



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

APPLICANT: Westlands Transmission, LLC

APPLICATION NOS.: Initial Study Application No. 7635 and Unclassified
Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3650

DESCRIPTION: Allow a 6.3-mile-long, double-circuit, 230-kV generation tie-line (gen-tie line) running along Jayne Avenue from the Gates Substation (approximately one mile west of the intersection of Lassen Avenue and Jayne Avenue) to the boundary between Kings County and Fresno County. This gen-tie line would allow various Solar Facilities located in the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and subject to approval of discretionary use permits by Kings County, to connect to the Gates Substation in Fresno County. The portion of the project under review by Fresno County is located in 100- to 350-foot-wide private easements and includes a temporary staging area and 44 transmission towers between 110 and 175 feet in height. Each monopole will require the clearing of approximately one acre of land for construction purposes, and approximately 700 sf around each pole will remain permanently cleared for safety purposes during operation. Including the staging site, it is anticipated that 74.5 acres of land will be impacted by construction on 18 parcels in the AE (Exclusive Agricultural) Zone District. Three additional power poles may be installed within the Gates Substation. A separate application must be approved by Kings County for the portion of the Gen-tie which will connect to the Westland Solar Project.

LOCATION: The proposed gen-tie line will run generally parallel to and north of W. Jayne Avenue (which becomes Nevada Avenue at the Kings County line) on 18 parcels: APNs 075-070-13S, -52S, -51S, -54S, -46S, -47S, -28, -29, 075-080-55, -52S, 078-060-55ST, -69S, -73S, -70S, -71S, -68, -77S, and -83S from the boundary of Kings County to the Gates Substation, a distance of approximately 6.2 miles. (Sup. Dist. 4).

This project represents a small portion of the Westlands Solar Park (WSP) Master Plan. A Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) was prepared for the entirety of the Westlands Solar Park and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan (SCH No. 2013031043). The Westlands Water District (WWD) Board of Directors certified the PEIR under CEQA and approved the WSP Master Plan on January 6, 2018. The PEIR considered the broad impacts of the entire Westlands Solar Park project and therefore, this Initial Study needs only to consider issues specific to this project. Pursuant to Section 15168(c), later activities must be examined in the light of the PEIR

to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared. If a later activity would have effects not examined in the PEIR, a new Initial Study would need to be prepared. Section 15168(c)(1) indicates that a later activity should be subject to the thresholds identified in Section 15162 to determine if additional environmental review is necessary. If such review is necessary, then this Initial Study may tier from the PEIR as provided in Section 15152.

Section 15162 indicates that no additional environmental documents shall be prepared for a project unless it meets one of the following thresholds: substantial changes are proposed to the project which will result in new significant environmental effects; substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is taken which result in new significant impacts, or an increase in the severity of identified impacts; or new information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known at the time the PEIR was certified show that the project will have new significant impacts, previously identified impacts will become more severe, mitigation or alternatives previously determined to be infeasible become feasible, or mitigation measures and alternatives which are considerably different than those analyzed in the PEIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the measure or alternative. In this case, the County of Fresno identified that the increase in the number of towers increased the contribution of the Gen-Tie construction to nitrogen oxide and particulate matter emissions, resulting in a potentially significant impact which required the adoption of mitigation measures (see Section III). In addition, new impacts related to compliance with plans and policies addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities were identified and mitigation was required to reduce impacts to less than significant (see Section XVII).

Based on the scope of this application, the second gen-tie line considered by the PEIR (the "WSP-North to Gates Gen-tie") will not be constructed. Discussion in this Initial Study considers the impacts of the entire gen-tie line.

The Westlands Solar Park Master Plan EIR can be viewed at the Westlands Water District Main Office (3130 N. Fresno Street, Fresno, CA) or at the Field Office (23050 W. Mt. Whitney Avenue, Five Points, CA). A copy is also available at the County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning (2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, Fresno, CA).

The following analysis reflects only those items where new impacts have been identified. For all other topics, this analysis defers to the analysis provided in the Program EIR (SCH No. 2013031043) for the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan Project.

I. AESTHETICS

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an

optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

- A. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR..

- B. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The PEIR for the Westlands Solar Park Project did not discuss impacts from the parcel identified as APN 075-070-51S which was required to be removed from the Williamson Act Contract due to non-compliance with the requirements of the Contract (maintain 20 acres on Prime Farmland). A notice of non-renewal was filed on October 10, 2019. The filing of the non-renewal removes the conflict with the existing Williamson Act Contract.

This impact is considered to be less than significant, but is identified herein for informational purposes and to provide the most correct analysis of this threshold.

- C. Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production; or
- D. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or
- E. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

III. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

- A. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan; or

- B. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

The PEIR determined that impacts from the construction of the Gen-tie portion of the project (which considered the entire length of the transmission line, including the Kings County portion) would be less than significant because the project's emissions were calculated to be less than the thresholds of significance. The County considers impacts from the entire gen-tie line, pursuant to PRC Section 21159.26, which prohibits the division of a project into smaller portions in order to qualify for exemptions or meet other significance thresholds.

After approval of the PEIR, the number of proposed towers to be located in Fresno was increased from 40 to 44, then further increased at the request of PG&E to consider the installation of three towers onsite at Gates Substation as part of this review. Neither County has jurisdictional authority over these three towers; however, they are considered part of the complete 'project'. The revised Air Quality Analysis (Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc., revised September 23, 2019) considered the installation of all 47 towers in Fresno County and the 57 towers in Kings County.

Unmitigated impacts from the construction of the Gen-tie line exceed the threshold for emissions of Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x) and Particulate Matter sized 10 microns or less (PM₁₀) set by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District and could contribute cumulatively to an exceedance of those thresholds when considered as part of the overall Westlands Solar Park Project and other nearby facilities.

With the adoption of the following mitigation measures, which were proposed for the Solar Facilities portion of the Westlands Solar Park PEIR as MM AQ-1 and AQ-2, impacts from this project will be reduced to less than significant and will not significantly contribute to a cumulative impact from other nearby projects.

* **Mitigation Measures**

1. *The following dust control measures of SJVAPCD shall be implemented during construction and decommission to reduce construction PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} to less than 15 tons per year:*
 - *Effective dust suppression (e.g. watering) for land clearing, grubbing, scraping, excavation, land leveling, grading, cut and fill, and demolition activities.*
 - *Effective stabilization of all disturbed areas of a construction site, including storage piles, not used for seven or more days.*
 - *Control of fugitive dust from onsite unpaved roads and offsite unpaved access roads.*

- *Removal of accumulations of mud or dirt at the end of the workday or once every 24 hours from public paved roads, shoulders, and access ways adjacent to the site.*
 - *Cease outdoor construction activities that disturb soils during periods with high winds.*
 - *Record-keeping for each day dust control measures are implemented.*
 - *Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 mph.*
 - *Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways.*
 - *Landscape or replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.*
 - *Prevent the tracking of mud or dirt on public roadways by limiting access to the construction sites. If necessary, use wheel washers for all exiting trucks, or wash off the tires or tracks of all trucks and equipment leaving the site.*
 - *Suspend trading activity when winds (instantaneous gusts) exceed 25 mph or dust clouds cannot be prevented from extending beyond the site.*
2. *The following measures shall be implemented during construction to reduce construction emissions of nitrogen oxides to less than 10 tons per year:*
- *Develop a plan to use construction equipment with low nitrogen oxides emissions. This may include the use of equipment that meets US EPA Tier 3 standards (and equipment that meets Tier 4 standards, if available).*
 - *Set idling time limit of 5 minutes or less for construction equipment.*
 - *Evaluate the feasibility of a work shuttle or carpool program to reduce emissions from worker travel.*
 - *Evaluate the feasibility of methods to reduce truck travel for delivery of equipment by reducing the number of necessary truck trips.*
 - *Any solar project for which the project-specific air quality analysis shows that the above mitigations will not be sufficient to reduce a project's construction emissions of NO_x below 10 tons per year, the project Proponent shall execute a Voluntary Emissions Reduction Agreement (VERA) with SJVAPCD, which provides for further reduction of construction NO_x to reduce the project's NO_x emissions to less than 10 tons per year.*

