if you have any comments, suggestions, or questions about the proposed project. Your concerns will be considered throughout the planning process.

YOUR COMMENTS:

11-1

DEFINE "FORCASTED LOAD GROWTH": WHO, WHERE, WHEN?? SOMEONE MUST NOT UNDERSTAND TODAY'S ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT.

11-2

WILL THE BENEFICIARIES OF THIS PROJECT COVER 100% OF THE COST AND BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY LITIGATION TO FOLLOW AS A RESULT OF DECREASED PROPERTY VALUE, ETC., ETC., ETC.??

R. R.
(BSEE)

TID
THE HUGHSON-GRAYSON 115KV TRANSMISSION
AND SUBSTATION PROJECT
ATTN: GREG TUCKER
PO BOX 949
TURLOCK, CA 95381-0949



Rosenquist Ronald L & Rosenquist Susan J 109
PO Box 749
Hughson CA 95326-0749

4.11.1 RESPONSE TO RONALD ROSENQUIST

RESPONSE 11-1

The commenter's views and concerns regarding "future load growth" are acknowledged. These issues are discussed in Sections 2.1.1, 3.2, and 5.1.2 related to Basic Project Objectives and in the Project Description in Section 3. As described in these sections, load growth is an increase in energy demand. Load growth occurs either through natural growth of a service territory resulting from increased productivity, population growth, or stimulation of the energy market. Load forecasting is the study of electric loads and factors affecting those loads, which is undertaken to determine future requirements for energy and capacity. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 11-2

The commenter's opinions on cost, benefits, responsibilities, and litigation risk are acknowledged. The proposed improvements to the TID transmission system will benefit TID ratepayer-owners. Therefore, TID's ratepayer-owners are both the beneficiaries and the financiers of the project. TID's rate design also ensures that customer benefits and costs are fairly apportioned. Further, as discussed with regard to Impact 4.13-3 and Mitigation Measure 4.13-3 (pages 4.13-6 to 4.13-7 in the Draft EIR), the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on property values. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.12 LETTER 12

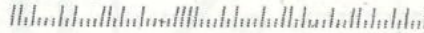
S
GARI SPERRY
4131 E REDWOOD RD
CERES CA 95307-9709

TURLOCK/STARR
CA 952 2 T
21 SEP 2009 PM



TID
THE HUGHSON-GRAYSON 115KV TRANSMISSION
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ATTN: GREG TUCKER
PO BOX 949
TURLOCK, CA 95381-0949

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Your views are important to us. Please return this form if you have any comments, suggestions, or questions about the proposed project. Your concerns will be considered throughout the planning process.

12-1

YOUR COMMENTS: I Feel you should Run the
Line down Coe Rd to Keyser to Crossharden
Pay CalTrans for a crossing and KEEP
THE POWER GRID ON MAJOR RIGHT OF
WAYS.

TID
THE HUGHSON-GRAYSON 115KV TRANSMISSION
AND SUBSTATION PROJECT
ATTN: GREG TUCKER
PO BOX 949
TURLOCK, CA 95381-0949



Sperry Steven F & Sperry Gari L
4131 E Redwood Rd
Ceres CA 95307-9709

90

4.12.1 RESPONSE TO STEVEN AND GARI SPERRY

RESPONSE 12-1

The commenter's views and concerns regarding a line down Geer Road to Keyes to Crows Landing, and paying Caltrans for crossing to "keep the power grid on major rights of way" are acknowledged. As discussed in Section 4.11 on Transportation and in the Basic Project Objectives in Sections 2.1.1, 3.2, and 5.1.2, potential impacts on traffic and transportation, including the use of "major" traffic ways are addressed and there are no unmitigated significant impacts associated with the Project. Impact 4.11-2 and Mitigation 4.11-2 (pages. 4.11-10 to 4.11-11 of the Draft EIR) require TID to implement temporary traffic controls to minimize the potential for construction activities to result in traffic disruptions. Traffic controls within Stanislaus County's right-of-way shall be submitted to Stanislaus County Public Works for approval. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.13 LETTER 13



*Damrell Nelson Schrimp
Pallios Pacher & Silva*
ATTORNEYS

A Professional Corporation

September 11, 2009

Duane L. Nelson
Roger M. Schrimp
Steven G. Pallios
Matthew O. Pacher
Fred A. Silva
Kathy L. Monday
Clinton P. Walker
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Matthew O. Pacher
mpacher@damrell.com

Re: *Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission and Substation Project /
Draft Environmental Impact Report*

Dear Mr. Tucker:

13-1 This office represents David and Sandra Yonan, the owners of approximately 20 acres commonly referred to as 4936 Central Avenue, Ceres, California (the "Property"). We have reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR") relative to the Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission and Substation Project (the "Project"). The Property is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of South Central Avenue and East Grayson Road. After reviewing the proposed Project route in the vicinity of the Project, my clients have grave concerns regarding the impacts that the Project, as currently routed, will have on the Property.

The Property contains almond orchards and a home. The TID Newsletter Issue 1, dated February 2009 contained a map showing the Project's Transmission Line Route and Alternatives. In the vicinity of the Property it showed a 115kV Line running east-west on Turner Road between North Central Avenue and the Ceres Main Canal. We were surprised to see that the TID Newsletter Issue 2, dated August 2009 and the DEIR now show the line running directly east from the east end of East Grayson Road to the Ceres Main Canal, since it was not even initially proposed as an alternative, and that the Turner Road route is now designated as "Alternative 4."

