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APPLICANT'S SUPPLEMENTAL RESPONSE TO DATA REQUEST 16 AND 26: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING LAND USE

In this section of Applicant's Supplemental Response to CEC Staff Data Requests 16 and 26, Applicant describes the changes to the Land Use section that will result from the changes to the Project Description relating to the removal of Unit 3. Per staff's request, Applicant uses a strike-out/underline format to identify changes to the Land Use section of the Application for Certification that will result from the changes to the Project Description.

The Land Use sub-sections that have been modified are listed in the table of contents below. If there has been no change to a Land Use sub-section relating to Applicant's Supplemental Response to Data Request 16 and 26, the section is labeled "no changes" in the table of contents below.

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5.6 LAND USE

5.6.1 Introduction (see Section 2.1.1 for updated project description)

5.6.2 Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, and Standards

The applicable federal, state, and local LORS related to land use are summarized in Table 5.6-1 below. The Project will be constructed and operated in compliance with all applicable land use LORS.

Table 5.6-1
Laws, Ordinances, Regulations and Standards (LORS)

LORS	Applicability	AFC Section Explaining Conformance
Federal		
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969	NEPA establishes a public, interdisciplinary framework for federal decision-making and ensures that Federal agencies take environmental factors into account when considering federal actions.	Section 5.6.2.1
Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA): 43 United States Code (USC) Sections 1761-1771 and Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 2800	Establishes the authority of BLM to manage land within its jurisdiction, and to provide management direction including planning, environmental, and right-of-way (ROW) grant requirements.	Section 5.6.2.1
California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan of 1980 as amended; Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert (NECO) Coordinated Management Plan	Under FLPMA, BLM is required to develop Resource Management Plans (RMP). All activities proposed for public land must be consistent with the approved Resource Management Plan(s). The relevant land use plan for this Project is the CDCA Plan, as amended by NECO Plan.	Sections 5.6.2.1; 5.6.3.2; and 5.6.3.3
Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971, as amended	Herd Areas (HAs) are those geographic areas where wild horses and/or burros were found at the passage of the Wild Horse and Burros Act in 1971. Herd Management Areas (HMAs) are those areas within HAs where the decision has been made, through Land Use Plans, to manage for populations of wild horses and/or burros.	Sections 5.6.2.1 and 5.6.4.2
Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR), Part 77: Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace	Requires notification of construction or alteration to regional Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) office based on notification requirements.	Section 5.6.2.1
U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991; 162 USC, Title 23	Established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. The policy sets forth the procedures for the designation by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation of certain roads as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads based on their archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic qualities. BLM manages scenic byways as Back Country Byways.	Sections 5.6.2.1 and 5.6.3.3
State		

Table 5.6-1
Laws, Ordinances, Regulations and Standards (LORS)

LORS	Applicability	AFC Section Explaining Conformance
Warren-Alquist State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Act, California Public Resources Code, § 25000, et seq.	Gives the CEC licensing authority in lieu of state, regional and local permits and requirements.	Sections 5.6.2.2 and 5.6.4
California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) California Public Resources Code, Division 13, §§ 21000-21177, as amended 2010.	Requires that all agencies of the State government that regulate activities of private individuals, corporations, and public agencies, which are found to affect the quality of the environment, shall regulate such activities so that major consideration is given to preventing environmental damage.	Sections 5.6.2.2 and 5.6.4
California Government Code 51200 through 51207, California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)	Regulations pertaining to Williamson Act contract agricultural lands.	Sections 5.6.2.2; 5.6.3.3; and 5.6.4
Local		
Riverside County General Plan (2003 and 2008 update)	Provides land use designations, goals, vision statements, and policies for the development and conservation of non-federal land within the unincorporated areas of Riverside County.	Sections 5.6.2.3; 5.6.3.2; 5.6.4.2; and 5.6.4.3
Palo Verde Valley Area Plan (2003)	Provides land use designations, goals, vision statements, and policies for the Palo Verde Valley.	Sections 5.6.2.3; 5.6.3.2; and 5.6.4.3
Riverside County Land Use Ordinance (Ordinance 348)	Provisions for issuance of building and grading permits, grading plans, change of zone, and land use applications, such as parcel mergers.	Sections 5.6.2.3; 5.6.3.2; 5.6.4.3; and 5.6.7

BLM = Bureau of Land Management
CCR = California Code of Regulations
CDCA = California Desert Conservation Area
CEC = California Energy Commission
CEQA = California Environmental Quality Act
CFR = Code of Federal Regulations
DOT = United States Department of Transportation
FAA = Federal Aviation Administration
FAR = Federal Aviation Regulations
FHWA = Federal Highway Administration
FLMPA = Federal Land Policy and Management Act
HAs = Herd Areas
HMAs = Herd Management Areas
MOU = Memorandum of Understanding
NECO = Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan
NEPA = National Environmental Policy Act
RMP = Resource Management Plan
ROW = Right of Way
USC = United States Code

5.6.2.1 Federal

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) establishes a public, interdisciplinary framework for Federal agencies reviewing projects under their jurisdiction to consider environmental impacts. NEPA's basic policy is to assure that all branches of government give proper consideration to the environment prior to undertaking any major federal action that significantly affects the environment.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), as lead Federal agency for the Project, is responsible for preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in compliance with NEPA to evaluate the environmental impacts of the portions of the Rio Mesa SEGF on federal lands. ~~The Rio Mesa Solar III plant and the~~ Portions of the Project gen-tie line, upgraded Bradshaw Trail access road, and 33kV construction/emergency backup power supply line are located on lands administered and managed by the BLM. NEPA compliance is required for this~~ese~~ portion~~s~~ of the Project through preparation of a Draft and Final EIS. The Applicant anticipates that BLM may consider RMS 1 and 2 as a connected action under NEPA. BLM is also responsible for Native American consultation, including government to government consultation regarding project facilities located on BLM land.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976

The Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) provides a framework for the BLM to manage lands in perpetuity for the benefit of present and future generations. The law provides direction for land use planning, administration, range management, right-of-way (ROW) grants, designated management areas (including specific locations and general designation of wilderness areas), and effects on existing rights. FLPMA establishes critical planning requirements, such as observation of principles of multiple-use and sustained yield; use of a systematic interdisciplinary approach (physical, biological, economic, cultural); designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC); areas in which special management attention is required to protect and prevent impacts to historic, cultural, scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazard; consideration of present and potential uses; and coordination with other Federal, State, tribal, and local government entities.

The Project requires a ROW grant from the BLM for linear facilities associated with the Project (gen-tie line, 33 kV construction/emergency backup power supply line, and one access road)~~for construction and operation~~. A ROW grant is an authorization to use public land for a specific project, such as transmission lines, power plants, and communication sites. A ROW grant authorizes rights and privileges for a specific use of the land for a certain period of time, with appropriate terms and conditions.

The Project will be processed as a ROW authorization under FLPMA Subchapter V and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 43 Part 2800. The Project must comply with the BLM's planning, environmental, and ROW application requirements. The BLM will consider information about the Project, existing land use information, and environmental impacts.

Pursuant to CFR Title 43 § 1610.5-3, a ROW granted by BLM must be consistent with the relevant Resource Management Plan(s) (RMP). The RMPs relevant to the Project are the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan and the Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert (NECO) Coordinated Management Plan.

California Desert Conservation Area Plan and Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan

The management principles contained in the FLPMA are achieved through the implementation of the CDCA Plan. The specific intent of the CDCA Plan covers approximately 25 million acres of land in

Southern California designated by Congress through the Federal Land Policy Management Act. The CDCA Plan was originally prepared in 1980 and last updated in 1999. The Plan recognizes the desert as an important public resource, seeks to preserve desert assets, and considers multiple uses, including power plant siting and utility corridors. The Plan requires that proposed development projects are compatible with policies set forth in the plan. New power plant sites will be evaluated by BLM through an amendment process to the CDCA Plan. The BLM manages the CDCA to include economic, educational, scientific, and recreational use, in a manner that enhances and does not diminish the environmental, cultural, and aesthetic values of the California Desert and its productivity.

The management principles of the CDCA Plan include: multiple-use, sustained yield, and the overall maintenance of environmental quality. Guidance is stated on a geographic basis, in the guidelines for each of the four multiple-use classes. Within those multiple-use class guidelines, further refinement of the guidance is expressed in each Plan element. Direction is also expressed in certain site-specific Plan decisions such as ACECs (BLM, 1980).