- C. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations; or
- D. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

- A. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation; or
- B. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Energy Impacts were considered in the PEIR as part of Chapter 6 “Other CEQA Considerations.” No new impacts to energy were identified when compared to the thresholds identified above (CEQA Guidelines Appendix G); the project is determined to have a beneficial impact on energy usage by removing the need to transport coal and other carbon-based generation of electricity to favor solar generation in compliance with AB 32 – The California Global Warming Solutions Act.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

- A. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment; or
- B. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The project has the potential to generate Greenhouse Gas emissions in levels that would exceed the threshold set by the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. Emissions are measured in Metric Tons of Equivalent Carbon Dioxide (MTCO₂e). Because the gen-tie will be used by multiple projects to connect to Gates Substation, decommissioning is not anticipated and operational impacts are expected to be negligible. The revised analysis determined that construction of the Gen-Tie would produce 2,250 MTCO₂e, which is less than the threshold of 7,000 MTCO₂e. There is no change in the impacts to this area; however, this information is being provided as clarification to the existing analysis.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

- A. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT:

The path of the Gen-tie has been revised since publication of the PEIR and the new position increases the anticipated maximum noise from 78 dBA to 81 dBA. This does not present a new violation of the Fresno County Noise Ordinance, as construction noise is exempt when it occurs after 6:00 A.M. and before 9:00 P.M. on weekdays, and after 7:00 A.M. and before 5:00 P.M. Saturday or Sunday. No new impacts were identified and this information is being provided as clarification to the existing analysis.

- B. Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels; or
- C. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public

use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels; or

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XVI. RECREATION

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

- A. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

In addition to the Fresno County General Plan Policy identified in the PEIR (TR-A.2), the following policies relate to the project:

TR-A.5: The County shall require dedication of right-of-way or dedication and construction of planned road facilities as a condition of land development, and require an analysis of impacts of traffic from all land development projects including impacts from truck traffic. Each such project shall construct or fund improvements necessary to mitigate the effects of traffic from the project. The County may allow a project to fund a fair share of improvements that provide significant benefit to others through traffic impact fees.

TR-A.7: The County shall assess fees on new development sufficient to cover the fair share portion of that development's impacts on the local and regional transportation system.

TR-A.8: The County shall ensure that land development that affects roadway use or operation or requires roadway access to plan, dedicate, and construct required improvements consistent with the criteria in the Circulation Diagram and Standards section of [the Transportation and Circulation] element.

The Aquamarine Solar, Chestnut Solar, and Solar Blue projects, which are each a small portion of the overall Westlands Solar Park project (Kings County), each incorporated a

mitigation measure into their approval, addressing the impact of damage to County Roads. Construction of the gen-tie line will similarly have adverse impacts to the quality of Jayne Avenue, which must be addressed through repair and/or the funding of a fair share portion towards repairs and/or expansion as necessary. In this case, impacts were estimated as part of the review for the Aquamarine Solar, Chestnut Solar, and Solar Blue Projects and therefore, specific costs have been identified as mitigation for this project:

* **Mitigation Measure**

1. *Prior to the issuance of building permits, the applicant shall implement its fair share of agree-upon roadway improvements or contribute its fair-share of funding to undertake such improvements. The cost of impacts for the gen-tie line is \$179,454.00. Of that amount, approximately 47% of the impacts occur on the Fresno County side of the gen-tie and require payment of impact fees in the amount of \$81,099.00.*
- B. Be in conflict or be inconsistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b); or
- C. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment); or
- D. Result in inadequate emergency access?

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XX. WILDFIRE

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

- A. Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or

animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

- B. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable (“cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

FINDING: LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED:

As discussed above, the construction of the gen-tie lines would exceed Air District significance thresholds without the adoption of mitigation. Adoption of the Mitigation Measures identified in Section III are required to reduce the project-specific and cumulative impacts to less than significant.

* **Mitigation Measure**

See Section III.

- C. Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings either directly or indirectly?

No changes to the analysis presented in the PEIR.

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Based upon the Program Environmental Impact Report prepared for the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan, staff has concluded that new impacts related to Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Transportation, and Cumulative Impacts would be significant without the adoption of additional mitigation measures.

A Mitigated Negative Declaration is recommended and is subject to approval by the decision-making body. The Initial Study is available for review at 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, street level, located on the southwest corner of Tulare and “M” Street, Fresno, California. A copy of the Program Environmental Impact Report may be requested at the same address, at the Westlands Water District Main Office (3130 N. Fresno Street, Fresno, CA) or at the Field Office (23050 W. Mt. Whitney Avenue, Five Points, CA).

CMM:

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County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. Project title:

Supplemental Initial Study Application No. 7635 and Unclassified Conditional Use Permit No. 3650

2. Lead agency name and address:

Fresno County
2220 Tulare Street, 6th Floor
Fresno, CA 93721

3. Contact person and phone number:

Chrissy Monfette
(559) 600-4245

4. Project location:

The project is located along the north and south sides of Jayne Avenue, from the Gates Substation east for 6.2 miles into Kings County, where it will connect with projects approved as part of the Westlands Solar Park. APNs: 075-070-13S, 075-070-52S, 075-070-51S, 075-070-54S, 075-070-46S, 075-070-47S, 075-070-28, 075-070-29, 078-080-55, 078-080-52S, 075-060-55ST, 078-060-73S, 078-060-69S, 078-060-70S, 078-060-71S, 078-060-68, 078-060-77S, and 078-060-83S.

5. Project sponsor's name and address:

Westlands Transmission, LLC
4700 Wilshire Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90010

6. General Plan designation:

All parcels are designated as Agriculture by the Coalinga Regional Plan.

7. Zoning:

Parcels are zoned for Exclusive Agricultural Uses with 20- or 40-acre minimum parcel size (AE-20 and AE-40)

8. Description of project:

This project represents a portion of the project described by the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan. A Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) was prepared for the entirety of the Westlands Solar Park and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan (SCH No. 2013031043). The Westlands Water District (WWD) Board of Directors certified the PEIR under CEQA and approved the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan on January 6, 2018.

The WSP Master Plan is intended to serve as the planning framework for a series of utility-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) energy generating facilities on about 21,000 acres in west-central Kings County, generally located south of SR-198, west of SR-41 and the Kings River, and east of the Fresno County Line. The combined generating capacity of WSP solar projects is estimated to be 2,000 MW, although the final power output could increase with improved solar PV module efficiency over the course of the WSP buildout period. The solar PV projects developed within WSP would have varying generation capacities, with the power output from individual solar facilities ranging up to about 250 MW. The installation of solar generating facilities is planned to occur incrementally over an approximately 12-year buildout period extending to about 2030. For planning purposes, the Master Plan area is divided into 12 subareas (or solar generating facilities – SGFs), and includes several substations to step up the generated power to a transmission voltage of 230-kV gen-tie (this application).