13-3 One of the objections to this new segment of the route is that, according to Section 3.6 of the DEIR (at page 3-10), since it runs through open fields and through orchards, a 30 foot wide easement will be required. According to language set forth on page 4.1-20 of the DEIR, orchard crops would not be permitted in this strip, and the majority of crops along this segment are currently orchard (i.e., the majority of this approximately 6,400 foot long strip will be taken out of production).

The DEIR provides that "The line would pass north of a residence on Central Avenue before meeting East Grayson Road." (See page 4.1-2 of the DEIR.) We understand this to mean that because there is a home located at the southeast corner of the intersection of South Central Avenue and East Grayson Road, the line at this particular point (the "cross-over point") will be placed on the Yonan's Property. Therefore, 30 feet of orchards on the southern end of their Property will be removed

permanently, and the ability to do aerial spraying on a portion of the remainder of the Property will be impaired. 13-4
(Cont)

13-5 More importantly, the Property and most of the other properties located north of this segment of the route between the Property and the Ceres Main Canal (approximately 4,700 linear feet directly adjacent to the line) are designated on the Ceres 2008 General Plan as Low Density Residential, which under current zoning ordinances allows up to seven homes per acre. Therefore, the potential number of residences that will be directly impacted by the line in this segment of the new route is in the hundreds as compared to 31 residences directly impacted by Alternative 4 (see page 5-29 of the DEIR). Likewise, the impact to the viewsheds from homes that are anticipated to be built near this segment of the line will be far greater than those impacted on Alternate 4.

It is also our understanding that the City of Ceres plans for future development include the expansion of Grayson Road to four lanes, and the extension of Grayson Road east to Mitchell Road. Because the line will cross from the northern portion of the Turner Road properties to the southern portion of the Yonan's Property (as discussed above), we question whether there will be adequate space between the towers at the cross-over point to allow for the expansion of Grayson Road. 13-6

13-7 Turner Road (Alternate 4) was initially designated as the route in this vicinity of the Project, rather than as an alternate route. Presumably, it was so designated because distribution lines already run along the north side of Turner Road and TID already has a transmission line easement at that location. (We would appreciate an explanation of why Turner Road was initially selected to be a segment of the transmission line route.) It is our understanding that if Alternate 4 is used, the right of way will be ten feet wide (see page 3-10 of the DEIR), rather than 30 feet wide.

13-9 The DEIR at page 5-10 states "Alternate 4 would place transmission infrastructure between residences and the most likely access to the properties." There does not appear to be anything in the record to support this conclusion since the exact location of the towers has not yet been determined. Obviously, TID could work with the landowners so that transmission infrastructure could be placed so that it does not interfere with access to the properties on Turner Road. Moreover, since there already exists transmission infrastructure on Turner Road, and TID's intent is to underbuild existing distribution lines on the 115kV line (see page 3-1 of the DEIR), it would appear to make more sense to use Alternate 4 rather than having transmission infrastructure on both the north and south boundaries of the parcels on Turner Road, creating two transmission line corridors. 13-8

For all of the foregoing reasons, we urge you to reconsider the routing of this segment of the Project and to return to the original route now identified as Alternate 4. 13-10

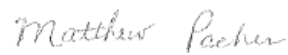
September 11, 2009
Page 3

In the alternative, is it feasible for TID to use its existing easements along TID Laterals
No. 2 and/or 2-1/2 for the Project?

13-10
(Cont)

Very truly yours,

DAMRELL, NELSON, SCHRIMP,
PALLIOS, PACHER & SILVA



Matthew Pacher

MOP/tlc

cc: David and Sandra Yonan
Charles Fernandes
Randy Fiorini
Phillip N. Short
Michael C. Berryhill, Sr.
Rob Santos

G:\Matt Pacher\Yonan Letters\Tuckee003.doc

4.13.1 RESPONSE TO MATTHEW PACHER (DAMRELL, NELSON, SCHRIMP, PALLIOS, PACHER & SILVA)

RESPONSE 13-1

The commenter's statements of fact regarding their representation of David and Sandra Yonan, facts regarding the Yonan property's location relative to Project features, and other factual matters are acknowledged. The commenter's concerns regarding the impacts of the Project as routed on the Yonan's property are acknowledged. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 13-2

An Initial Study and Revised Notice of Preparation of an EIR was filed with the State Clearinghouse on February 9, 2009, beginning a 30-day public review and comment period. On February 18, 2009, TID hosted a public scoping workshop on the Project, which was advertised, in part, through the newsletter the commenter has referenced. The workshop provided general members of the public, interested parties, and agency representatives the opportunity to learn about the Project, as well as provide input on issues for discussion in the EIR. In direct response to the input received in the public scoping process, TID revised the Project route.

The Draft EIR was released for public review between August 11 and September 25, 2009. A Draft EIR public workshop was held on September 14, 2009. The Final EIR will go to the TID Board for certification, and the project will thereafter be considered for approval or disapproval by the TID Board based on available documentation and public testimony. Public review and comment are an integral part of the CEQA process. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 13-3

The commenter's views and concerns regarding fields, crops, orchards and permitted uses are acknowledged. Impact 4.1-4 and Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 (pages 4.1-18 to 4.1-21 in the Draft EIR) address these issues. TID will minimize the number of transmission poles and the amount of ground disturbance that would occur to land agricultural production. As necessary, TID shall coordinate with landowners to determine pole placement that would result in minimal disruption to agricultural operations.