The CDCA Plan organizes BLM-managed lands into one of four multiple-use class (MUC) designations: Controlled Use (C), Limited Use (L), Moderate Use (M), and Intensive Use (I). The gen-tie line, 33 kV construction/emergency backup power supply line, and access road corridors to be improved~~The project site and linear features~~, with the exception of privately-owned parcels, are designated MUC-L and MUC-M (see Figure 5.6-1 (rev)).

Table 5.6-2
Multiple-Use Classes

Multiple Use Class	Guidelines	Approximate Project Acreage	
Limited (L)	Protects sensitive, natural, scenic, ecological, and cultural resource values. Public lands designated as Class L are managed to provide for generally lower-intensity, carefully controlled multiple use of resources, while ensuring that sensitive values are not significantly diminished. Electrical generation facilities can be permitted on MUC-L lands provided that BLM undertakes the necessary review under NEPA.	~~Gen-tie Line Corridor~~Project Linears[1]	Project Site
		~~37~~313	~~1,473~~0
Moderate (M)	Based upon a controlled balance between higher intensity use and protection of public lands. This class provides for a wide variety of present and future uses such as mining, livestock grazing, recreation, energy, and utility development. Class M management is also designed to conserve desert resources and to mitigate damage to those resources which permitted uses may cause.	Project Linears[1]~~Gen-tie Line Corridor~~	Project Site
		~~795~~889	~~124~~0

1 Project linears are defined as inclusive of the project gen-tie line, project construction/emergency backup power, and primary project access ROW's

Sources: BLM, 1980
L = Limited
M = Moderate

The class designations govern the type and degree of land-use actions allowed within the areas defined by class boundaries. Sites associated with power generation or transmission not identified in the CDCA Plan

must apply for a CDCA Plan Amendment in order for those uses to be allowed. The Project's ~~and its~~ linear facilities are not identified in the existing CDCA Plan. A CDCA Plan Amendment will be required in accordance with Chapter 7 of the CDCA Plan (BLM, 1980).

The Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan (NECO, Plan) is a landscape-scale, multi-agency planning effort that protects and conserves natural resources while balancing human uses of the California portion of the Sonoran Desert ecosystem. The NECO Plan amended the CDCA Plan in 2002.

The major plan amendments of the NECO Plan are as follows: to establish regional standards for Public Land Health and set forth guidelines for grazing management; establish two Desert Wildlife Management Areas (DWMAs) encompassing approximately 1.75 million acres that are managed as ACECs for recovery of the desert tortoise; establish the Southern Mojave and Sonoran Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (WHMAs) for bighorn sheep totaling over one million acres and 13 multi-species WHMAs totaling over one half million acres such that 80 percent of the distribution of all special status species and all natural community types are included in conservation management areas; combine Herd Management Areas (HMAs) for wild horses and burros and adjust the Appropriate Management Levels (AMLs); designate routes of travel (approximately 95 percent of existing routes will remain available for vehicle access); identify priorities for potential acquisition of private lands and disposal of public lands; provide access to resources for economic and social needs; incorporate 23 wilderness areas (totaling over a million acres) established by the 1994 California Desert Protection Act in the CDCA (BLM, 2002).

The project Study Area is located in unincorporated eastern Riverside County approximately 13 miles southwest of Blythe, California. The Study Area is located on the southeastern extent of the large Southern Recovery Unit for desert tortoise (NECO Map 1-2). The BLM has identified two federally-listed species affected by the CDCA Plan in the NECO Planning Area: the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) and the Coachella milkvetch (*Atragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae*). Special-status wildlife and plant species are discussed in Section 5.2, Biological Resources. The Study Area is not subject to a Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan or located within the boundaries of a wildlife preserve. The Study Area is located within the draft Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan area. The Chuckwalla DWMA is approximately four miles west of the Study Area. According to NECO Map 2-4, the Mule Mountains ACEC is outside of the Study Area, approximately 0.8 miles west and southwest of the transmission line (BLM, 2002) (see Figure 5.6-2 rev).

Wild Horse and Burro Act (no changes)

Federal Aviation Regulations

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 77, establish standards and notification requirements for objects affecting navigable airspace. This notification serves as the basis for evaluating the effects of construction or alteration on operating procedures; determining the potential hazardous effect of the proposed construction on air navigation; identifying mitigating measures to enhance safe air navigation; and charting of new objects. The following regulations apply to the Project:

- Any construction or alteration exceeding 200 feet above ground level;

- Any construction or alteration:
  - A horizontal distance of the 100 to 1 slope has been restricted to 20,000 feet for airports with the longest runway more than 3,200 feet in length.
  - For airports with the longest runway 3,200 feet or shorter, a 50 to 1 slope is prescribed for a horizontal distance of 10,000 feet.
  - A distance of 5,000 feet of a public use heliport that exceeds a 25 to 1 surface.

The ~~Study Area is located approximately 4.7~~RMSEGF project site is located more than 9 miles from Blythe Municipal Airport. Blythe Airport has two runways. The Blythe Airport runways are 5,800 and 6,543 feet in length. The proposed gen-tie line structures will be located approximately 25,000 feet from the end of the nearest runway. According to the FAA horizontal distance equation for a runway greater than 3,200 feet, a 100 to 1 imaginary slope extending from the nearest point of a runway nearest to the site of the proposed structure is restricted to 20,000 feet. Accordingly, a distance of approximately 25,000 feet will allow a structure of up to 125 feet. The Project gen-tie line structure will ~~be approximately 85~~ range from 85-120 feet in height. The Project gen-tie line structures will not pierce the imaginary slope of 100 to 1. Additionally, they will be located adjacent to and south (opposite from the airport) of an existing 500 kV SCE transmission line and the 220 kV gen-tie line from the Blythe Combined Cycle Power Plant. Therefore, the Project gen-tie line will not pose a new impediment for aircraft taking off or landing at the Blythe Municipal Airport.

The Project proposes ~~three~~ two power tower structures of approximately 760 feet in height (750 feet for the tower inclusive of the SRSG and an additional 10-foot tall lightening rod) that will exceed the 200 feet above ground level; therefore, FAA aeronautical review will be required. The nearest power tower (RMS-2) to the airport is approximately 10.75~~8.1~~ miles from the end of the Blythe Municipal Airport runway.

The Project must also comply with the guidance set forth in FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 70/7460-1K, Obstruction Marking and Lighting. The number and type of lights and marking per structure are based on the height of the structure and width of the structure at its highest point. Various lighting systems will be used to identify structures through an aeronautical study with the FAA to determine added conspicuity.

The Project is located within the lateral boundaries of Visual Route (VR)-296, a visual military training route used for terrain following operations originating at March Air Reserve Base in California. This route may be used by military pilots to conduct operation as low as 300 feet above ground level. ~~One of the three 760 feet solar power towers will be located on federal land.~~ The FAA is the sole agency with regulatory approval relating to federal aviation law for the Project. Capital Airspace Group performed an Obstacle Evaluation Study for the Project to evaluate the impacts from the Project on airspace (Appendix 5.6A). The Department of Defense (DOD) commented with a letter dated August 30, 2011 that while they believe there will be impacts, that those impacts are mitigable and that they will not oppose the Project (Appendix 5.6B). Additionally, the BLM will confer with the DOD on the Project.

Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 set forth the policy for establishment of certain roads as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads based on their archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic qualities. The BLM manages these scenic roads as Back Country Byways. Bradshaw Trail is a BLM Back Country Byway ~~that intersects the Study Area~~located directly north of the project site.

5.6.2.2 State

Warren-Alquist State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Act (no changes)

California Environmental Quality Act (no changes)

California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)

The California Land Conservation Act, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, was passed in 1965 to preserve agricultural and open space lands by enabling local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value.

The California Department of Conservation's (CDC) Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on agricultural resources. Agricultural land is rated based on soil quality and irrigation status. No special agricultural land use designations have been assigned as Farmland of Statewide Importance, Prime Farmland, or Unique Farmland on the project site or gen-tie line, as indicated on the FMMP. However, ~~the proposed 34th Avenue access road and~~ Bradshaw Trail access road improvements~~,~~ and the proposed 33 kV service line new construction and overbuild are adjacent to farmlands mapped as Farmland of Statewide Importance, Prime Farmland, and Unique Farmland. The proposed access road north of 34th Avenue will affect a small amount of farmlands mapped as Farmland of Statewide Importance and Prime Farmland. The Study Area contains all three classifications of farmland. The Study Area for the 33 kV service line also runs adjacent to farmland under Williamson Act Contract. However, as discussed in Section 5.6.3.3 below, the portion of the 33 kV Study Area that contains Williamson Act contracts is the segment of the service line that will only require an overbuild (stringing of additional transmission lines) on existing transmission line structures. Southern California Edison confirmed via an email from Peter Lennon on September 1, 2011, that no new construction will be necessary for the portion of the service line from the Blythe substation to Neighbors at 28th Avenue (Appendix 5.6C).