The scope of this application is limited to construction of the Fresno County portion of the southern gen-tie: allow a 6.3-mile-long, double-circuit, 230-kV generation tie-line (gen-tie line) running along Jayne Avenue from the Gates Substation (approximately one mile west of the intersection of Lassen Avenue and Jayne Avenue) to the boundary between Kings County and Fresno County. The portion of the project under review by Fresno County is located in 100- to 350-foot-wide private easements and includes a temporary staging area and 44 transmission towers between 110 and 175 feet in height. Each monopole will require the clearing of approximately one acre of land for construction purposes, and approximately 700 sf around each pole will remain permanently cleared for safety purposes during operation. Including the staging site, it is anticipated that 74.5 acres of land will be impacted by construction on 18 parcels in the AE (Exclusive Agricultural) Zone District. Three additional power poles may be installed within the Gates Substation. A separate application must be approved by Kings County for the portion of the Gen-tie which will connect to the Westland Solar Project.

9. Surrounding land uses and setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:

Parcels in the area of this project are generally dedicated to agricultural purposes with the majority of parcels restricted by a Williamson Act Contract with established orchards and field crops. The Gates substation is operational at the western edge of the project site and a few solar facilities have been developed in the general area.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)

Kings County, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), Regional Water Quality Control Board – Central Valley Region (CVRWQCB), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), California Department of Water Resources (DWR), US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS),

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

Westlands Water District (WWD) received two formal requests from tribal governments to be notified of any projects to be undertaken by WWD that involve CEQA documentation, as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1. The two tribes requesting notification include the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe and the Dumna Wo Wah Tribal Government. On September 8, 2017, WWD provided formal written notification of the subject WSP Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan EIR to both tribes. Both tribal governments subsequently submitted formal requests for consultation regarding possible adverse effects of the subject plans on tribal cultural resources. Consultations with both tribal governments have been initiated by WWD in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1.

Mitigation Measures were adopted as part of the Program EIR which require site-specific surveys for cultural resources and allow Native American Governments the opportunity to be on site during ground disturbance. Additionally, the Mitigation Measures require pre-construction training and establish procedures to handle inadvertent discoveries.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | |

DETERMINATION OF REQUIRED ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☐ I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment. **A NEGATIVE DECLARATION WILL BE PREPARED.**
- ☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the Mitigation Measures described on the attached sheet have been added to the project. **A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION WILL BE PREPARED.**
- ☐ I find the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required
- ☐ I find that as a result of the proposed project, no new effects could occur, or new Mitigation Measures would be required that have not been addressed within the scope of a previous Environmental Impact Report.

PERFORMED BY:

REVIEWED BY:


Chrissy Monfette, Planner


Marianne Mollring, Senior Planner

Date: October 10, 2019

Date: 10-10-19

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INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

(Initial Study Application No. 7635 and
Classified Conditional Use Permit
Application No. 3650)

The following checklist is used to determine if the proposed project could potentially have a significant effect on the environment. Explanations and information regarding each question follow the checklist.

1 = No Impact

2 = Less Than Significant Impact

3 = Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

4 = Potentially Significant Impact

N/A = Not discussed in this Initial Study

I. AESTHETICS

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

- N/A a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
- N/A b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
- N/A c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?
- N/A d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

- N/A a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?
- 2 b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?
- N/A c) Conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland or timberland zoned Timberland Production?
- N/A d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?
- N/A e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

III. AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

- 3 a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan?
- 3 b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?
- N/A c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
- N/A d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- N/A a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- N/A b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?
- N/A c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally-protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?
- N/A d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?
- N/A e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
- N/A f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state Habitat Conservation Plan?

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- N/A a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?
- N/A b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?
- N/A c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

VI. ENERGY

Would the project:

- N/A a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?
- N/A b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:

- a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
 - N/A i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?
 - N/A ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?
 - N/A iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?
 - N/A iv) Landslides?
- N/A b) Result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil?
- N/A c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?
- N/A d) Be located on expansive soil as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?
- N/A e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?
- N/A f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:

- 2 a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
- 2 b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:

- N/A a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
- N/A b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?
- N/A c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?
- N/A d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?
- N/A e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?
- N/A f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- N/A g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:

- N/A a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?
- N/A b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?
- N/A c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?
 - N/A i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site;
 - N/A ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off site;
 - N/A iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
 - N/A iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?
- N/A d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?
- N/A e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:

- N/A a) Physically divide an established community?
- N/A b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- N/A a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?
- N/A b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local General Plan, Specific Plan or other land use plan?

XIII. NOISE

Would the project result in:

- 2 a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?
- N/A b) Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?
- N/A c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, exposing people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:

- N/A a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and

businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

- N/A b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project:

- N/A a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically-altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically-altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:
- N/A i) Fire protection?
- N/A ii) Police protection?
- N/A iii) Schools?
- N/A iv) Parks?
- N/A v) Other public facilities?

XVI. RECREATION

Would the project:

- N/A a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
- N/A b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

XVII. TRANSPORTATION

Would the project:

- 3 a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?
- N/A b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?
- N/A c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?
- N/A d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

- N/A a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
- N/A i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k), or
- N/A ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set

forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.)

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:

- N/A a) 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?
- N/A b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?
- N/A c) 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?
- N/A d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?
- N/A e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

XX. WILDFIRE

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

- N/A a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
- N/A b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?
- N/A c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?
- N/A d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Would the project:

- N/A a) Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?
- 3 b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)
- N/A c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Documents Referenced:

This Initial Study is referenced by the documents listed below. These documents are available for public review at the County of Fresno, Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services and Capital Projects Division, 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, Fresno, California (corner of M & Tulare Streets).

Fresno County General Plan, Policy Document, Background Report, and Final EIR
Fresno County Zoning Ordinance
Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan (SCH No. 2013031043)
Jayne Avenue Pavement Evaluation Report (Kimley and Horn, October 3, 2019)
Jayne Avenue Pavement Study – Fair Share Roadways Improvements Attributable to the Construction of the Fresno County Segments of the Jayne Avenue Gen-Tie Line (Memo from Tim Miller, P.E., October 3, 2019)
Aquamarine Solar Project and Gen-Tie Line Air Quality Assessment (December 17, 2018, revised October 4, 2019, Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc.)
Jayne Avenue Gen-Tie Line – Fresno County File UCUP 3650 Supplemental Project Information (PN 1388-08), (September 23, 2019, Live Oak Associates)
Jayne Avenue Gen-Tie Line – Supplemental Cultural Resources Review Vicinity of S. Trinity Avenue and Jayne Avenue, Fresno County, California (Basin Research Associates, September 23, 2019)
Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration Aquamarine Solar Project and Gen-Tie Line CUP 17-04 (May 2019, Kings County Community Development Agency)

CMM

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County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

