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Description:	This document replaces in full TN 257916. Revisions made address CEC data requests WATER-1 through WATER-30. This Section evaluates the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts the Project may have related to utilities and service systems and identifies any required Applicant-Proposed Measures (APM) and any required Mitigation Measures.
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3.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This section of the EIR addresses the project's potential for environmental impacts related to the provision of utilities and service systems for the project. Utilities include water supply services, wastewater services, stormwater drainage, solid waste services, electricity services, and natural gas services. This analysis is based on the review of existing resources; technical data; applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines; and the following technical reports prepared for the project:

- *Water Supply Report,* prepared by SWCA Environmental Consultants (2025) (Appendix J).

3.19.1 Regulatory Setting

3.19.1.1 Federal

CALIFORNIA DESERT CONSERVATION AREA PLAN OF 1980, AS AMENDED

The 25 million-acre California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) contains over 12 million acres of public lands spread within the area known as the California Desert, which includes the following three deserts: the Mojave, the Sonoran, and a small portion of the Great Basin. Approximately 10 million acres of the CDCA public lands are administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Lands within the project site are designated Multiple-Use Classes L, M, and I under the CDCA Plan. Specifically, with respect to waste disposal, the CDCA Plan requires that no hazardous or nonhazardous waste disposal is allowed in any areas within the CDCA, regardless of multiple-use class. Thus, any solid waste generated by the project would require off-site disposal.

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

In September 2016, the BLM adopted the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) to the CDCA Plan, Bishop Resource Management Plan, and Bakersfield Resource Management Plan. The DRECP LUPA addresses solar, wind, and geothermal energy generation and transmission projects on 10.8 million acres of BLM-administered lands in the desert regions of southern California (BLM 2016).

The BLM DRECP LUPA establishes several land use classifications, including Development Focus Areas (DFAs), Variance Process Lands (VPLs), Recreation Management Areas, General Public Lands, and various conservation land use designations. In DFAs, renewable energy projects are incentivized, and permitting is streamlined. Renewable energy projects may be implemented on VPLs, but they must first be evaluated under a variance process and then approved by the BLM to proceed through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental review. BLM Conservation Areas include National Landscape Conservation System lands, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), and Wildlife Allocations. Recreation Management Areas are designated for recreation actions. This designation includes Extensive Recreation Management Areas, which entail management specifically to address recreation use and demand; and Special Recreation Management Areas, which are high-priority areas for recreation and have unique value and importance for recreation. General Public Lands are BLM-administered lands that do not have a specific land allocation or designation associated with energy development, conservation, or recreation. These lands are not needed to fulfill the DRECP biological conservation or renewable energy strategy. These areas are available to renewable energy applications but do not benefit from permit review streamlining or other incentives.

Most of the project site is on DRECP General Public Lands, and the gen-tie route is within an ACEC.

CLEAN WATER ACT

In 1972, the federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act [CWA]) was amended to prohibit the discharge of pollutants to waters of the United States unless the discharge receives a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The CWA focused on tracking point sources, primarily from wastewater treatment facilities and industrial waste dischargers, and required implementation of control measures to minimize pollutant discharges. The CWA was amended again in 1987, adding Section 402(p), to provide a framework for regulating municipal and industrial stormwater discharges. In November 1990, the EPA published final regulations that establish application requirements for specific categories of industries, including construction projects that encompass greater than or equal to 5 acres of land. The Phase II Rule became final in December 1999, expanding regulated construction sites to those greater than or equal to 1 acre. The regulations require that stormwater and non-stormwater runoff associated with construction activity that discharges either directly to surface waters or indirectly through Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s), must be regulated by an NPDES permit.

SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT

The purpose of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) is to protect public health by regulating the nation's public drinking water supply. The SDWA authorizes the EPA to set national health-based standards for drinking water to protect against both naturally occurring and human-made contaminants that may be found in drinking water. Potential contaminants include improperly disposed chemicals, animal wastes, pesticides, human threats, waste injected underground, and naturally occurring substances. In addition, water that is not properly treated may pose a threat to drinking water. The SDWA applies to all public water systems across the nation. The EPA, individual states, and water systems work in coordination to ensure that these standards are met. The EPA identifies potential contaminants, determines an allowable maximum contaminant level, and enforces the set standards.

3.19.1.2 State

URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

Public water systems are required by the California Water Code to prepare Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) to carry out "long-term resource planning responsibilities to ensure adequate water supplies to meet existing and future demands for water" (California Water Code 10610.2). UWMPs are prepared using input from multiple water systems operating in a region. They include assessment of the reliability of water supply over a 20-year period and account for known and projected water demands during that time, including during normal, single dry, and multiple dry water years (Mojave Water Agency [MWA] 2021.

The MWA created an UWMP for 2020 that covers the entire MWA service area. The project water supply source lies within the Baja Subarea, an adjudicated water basin, and therefore, groundwater within the basin is actively managed to achieve sustainability. As part of the UWMP, an analysis was performed to determine whether MWA has adequate water supplies to meet demands during average, single dry, and multiple dry years over the next 25 years.

SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ACT

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) created a framework to promote the sustainable management of groundwater resources by local agencies. It creates requirements applicable to groundwater basins that have been designated as high- or medium-priority by DWR under California Water Code 10933. Basin prioritization is based on the best available socioeconomic and hydrological

data, such as population, number of wells, and irrigated acres. The majority of subbasins within the Mojave Desert are designated by the SGMA as "Low & Very Low Priority" basins. In general, factors that influence basin priority designations within the Mojave Desert remain low, such as urban development, well development, and groundwater reliance within the Mojave Desert remain low. The basin's priority designation under SGMA may not provide a comprehensive depiction of the hydrologic conditions or groundwater resources underlying the project's water supply well, particularly due to limited data and development within the region.

The SGMA addresses the depletion of groundwater resources by mandating the formation of groundwater sustainability agencies tasked with developing and implementing groundwater sustainability plans tailored to local basins. These plans outline strategies, such as recharge and demand management to achieve sustainability within 20 years, guided by set goals and criteria. The framework outlined by the SGMA does not apply to the project because the project site is underlain by the Soda Lake Valley Groundwater Basin, a subbasin designated low priority by the DWR (DWR 2014). Additionally, the water supply for the proposed project is situated approximately 12 miles northeast of the proposed project, within the Silver Lake Valley Groundwater Basin. The Silver Lake Valley Groundwater Basin is designated as Very Low Priority under the SGMA; therefore, the framework outlined by the SGMA does not apply to the proposed project water supply source.

CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT ACT

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) mandated local jurisdictions to meet waste diversion goals of 25% by 1995 and 50% by 2000 and established an integrated framework for program implementation, solid waste planning, and solid waste facility and landfill compliance. AB 939 requires Cities and Counties to prepare, adopt, and submit to CalRecycle a source reduction and recycling element to demonstrate how the jurisdiction will meet the diversion goals. Other elements included encouraging resource conservation and considering the effects of waste management operations.
The diversion goals and program requirements of the act are implemented through a disposal-based reporting system by local jurisdictions under California Integrated Waste Management Board regulatory oversight. AB 939 has achieved substantial progress in waste diversion, program implementation, solid waste planning, and protection of public health, safety, and the environment from landfill operations and solid waste facilities. In 2011, AB 341 was passed, requiring CalRecycle to require that local agencies adopt strategies that will enable 75% diversion of all solid waste by 2020.