The County of Riverside is the local government agency responsible for Williamson Act Contract implementation and administration. Potential impacts to agricultural land are discussed below in Section 5.6.3, Section 5.6.6, and indicated on Figure 5.6-3 (rev), however the project will not require cancellation of a Williamson Act contract.

5.6.2.3 Local

Riverside County General Plan (no changes)

Palo Verde Valley Area Plan (no changes)

Riverside County Land Use Ordinance (no changes)

Riverside Zoning and County Land Use Designation

Rio Mesa Solar Holdings, LLC, submitted an application to Riverside County for a change of zone for certain parcels in the project site. There are approximately 1,2461,536 acres of parcels zoned W-2-10 on the project site. ~~Additionally, there~~There are approximately ~~146 acres of private parcels on the BLM portion of the project site and approximately 386~~ 550 acres of private parcels within the 1,300-foot wide~~proposed gen-tie line~~ survey corridor for the proposed gen-tie line zoned as W-2-10 (see Figure 5.6-4 (rev)). As indicated in Table 5.6-4, the W-2-10 Zone allows for public utility uses with a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The County has found this zone suitable for solar electricity development in the past. While the Project is not considered a public utility, it was determined during the permitting of the Rice Solar Energy Project (northern Riverside County) that such projects are substantially the same in character and intensity as public utility uses from a Land Use perspective. The Rice Solar Energy Project utilizes solar thermal power tower technology, similar to the Rio Mesa SEGF. It was also conveyed by the County that W-2-10 is suitable for development of the Project (Riverside County July 14, 2011).

There are approximately 2,558 ~~4,224~~ acres of parcels zoned N-A on the project site, for which the application for change of zone will change to W-2-10. The County is anticipated to approve the change of zone application before the Energy Commission Staff Assessment is released.

The current project site zoning is both "Conditionally Consistent" and "Generally Inconsistent" with the RCGP land use designations on the project site. The project site has both "Agriculture" (AG) and "Open-Space Rural" (OS-RUR) RCGP land use designations (see Figure 5.6-1 (rev)). Parcels zoned W-2-10 are located on both OS-RUR (project site) and AG (gen-tie line corridor) land use designations. The W-2-10 Zone is "Conditionally Consistent" with the AG land use designation, and "Generally Inconsistent" with the OS-RUR land use designation. The W-2-10 Zone and OS-RUR designation requires a density suffix for consistency. This suffix pertains to a 20 acre minimum development required within the OS-RUR land use designation. As all parcels within the project site will be merged into one parcel per CEC siting regulations, the W-2-10 Zone is expected to be consistent with the OS-RUR land use designation (20 acre minimum development). Furthermore, the County found during the Rice Solar Energy Project that OS-RUR, while not specifically allowing solar energy projects, could be consistent with the OS-RUR designation policies, which expressly encourage the development of renewable resources in Open Space designations (see Table 5.6-3; Riverside 2008; Figure 5.6-1 (rev)). This combination of W-2-10 with OS-RUR was allowed for the Rice Solar Power Project. Furthermore, it was determined through consultation with the County that this combination is suitable for development of the Project (Riverside County July 14, 2011).

Imperial County General Plan and Land Use Ordinance (no changes)

5.6.3 Affected Environment

This subsection discusses existing land use conditions in the area potentially affected by the Project. The following analysis will focus primarily on existing land use conditions within the project Study Area, which is defined as a one mile radius from the project site and a 0.25 mile radius from offsite linear features. This subsection will also address existing land uses within the Project area to facilitate BLM's review under NEPA.

The Project is proposed to be constructed on both public and private land. A detailed map and list of property owners within 1,000 feet of the project site and offsite linear features is attached to this AFC as Appendix 1A (in the Executive Summary).

5.6.3.1 General Description of the Vicinity

The proposed project site is located in eastern Riverside County approximately 13 miles southwest of Blythe, California. The project site is located ~~partially~~ on private land and the gen-tie line, 33 kV ~~service~~construction/emergency backup power line, and access roads are located on both privately owned lands and public lands administered by the BLM ~~and partially on public land administered by BLM~~ (see Figure 5.6-1 (rev)). The project site and linear features are located in the Palo Verde Valley, south of Interstate 10 (I-10) freeway and north of the Imperial County line. The site is west of State Route 78. There is an existing SCE transmission line along State Route 78 through agricultural fields. The existing Imperial Irrigation District (IID) transmission line is north of the project and the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) transmission line borders the project site on the ~~northwest and~~ east~~, respectively~~. The existing TransCanada Gas Transmission Company (TCGT) North Baja Pipeline borders the site on the east. Bradshaw Trail ~~intersects~~ runs north of the project site at an east-west orientation (see Figure 5.6-1 (rev)). The Colorado River borders eastern Riverside County and Arizona approximately 5 miles to the southeast at its nearest point.

The Palo Verde Valley is situated between the project site on the Palo Verde Mesa to the west and the Colorado River to the east. The area is comprised primarily of open space and agricultural land. There is some very low density residential use in the vicinity of the project site. Palo Verde is the closest community to the project site, which is approximately 2.3 miles east of the southeast corner of the project site boundary on the border of Riverside and Imperial Counties but located within Imperial County. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Palo Verde had a population of 171 in 2010 (U.S. Census, 2010). The community of Ripley is approximately 6.8 miles from the project site. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Ripley had a population of 692 in 2010 (U.S. Census, 2010). The population of Blythe was 20,817 in 2010 (U.S. Census, 2010). See Section 5.10, Socioeconomics, for further information on population within Palo Verde Valley. See Section 5.3, Cultural Resources, for a historical context of the Palo Verde Valley.

5.6.3.2 Existing Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Designations

As mentioned above, the Project is located on ~~on lands administered by the BLM and~~ private lands with a gen-tie line, 33kv construction/emergency backup power line, and access road on lands administered by the BLM ~~under the jurisdiction of Riverside County~~.

BLM Land Use Designations *(no changes)*

Riverside County General Plan and Zoning Ordinance *(no changes)*

5.6.3.3 Land Uses in the Study Area and Vicinity

CCR Title 20, Division 2, Chapter 5, Article 6(3)(A)(i) defines the regulations for CEC site certification for Land Use. The regulations require, at minimum, a discussion of the existing environment within one mile of the proposed site and within one-quarter mile of any project-related linear facilities (Study Area). According to the siting regulations, the following land uses should be identified: residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, scenic, agricultural, natural resource protection, natural resource extraction, educational, religious, cultural, and historic areas, and any other area of unique land uses. Below is a discussion of these existing land uses in the Study Area. In addition, a brief discussion of existing land uses within the vicinity of the Project (Project Vicinity) is included for certain land uses. This additional analysis should provide a more complete understanding of the land uses in the area and help facilitate BLM's review under NEPA.

Residential Land Use *(no changes)*

Commercial and Industrial *(no changes)*

Recreational Land Use in the Study Area

BLM:

The types of recreational uses in the Study Area are governed by the CDCA Plan and the NECO Plan. The Study Area is designated as MUC L and M. MUC L and M are suitable for recreation activities that generally involve low to moderate uses, including backpacking, primitive unimproved site camping, hiking, horseback riding, rockhounding, nature study and observation, photography, rock climbing, hunting, noncompetitive vehicle touring, and events only on "approved" routes of travel (BLM, 1980; BLM, 2002). There are no recreation facility structures or campsites in the Study Area. However, there are off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreational attractions in the Study Area.

Bradshaw Trail is a 65-mile BLM Back Country Byway that begins about 35 miles southeast of Indio, California near the Salton Sea. The trail's eastern end is within the Study Area on the northeast~~ern side~~ of the proposed project site. The portion of the trail ~~that traverses through~~in the Study Area is primarily used for OHV purposes (BLM, 2011).

The CDCA Plan and the NECO Plan Amendment created a detailed inventory and designation of routes within the NECO Plan area that are officially designated as *Open*, *Limited* or *Closed* as part of the NECO Plan routes of travel system. Under the CDCA Plan routes are defined as follows:

- Open Route: Access by motorized vehicles is allowed.
- Limited Route: Access by motorized vehicles is limited to use by number of vehicles, type of vehicle, time or season, permitted or licensed, or speed limits.
- Closed Route: Access by motorized vehicles is prohibited except for authorized use.