DATE: May 31, 2019

TO: Development Services and Capital Projects, Attn: William M. Kettler, Division Manager
Development Services and Capital Projects, Attn: Chris Motta, Principal Planner
Development Services and Capital Projects, Current Planning, Attn: Marianne Mollring, Senior Planner
Development Services and Capital Projects, Policy Planning, ALCC, Attn: Mohammad Khorsand
Development Services and Capital Projects, Zoning & Permit Review, Attn: Tawanda Mtunga
Development Services and Capital Projects, Site Plan Review, Attn: Hector Luna
Development Services and Capital Projects, Building & Safety/Plan Check, Attn: Chuck Jonas
Development Services and Capital Projects, Building & Safety/Plan Check, CASp, Attn: Dan Mather
Resources Division, Solid Waste, Attn: Amina Flores-Becker/Sally Lopez
Development Engineering, Attn: Kevin Nehring, Senior Engineer
Development Engineering, Attn: Laurie Kennedy
Road Maintenance and Operations, Attn: Frank Daniele/Nadia Lopez
Design Division, Attn: Mohammad Alimi/Dale Siemer/Brian Spaunhurst
Water and Natural Resources Division, Attn: Glenn Allen, Division Manager
Fresno County Health Officer, Dept. of Public Health, Attn: Ken Bird, M.D.
Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division, Attn: Deep Sidhu/Steven Rhodes
Agricultural Commissioner, Attn: Melissa Cregan
Sheriff's Office, Attn: Captain John Zaroni, Lt. John Reynolds, Lt. Louie Hernandez, Lt. Kathy Curtice, Lt. Ryan Hushaw
Fresno County Historical Landmarks Commission, Attn: Karen Coletti
NAS Lemoore, NAVFAC, Public Works Lemoore, Attn: John Dirickson
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, San Joaquin Valley Division, Attn: Sarah Yates
CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Attn: Craig Bailey, Environmental Scientist & R4CEQA@wildlife.ca.gov
CA Regional Water Quality Control Board, Attn: Matt Scroggins
CALTRANS, Attn: Dave Padilla
State Historic Preservation Office, Attn: Lucinda Woodward
Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), Attn: Katy Sanchez
San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District (PIC-CEQA Division), Attn: PIC Supervisor
Fresno County Fire Protection District, Attn: Jim McDougald, Division Chief
Westside Resource Conservation District; Attn: Sarge Green
County of Kings, Community Development Agency; Attn: Chuck Kinney
Pacific Gas & Electric Company, Centralized Review Team

FROM: Danielle Crider, Planner
Development Services and Capital Projects Division

SUBJECT: Unclassified Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Application No. 3650, Initial Study Application No. 7635

APPLICANT: Westlands Transmission, LLC

DUE DATE: June 17, 2019

The Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services and Capital Projects Division, is reviewing the subject applications proposing to allow a 6.3-mile-long, 230-kV generation tie-line (gen-tie line) running along Jayne Avenue from the Gates Substation (approximately one mile west of the intersection of Lassen Avenue and Jayne Avenue) to the boundary between Kings County and Fresno County. This gen-tie line would allow the Aquamarine Solar Project, located in the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and currently being considered for discretionary use permit by Kings County, to connect to the Gates Substation in Fresno County. The portion of the project under review by Fresno County is located in 100-foot-wide to 350-foot-wide private easements, includes a temporary staging area, and 44 transmission towers between 110 and 175 feet in height. The towers will be able to support two circuits, one to be installed now and one to be installed upon further build out of the Westlands Solar Park Area. Each monopole will require the clearing of approximately 1 acre of land for construction purposes, and approximately 700 square-feet around each pole will remain permanently cleared for safety purposes during operation. Including the staging site, it is anticipated that 74.5 acres of land will be impacted by construction on 18 parcels in the AE (Exclusive Agricultural) Zone District. (See attached APN list) (Sup. Dist. 4).

The Department is also reviewing for environmental effects as mandated by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and for conformity with plans and policies of the County.

Based upon this review, a determination will be made regarding conditions to be imposed on the project, including necessary on-site and off-site improvements.

Please return your comments by **June 17, 2019**. If your agency or department has no comments, please return a "no comments" response. If you need extra time to review the proposed project, please let me know before the comment deadline.

If you have any questions, contact Danielle Crider, Planner, Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning at (559) 600-9669 or at dacrider@fresnocountyca.gov.

DTC:

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Activity Code (Internal Review): 2384

Enclosures



Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning

Date Received: 5/6/19

CUP 3050
IS 7035

(Application No.)

MAILING ADDRESS:

Department of Public Works and Planning
Development Services Division
2220 Tulare St., 6th Floor
Fresno, Ca. 93721

LOCATION:

Southwest corner of Tulare & "M" Streets, Suite A
Street Level
Fresno Phone: (559) 600-4497
Toll Free: 1-800-742-1011 Ext. 0-4497

APPLICATION FOR:

- ☐ Pre-Application (Type) _____
- ☐ Amendment Application ☐ Director Review and Approval
- ☐ Amendment to Text ☐ for 2nd Residence
- ☒ Conditional Use Permit ☐ Determination of Merger
- ☐ Variance (Class)/Minor Variance ☐ Agreements
- ☐ Site Plan Review/Occupancy Permit ☐ ALCC/RLCC
- ☐ No Shoot/Dog Leash Law Boundary ☐ Other _____
- ☐ General Plan Amendment/Specific Plan/SP Amendment)
- ☐ Time Extension for _____

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED USE OR REQUEST:

6.3 miles of 230-kV gen-tie line within a 100- to 350-foot easement along north and/or south side of Jayne Avenue between the PG&E Gates Substation and the Kings County line. Project includes approximately 46 tubular steel monopoles ranging in height from 110 to 175 feet, spaced at intervals ranging from approximately 600 to 1,320 feet.

CEQA DOCUMENTATION:

☒ Initial Study ☐ PER ☐ N/A

PLEASE USE FILL-IN FORM OR PRINT IN BLACK INK. Answer all questions completely. Attach required site plans, forms, statements, and deeds as specified on the Pre-Application Review. Attach Copy of Deed, including Legal Description.

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: North & South side of West Jayne Avenue
between Avenal Cutoff Road and Gates Substation (~1,000 ft west of S.Trinity Ave.)
Street address: Unknown

APN: 075-070-028 Parcel size: Varies Section(s)-Twp/Rg: S 25-36 - T 20 S/R 17-18 E

ADDITIONAL APN(s): 075-070-13S,-29,-46S,-47S,-51S,-52S,-54S; 075-080-52S,-55; 075-060-68,-69S,-70S,-71S,-73S,-77S,-83S,

I, Robert G. Dowds (signature), declare that I am the owner, or authorized representative of the owner, of the above described property and that the application and attached documents are in all respects true and correct to the best of my knowledge. The foregoing declaration is made under penalty of perjury.