TID shall obtain easements for private agricultural land that may be used along the route and compensate landowners for loss of crops, up to the provisions of law. Agricultural land used during construction shall be re-tilled to offset compaction caused by heavy material storage and construction activities, as requested by the landowner. No revisions to Draft the EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 13-4

The commenter's opinion and understanding regarding the description of the routing related to the Yonan property are acknowledged. The commenter's understanding of the use of orchards on the southern end of the property is acknowledged. The commenter's opinion regarding purported effects on the ability to aerial spray a portion of the property is acknowledged, but cannot be either confirmed or denied absent the presentation of information to support this opinion.

Impact 4.1-4 acknowledges that, among other things, "Transmission lines installed as part of the Project may interfere with the aerial application of pesticides and herbicides, requiring ground-level application techniques to be used." The impact is less than significant after the implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-4. The commenter is referred to Section 4.1 of the Draft EIR for a full discussion of this topic. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 13-5

The commenter's opinions and concerns regarding development in the vicinity of the Ceres Main Canal, and the City of Ceres' 2008 General Plan designation of Low Density Residential for these lands, currently located in unincorporated Stanislaus County, are acknowledged. The commenter's speculation about potential future development, the number of residences, and the effect on viewsheds of future residences, are related to potential projects that are not 'reasonably foreseeable' under CEQA. As such, the EIR is not required to address these projects. See also Responses 3-3 through 3-8.

The area north of the proposed route between approximately the Ceres Main canal and Blaker Road, while depicted on the *2008 General Plan Land Use Diagram* for the City of Ceres as Low Density Residential, is outside of the city's Sphere of Influence. These designations serve as guidance to the county, but are not binding. Therefore, zoning is per

Stanislaus County. Current Stanislaus County zoning of the property is A-2-40, Exclusive Agriculture. Development of this area is not a reasonably foreseeable project under CEQA because the city does not currently have the jurisdiction to move forward. Further, there is currently no dedication of resources to undertake this project.

The analysis contained in the Alternatives section of the Draft EIR is based on current land uses and governance, not projected land uses. There is no identified land use conflict with the proposed Project, and implementation of Alternative 4 rather than the proposed route would not avoid any significant impacts. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 13-6

The commenter's views and concerns regarding future plans for development of lands in unincorporated Stanislaus County related to Grayson Road, Mitchell Road, Turner Road, and the Yonan property are acknowledged. See also Responses to Comments 3-3 through 3-8.

According to Stanislaus County (Fontana 2009), the ultimate, proposed right-of-way for the expansion of Grayson Road from two to four lanes would be 100 feet. As stated in the Draft EIR, the typical span between poles is 250 feet (refer to page 3-10). Therefore, it is anticipated that the proposed right-of-way could be spanned by the proposed TID facilities. As discussed in Response 3-3, however, these accommodations may not be made. Failure to accommodate the proposed right-of-way presented in the *Regional Transportation Plan* is not a significant impact under CEQA. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 13-7

The commenter's views regarding the initial designation of Turner Road (Alternative 4) as a portion of the Project route are acknowledged. The commenter's views and suggestions that Turner Road was designated because distribution lines already run along this road, and TID has a transmission easement, are acknowledged as providing some of the reasons for the designation of Turner Road. The full range of influences on route and alternative selections are set forth in the discussions in Sections 2.1.1, 3.2, and 5.1.2. As for an explanation as to why Turner Road was initially selected, see the Sections set forth in the preceding sentence and also TID Objectives for Transmission Lines at pages 5-3 to 5.4 of the EIR. With regard

to the widths of rights of way, the DEIR provides at page 3-10 as follows: “The 115 kV transmission line would be constructed within existing or acquired electrical easements (not within the road rights-of-way). Along county road rights-of-way, a 10 foot wide easement adjacent to, and contiguous with, the existing road right-of-way would be established. In open fields, through orchards, or along property lines not near a county road, a 30 foot wide easement would be acquired. Along the canals, TID would use its existing easement (prescriptive or fee title) or obtain a 20 foot wide electrical easement in particular portions of the route.” No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 13-8

The commenter’s quotation of page 5-10 is acknowledged. It appears that the commenter has misunderstood the text regarding support for the conclusion that Alternative 4 would place infrastructure between residences and most likely access points. Under Alternative 4, transmission poles would not preclude access to the Turner Road properties. Rather, this infrastructure (the line, poles, and related facilities) would be located such that residents are likely to see – and pass under – infrastructure when accessing their properties, which is a common observation point from which one views a residential property.

As stated in Section 4.2.3 of the Draft EIR (page 4.2-7) “foreground changes (i.e., generally within about a one-quarter mile) are considered more important than middle ground changes (i.e., over one-quarter to less than one mile) and distant views (i.e., greater than one mile).” The Turner Road properties are approximately one-quarter mile north to south. Therefore, with regard to the existing residents on Turner Road, Alternative 4 would be more visually intrusive than the proposed 115 kV transmission line route because it would be located in the foreground of the view of residential property along Turner Road, rather than the middle ground. Conversely, the proposed route in this area is not located along established access points (i.e. driveways) to adjacent properties. Therefore, it is not in the foreground of established views.