The Study Area contains NECO Plan-designated "open" and "limited" routes of travel. Bradshaw Trail and the road that follows the existing WAPA transmission line are defined in the NECO Plan Route Designations as "Maintained Dirt-Proposed Open." The road that follows the existing IID transmission line is designated as "Unmaintained Dirt-Proposed Open." There are other routes in the Study Area, such as Opal Hill mining road and roads that access the historic Hodge Mine that are designated "Unmaintained Dirt-Proposed Open." Motorized vehicle use within MUC L and M are allowed on existing routes of travel. There are no BLM-designated open OHV areas in Riverside County where riding off of designated routes is permitted.

Riverside County: (no changes)

Recreational Land Use in the Project Vicinity (no changes)

Scenic Land Use within the Study Area (no changes)

Agricultural Land Use within the Study Area and the Palo Verde Valley

The following discussion evaluates the existing agricultural uses in the Study Area and the existing agricultural uses within the Palo Verde Valley in general. The Project Vicinity for the purposes of this discussion is defined as the portion of the Palo Verde Valley, framed by the Palo Verde Mesa on the west, Colorado River to the east, the I-10 freeway to the north, and the Imperial County boundary to the south. A larger discussion of the Palo Verde Irrigation District (PVID) is included as well.

The 0.25 mile Study Area for the 34th Avenue project access road, as indicated on Figure 5.6-3 (rev), is ~~primarily~~ partially ~~covered~~ within the one-mile project site Study Area. The remainder of the 34th Avenue access road Study Area is included in Table 5.6-6. This was done to avoid double-counting effects to agricultural land from the project site Study Area and the 34th Avenue Study Area boundaries. The Study Area for Bradshaw Trail access road improvements, as indicated on Figure 5.6-3 (rev), is entirely covered in the 0.25 mile Study Area for the proposed 33 kV service line, and, therefore is not included or counted in Table 5.6-6. The Study Area for Bradshaw Trail access road improvements and the portion of this linear that follows alongside the 33 kV service line Study Area, are evaluated as one linear corridor with the same Study Area.

Table 5.6-6 and Figure 5.6-3 (rev) indicate the designation of farmland within the Study Area.

Table 5.6-6
Farmlands within the Study Area

	Designation	Acreage within Study Area Radius(acres approximate)
Project Site Study Area (one mile buffer)	Prime Farmland	~~645~~ 4 acres
	Farmland of Statewide Importance	~~315~~ 2 acres
	Unique Farmland	~~27 acres~~None
	Farmland of Local Importance	~~6,271~~3,699 acres
	Williamson Act Contract	None
Gen-tie line Study Area (0.25 mile buffer)	Prime Farmland	None
	Farmland of Statewide Importance	None
	Unique Farmland	None
	Farmland of Local Importance	~~1,388~~2,476 acres
	Williamson Act	None
34th Avenue Access Road Study Area (0.25 mile buffer)	(1)Prime Farmland	~~36~~ 224 acres
	(1)Farmland of Statewide Importance	~~36~~ 87 acres
	Unique Farmland	None
	Farmland of Local Importance	~~None~~29 acres
	Williamson Act Contract	None
(2)33 kV Service Line (0.25 mile buffer)		
New right-of-way (ROW)	Prime Farmland	~~128~~ 144 acres
Overbuild in Existing ROW		~~867~~ 888 acres
New ROW	Farmland of Statewide Importance	~~61~~ 69 acres
Overbuild in Existing ROW		~~767~~ 742 acres
New ROW	Unique Farmland	15 acres
Overbuild in Existing ROW		~~15~~ 17 acres
New ROW	Farmland of Local Importance	~~None~~197 acres
Overbuild in Existing ROW		None
New ROW	Williamson Act Contract	None
Overbuild in Existing ROW		786 acres

Sources: CDC FMMP, 2008
ROW = Right-of-Way
(1) Acreages reflect the portion of the Study Area not included within the project site one-mile Study Area boundary.
(2) The 33 kV service line Study Area is evaluated as two different ROWs. The "New ROW" portion is the portion of the service line that will require approximately 3.12 miles of new transmission line structures (this 3.12 mile section is inclusive of Bradshaw Trail access road improvements Study Area). The "Existing ROW" portion is the portion of the service line that will require approximately 5.1 miles of overbuild onto an existing SCE transmission line. This overbuild requires no new transmission structures.

According to the CDC FMMP, portions of the Study Area have been mapped for agricultural purposes. The mapped farmland, as indicated in Table 5.6-6 and Figure 5.6-3 (rev), includes every type of important farmland.

- Prime Farmland is land best suited for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is available for these uses: cropland, pastureland, rangeland, forest land, or other land, but not urban land or water. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to

economically produce sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed (including water management) according to modern farming methods (Riverside, 2008).

- Farmland of Statewide Importance is land other than Prime Farmland that has a good combination of physical and biological characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is available for these uses (the land could be cropland, pastureland, rangeland, forest land or other land, but not urban land or water) (Riverside, 2008).
- Unique Farmland is land other than Prime and Statewide Important Farmland that is currently used for the production of specific high value food and fiber crops. It has the special combination of soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high quality of a specific crop when treated and managed according to modern farming methods. Examples of such economically important crops are citrus, olives, and avocados (Riverside, 2008).
- Riverside County Farmland of Local Importance is locally significant farmlands not covered under the CDC categories (Riverside, 2008). They include the following:
  - Lands with soils that would be classified as Prime or Statewide Important Farmlands but lack available irrigation water.
  - Lands planted in 1980 or 1981 in dry land grain crops such as barley, oats, and wheat.
  - Lands producing major crops for Riverside County but that are not listed as Unique Farmland crops. Such crops are permanent pasture (irrigated), summer squash, okra, eggplant, radishes, and watermelon.
  - Dairylands including corrals, pasture, milking facilities, and hay and manure storage areas if accompanied with permanent pasture or hayland of 10 acres or more.
  - Lands identified by the County with Agriculture land use designations or contracts.
  - Lands planted with jojoba that are under cultivation and are of producing age.

According to aerial images and site visits, the farmland within the Study area is both active and inactive. The farmland of Local Importance nearest the project site Study Area boundary is not productive. The farmland nearest the proposed access roads and 33-kV service line Study Area is active.

The Palo Verde Valley is well known for its agricultural land. The Palo Verde Valley surrounding Blythe and Ripley is heavily farmed (see Figure 5.6-3 (rev)). The history of the Palo Verde Valley is entwined with the history of the Colorado River. According to the Palo Verde Valley Area Plan, the agricultural lands found in the Palo Verde Valley area were created by periodic floods from the Colorado River. Agriculture is the major economic activity here (Palo Verde, 2008).

The Palo Verde Valley is home to the PVID. The PVID occupies about 189 square miles of territory in Riverside and Imperial Counties, California. The PVID contains approximately 131,298 acres, 26,798 acres of which are on the Palo Verde Mesa. The Mesa lies just west of the Palo Verde Valley. The eastern portion of the Palo Verde Mesa lies within the Study Area nearest the Project. The Colorado River forms the eastern and southern boundaries of the PVID (PVID, 2011).

The Palo Verde Valley, with its long, hot growing season, is ideal for agriculture; crops are grown and harvested year round. The main crops grown in the Study Area are hay and cotton. The primary field crops used for production of hay in the Study Area and the Palo Verde Valley nearest the Project are alfalfa and sudan (Personal conversation between Darin Neufeld at URS and a staff member at Hayday Farms, Blythe, CA). According to the PVID 2010 Crop Report, these crops comprised 42,975 and 3,876 acres respectively (PVID, 2010). Table 5.6-7 details the field crops grown in the entire PVID.

Table 5.6-7
Palo Verde Irrigation District Field Crops 2010

Field Crops	Acreage	Field Crops	Acreage
Alfalfa	42,975	Oats	1,009
Barley	214	Orchard	111
Bermuda Grass	1,837	Palm Trees	147
Citrus	1,956	Rye	5
Corn	121	**Sudan**	3,876
Cotton-Short	9,129	Timothy Grass	402
Golf Course	127	Wheat	1,548
Klein Grass	2,122	MSCP Habitat	619
Milo	92		
Subtotal: 66,290 Acres			

Sources: PVID, 2010.
Notes:
Acreages are for the entire Palo Verde Irrigation District. Field crops in bold represent those most prevalent within the Study Area and the Project Vicinity.

Natural Resource Protection and Natural Resource Extraction Areas (no changes)

Educational and Religious Land Use (no changes)

Cultural and Historic Land Use (no changes)

Unique Land Uses (no changes)

5.6.3.4 Recent or Proposed Development Code and General Plan Amendments

Recent or proposed amendments applicable to the project Study Area within the past 18 months are discussed below.