(see separate sheets)

Owner (Print or Type)	Address	City	Zip	Phone
Westlands Transmission, LLC	4700 Wilshire Blvd	Los Angeles	90010	
Applicant (Print or Type)	Address	City	Zip	Phone
Robert G. Dowds	Same as above			
Representative (Print or Type)	Address	City	Zip	Phone

CONTACT EMAIL: RDOWDS@gmail.com

OFFICE USE ONLY (PRINT FORM ON GREEN PAPER)

Application Type / No.: CUP 3050 Fee: \$ 9,123.00
Application Type / No.: Pre-app credit Fee: \$ -247.00
Application Type / No.: Fee: \$
Application Type / No.: Fee: \$
PER Initial Study No.: IS 7035 Fee: \$ 6,151.00
Ag Department Review: Fee: \$ 93.00
Health Department Review: Fee: \$ 992.00
Received By: Danielle C. Invoice No.: TOTAL: \$ 15,112.00

UTILITIES AVAILABLE:

WATER: Yes ☐ / No ☒

Agency: NA

SEWER: Yes ☐ / No ☒

Agency: NA

STAFF DETERMINATION: This permit is sought under Ordinance Section:

853-B.14

Related Application(s): Westlands' Solar EIR (located in Kings

Zone District: AE-20

Parcel Size: Varies

Sect-Twp/Rg: _____ - T _____ S/R _____ E

APN # _____ - _____ - _____

APN # _____ - _____ - _____

APN # _____ - _____ - _____

APN # _____ - _____ - _____



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

INITIAL STUDY APPLICATION

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer all questions completely. An incomplete form may delay processing of your application. Use additional paper if necessary and attach any supplemental information to this form. Attach an operational statement if appropriate. This application will be distributed to several agencies and persons to determine the potential environmental effects of your proposal. Please complete the form in a legible and reproducible manner (i.e., USE BLACK INK OR TYPE).

OFFICE USE ONLY

IS No. IS 7635

Project
No(s). CUP 3650

Application Rec'd.:
5/6/19

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **Property Owner :** _____ **Phone/Fax** _____
Mailing Address: _____
Street City State/Zip

2. **Applicant :** _____ **Phone/Fax:** _____
Mailing Address: _____
Street City State/Zip

3. **Representative:** _____ **Phone/Fax:** _____
Mailing Address: _____
Street City State/Zip

4. **Proposed Project:** _____

5. **Project Location:** _____

6. **Project Address:** _____

7. **Section/Township/Range:** _____ / _____ / _____ 8. **Parcel Size:** _____

9. **Assessor's Parcel No.** _____

10. Land Conservation Contract No. (If applicable): _____

11. What other agencies will you need to get permits or authorization from:

_____ LAFCo (annexation or extension of services)	_____ SJVUAPCD (Air Pollution Control District)
_____ CALTRANS	_____ Reclamation Board
_____ Division of Aeronautics	_____ Department of Energy
_____ Water Quality Control Board	_____ Airport Land Use Commission
_____ Other _____	

12. Will the project utilize Federal funds or require other Federal authorization subject to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969? _____ Yes _____ No

If so, please provide a copy of all related grant and/or funding documents, related information and environmental review requirements.

13. Existing Zone District¹: _____

14. Existing General Plan Land Use Designation¹: _____

ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

15. Present land use: _____

Describe existing physical improvements including buildings, water (wells) and sewage facilities, roads, and lighting. Include a site plan or map showing these improvements:

Describe the major vegetative cover: _____

Any perennial or intermittent water courses? If so, show on map: _____

Is property in a flood-prone area? Describe: _____

16. Describe surrounding land uses (e.g., commercial, agricultural, residential, school, etc.):

North: _____

South: _____

East: _____

West: _____

17. What land use(s) in the area may be impacted by your Project?: _____

18. What land use(s) in the area may impact your project?: _____

19. **Transportation:**

NOTE: The information below will be used in determining traffic impacts from this project. The data may also show the need for a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) for the project.

A. Will additional driveways from the proposed project site be necessary to access public roads?
_____ Yes _____ No

B. **Daily traffic generation:**

I. Residential - Number of Units _____
Lot Size _____
Single Family _____
Apartments _____

II. Commercial - Number of Employees _____
Number of Salesmen _____
Number of Delivery Trucks _____
Total Square Footage of Building _____

III. Describe and quantify other traffic generation activities: _____

20. Describe any source(s) of noise from your project that may affect the surrounding area: _____

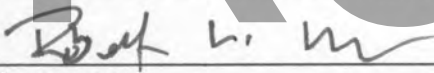
21. Describe any source(s) of noise in the area that may affect your project: _____

22. Describe the probable source(s) of air pollution from your project: _____

23. Proposed source of water:
() private well
() community system³--name: _____

24. *Anticipated volume of water to be used (gallons per day)*²: Approx. 4,000 gpd (TBD by project engineer.)
25. *Proposed method of liquid waste disposal:*
 () *septic system/individual* Construction: Portable chemical toilets at staging yard. Operations: None.
 () *community system*³-name
26. *Estimated volume of liquid waste (gallons per day)*²: Construction: Negligible. Operations: None.
27. *Anticipated type(s) of liquid waste:* Construction: Domestic wastewater. Operations: None.
28. *Anticipated type(s) of hazardous wastes*²: Construction & Operations: Fuels, lubricants, solvents, welding supplies, etc.
29. *Anticipated volume of hazardous wastes*²: Construction: Minimal. Operations: Negligible.
30. *Proposed method of hazardous waste disposal*²: Transported by a licensed hauler to a licensed disposal facility.
31. *Anticipated type(s) of solid waste:* Construction & Operations: Scrap materials & debris.
32. *Anticipated amount of solid waste (tons or cubic yards per day):* Construction: Minimal. Operations: Negligible.
33. *Anticipated amount of waste that will be recycled (tons or cubic yards per day):* Maximum extent practicable.
34. *Proposed method of solid waste disposal:* Transported to municipal landfill.
35. *Fire protection district(s) serving this area:* Fresno County Fire Protection District - Zone 2.
36. *Has a previous application been processed on this site? If so, list title and date:* No
37. *Do you have any underground storage tanks (except septic tanks)?* Yes No X
38. *If yes, are they currently in use?* Yes No X

TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, THE FOREGOING INFORMATION IS TRUE.


 SIGNATURE

4/22/19
 DATE

¹Refer to Development Services Conference Checklist

²For assistance, contact Environmental Health System, (559) 600-3357

³For County Service Areas or Waterworks Districts, contact the Resources Division, (559) 600-4259

INITIAL STUDY – ATTACHMENT

Jayne Avenue Gen-Tie Easement – Property Ownership (4/24/19)

Assessor's Parcel No. (from west to east)	Owner	Agricultural Preserve No.
075-070-13S	Saje Farming Co., LP	356
075-070-52S	Doris R. Andrews	2306
075-070-51S	Brandy and Travis Grigg	2267
075-070-54S	Christopher Woolf	2267
075-070-46S	Sageberry I, LLC	2267
075-070-47S	Sageberry I, LLC	2267
075-070-28	Sageberry I, LLC	668
075-070-29	Sageberry I, LLC	668
078-080-55	Sageberry V, LLC	7769
078-080-52S	Alex Kochergen Sr.	668
078-060-55ST	USA	NA
078-060-73S	F&F West	2264
078-060-69S	B.E. Giovannetti & Sons	3253
078-060-70S	B.E. Giovannetti & Sons	None
078-060-71S	B.E. Giovannetti & Sons	2704
078-060-68	Harold and Florence Wall	2703
078-060-77S	Melanie Aldridge Trust	2222
078-060-83S	Melanie Aldridge Trust	2222

Notes:

1. Since the time that the pre-application was submitted, one APN has been removed and two APNs have been added, as follows:

- Removed: APN 078-060-85s (Sageberry III, LLC). N. side of Jayne Ave., west of CA Aqueduct).

- Added: APN 078-080-52S (Alex Kochergen Sr.). S. side of Jayne Ave., west of CA Aqueduct).
APN 078-080-55 (Sageberry V, LLC). S. side of Jayne Ave., west of CA Aqueduct).