Since 2007, CalRecycle has measured solid waste diversion rates by comparing reported disposal tons to population to calculate per capita disposal, expressed in pounds per person per day (PPD). The per-capita disposal rate is a jurisdiction-specific index used as one of several factors in determining a jurisdiction's compliance with AB 939 that allows jurisdictions, as well as CalRecycle, to set their primary focus on the successful implementation of diversion programs. CalRecycle measures per capita disposal rates for two measures of population, the total number of residents of a local jurisdiction ("population") and the estimate of the annual average number of people employed at businesses within the jurisdiction ("employment"). For most jurisdictions, CalRecycle uses population disposal rates to set diversion goals. For jurisdictions whose primary source of solid waste is business, CalRecycle may use the employment disposal rates.

In 2022, unincorporated San Bernardino County had an annual population disposal PPD of 5.8, which is below the County-specific target maximum of 6.2 PPD. The County also met the County-specific employment disposal target of 43.3 PPD by having an annual disposal of 31.0 PPD (CalRecycle 2022).

STATE-MANDATED SOLID WASTE DIVERSION

As landfills reach their capacities and new landfill sites become increasingly difficult to establish, the need to reduce solid waste generation is significant. State law currently requires that local jurisdictions divert at least 50% of their solid waste from landfills through recycling, conservation, and composting. The County of San Bernardino is required to comply with state regulations.

CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE AND GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS

The California Building Code (CBC) contains standards that regulate the method of use, properties, performance, or types of materials used in the construction, alteration, improvement, repair, or rehabilitation of a building or other improvements to real property. The CBC is adopted every 3 years by the Building Standards Commission.

"Green" building standards are virtually indistinguishable from any other building standards, are contained in the CBC, and regulate the construction of new buildings and improvements. Whereas the focus of traditional building standards has been protecting public health and safety, the focus of green building standards is to improve environmental performance. The green building standards were most recently updated in January 2023 and are detailed in the 2022 California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen). CALGreen Section 5.408 requires the diversion of at least 65% of the construction waste generated during construction (CALGreen 2023).

CALIFORNIA SENATE BILL 1374

SB 1374 was implemented to assist jurisdictions with diverting construction and demolition waste material. Per SB 1374, Public Resources Code (PRC) 41821 requires public agencies to include a summary of the progress made in diverting construction and demolition waste according to diversion goals included in AB 939. Per SB 1374, PRC 41850 authorizes CalRecycle to fine jurisdictions that do not meet the required goals. Additionally, per SB 1734, PRC 42912 requires that CalRecycle adopt a model ordinance for diverting 50% to 75% of all construction and demolition waste from landfills.

SENATE BILL 901, 610, AND 267, WATER SUPPLY ASSESSMENT

SB 901 was enacted in 1995 to ensure that Cities and Counties assess the adequacy of available water supplies to meet projected water demand prior to approving certain types of new land development projects. SB 901, also known as the Water Supply Assessment (WSA) law, requires that before a project is granted approval, the city or county must request the preparation of a WSA by the public water supplier that will serve the project. The provisions of SB 901 were codified in Water Code Sections 10910 through 10915.

In 2001, California adopted SB 610 and SB 221, amending the CWC to require that certain types of development projects provide detailed assessments of water supply availability and reliability to county and city decision-makers prior to project approval. Preparation of a WSA is required for specified projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including a proposed industrial facility occupying more than 40 acres of land (CWC 10912(a)). WSAs identify water supply needs for a described project over a 20-year projection under varying climatic conditions. The primary purpose of these requirements is to promote collaborative planning of local water supplies and land use decisions. Because the language of SB 610 is unclear on whether renewable energy projects meet the definition of a "project," this analysis takes a conservative approach and considers renewable energy projects to be subject to the requirements of SB 610. In accordance with this law, a WSA was prepared to support the analysis in this EIR (see Appendix J).

14 CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS DIVISION 7.3

Title 14, Division 7, Chapter 3 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) (14 CCR 17200 et seq.) provides minimum requirements for solid waste handling and disposal within the state. The regulations implement standards for the disposal and storage of solid waste, for nonhazardous wastes, and solid wastes from industrial sources. Specific requirements are included for the handling and disposal of construction and demolition wastes, nonhazardous contaminated soil, waste tires, nonhazardous ash, and inert debris. Additional requirements are provided for transfer and processing facilities, siting and design standards, operation, and recordkeeping and reporting.