BLM (no changes)

County of Riverside

There have been no amendments to the RCGP or Ordinance 348 within the last 18 months within the Study Area. As mentioned previously, a change of zone is pending with the County. The Applicant anticipates receiving a zone change prior to the release of the Staff Assessment.

As outlined below the Applicant will undertake the following actions after certification, prior to construction. The Rio Mesa site, exclusive of gen-tie line and access roads, currently consists of 2830 ~~legally created~~ private parcels~~, as well as land controlled by the BLM~~. In order to create one legal parcel, excluding the linears, a ~~Reversionary Map~~one-lot parcel map ~~in accordance with the California Subdivision Map Act, Chapter 6, Article, "reversion to acreage"~~ will need to be prepared. Once the ~~Reversionary Map~~parcel map is prepared, it will be submitted to Riverside County for review and comment. ~~Prior to submittal to the County, all~~All parcels to be included in the ~~Reversionary Map~~parcel map ~~will need to be~~are in common ownership. The estimated timeframe for review, comment, and processing time by the County is expected to run between 90 and 120 days.

Once Riverside County has performed its review process and all comments are addressed, the ~~Reversionary Map~~parcel map can be recorded and the ~~reverted acreage~~parcels for the Rio Mesa project ~~area~~ site would be in one lot containing approximately 6,741 acres~~, not including the land managed by the BLM~~. The recordation of the ~~Reversionary Map~~parcel map will be done through the Riverside County Recorder's Office.

~~It has not yet been determined whether the reversion will result in one single legal parcel, or more than one parcel.~~ It is important to note that the Applicant holds an option to a leasehold interest for the ~~portion of the~~ project site that is owned by the Metropolitan Water District. As described in AFC Section 2.1.3:

> Rio Mesa Solar Holdings, LLC holds a~~n~~ lease option agreement with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California for approximately 6,741 acres, a portion of ~~in~~ which ~~the area~~ is planned for development of the ~~southern portion of the~~ Project. ~~In addition, Rio Mesa Solar III, LLC has applied for ROW grants from BLM for two areas: a 2,800 acre parcel in which the northern portion of the project site is located, and an additional 1,300 acre study area in which the common gen-tie line will be located.~~

Given the leasehold interest ~~, BLM managed land,~~ and the ~~three~~ two distinct legal entities with an interest in the project site (Rio Mesa Solar I, LLC~~,~~ and Rio Mesa Solar II, LLC, ~~Rio Mesa Solar III, LLC,~~ individually, and collectively as tenants in common for the common area), ~~reversion~~ a parcel map may result in ~~three~~ two ~~or more~~ legally created parcels. ~~In addition, merger~~Merger is typically required where a building or a structure crosses a property line between two parcels under common ownership to comply with specific setback requirements. It is not clear however, where the development consists of a field of heliostats that ~~merger~~ one parcel is required under either the County development ordinances or under the Subdivision Map Act. The process, if applicable will be started immediately after the project certification is final and no longer subject to further administrative challenge or judicial review.

The Project is also requesting a height variance to be processed as part of the CEC licensing process. The proposed height of the ~~three~~ two solar towers of 760 feet (inclusive of 10 foot lightning rod) will require approval of a height variance from Riverside Count~~r~~y Planning Department not withstanding the CEC's siting process. The current height limitation in the W-2 Zone is 105 feet. A height variance for the proposed towers will be pursuant to Section 18.27 of Ordinance 348, but is anticipated to be processed through the CEC's CEQA-equivalent regulatory review.

5.6.3.5 Recent Discretionary Reviews by Public Agencies (no changes)

5.6.4 Environmental Analysis

The land use impact evaluation was determined through review of applicable federal, state, and local LORS. Because the Warren-Alquist Act is equivalent to a CEQA review, the criteria from the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, CEQA Checklist, were used to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the Project:

1. Will the project physically divide an established community?
2. Will the project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?
3. Will the project conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?
4. Will the project convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?
5. Will the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, given their location and nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use?

5.6.4.1 Potential Effects on Land Use

1. Will the project physically divide an established community?

No impact: The Project will not physically divide an established community. The project site, consisting of the ~~three~~ two plants and common facilities area, will be located on previously disturbed land west of any existing community. The gen-tie line route will parallel two existing transmission lines and will not be located on or near an existing community. The access roads and 33 kV service line will not be located through an established community. Therefore, the Project will result in a finding of no impact under this criterion.

2. Will the project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No impact: The Project does not conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The project site is ~~partially~~ located on private land zoned by Ordinance 348 as N-A and W-2-10. The Applicant has submitted a Change of Zone Application to the Riverside County Planning Department as indicated above. The Applicant expects this zone change to be processed and approved prior to the release of the Staff Assessment. The

Project will request a variance for allowable heights in the W-2-10 Zone to be processed through the CEC licensing process.

Based on the information in this Section, the Project will be consistent with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations.

3. Will the project conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? (no changes)

4. Will the project convert prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?

Less Than Significant Impact:

The development of the project site, inclusive of the ~~three~~ two plants and common facilities, will be constructed primarily on previously disturbed desert land that is not currently used for farming or agricultural purposes. Therefore, the project site will have a less than significant impact on agricultural land.

There are no Prime Farmlands, Farmlands of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland within 0.25 mile of the gen-tie line. The gen-tie line will parallel an existing transmission line through previously disturbed lands. Therefore, there will be no impacts to Farmland from the gen-tie line.

There are Prime Farmlands and Farmlands of Statewide Importance within the 0.25 mile of the 34th Avenue access road. ~~The~~ A new access road will be required ~~improvements (~~and may potentially be pav~~ed)ing~~ directly north and parallel of 34th Avenue ROW, which is an existing dirt road ~~within a County 60 ft. ROW~~. ~~However, the improvement and~~ The ~~use of the~~ proposed access road alignment north of 34th Avenue ~~Project access road~~ will convert ~~a small amount~~approximately 1.55 acres of Prime Farmland and approximately 0.67 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance (2.2 acres total)~~of farmland~~ to nonagricultural uses ~~pursuant to the existing easement~~ (access road acreages are based on a 24 foot-wide ROW). During a site visit on June 12, 2012, URS determined that the 2.2 acres of agricultural lands west of State Route 78 and north and parallel to 34th Avenue towards the project site, are both fallow and active. The fallow fields closest to State Route 78 appear to have been so for quite some time, while the fallow fields further west appear to have been tilled more recently. The agricultural fields closest to the project site along this route are active. ~~There is a~~ The small portion of farmland currently in production along the access road north of 34th Avenue that will be taken out of production, represents a relatively small amount of farmland in the Palo Verde Valley (see Figure 5.6-3 (rev)). ~~However, this land is subject to a current 60 ft. county ROW for purposes of road improvements.~~ Therefore, the impact to agricultural land from the access road is anticipated to be less than significant.

The proposed 33 kV service line will require construction of new transmission poles as it leaves the common facilities area and heads east approximately 3.12 miles along Bradshaw Trail to a point approximately half way between the common facilities and State Route 78 (as discussed previously, this portion of the 33 kV Study Area is the same as the Study Area for Bradshaw Trail access road improvements). From this point, the Project will require an existing ROW overbuild on an existing SCE

transmission line that runs along Bradshaw Trail to State Route 78. From here, the overbuild portion of the service line will parallel State Route 78 until it reaches South Neighbors Boulevard (see Figure 5.6-3 (rev)). The entire distance of the overbuild portion of the service line is approximately 5.1 miles. The Study Area for the approximate 3.12 mile portion of the service line that requires construction of a new line affects parcels with Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland designations. Construction of new transmission structures is proposed adjacent to an existing road and will not directly impact farmlands. Construction of new transmission structures may indirectly impact these farmlands through temporary construction staging. The portion that requires Bradshaw Trail access road improvements (paved or unpaved) may indirectly impact these farmlands through increased vehicle trips on this road. The impact to agricultural land from the portion of the 33 kV service line that requires new construction and Bradshaw Trail access road improvements is anticipated to be less than significant. The Study Area for the remainder of the service line that requires overbuild of an existing transmission line affects parcels with Farmland designations. However, this portion is simply an upgrade and requires no new structures, and therefore, will result in a finding of no impact.

There are approximately 786 acres of agricultural land under Williamson Act Contract within the Study Area of the 5.1 mile overbuild portion of the proposed 33 kV service line. However, there will be no new transmission line poles constructed within lands under Williamson Act Contract. The Project will not require a cancellation of any Williamson Act Contracts. Therefore, the Project will result in a finding of no impact to Williamson Act Contract lands.