The commenter correctly notes that TID will work with the landowners on the placement of transmission infrastructure. Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 provides that “TID shall minimize the number of transmission poles and ground disturbance that would occur to land agricultural production. As necessary, TID shall coordinate with landowners to determine pole placement

that would result in minimal disruption to agricultural operations.” No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 13-9

The commenter’s opinions that “it would appear to make more sense” to use Alternative 4 are acknowledged, but represent subjective opinion. The existing 12 kV electrical lines along Turner Road are located on distribution poles. These 45 foot poles are common throughout the study area. Although co-location reduces visual impacts, the addition of structures sufficient to support 115 kV lines would change the character of Turner Road. There are approximately 24 residences along Turner Road. Existing tall and/or ornamental trees may need to be removed from front yards on the north side of Turner Road to accommodate the project. In contrast, routing the transmission line along the north (rear) property lines of Turner Road would allow for future development to be planned around the transmission corridor. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE 13-10

The commenter’s views, opinions and questions regarding its preference for and the feasibility of alternative routes that would follow TID Laterals No. 2 and No. 2½ are acknowledged. The potential to follow TID Laterals No. 2 and No. 2½ are analyzed below. The analysis confirms the conclusions that these alternative routes would not avoid or minimize any potentially significant effects of the project. The commenter’s proposed routes were analyzed using TID’s routing criteria, as presented in Section 5 of the Draft EIR. These include the following parameters:

- Use of existing overhead circuit routes and other utility corridors that could include canals, drainage corridors, parkways, open space, freeways, and railroad alignments;
- Following arterial streets;
- When the alignment is not along a street, following property lines to minimize bisecting parcels of land;
- Preference for an alignment that is the shortest length with the fewest angles;
- Minimizing impacts to wetlands, special-status vegetation and wildlife species, and cultural and paleontological resources along the alignment;

- Preference for compatible adjacent land uses and zoning;
- Consideration of compatibility with potential future expansion;
- Avoidance of freeway access areas and airport approach/departure flight zones;
- Minimizing the land use impact by affecting the smallest percentage of a parcel of land;
- Minimizing the need to relocate existing facilities, infrastructure, or utilities;
- Minimizing residential communities' visual impacts and electrical and magnetic field exposure;
- Siting in areas that are least susceptible to flooding, fire, and other natural or human-made disasters; and
- Community and agency input.

With regard to Lateral No. 2, an existing 230 kV transmission line that is jointly owned by TID and the MID parallels Lateral No. 2. It is not possible to maintain safe horizontal electrical clearances in conformance with safety and reliability-based regulatory requirements if the lines are placed adjacent to one another, parallel to Lateral No. 2. Similarly, co-locating the lines on the existing 230 kV structures is not possible because co-location would not allow for sufficient vertical clearance to meet reliability requirements. Additionally, the existing structures do not provide sufficient strength for co-location. As such, the co-location of lines would overload the structural capacities of the existing structures, requiring the construction of larger structures of greater structural capacity. If new poles were installed to accommodate co-location of the 115 kV line and the existing 230 kV line, an outage of the MID and TID owned 230 kV transmission line would be required. This line is a major artery of the MID and TID electrical systems. In addition, the new poles would be up to 140' tall and would disturb a larger area both during construction and on a permanent basis.

Following the Ceres Main canal to Lateral No. 2½ west of State Route 99 would move the 115 kV route south of the Project alignment. For the purposes of this Response, residences were assumed potentially impacted if located within 150 feet of the centerline of the transmission line corridor, consistent with the Draft EIR. Routing the transmission line along

TID Lateral No. 2½ would likely result in the Project affecting 13 fewer residences when compared to the Project route. However, a route along Lateral No. 2½ would be approximately 6,162 linear feet longer than the Project alternative, and would require an additional 34 poles. On a per foot basis, following Lateral No. 2½ would require a greater density of poles due to the non-linear path of the lateral.

Direct and indirect impacts to residential, agricultural, and other land uses along a TID Lateral No. 2½ route were estimated through analysis of aerial photography. Consistent with the discussions in the Draft EIR, lengths of each land use type along the routes were estimated at a 150 foot buffer from the alignment. Direct and indirect impacts are presented in the following table.

Length ¹² (Feet)	# of Poles	Residences within 150 feet	Bisect Parcels?	Direct Effects ¹³ (linear feet)			Indirect Effects (linear feet)		
				Ag	Res	Other	Ag	Res	Other
17,516	87	8	Yes	12,716 65%	6,128 32%	619 3%	9,680 63%	5,621 36%	186 1%

A transmission line route along TID Lateral No. 2½ would directly impact approximately 6,000 linear feet over six parcels in residential use, approximately 1,000 linear feet less than under the Project. A route along the Lateral, however, would directly impact nearly 13,000 linear feet of land in agricultural use, while the Project would directly impact approximately 6,000 linear feet in agricultural use in the corresponding portion of the 115 kV route. In addition, following the lateral would require bisecting parcels. Transmission routes that bisect parcels are not preferred by TID because they impede operation and maintenance, result in greater environmental impacts, and adversely affect land use.

The CEQA Guidelines, Article 9 Section 15126.6, state that an “EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any

¹² Actual route length

¹³ Sum of direct and indirect lengths taken from the 150 foot buffer. Therefore, the sum of these lengths will differ from the actual route lengths. Where route bisects a parcel, parcels on either side considered directly effected.

of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.” The EIR is not required to explore an exhaustive list of alternatives. The guidelines state that “it must only consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation.” The proposed Project meets the project sponsors’ objectives and would result in no significant unavoidable impacts under CEQA; therefore, it is not necessary to address the alternative routes identified in this Comment.