22 CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS DIVISION 4.5

Title 22, Division 4.5 of the CCR (22 CCR 66250 et seq.) discusses an array of requirements with respect to the disposal and recycling of hazardous and universal wastes. Specific standards and requirements are included for the identification, collection, transport, disposal, and recycling of hazardous wastes. Additional standards are included for the collection, transport, disposal, and recycling of universal wastes, defined as those wastes identified in 22 CCR 66273.9, including batteries, electronic devices, mercury-containing equipment, lamps, cathode ray tubes, and aerosol cans. Requirements include recycling, recovery, returning spent items to the manufacturer, or disposal at an appropriately permitted facility. Title 22, Division 4.5 also provides restrictions and standards relevant to waste destination facilities and provides authorization requirements for various waste handlers. Note that Title 22 includes California's Universal Waste Rule, as well as other additional waste handling and disposal requirements.

27 CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS DIVISION 2

Title 27, Division 2 of the CCR (27 CCR 20005 et seq.) implements regulations of CalRecycle and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) with respect to the disposal of wastes on land. The regulations implement a waste classification and management system, which determines whether wastes are compatible with containment features of specific disposal facilities, and whether wastes are considered hazardous. Additional requirements are included for the waste disposal sites, including construction standards, liner requirements, siting criteria, and operational management requirements. Water quality monitoring requirements are also included, along with associated contamination response programs. Finally, disposal facility closure and post-closure requirements, compliance with reporting programs, and financial assurance requirements also are included.

3.19.1.3 Local

The project is located on federally owned land managed by the BLM. While it is not subject to County land use plans and ordinances, local plans were reviewed for informational purposes.

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The following policies identified in the Infrastructure & Utilities element of the San Bernardino County General Plan are relevant to this analysis (San Bernardino County 2020).

Goal IU-1 Water Supply Water supply and infrastructure are sufficient for the needs of residents and businesses and resilient to drought.

- **Policy IU-1.1 Water supply**. We require that new development be connected to a public water system or a County-approved well to ensure a clean and resilient supply of potable water, even during cases of prolonged drought.

- **Policy IU-1.2 Water for military installations**. We collaborate with military installations to avoid impacts on military training and operations from groundwater contamination and inadequate groundwater supply.
- **Policy IU-1.3 Recycled water**. We promote the use of recycled water for landscaping, groundwater recharge, direct potable reuse, and other applicable uses in order to supplement groundwater supplies.
- **Policy IU-1.4 Greywater**. We support the use of greywater systems for non-potable purposes.
- **Policy IU-1.5 Agricultural water use**. We encourage water-efficient irrigation and the use of non-potable and recycled water for agricultural uses.
- **Policy IU-1.6 User fees**. For water systems operated by County Special Districts, we establish user fees that cover operation and maintenance costs and set aside adequate reserves for capital upgrades and improvements.
- **Policy IU-1.7 Areas vital for groundwater recharge**. We allow new development on areas vital for groundwater recharge when stormwater management facilities are installed onsite and maintained to infiltrate predevelopment levels of stormwater into the ground.
- **Policy IU-1.8 Groundwater management coordination**. We collaborate with watermasters, groundwater sustainability agencies, water purveyors, and other government agencies to ensure groundwater basins are being sustainably managed. We discourage new development when it would create or aggravate groundwater overdraft conditions, land subsidence, or other "undesirable results" as defined in the California Water Code. We require safe yields for groundwater sources covered by the Desert Groundwater Management Ordinance.
- **Policy IU-1.9 Water conservation**. We encourage water conserving site design and the use of water conserving fixtures, and advocate for the adoption and implementation of water conservation strategies by water service agencies. For existing County-owned facilities, we incorporate design elements, building materials, fixtures, and landscaping that reduce water consumption, as funding is available.
- **Policy IU-1.10 Connected systems**. We encourage local water distribution systems to interconnect with regional and other local systems, where feasible, to assist in the transfer of water resources during droughts and emergencies.
- **Policy IU-1.11 Water storage and conveyance**. We assist in development of additional water storage and conveyance facilities to create a resilient regional water supply system, when it is cost effective for County-owned water and stormwater systems.