In conclusion, the Project will result in a finding of less than significant impact under this criterion because a small portion of active farmland will be converted to nonagricultural use as a result of the access road alignment ~~improvements~~north ~~and paving~~ of 34th Avenue. However, the small amount of farmland necessary for road improvements will result in a small effect to agricultural land within the Palo Verde Valley ~~that is within a County ROW for purposes of road improvements,~~ and will not significantly alter agricultural uses in the Study Area. Additionally, there may be some indirect impacts due to construction staging and increase vehicle trips along the 33 kV service line.

5. Will the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, given their location and nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use?

(no changes)

5.6.4.2 Other Potential Effects

In addition to the criterion required above for impacts to Farmland, the project site and access road north of 34th Avenue will convert some ~~parcels~~ land designated as Farmland of Local Importance by Riverside County to nonagricultural use. However, this farmland is currently inactive and has been allowed to lie fallow by the site owner, Metropolitan Water District (MWD). There are no future plans to use the farmland on the project site or within the proposed access road alignment for agricultural purposes. There is also land designated Farmland of Local Importance within the gen-tie portion of the Project. The gen-tie line will parallel existing transmission lines in a disturbed area of desert land. The land designated Farmland of Local Importance in the Study Area is not currently used for agricultural purposes and is not anticipated to be converted to nonagricultural use. The Project will result in a finding of no impact to locally important farmland.

As discussed previously, the Project is located within the Chocolate-Mule Mountains HA. The project site will be fenced, closing off a portion of this HA (see Figure 5.6-2 (rev)). However, the closing of this portion of the HA is not anticipated to cause a significant impact. The Chocolate-Mule Mountains HMA is approximately 10 miles south of the project site. The Project will result in a finding of no impact to the HMA.

5.6.4.3 Compatibility with Plans and Policies (no changes)

5.6.5 Cumulative Effects (no changes)

5.6.5.1 Current Setting (no changes)

5.6.5.2 Past, Present, or Reasonably Foreseeable Future Projects (no changes)

5.6.5.3 Summary of Cumulative Effects

The Project will be consistent with applicable plans and policies, will not physically divide an established community, and will not significantly impact the land uses described above in Section 5.6.3.3. Therefore, the Project will not result in significant land use impacts. ~~In addition, the~~The Project will ~~not~~ convert approximately 2.2 acres of farmland designated as prime and statewide importance by the California Resources Agency to nonagricultural uses; however, this will not ~~or~~ significantly impact farmland in the Palo Verde Valley. Therefore, the Project will not result in a cumulative farmland impact. Furthermore, it is expected that reasonably foreseeable projects considered in Section 5.17 and Table 5.17-4 will also not contribute to a significant impact on land use in the vicinity of the Project because each of these projects will receive discretionary approvals that could not be issued without a determination of consistency with applicable plans and policies, including policies pertaining to farmland, development, and habitat conservation.

5.6.6 Mitigation Measures (no changes)

5.6.7 Involved Agencies and Agency Contacts (no changes)

5.6.8 Permits Required and Permit Schedule

BLM is the lead agency responsible for the federal land use decisions for the Project. Land use decisions will be consistent with the CDCA Plan and the NECO Plan. A ROW grant from BLM will be required for the Project gen-tie line, 33 kV service line, and access road~~Project~~. BLM is responsible for the approval or denial of a ROW grant application based on review of environmental impacts and mitigation requirements, and existing land use information for the Project.

The ~~Project~~ project site is proposed to be constructed ~~partly~~ on private parcels under the jurisdiction of Riverside County. Figure 5.6-5 (from the Change of Zone Application filed with the County of Riverside) depicts the parcel numbers and locations requiring a zone change. These parcels will be merged prior to construction of the Project, so that the Project will be located on a single legal parcel.

The legal description of the private lands under lease from MWD on which the Project will be located is:

All of Section 28 and portions of Sections 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 29, 33, and 34, Township 08 South, Range 21 East, San Bernardino Meridian, Riverside County, California.

Some permits such as encroachment permits, zone change, and construction and building permits might be required for Project components on private lands. County land use issues will be addressed as part of the CEC licensing process.

Land use permits and related schedule are indicated in Table 5.6-10 below.

Table 5.6-10
Applicable Permits

Permit	Agency	Schedule
Right-of-Way (ROW) Grant	Bureau of Land Management	Approximately 60 calendar days following NEPA review
California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment		Prior to construction
Change of Zone	Riverside County	Prior to construction
County ROW Encroachment Permit		Prior to construction
Land Use Application-Parcel Merger		Prior to construction
Encroachment Permit	California Department of Transportation	Prior to construction

ROW = Right-Of-Way

5.6.9 References (no changes)

Southern California Edison 161kV

10

Blythe Airport

OS-RUR

PF

BP

CR

CT

FWY

LI

RC-LDR

MDR

RC-EDR

AG

CITY

RR

Buck-Julian Hinds - 220kV

Imperial Irrigation District - 161kV / W. Area Power Administration - 161kV

22nd Ave

Southern California Edison - 500kV

Rannells Blvd

28th Ave

78

Bradshaw Trail

30th Ave

Imperial Irrigation District - 161kV

32nd Ave

Hodges Drain

34th Ave

Existing Gas Line

Riverside County

Imperial County

Palo Verde

Area Power Administration 161kV

Private Land Owned by MWD (approx. 6,741 ac.)
Draft Fenceline Boundary of Solar Field (approx. 3,805 acres) *Includes Common Areas and Switch Yard
Approx. Boundary of Common Areas (approx. 19 acres) *Included in Solar Field acres
SwitchYard (approx. 2.2 ac.) *Included in Solar Field acres
Approx. Construction Area (approx. 53 ac.)
Bradshaw Trail Off Site
Existing Gas line (50ft. easement corridor, gas line is off-centered, 12.5ft. west of eastern easement boundary)

Access Road Corridors to be Improved

34th Ave Access Road Corridor to be Improved (1.02 mile, 200ft. corridor, 100ft. from c/l, 25 ac.)
Bradshaw Trail Access Road Corridor to be Improved 2.96 miles, 200ft. corridor, 100ft. from c/l, 71 ac.)
Drainage Crossing Upgrade (500ft. radius from center point, 18 ac. each; 72 ac. total)

Proposed 33kV Service Line

SCE 33kV Proposed Service (Existing ROW overbuild) (approx. 5.1 miles, 200 ft. corridor, 100 ft. from c/l, 119 ac.)
SCE 33kV Proposed Service (New ROW) (approx. 3.1 miles, 200 ft. corridor, 100 ft. c/l, 77 ac. total)

Proposed Project 230kV Transmission Line Corridor - (approx. 9.4 mi)

Proposed Project 230kV Transmission Line Centerline (approx. 9.9 mi offsite)
ROW Corridor approx. 1,228 ac. (1,300 ft. corridor, 650ft. from c/l; approx acres: 841 BLM, 387 Private)
CRS Substation (77 ac.)
Colorado River Substation Gen-tie Area (approx. 114 ac.)

Existing Substations

161 kV
230 kV
500 kV

Existing Transmission Lines

161 kV
220 kV
500 kV
City/Town
County Boundary

Note: Project is within Palo Verde Valley Area Plan.

Land Use Study Area (One Mile Project Site, 0.25 Mile All Linears)

BLM Multiple Use Classification

Limited (approx. 313 ac. in Project Linears)
Moderate (approx. 889 ac. in Project Linears)

Riverside County Landuse

Agriculture (AG)
Business Park (BP)
City (CITY)
Commercial Retail (CR)
Commercial Tourist (CT)
Freeway (FWY)
Light Industrial (LI)
Medium Density Residential (MDR)
Open Space Rural (OS-RUR)
Public Facilities (PF)
Rural Community - Estate Density Residential (RC-EDR)
Rural Community - Low Density Residential (RC-LDR)
Rural Residential (RR)

SOURCES: Landuse (Counties of Riverside, 2011).
Transmission Line Corridor, MWD Land, Private Lands,
Existing Gasline (VTN, 3-15-2011). Buck-Julian Hinds 220kV (Power Engineers, 8-2011).
Transmission Line Centerline (Power Engineers, 5-7-2012).
CRS Substation, Potential Gen-tie Area (Power Engineers, 5-7-2012).
Aerial Imagery (NAIP, 5-25-2009). County, State Boundaries, Roads,
Bradshaw Trail (ESRI, 2007). Land Ownership (BLM, 3-03-2011).
Existing Transmission Lines, Existing Substations (Platts, 2009).
Improved Access Roads, Drainage Crossing Upgrade (URS, 3-18-2011).
33kV Proposed Service Transmission Lines (BSE, 2011).