2. The California Aqueduct/San Luis Canal is in APN 078-060-55ST. The Aqueduct is owned by U.S. government (Bureau of Reclamation) and is operated and managed by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). An Encroachment Permit Application is being submitted to DWR to obtain authorization for work in the Aqueduct ROW, and to allow aerial crossing of the Aqueduct by overhead conductors. No monopoles or other structures are proposed to be constructed within the Aqueduct right-of-way.

Operational Statement

Westlands Solar Park Gen-Tie Line – Fresno County Segment

December 17, 2018 (Revised April 24, 2019)

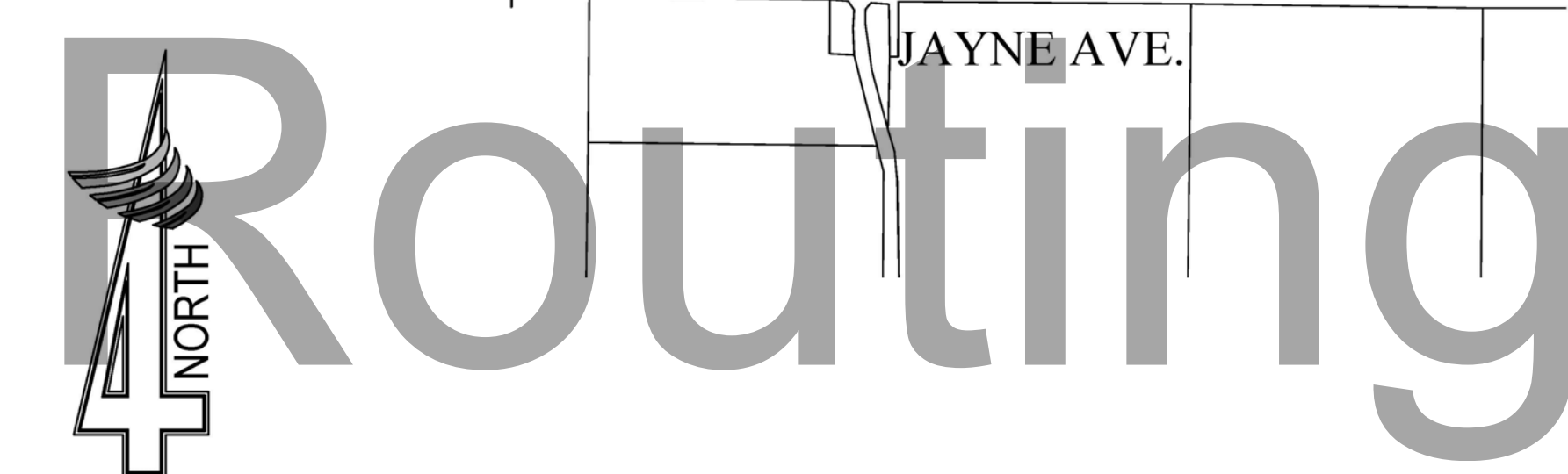
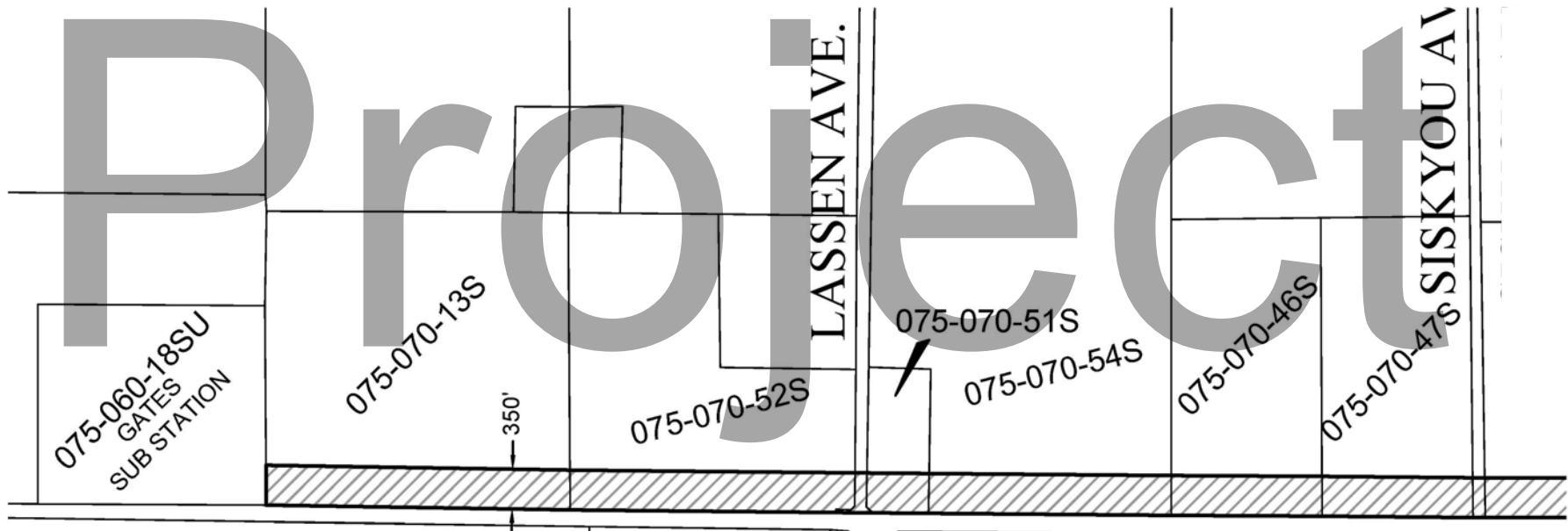
1. **Nature of the operation:** The project is a 230-kV generation-transmission tie line (gen-tie line) that is planned to run within a 100- to 350-foot wide easement along the north side of Jayne Avenue between the Kings County line to the east and PG&E's Gates Substation (west of Trinity Avenue) to the west. The total length of the gen-tie line within Fresno County is 6.3 miles. The purpose of the gen-tie line is to transmit solar-generated electric power from several solar PV generating facilities planned within the Westlands Solar Park, which lies entirely within Kings County. The gen-tie right-of-way will consist of easements acquired from private landowners along the north side of Jayne Avenue.

The gen-tie line will be entirely composed of electrical conductors strung over tubular steel monopoles. The monopoles will range in height from 110 to 175 feet, and the spans between monopoles will range from approximately 600 feet to 1,320 feet. The spacing of monopoles has been planned to avoid placement of poles within cultivated fields. Instead, the monopoles are planned to be located at section lines and half section lines marking the edges of cultivated fields, to the extent feasible. Within Fresno County, a total of 46 monopoles are planned between the Kings County line and the Gates Substation. Within Gates Substation, electrical facilities for interconnection to the State grid will be installed by PG&E under the jurisdiction of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).

The gen-tie line is planned to extend east into Kings County, along the north side of Nevada Avenue, for a distance of 6.2 miles to the Westlands Solar Park. The entire gen-tie line (both the Fresno County and Kings County segments) received programmatic CEQA review in the "Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan Program EIR" which was certified by the Westlands Water District Board of Directors on January 16, 2018. It is now timely for the planned Fresno County portion of the gen-tie line to receive project-level approval and CEQA clearance under a tiered review process, as provided under CEQA Guidelines Section 15152. Because the gen-tie line will be privately held and not under the ownership of a Publicly Owned Utility (e.g., PG&E), the CPUC does not have approval jurisdiction regarding the gen-tie project. Therefore, Fresno County is the approving agency for the gen-tie project.