Goal IU-2 Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Residents and businesses in unincorporated areas have safe and sanitary systems for wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal.

- **Policy IU-2.1 Minimum parcel size**. We require new lots smaller than one-half acre to be served by a sewer system. We may require sewer service for larger lot sizes depending on local soil and groundwater conditions, and the County's Local Area Management Program.
- **Policy IU-2.2 User fees**. For wastewater systems operated by County Special Districts, we establish user fees that cover operation and maintenance costs and set aside adequate reserves for capital upgrades and improvements.
- **Policy IU-2.3 Shared wastewater facilities for recycled water**. We encourage an expansion of recycled water agreements between wastewater entities to share and/or create connections between wastewater systems to expand the use of recycled water.

Goal IU-3 Stormwater Drainage A regional stormwater drainage backbone and local stormwater facilities in unincorporated areas that reduce the risk of flooding.

- **Policy IU-3.1 Regional flood control**. We maintain a regional flood control system and regularly evaluate the need for and implement upgrades based on changing land coverage and hydrologic conditions in order to manage and reduce flood risk. We require any public and private projects proposed anywhere in the county to address and mitigate any adverse impacts on the carrying capacity and stormwater velocity of regional stormwater drainage systems.
- **Policy IU-3.2 Local flood control**. We require new development to install and maintain stormwater management facilities that maintain predevelopment hydrology and hydraulic conditions.
- **Policy IU-3.3 Recreational use**. We prefer that stormwater facilities be designed and maintained to allow for regional open space and safe recreation use without compromising the ability to provide flood risk reduction.
- **Policy IU-3.4 Natural floodways**. We retain existing natural floodways and watercourses on County- controlled floodways, including natural channel bottoms, unless hardening and channelization is the only feasible way to manage flood risk. On floodways not controlled by the County, we encourage the retention of natural floodways and watercourses. Our priority is to reduce flood risk, but we also strive to protect wildlife corridors, prevent loss of critical habitat, and improve the amount and quality of surface water and groundwater resources.
- **Policy IU-3.5 Fair share requirements**. We require new development to pay its fair share of capital costs to maintain adequate capacity of the County's regional flood control systems.

Goal IU-4 Solid Waste Adequate regional landfill capacity that provides for the safe disposal of solid waste, and efficient waste diversion and collection for unincorporated areas.

- **Policy IU-4.1 Landfill capacity**. We maintain a minimum ongoing landfill capacity of 15 years to serve unincorporated waste disposal needs.
- **Policy IU-4.2 Transfer stations**. We locate and operate transfer stations based on overall system efficiency.
- **Policy IU-4.3 Waste diversion**. We shall meet or exceed state waste diversion requirements, augment future landfill capacity, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and use of natural resources through the reduction, reuse, or recycling of solid waste.
- **Policy IU-4.4 Landfill funding**. We require sufficient fees for use of County landfills to cover capital costs; ongoing operation, maintenance, and closure costs of existing landfills; and the costs and liabilities associated with closed landfills.

Goal IU-5 Power and Communications Unincorporated area residents and businesses have access to reliable power and communication systems.

- **Policy IU-5.1 Electricity and natural gas service**. We partner with other public agencies and providers to improve the availability and stability of electricity and natural gas service in unincorporated communities.
- **Policy IU-5.2 Expanded high-speed internet and wireless communication**. We encourage the expansion of expand affordable, high-speed internet access in underserved and unserved unincorporated communities. We encourage the expansion of advanced mobile and fixed wireless communication technologies that improve service, coverage, and reliability throughout the county.