LAND USE
RIO MESA SOLAR
ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITY

URS

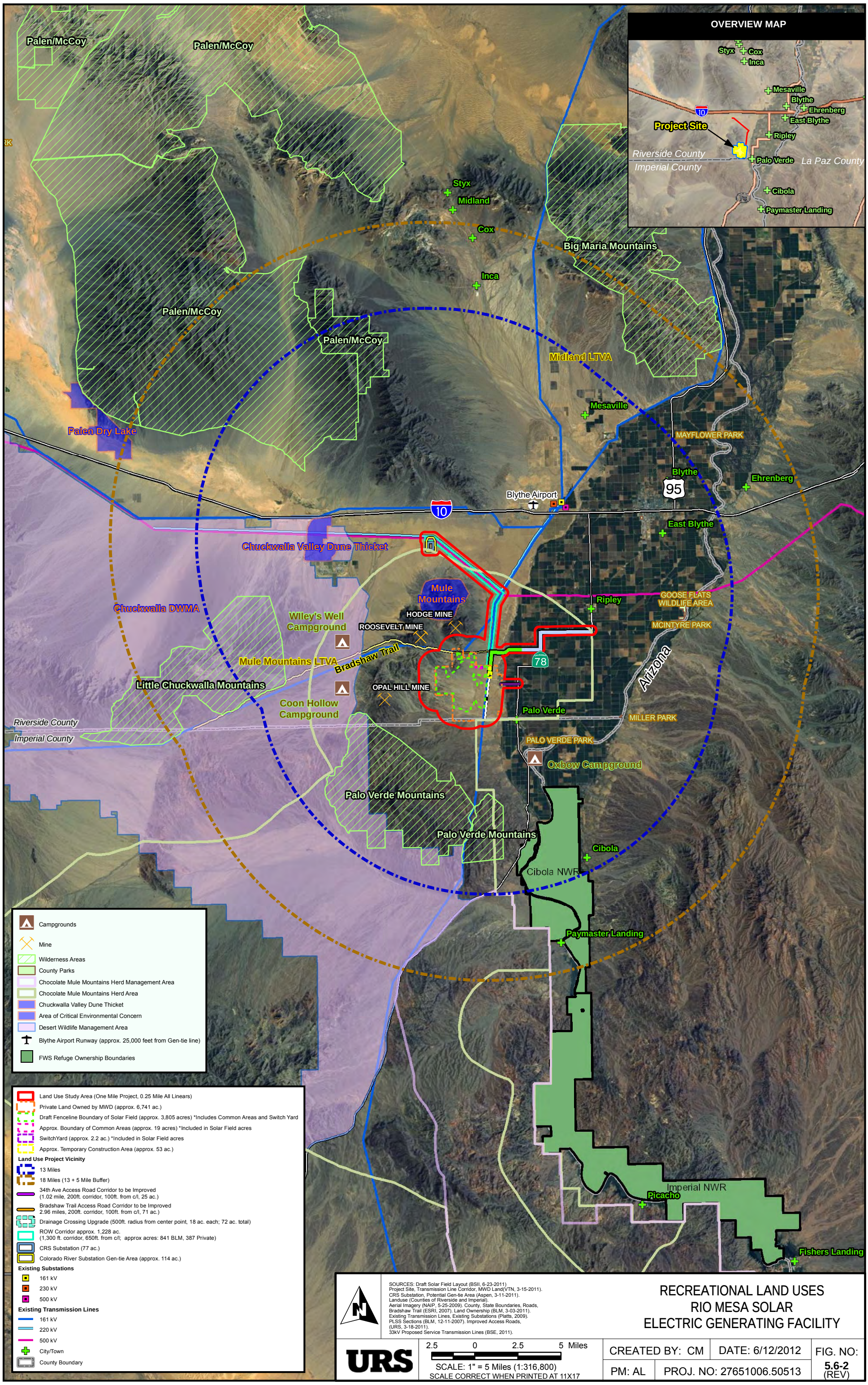
0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles

SCALE: 1" = 1 Mile (1:63,360)
SCALE CORRECT WHEN PRINTED AT 11X17

CREATED BY: CM | DATE: 7/5/2012 | FIG. NO: **5.6-1 (REV)**

PM: AL | PROJ. NO: 27651003.40010

Path: G:\gis\projects\1577\27651002\map_docs\mxd\AFC\LandUse\Supplemental\Landuse.mxd, paul_moreno, 7/5/2012, 1:49:23 PM


OVERVIEW MAP
Styx
Cox
Inca
Mesaville
Blythe
Ehrenberg
East Blythe
Project Site
Ripley
Riverside County
Imperial County
Palo Verde
La Paz County
Cibola
Paymaster Landing
Palen/McCoy
Palen/McCoy
Palen/McCoy
Palen/McCoy
Styx
Midland
Cox
Inca
Big Maria Mountains
Midland LTVA
Mesaville
MAYFLOWER PARK
Palen Dry Lake
Blythe Airport
Blythe
Ehrenberg
East Blythe
Chuckwalla Valley Dune Thicket
Mule Mountains
Ripley
GOOSE FLATS WILDLIFE AREA
MCINTYRE PARK
Chuckwalla DWMA
Wiley's Well Campground
HODGE MINE
ROOSEVELT MINE
Mule Mountains LTVA
Bradshaw Trail
Arizona
Little Chuckwalla Mountains
OPAL HILL MINE
Coon Hollow Campground
Palo Verde
MILLER PARK
Riverside County
Imperial County
PALO VERDE PARK
Oxbow Campground
Palo Verde Mountains
Palo Verde Mountains
Cibola
Cibola NWR
Paymaster Landing
Imperial NWR
Picacho
Fishers Landing
Campgrounds
Mine
Wilderness Areas
County Parks
Chocolate Mule Mountains Herd Management Area
Chocolate Mule Mountains Herd Area
Chuckwalla Valley Dune Thicket
Area of Critical Environmental Concern
Desert Wildlife Management Area
Blythe Airport Runway (approx. 25,000 feet from Gen-tie line)
FWS Refuge Ownership Boundaries
Land Use Study Area (One Mile Project, 0.25 Mile All Linears)
Private Land Owned by MWD (approx. 6,741 ac.)
Draft Fenceline Boundary of Solar Field (approx. 3,805 acres) *Includes Common Areas and Switch Yard
Approx. Boundary of Common Areas (approx. 19 acres) *Included in Solar Field acres
SwitchYard (approx. 2.2 ac.) *Included in Solar Field acres
Approx. Temporary Construction Area (approx. 53 ac.)
Land Use Project Vicinity
13 Miles
18 Miles (13 + 5 Mile Buffer)
34th Ave Access Road Corridor to be Improved
(1.02 mile, 200ft. corridor, 100ft. from c/l, 25 ac.)
Bradshaw Trail Access Road Corridor to be Improved
2.96 miles, 200ft. corridor, 100ft. from c/l, 71 ac.)
Drainage Crossing Upgrade (500ft. radius from center point, 18 ac. each; 72 ac. total)
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(1,300 ft. corridor, 650ft. from c/l; approx acres: 841 BLM, 387 Private)
CRS Substation (77 ac.)
Colorado River Substation Gen-tie Area (approx. 114 ac.)
Existing Substations
161 kV
230 kV
500 kV
Existing Transmission Lines
161 kV
220 kV
500 kV
City/Town
County Boundary
SOURCES: Draft Solar Field Layout (BSII, 6-23-2011)
Project Site, Transmission Line Corridor, MWD Land(VTN, 3-15-2011).
CRS Substation, Potential Gen-tie Area (Aspen, 3-11-2011).
Landuse (Counties of Riverside and Imperial).
Aerial Imagery (NAIP, 5-25-2009). County, State Boundaries, Roads,
Bradshaw Trail (ESRI, 2007). Land Ownership (BLM, 3-03-2011).
Existing Transmission Lines, Existing Substations (Platts, 2009).
PLSS Sections (BLM, 12-11-2007). Improved Access Roads,
(URS, 3-18-2011).
33kV Proposed Service Transmission Lines (BSE, 2011).
URS
2.5 0 2.5 5 Miles
SCALE: 1" = 5 Miles (1:316,800)
SCALE CORRECT WHEN PRINTED AT 11X17
RECREATIONAL LAND USES
RIO MESA SOLAR
ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITY
CREATED BY: CM
DATE: 6/12/2012
PM: AL
PROJ. NO: 27651006.50513
FIG. NO:
5.6-2
(REV)
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Land Use Study Area (One Mile Project, 0.25 Mile All Linears)

Farmland in Project Study Area

Project Site:
- Prime: 4 ac.
- State: 2 ac.
- Local: 3,699 ac.