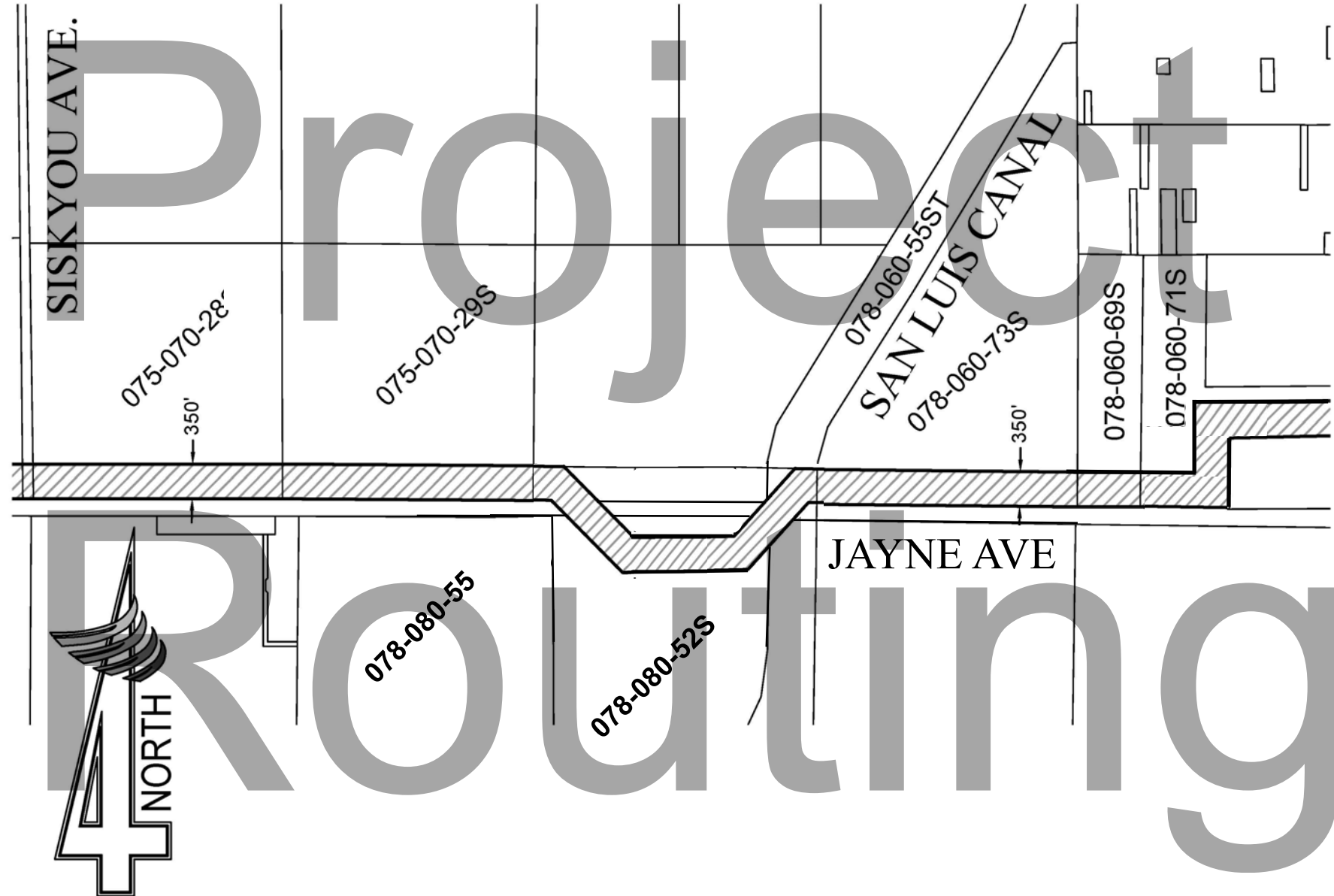
2. **Operational time limits:** The gen-tie line will operated 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.
3. **Number of customers or visitors:** The electrical generation will be delivered to electricity customers on the State electrical grid. No customers or visitors will come to the gen-tie right-of-way.
4. **Number of employees:** The gen-tie line will have no permanent employees. Maintenance staff will periodically perform inspections of the gen-tie line and make repairs as needed.
5. **Service and delivery vehicles:** The gen-tie line will occasionally be visited by maintenance employees who will operate service vehicles. Over a span of many years, delivery trucks may occasionally come to the gen-tie right-of-way to deliver replacement parts.
6. **Access to the site:** Maintenance access to the gen-tie right-of-way will be readily available directly from Jayne Avenue which runs adjacent the gen-tie line.
7. **Number of parking spaces for employees, customers, and service/delivery vehicles:** The gen-tie line will include no parking spaces.

8. **Are any goods to be sold on-site?** No goods will be sold from the gen-tie right-of-way.
9. **What equipment is used?** The gen-tie line will consist of electrical conductors strung over tubular steel monopoles. No other equipment will be used.
10. **What supplies or materials are used and how are they stored?** The operation of the gen-tie line will not include storage of supplies or materials. On the rare occasions when equipment needs to be repaired or replaced, the required materials would be delivered from a central utility yard located elsewhere in the region.
11. **Does the use cause and unsightly appearance?** The gen-tie project has been planned and designed to minimize visual effects. This is accomplished by the use of narrow profile monopoles instead of lattice towers that are typical of the area. Also, the wide spacing between monopoles reduces the overall number of monopoles installed.
12. **List any solid or liquid wastes to be produced:** No solid or liquid wastes will be produced by the operation of the gen-tie line.
13. **Estimated volume of water to be used (gallons per day):** No water will be utilized in the operation of the gen-tie line.
14. **Describe any proposed advertising including size, appearance, and placement:** The gen-tie line will include no advertising.
15. **Will existing buildings be used or will new buildings be constructed?** No new or existing buildings will be utilized in the operation of the gen-tie line.
16. **Explain which buildings or what portions of buildings will be used in the operation:** Not applicable.
17. **Will any outdoor lighting or an outdoor sound amplification system be used?** The operation of the gen-tie line will not include any outdoor lighting or sound amplification systems.
18. **Landscaping or fencing proposed?** The gen-tie line will not include any landscaping or fencing.
19. **Any other information that will provide a clear understanding of the project or operation:** The gen-tie corridor has been subject to biological and cultural resources ground surveys, with no impacts to sensitive resources identified.
20. **Identify all Owners, Officers and/or Board Members for each application submitted:**
Gen-tie owner – Westlands Transmission, LLC
Officers – Jennifer Gandin, Vice President of Westlands MM Investor, LLC, The Managing Member of Westlands Solar Park Holdings, LLC, the owner of Westlands Transmission, LLC