- **Policy IU-5.3 Underground facilities**. We encourage new and relocated power and communication facilities to be located underground when feasible, particularly in the Mountain and Desert regions.
- **Policy IU-5.4 Electric transmission lines**. We support the maintenance of existing and development of new electric transmission lines along existing rights-of-way and easements to maintain the stability and capacity of the electric distribution system in southern California.
- **Policy IU-5.5 Energy and fuel facilities**. We encourage the development and upgrade of energy and regional fuel facilities in areas that do not pose significant environmental or public health and safety hazards, and in a manner that is compatible with military operations and local community identity.
- **Policy IU-5.6 Dig once approach**. We encourage infrastructure, telecommunication, and utility planning and projects to coordinate so that improvements are made concurrently or in such a manner that minimizes disruption to rights-of-way and reduces costs.

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTYWIDE INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

State law requires Counties in California, in conjunction with their Cities, to prepare a Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP) to reduce dependence on landfilling solid waste, and to ensure an effective and coordinated effort to safely manage solid waste generated within the state. The San Bernardino CIWMP includes a Source Reduction and Recycling Element, Countywide Siting Element, Household Hazardous Waste Element, and a Non-Disposal Facility Element. The CIWMP contains goals and policies that profile the County's current waste as well as a summary of integrated waste management issues faced by the County and strategies being utilized in its approach to these issues. It summarizes waste management programs designated by the County's jurisdictions to meet their 50% waste reduction mandates and suggests steps necessary to cooperatively implement and administer specific programs regionally or countywide (San Bernardino County 2018).

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DIVISION

San Bernardino County has adopted CALGreen, which includes mandatory construction and demolition waste recycling (San Bernardino County 2022). Projects that have the potential to generate construction and demolition waste are required to submit a Construction and Demolition Solid Waste Management Plan (WMP) to identify the estimated quantity and location of recycling for construction and demolition waste resulting from the project. The goal of the WMP is to recycle, reuse, compost, and/or salvage a minimum of 50% by weight of the waste generated on-site. The WMP must be approved by the Solid Waste Management Division prior to issuance of building permits. An "Actual Material Disposal/ Diversion Worksheet" is required upon completion of construction that demonstrates the actual quantity of construction and demolition waste recycled.

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY GROUNDWATER ORDINANCE NO. 3872

San Bernardino County (County) adopted this ordinance to help protect water resources in unregulated portions of the desert while not precluding its use. The ordinance requires a permit to locate, construct, operate, or maintain a new groundwater well within the unincorporated, unadjudicated desert region of San Bernardino County. CEQA compliance must be completed prior to issuance of a permit, and groundwater management, mitigation, and monitoring may be required as a condition of the permit. The ordinance states that it does not apply to "groundwater wells located on federal lands unless otherwise specified by inter-agency agreement." The BLM and County entered into a memorandum of

understanding, which establishes that the BLM will require conformance with this ordinance for all projects proposing to use groundwater from beneath public lands within the county.

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY TECHNICAL GUIDANCE MANUAL FOR ON-SITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS

The San Bernardino County Division of Environmental Health Services (EHS) has published guidelines for the minimum setback and location of septic systems (San Bernardino County EHS 2024). The guidelines provide guidance to project contractors, engineers, designers, and installers for on-site wastewater treatment systems within San Bernardino County. According to the manual, installation of the proposed septic system would require a setback of at least 100 feet between the system and the nearest groundwater well. There are no existing groundwater wells within 5 miles of the proposed septic system.

3.19.2 Environmental Setting

3.19.2.1 Water

WATER SERVICE

The project site is not connected to or within the boundaries of a municipal water district. The closest water system is the Baker Community Services District, approximately 8 miles to the north.