34th Avenue Access Road:
- Prime: 224 ac.
- State: 87 ac.
- Local: 29 ac.

Gen-tie Line:
- Local: 2,476 ac.

New 33kV Transmission Line
- Prime: 144 ac.
- State: 69ac.
- Unique: 15 ac.
- Local: 197 ac.

Existing 33kV Transmission Overbuild
- Prime: 888 ac.
- State: 742 ac.
- Unique: 17 ac.
- Williamson Act Contract: 786 ac.

Farmland of Importance

- Statewide (approx. 0.8 mi. from Project Site, 0.7 mi. from Gen-tie Corridor)
- Prime (approx. 0.8 mi. from Project Site, 0.7 mi. from Gen-tie Corridor)
- Unique (approx. 1.1 mi. from Project Site, 0.9 mi. from Gen-tie Corridor)
- Local (present on Project Site and Gen-tie Corridor)
- Draft Fenceline Boundary of Solar Field (approx. 3,805 acres) *Includes Common Areas and Switch Yard
- Approx. Boundary of Common Areas (approx. 19 acres) *Included in Solar Field acres
- SwitchYard (approx. 2.2 ac.) *Included in Solar Field acres
- Approx. Temporary Construction Area (approx. 53 ac.)

California Williamson Act

- Prime (approx. 2.3 mi. from Project Site)
- Bradshaw Trail Off Site
- Existing Gas Line (50 ft. easement corridor, gas line is off-centered, 12.5 ft. west of eastern easement boundary)

Access Road Corridors to be Improved

- 34th Ave Access Road Corridor to be Improved (1.02 mile, 200 ft. corridor, 100 ft. from c/l, 25 ac.)
- Bradshaw Trail Access Road Corridor to be Improved 2.96 miles, 200 ft. corridor, 100 ft. from c/l, 71 ac.)
- Drainage Crossing Upgrade (500ft. radius from center point, 18 ac. each; 72 ac. total)

Proposed Project 230kV Transmission Line Corridor - (approx. 10 mi)

- Proposed Project 230kV Transmission Line Centerline (approx. 10 mi offsite)

Proposed 33kV Service Line

- SCE 33kV Proposed Service (Existing ROW overbuild) (approx. 5.1 miles, 200 ft. corridor, 100 ft. from c/l, 119 ac.)
- SCE 33kV Proposed Service (New ROW) (approx. 3.12 miles, 200 ft. corridor, 100 ft. c/l, 78 ac. total)
- ROW Corridor approx. 1,563 ac. (1,300 ft. corridor, approx 650ft. from c/l; approx acres: 1118 BLM, 445 Private)
- CRS Substation (77 ac.)
- Colorado River Substation Gen-tie Area (approx. 114 ac.)

Existing Substations

- 161 kV
- 230 kV
- 500 kV

Existing Transmission Lines

- 161 kV
- 220 kV
- 500 kV
- City/Town
- County Boundary

Land Ownership

- US Bureau of Land Management (2,598 ac. within project)
- Unclassified (5,749 ac. within project)

Blythe Airport
Buck- Julian Hinds - 220kV
Imperial Irrigation District - 161kV / W. Area Power Administration - 161kV
22nd Ave
Southern California Edison - 500kV
Rannells Blvd
28th Ave
Bradshaw Trail
30th Ave
Imperial Irrigation District - 161kV
Bradshaw Trail
78
Hodges Drain
32nd Ave
34th Ave
W. Area Power Administration 161 kV
Existing Gas Line
Palo Verde
Riverside County
Imperial County
78

SOURCES: Project Site, Transmission Line Centerline, Transmission Line Corridor, MWD Land, Private Lands, Existing Gasline (VTN, 3-15-2011). CRS Substation, Potential Gen-tie Area (Aspen, 3-11-2011). Aerial Imagery (NAIP, 5-25-2009). County, State Boundaries, Roads, Bradshaw Trail (ESRI, 2007). Land Ownership (BLM, 3-03-2011). Existing Transmission Lines, Existing Substations (Platts, 2009). Improved Access Roads, Drainage Crossing Upgrade (URS, 3-18-2011). Bradshaw Trail Re-route, Imperial Irrigation District Re-route (URS, 6-2011). 33kV Proposed Service Transmission Lines (BSE, 2011). Farmland (CDC, 2008).

FARMLANDS OF IMPORTANCE
RIO MESA SOLAR
ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITY

URS

3000 0 3000 6000 Feet

SCALE: 1" = 6,000' (1:72,000)
SCALE CORRECT WHEN PRINTED AT 11X17

CREATED BY: CM	DATE: 6/12/2012	FIG. NO:
PM: AL	PROJ. NO: 27651006.50509	5.6-3 (REV)

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Southern California Edison 161kV

Blythe Airport

10

Southern California Edison - 500 kV

W-2-10

Buck- Julian Hinds - 220kV

Imperial Irrigation District - 161kV / W. Area Power Administration - 161kV

Southern California Edison - 500kV

A-1-10

R-R

Bradshaw Trail

78

Hodges Drain

N-A

W. Area Power Administration 161kV

Existing Gas line

Palo Verde

Riverside County

Imperial County

Private Land Owned by MWD (approx. 6,741 ac.)
Draft Fenceline Boundary of Solar Field (approx. 3,805 acres) *Includes Common Areas and Switch Yard
Approx. Boundary of Common Areas (approx. 19 acres) *Included in Solar Field acres
SwitchYard (approx. 2.2 ac.) *Included in Solar Field acres
Approx. Construction Area (approx. 53 ac.)
Bradshaw Trail Off Site
Existing Gas Line (50 ft. easement corridor, gas line is off-centered, 12.5 ft. west of eastern easement boundary)

Access Road Corridors to be Improved

34th Ave Access Road Corridor to be Improved (1.02 mile, 200ft. corridor, 100ft. from c/l, 25 ac.)
Bradshaw Trail Access Road Corridor to be Improved 2.96 miles, 200ft. corridor, 100ft. from c/l, 71 ac.)

Proposed 33kV Service Line

SCE 33kV Proposed Service (Existing ROW overbuild) (approx. 5.1 miles, 200 ft. corridor, 100 ft. from c/l, 119 ac.)
SCE 33kV Proposed Service (New ROW) (approx. 3.1 miles, 200 ft. corridor, 100 ft. c/l, 77 ac. total)

Proposed Project 230kV Transmission Line Corridor - (approx. 9.4 mi)

Proposed Project 230kV Transmission Line Centerline (approx. 9.9 mi offsite)
ROW Corridor approx. 1,563 ac. (1,300 ft. corridor, approx 650ft. from c/l; approx acres: 1118 BLM, 445 Private)
CRS Substation (77 ac.)
Colorado River Substation Gen-tie Area (approx. 114 ac.)

Existing Substations

161 kV
230 kV
500 kV

Existing Transmission Lines

161 kV
220 kV
500 kV
City/Town
County Boundary

Note: Project is within Palo Verde Valley Area Plan.

Land Use Study Area (One Mile Project, 0.25 Mile All Linears)

Riverside County Zoning

A-1-10 - Light Agriculture
N-A - Natural Assets
R-R - Rural Residential
W-2-10 - Controlled Development Areas

SOURCES: Transmission Line Centerline, Transmission Line Corridor, MWD Land, Private Lands, Existing Gasline (VTN, 3-15-2011). CRS Substation, Potential Gen-tie Area (Aspen, 3-11-2011). Aerial Imagery (NAIP, 5-25-2009). County, State Boundaries, Roads, Bradshaw Trail (ESRI, 2007). Land Ownership (BLM, 3-03-2011). Existing Transmission Lines, Existing Substations (Platts, 2009). PLSS Sections (BLM, 12-11-2007). Improved Access Roads, Drainage Crossing Upgrade (URS, 3-18-2011). Bradshaw Trail Re-route, Imperial Irrigation District Re-route (URS, 6-2011). 33kV Proposed Service Transmission Lines (BSE, 2011). Zoning (County of Riverside, 2006).

URS

0.5 0 0.5 1 Miles

SCALE: 1" = 1 Mile (1:63,360)
SCALE CORRECT WHEN PRINTED AT 11X17

ZONING
RIO MESA SOLAR
ELECTRIC GENERATING FACILITY

CREATED BY: CM	DATE: 6/12/2012	FIG. NO:
PM: AL	PROJ. NO: 27651006.50513	**5.6-4** (REV)

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