The alternatives selected for detailed analysis were developed by TID, following established siting criteria. CEQA requires the consideration of alternatives that avoid or minimize potentially significant impacts of the project. Feasibility is a subset of the larger analyses set forth in the sections cited above in this Response. Neither Lateral No. 2 nor Lateral No. 2 ½ would avoid or minimize potentially significant impacts associated with the project. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.14 LETTER 14

Hughson-Grayson DEIR Comments

September 14, 2009

- 14a-1 **Kathy Hansen** (4866 Crows Landing Road, Modesto) – Lives on the corner of Grayson and Crows Landing. TID wants to use 40% of her property for the substation. Corridor 1 is going to come from the power plant down the canal and down the middle of the ½ acre on the corner, hit the substation, go to Crows Landing Rd, up Crows Landing Road and then along the canal. That’s a square. It destroys any future development of the property. She is also concerned about Corridor 2 t-line associated with proposed power plant and vicinity to her home. Corridor 2 can’t be put on her property because of the pipelines at the end of her property. She is concerned with amount of her land t-lines will use. The route will be very close to her house. The 30’ easement required by TID will put her house right next to the power lines. What environmental and health issues might they have? Will they still get good coverage for their electrical things? Why can’t lines be put closer together so they don’t run down Crows Landing Road? The County is going to take 55’ of her property off Crows Landing Road in the next two to three years. They are going to take 55’ of her property off Grayson from the middle of the road. The County told her this yesterday. There is going to be an environmental impact there for all of the people along Grayson. She is concerned about what is the power line going to do to them besides destroy that whole quarter acre of that half-mile area.
- 14a-2
- 14a-3
- 14b-1 **David Yonan** (3301 Golf Links Road, Ceres) – He is concerned with proposed route east of Ceres Main Canal. He didn’t see in EIR that it addressed that TID is opening up a new utility corridor by going

along the back of the properties on Turner Road. The EIR is also deficient regarding the future widening of Grayson Road. There is lots of traffic down Grayson. City and County folks he has talked to say that Grayson needs to be widened to a four lane thoroughfare.

14b-2

14b-3

The extension of Grayson Road past Central (where Grayson dead ends at Central) is not addressed. Everyone at the City says that Grayson will be extended to a city loop to correspond with Mitchell Road. This Grayson Road extension was not addressed. The EIR does not address that the area from east of Ceres Main Canal is marked a low density residential in the General Plan. There are four problems east of the Ceres Main: 1) the widening of Grayson Road; 2) the extension of Grayson Road past Central; 3) a new utility corridor that TID is creating; and 4) the impact to the area identified in the Ceres General Plan marked low-density residential that could potentially impact hundreds of homes.

14b-4

14b-5

He has heard a lot about the comments about people on Turner Road. From the attendance at the Scoping meeting there were four families that attended from Turner Road based on the exhibit in the DEIR. None of those families provided comments. There was one family from Turner Road that provided written comments. He has heard over and over again that TID is not going down Turner Road because of complaints. He would like to see if Turner Road complaints were memorialized. Who made them? What were they? Were they taken as phone calls? What is the address of the people? What was the specific complaint? What were their names? Because right now everything he was given and his attorney was given is one complaint from Turner Road; four families in attendance at the first scoping meeting with virtually no complaints from those in attendance.

EIR is deficient because it does not analyze the use of Laterals 2 and 21/2. Lateral 2 ½ would take TID about 2,000 feet out of the way. TID owns the corridor east of Ceres Main. It doesn't have to buy and easements or land. There are no houses along this route. There may be one approximately 150' off of Lateral 2 ½. TID already owns the property. Alternatively, TID has Lateral #2. This may be more problematic since there are already some lines on Lateral #2. But the benefit of that is that TID could put all of its stuff in one spot. It can be done. TID may just need a little bit more easement but you wouldn't be disturbing anyone that way either. If you don't want to put it where you have lines now, you can put it on Lateral 2 1/2.

14b-6

14c-1

Edward Fountain (4318 Washington Road, Hughson) - People now affected by route in EIR are not able to express their opinion. They assumed the route was going to be on the next street up. So there was no reason for them to come forward. How were they not informed of changes of new routes so they could have input? Why wasn't there another meeting? Now it feels like this is how it's going to be. How can you do that? You have one meeting with a lot of time for people to come forward and we basically don't have an option.

Greg asked him a question which can't be heard. Mr. Fountain then asked about how much property will be taken for t-line pole footing. Greg gave a response which can't be heard. Mr. Fountain spoke to how it will affect his property and that across the street there are no houses.

Route affects neighbors on either side. Doesn't understand how TID can say this is the end result. Poles are already on one side. They are already a nuisance. Now a bigger line will be located on the same side as the existing line. He wants the t-line to be located on the other

14c-2

side of the canal from his property. His main point is that he wants TID to look at this again since the route was changed.

14c-2
(Cont)

14d-1 **Rob Hidahl** (3874 E. Service Road) - Hidahl Farms. He farms on the north side of the TID lateral and the poles are on the south side currently. He understands TID is going to take those out and put new ones in. He asked if the new poles will be on the same side. Greg answered that they will be on the same side as the existing line is.

14e-1 **Steve Vilas** (Vilas Farms, 5000 Esmar Road) - Wants EIR to address the leakage of electricity. He served on TID board so he is familiar with electricity. However, TID's procedure has changed and they have to have a larger ROW and cut down more trees. The EIR doesn't address the amount of trees to be removed and the leakage of electricity that they will receive. He mentioned that when they open valves underneath the existing lines they get shocked. The EIR needs to address how much electricity will be leaking because they are currently experiencing leakage from the transmission lines now behind his house.