GROUNDWATER

The Soda Lake Valley Groundwater Basin underlies the project site and the Cronise Valley Groundwater Basin is directly adjacent (DWR 2019); neither basin has been adjudicated, and both are considered very low priority under the SGMA (DWR 2019). The project would use water sourced from one off-site groundwater well approximately 12 miles northeast within the Silver Lake Valley Groundwater Basin in San Bernardino County, California. The Silver Lake Groundwater Basin is designated as Very Low Priority pursuant to the SGMA.

3.19.2.2 Wastewater

The project site is not currently served by a public wastewater treatment service provider.

3.19.2.3 Stormwater

The project site is located in the valley portion of the Soda Lake Watershed. Interstate 15 (I-15) intersects a large historic alluvial fan landscape, and culverts were constructed beneath the highway to collect and allow passage of upstream water from the north side of the highway to the south side. In addition to the culverts, large berms and the elevated highway prevent upstream water from passing through until diverted toward and through one of the culverts.

3.19.2.4 Electric Power and Other Utilities

Infrastructure surrounding the site includes two high-voltage electric transmission lines, an electrical distribution line, wireless cellular telephone towers, two fiber-optic cables, and two fuel pipelines. The two high-voltage electrical transmission lines to the west of I-15 are a 115-kilovolt (kV) sub-transmission line owned by Southern California Edison and the Mead-Adelanto 500-kV transmission line operated by the Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Mead-Adelanto Transmission Project is a 202-mile, 500 kV alternating current transmission line that extends between a southwest terminus at the

Adelanto substation in Southern California and a northeast terminus at Marketplace Substation approximately 17 miles southwest of Boulder City, Nevada. The transmission line has a transfer capability of 1,291 MW (SCPPA 2024).

3.19.3 Impact Analysis

3.19.3.1 Thresholds of Significance

The determinations of significance of project impacts are based on applicable policies, regulations, goals, and guidelines defined by CEQA and San Bernardino County. Specifically, the project would be considered to have a significant effect on utilities and service systems if the effects exceed the significance criteria described below:

1. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.
2. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years.
3. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

Each of these thresholds is discussed under Section 3.19.4, Impact Assessment, below.

3.19.3.2 Methodology

The following impact assessment evaluates the potential for the project to require new or relocated utility infrastructure or exceed existing utility infrastructure capacities and whether or not any necessary improvements may have the potential to cause significant environmental effects.

3.19.3.3 Applicant-Proposed Measures

The applicant has identified and committed to implementing the following APMs as part of the proposed project to avoid or substantially lessen potentially significant impacts to utilities and service systems, to the extent feasible. The APMs, where applicable, are discussed in the impact analysis section below.

- **APM USS-1:** Prior to issuance of a notice to proceed, the project applicant shall submit a Waste Recycling Plan (WRP) to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the BLM. At a minimum, the WRP must identify the materials (e.g., solar panels, cardboard, concrete, asphalt, wood) that will be generated by construction and development; the projected amounts of each; the applicable state and local laws and regulations governing waste disposal and recycling (e.g., Department of Toxic Substances Control regulations regarding photovoltaic modules); the measures/methods that will be taken to recycle, reuse, and/or reduce the amount of materials; the facilities and/or haulers that will be utilized; and the targeted project-specific recycling or reduction rate. During construction, the project site shall have, at a minimum, two bins: one for waste disposal and the other for the recycling of construction and demolition (C&D) materials. Additional bins are encouraged to be used for further source separation of C&D recyclable materials and shall be provided if required by applicable state and local laws. The project applicant shall maintain accurate records (receipts or other types of verification) for recycling of C&D recyclable materials and solid waste disposal; arrangements for such receipts can be made

through the franchise hauler. These receipts will be retained to demonstrate compliance with the approved WRP if requested by the agencies and must clearly identify the amount of waste disposal and C&D materials recycled.

- **APM USS-2:** Standard in situ testing (deep percolation tests) would be performed at locations where septic or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed. The applicant shall document that any proposed sites for septic or alternative wastewater disposal systems meet all applicable standards, and that documentation shall be made available to BLM.