14e-2

14f-1 **Brian Sinclair** (Euclid Road) – He was not aware of earlier meeting. There are already t-lines on Geer Road from the Hughson substation. Why Euclid and not Geer Road. It seems odd to go down a relatively small street that is partially zoned residential when there is a major traffic artery which has more traffic and probably less impact on residential development or property values down Euclid. What was the criteria for choosing Euclid Ave vs. Geer Road?

4.14.1 RESPONSE TO KATHY HANSEN (COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 14, 2009)

RESPONSE 14A-1

The commenter's views and opinion regarding routing, use of her property, pipeline constraints, easements, and proximity of the Project to her home are acknowledged. The discussion of the routing section and the determination of the preferred routing for the Project are discussed in detail in Section 5 of the Draft EIR (pp 3-7 through 3-12). The acreage necessary for the development of the Project are discussed in Sections 3.4 through 3.6 of the Draft EIR, confirming that the Project has attempted to minimize the project's footprint consistent with safe and reliable operations. The lack of effects is confirmed at all locations, including the residence referenced. Further, as discussed with regard to Impact 4.13-3 and Mitigation Measure 4.13-3 (pages 4.13-5 to 4.13-7), the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on property values. While the proposed Project may limit the ability to utilize land within the easement, as discussed in Section 4.1 of the Draft EIR, this is not an unmitigated significant impact under CEQA. Impact 4.1-4 and Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 (pages 4.1-18 to 4.1-21) address these issues. TID shall minimize the number of transmission poles and ground disturbance that would occur to land in agricultural production. TID shall obtain easements for private agricultural land that may be used along the route and compensate landowners for loss of crops, up to the provisions of law. Agricultural land used during construction shall be re-tilled to offset compaction caused by heavy material storage and construction activities, as requested by the landowner. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 14A-2

Potential effects associated with electromagnetic fields, which are less than significant, are discussed in Section 4.9 of the Draft EIR. EMF measurements were taken at several locations (See Figure 4.9-1) and the results of those measurements have been studied and are presented in Tables 4.9-2, 4.9-3, and 4.9-4 (pp. 4.9-19 to 4.9-21). No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 14A-3

The commenter's opinions and concerns regarding actions the county may take in the future and possible inference with electric devices are acknowledged. Comments about the county possibly taking 55 feet of property are noted. Comments regarding transmission poles for a second project under consideration by the California Energy Commission (the Almond 2 Power Plant project), requiring two additional 115 kV transmission lines from the proposed Grayson Substation to the proposed Almond Power Plant, are discussed under Cumulative Impacts, Section 6.1 of the Draft EIR. See also Responses 9-1 and 9-2.

On public health and safety issues, see also Response 14a-1. As discussed in Sections 4.10.3 and 5.4.10 of the Draft EIR, the proposed Project would not interfere with household electrical equipment and coverage would remain the same. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.14.2 RESPONSE TO DAVID YONAN (COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 14, 2009)

RESPONSE TO 14B-1

The commenter's views and opinions regarding potential impacts in the vicinity of the Ceres Main Canal are acknowledged. Please refer to Responses 3-7 and 13-5 for a discussion of this topic. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 14B-2

The commenter's concerns regarding compatibility of the Project with the City's purported plans to extend Grayson Road are acknowledged. The commenter is referred to Responses 3-3 through 3-8 for a discussion of these concerns. The proposed extension of Grayson Road east to Mitchell Road is addressed in Table 4.11-1 in the Draft EIR. No plans or funding are currently in place to indicate that the proposed extension is a reasonably foreseeable probable future project. Section 4.11 of the Draft EIR has been modified in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 14B-3

The commenter's concerns regarding compatibility of the Project with the city's purported plans to extend Grayson Road are acknowledged. The commenter is referred to Responses 3-

3 through 3-8 and Response 14b-2 for a discussion of these concerns. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 14B-4

The commenter's concerns regarding compatibility of the Project with the city's purported plans to extend Grayson Road and impact on future low density housing developments in the area are acknowledged. With regard to the Grayson Road issues, the commenter is referred to Responses 3-3 through 3-8 and Response 14b-2 for a discussion of these concerns. For a discussion of future low density housing in areas that are currently located in unincorporated Stanislaus County, the commenter is referred to Responses 2-1, 3-7, 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, and 13-5. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 14B-5

The commenter's concerns regarding compatibility issues related to Turner Road are acknowledged. The commenter's comments and opinions about the activities of individuals living near Turner Road are acknowledged. The Draft EIR identifies all comments received, including, but not limited to, those received in response to the Notice of Preparation and Initial Study. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 14B-6

The commenter's views and opinions regarding TID's Lateral No. 2 and Lateral No. 2 ½ are acknowledged. With regards to TID's Lateral No. 2 and Lateral No. 2 ½, the commenter is referred to Responses 3-5 and 13-10. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.14.3 RESPONSE TO EDWARD FOUNTAIN (COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 14, 2009)

RESPONSE TO 14C-1

A Revised Notice of Preparation and Initial Study were released for a 30-day public review period on February 9, 2009. A newsletter was sent to property owners in February of 2009, which provided the date and location of the public workshop held on February 18, 2009. In response to comments received during the workshop and written submissions provided to

TID by the public and regulatory agencies, the original route was revised to follow TID's Lateral, where feasible. In addition, the route was modified in the area of Turner Road.

TID released the Draft EIR, which includes an analysis of the route developed through the public scoping process, for a 45-day review period on August 11, 2009. A newsletter detailing the revised route, and the time and location of the Draft EIR public workshop, was mailed to all adjacent property owners and interested parties in August of 2009.

This document constitutes the Final EIR. TID's Board of Directors will review the Project, the EIR, and public testimony and decide whether to certify the EIR and whether to approve or deny the Project. The above summarizes most, but not all, of the opportunities for public review and comment on the Project. See also Response 13-2.

With regard to specific other comments, the description that residents thought the Project would be located "the next street up" is vague. In any event, the public was notified of the Project, consistent with CEQA noticing requirements, the route presented in the Draft EIR is the proposed Project, and there are still opportunities for public comment up to and including at the Board of Directors meeting to consider certification of this EIR and approval of the Project. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 14C-2

The commenter's views and concerns regarding pole placement and related issues are acknowledged. TID disagrees with the characterization of the existing lines as a nuisance, since there are no significant impacts associated with the Project. TID also disagrees with the suggestion that the route has "changed," when in fact the Project has been evaluated pursuant to CEQA. Compliance with this process requires, among other things, evaluation of potential effects and the consideration of alternatives. The reasoning for the location of the transmission poles is set forth in Section 3 (Project Description) and Section 5 (Alternatives) in the Draft EIR. The comments would not avoid or minimize any potentially significant impacts, since potential impacts associated with the Project are mitigated to a less-than-significant level. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.14.4 RESPONSE TO ROB HIDAHL (COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 14, 2009)

RESPONSE TO 14D-1

The reasoning for the location of the transmission poles is set forth in Section 3 (Project Description) and Section 5 (Alternatives). See also Response 4.14c-2. Impact 4.1-4 and Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 (pages 4.1-18 to 4.1-21) address pole placement issues.

TID shall minimize the number of transmission poles and ground disturbance that would occur to land in agricultural production. As necessary, TID shall coordinate with landowners to determine pole placement that would result in minimal disruption to agricultural operations. TID shall obtain easements for private agricultural land that may be used along the route and compensate landowners for loss of crops, up to the provisions of law. Agricultural land used during construction shall be re-tilled to offset compaction caused by heavy material storage and construction activities, as requested by the landowner. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.14.5 RESPONSE TO STEVE VILAS (COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 14, 2009)

RESPONSE TO 14E-1

Impact 4.1-4 and Mitigation Measure 4.1-4 (pp. 4.1-18 to 4.1-21) address pole placement issues with regard to potential impacts on trees. TID shall minimize the number of transmission poles and ground disturbance that would occur to land in agricultural production. As stated in Response 14c-1, above, the Project shall minimize these potential impacts by avoiding production farmland wherever feasible. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

RESPONSE TO 14E-2

As stated in Section 4.9.2 of the Draft EIR (page 4.9-12) TID adheres to the regulations and General Orders issued by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) relating to transmission line safety and design, including electrical shock hazards, even though it is not an investor owned utility regulated by the (CPUC). In addition, potential effects associated with electromagnetic fields, which are less than significant, are discussed in Section 4.9 of the Draft EIR. Impact 4.9-2 (originally numbered 4.12-2 in the Draft EIR and corrected in

this Final EIR) and Mitigation Measure (pages 4.9-17 to 4.9-21) address these concerns. Electromagnetic field measurements were taken at several locations (See Figure 4.9-1) and the results of those measurements studied and presented in Tables 4.9-2, 4.9-3, and 4.9-4 (pages 4.9-19 to 4.9-21.). The EIR also discusses these issues in Section 4.1.3 and sets forth requirements for compliance in Mitigation Measure 4.1-4.

A height restriction would be implemented within the public utilities easement acquired adjacent to public road right of way. These restrictions do not mandate tree removal, although limited tree removal may be required to place utility infrastructure. Within the easement, TID reserves the right to trim and/or remove all vegetation that it deems necessary for safe operation of the electrical system. Impacts would be minimized via Mitigation Measure 4.1-3 that requires, among other things, minimization of the number of transmission poles and ground disturbance that would occur to land in agricultural production. As necessary, TID shall coordinate with landowners to determine pole placement that would result in minimal disruption to agricultural operations. TID shall obtain easements for private agricultural land that may be used along the proposed route and compensate landowners for loss of crops, up to the provisions of law. With the implementation of this mitigation and other measure described in Section 4.1, the impacts are less than significant. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.14.6 RESPONSE TO BRIAN SINCLAIR (COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 14, 2009)

RESPONSE TO 14F-1

The commenter's concerns and opinions are acknowledged. With regard to the process for notice and approval of the Project, see Response 14c-1. With regard to comments on routing, see Response 14a-1. Purported impacts from traffic are discussed in Responses 1-1 and 12-1. With regard to property values, as discussed with regard to Impact 4.13-3 and Mitigation Measure 4.13-3 (pages 4.13-6 to 4.13-7), the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on property values.

The reasons for choosing the routing in the vicinity of Euclid and Geer are set forth in Section 5.2.1 of the Draft EIR. See also the revisions to Section 5.2 made in this Final EIR and response 2-1. Using the alternative suggested would not avoid any potentially significant

impacts. The discussion of the routing section and the determination of the preferred routing for the Project are discussed in detail in Section 5 of the Draft EIR. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

4.15 LETTER 15

Turlock Irrigation District
Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission and Substation Project
Environmental Impact Report Scoping Workshop

9/16/09

Attn: Greg Tucker, Electrical Engineering Department Mgr
P.O. Box 949
Turlock, Calif. 95381

We, the undersigned residents of Turner Rd., Ceres, look more favorably on the new proposed route put forward at the meeting held on Monday evening, Sept. 14, 2009, at the Hughson Community Center. We are unanimously against the original proposal (alternate route 4) for the following reasons:

15-1

1. Turner Rd already has a sewer line running down the South side of the road.
2. PG&E's main gas line runs down the North side.
3. Power lines would run across most of the front yards of those houses on the North side.
4. Health issues! While some studies refute higher incidences of some cancers, other studies document the increase of some types of cancers.
5. Property values. The construction of the types of towers to carry the higher voltages historically causes a significant decrease in property values.