3.19.3.4 Impact Assessment

Impact USS-1: Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? (Less Than Significant)

Water, Electric Power, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications

The project would construct a new electric solar power facility that includes electric power and telecommunications connections. The project would not be connected to a public water system and would not use natural gas. The electric power and telecommunications would be attached to existing distribution lines, telecommunications infrastructure, and the project's substation. There would be no need to relocate any existing electric power or telecommunications structures. Given the proximity of existing facilities to the project site, the project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new water or natural gas facilities during construction, operation, maintenance, and future decommissioning. Impacts would be **less than significant.**

Wastewater

The project would not be connected to a public wastewater system and would not cause waste that would be treated in an existing wastewater treatment plant. During construction, portable sanitary facilities would be located in the project area, maintained by a local contractor, and transported to an off-site disposal facility authorized to accept the waste. The project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new wastewater facilities that would cause significant environmental impacts. Impacts would be **less than significant.**

Stormwater

Current state and federal water quality regulations, along with the proposed Stormwater Pollution Prevention (SWPPP), aim to maintain compliance with stormwater, water quality, and waste discharge standards throughout all phases of the project, including construction, operations, and eventual decommissioning. Compliance with these regulations would ensure that the project would not require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects. Therefore, impacts related to construction or relocation of service utilities would be **less than significant**.

Impact USS-2: Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? (Less Than Significant)

The project would transport water from an existing off-site groundwater well located outside of Baker, California to the project site. Refer to Section 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality, Impact HYD-2 for further analysis on impacts to groundwater supply. The proposed project would use up to 896 af of water over the course of 18 months of construction, 40 years of operation, and 18 months of decommissioning. The majority of water would be pumped during the 18 months of construction and decommissioning periods (maximum of 336 af during each phase), whereas the 40-year operational period will require a total of 224 af, averaging 5.6 af-yr. In addition to the water demand associated with the project, the well owner requires full use of the well for 4 to 6 hours per day for irrigation (Appendix J). The well owner would pump 250 gallons per minute (gpm) for a maximum of 6 hours per day, or 90,000 gpd. Over the course of 1 year, the well owner would use a maximum of approximately 32,850,000 gallons, or 101 af. The total maximum pumping demand for the project water supply well (i.e., the project water demand plus the well owner's on-site agriculture irrigation water use) is 437 af during 18 months of project construction phases, 106.6 af-yr during project operation phases, and 437 af during the 18-month decommissioning phase. As quantified in Appendix J, the well would support the maximum water demand for the project in addition to the on-site agricultural water requirements for the well owner. There would be sufficient water supplies available to serve the project during normal, dry, or multiple dry year scenarios. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

Impact USS-3: Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? (No Impact)

The project would not be connected to a public sewer system and would not produce waste that would be treated in an existing wastewater treatment plant. **No impacts** would result from the proposed project.

3.19.4 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

3.19.5 Cumulative Impacts

Impact C-USS-1: Would the impacts of the proposed project, in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, contribute to a cumulative impact related to utilities and service systems? (Less than Significant)

Several other utility-scale solar development projects are proposed within 50 miles of the proposed project. Together, with the proposed project, these projects could temporarily increase demand for solid waste disposal in San Bernardino County due to simultaneous increases in solid waste during construction and future decommissioning. However, this would not lead to a significant cumulative effect on utility service systems as all projects would adhere to existing state and local regulations on waste management, recycling, and landfill capacity within San Bernardino County. Therefore, the waste accepted by the Barstow Sanitary Landfill would not exceed capacity, and cumulative impacts to solid waste disposal would be less than significant. Similarly, the cumulative impact to utility services during operations is not expected to be significant. The proposed project will source water from an off-site provider and will not produce wastewater and will not contribute to cumulative impacts to water or wastewater infrastructure.

Therefore, considering past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, the cumulative impact regarding utilities and service systems during construction, operation, and decommissioning will be **less than significant.**

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