Thank you for your considerations,

Jack Shoffa 2407 Turner Rd.
Jan [unclear] M. Passalacqua
** Joe Fabela 2323 Turner Rd. 2412 Turner Rd*
Rydia Fabela 2323 Turner Rd, Ceres, Ca 95307
[unclear] 5148 A Central Av. Ceres Ca 95307
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Sharon [unclear] Turner Rd Ceres Ca 95307

4.15.1 RESPONSE TO RESIDENTS OF TURNER ROAD

RESPONSE 15-1

The opinions and concerns of the commenters are acknowledged. The Draft EIR studied effects from traffic (Section 4.11) and found no significant effects at the identified location. The presence of an existing sewer and natural gas lines are noted and do not cause potentially significant effects, since the line would be avoided, as described in Impact 4.12-3 and Mitigation 4.12-3: “TID shall coordinate with applicable utility providers to ensure that no damage is implemented on existing facilities. Underground Service Alert shall be notified at least two working days prior to any digging. TID shall provide 48 hours advance notice to customers along the transmission line of any temporary disruptions in service that may result from project construction.”

Potential effects associated with electromagnetic fields, which are less than significant, are discussed in Section 4.9 of the Draft EIR. Impact 4.12-2 and Mitigation Measure (pages 4.9-17 to 4.9-21) address these concerns. Electromagnetic field measurements were taken at several locations (See Figure 4.9-1) and the results of those measurements studied and presented in Tables 4.9-2, 4.9-3, and 4.9-4 (pages 4.9-19 to 4.9-21). Further, as discussed with regard to Impact 4.13-3 and Mitigation Measure 4.13-3 (pages 4.13-6 to 4.13-7), the Project would have a less-than-significant impact on property values. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

5.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

Chapter 8 of the Draft EIR is restated here. No additional staff members were used in the preparation of the Final EIR.

Cindy Arrington	Cultural Resource Associates	<i>Cultural Resources</i>
Harry Benke	Visual Impact Analysis LLC	<i>Aesthetics</i>
Yancey Bissonnette	Alphabiota	<i>Biological Resources</i>
Jessica Carson	Parus Consulting, Inc.	<i>Introduction, Executive Summary, Project Description, Land Use, Hydrology and Water Quality, Geology and Soils, Transportation, Public Services and Utilities, Alternatives Analysis, Cumulative and Growth Inducing Effects, GIS Support, Document production</i>
Lois Clark	Miller Environmental Consultants	<i>Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Noise, Hazards and Hazardous Materials</i>
Nick Eide	Parus Consulting, Inc.	<i>GIS support, Alternatives Analysis</i>
Tom Lagerquist	Parus Consulting, Inc.	<i>Project Manager. Project Description, Land Use, Alternatives Analysis</i>
Paul Miller	Miller Environmental Consultants	<i>Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Noise, Hazards and Hazardous Materials</i>
Doug Proctor	D. Proctor Engineering, Inc.	<i>Electric and Magnetic Fields</i>
Susan Strachan	Strachan Consulting	<i>Project Director. Internal review</i>
Greg Tucker	Turlock Irrigation District	<i>Project Manager and Lead Agency Contact</i>

6.0 REFERENCES

This chapter of the Final EIR provides the references that were used to prepare this document. They are in addition to those listed in the Draft EIR.

[Alta] Alta Planning + Design. 2008. Stanislaus County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. Stanislaus County Council of Governments: Berkley (CA).

[ACEC] American Council of Engineering Companies, California. 2009. 2009 California Environmental Quality Act: CEQA Guidelines. Sacramento (CA).

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Wood Rodgers, Lamphier Gregory. 2008. West Ceres Specific Plan Opportunities and Constraints Analysis. City of Ceres: Modesto (CA).



BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
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**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION
FOR THE TID ALMOND 2
POWER PLANT PROJECT**

Docket No. 09-AFC-2

**PROOF OF SERVICE
(Revised 7/30/10)**

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DECLARATION OF SERVICE

I, Sarah Madams, declare that on September 29, 2010, I served and filed copies of the attached, Hughson-Grayson 115kV Transmission Line and Substation Project, Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report, dated, July 23, 2010. The original document, filed with the Docket Unit, is accompanied by a copy of the most recent Proof of Service list, located on the web page for this project at: **[http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/almond]**.

The documents have been sent to both the other parties in this proceeding (as shown on the Proof of Service list) and to the Commission's Docket Unit, in the following manner:

(Check all that Apply)

FOR SERVICE TO ALL OTHER PARTIES:

sent electronically to all email addresses on the Proof of Service list;

by personal delivery or by depositing in the United States mail at Sacramento, CA with first-class postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed as provided on the Proof of Service list above to those addresses **NOT** marked "email preferred."

AND

FOR FILING WITH THE ENERGY COMMISSION:

sending an original paper copy and one electronic copy, mailed and emailed respectively, to the address below (***preferred method***);

OR

depositing in the mail an original and 12 paper copies, as follows:

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

Attn: Docket No. 09-AFC-2
1516 Ninth Street, MS-4
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I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.



Sarah Madams