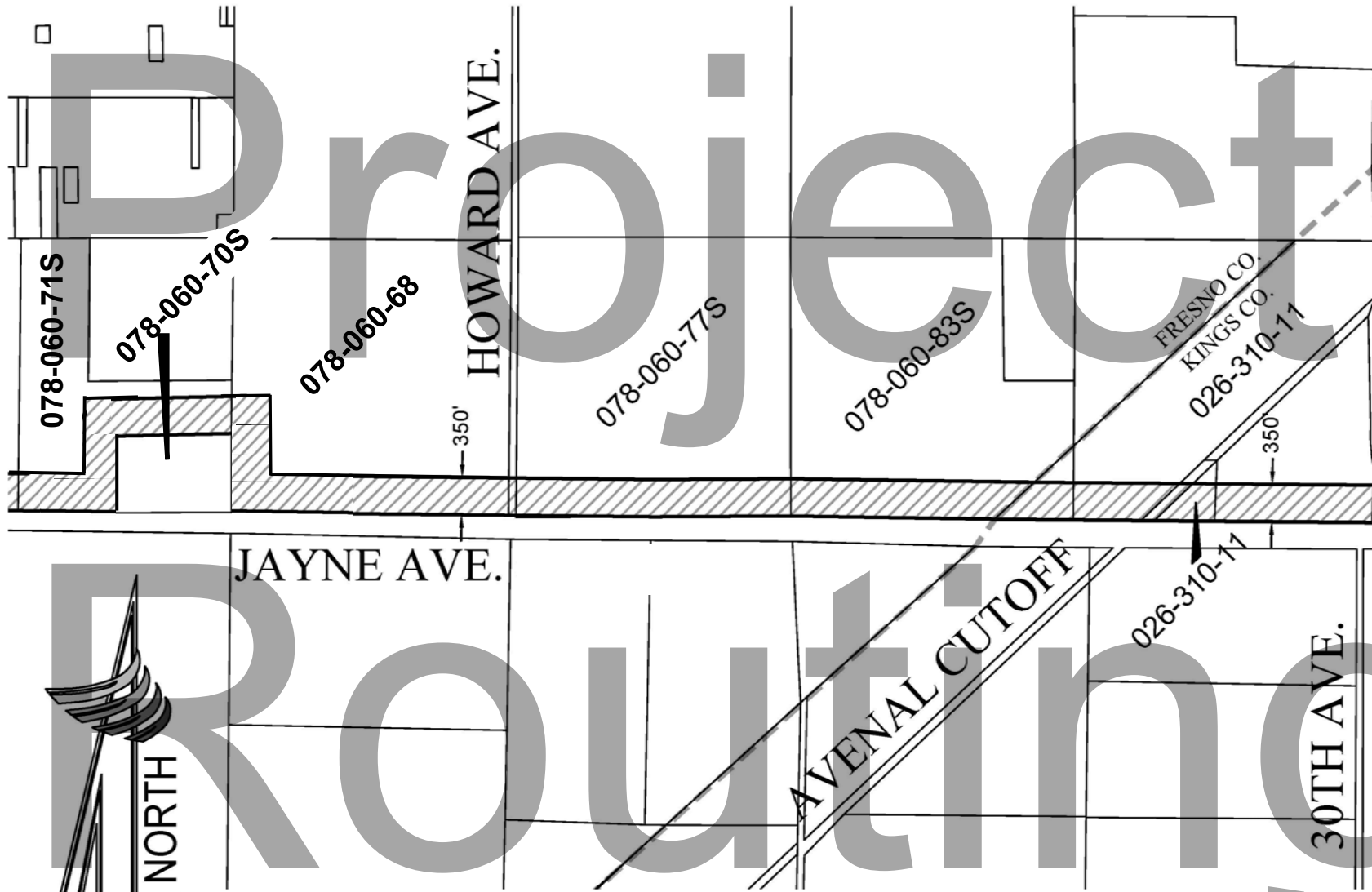
 DENOTES 230 KV CORRIDOR AREA

GEN-TIE CORRIDOR EXHIBIT



 DENOTES 230 KV CORRIDOR AREA

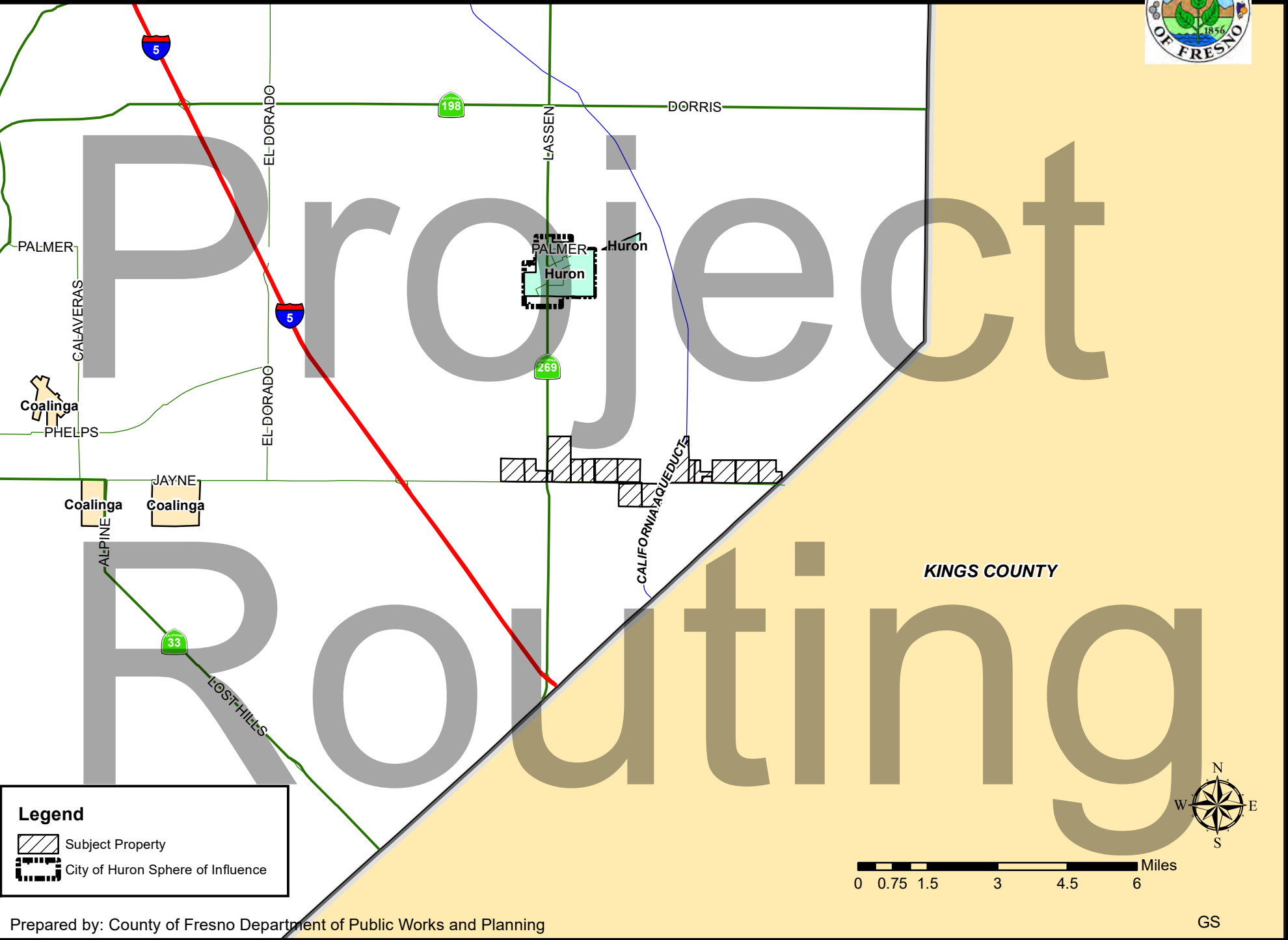
GEN-TIE CORRIDOR EXHIBIT



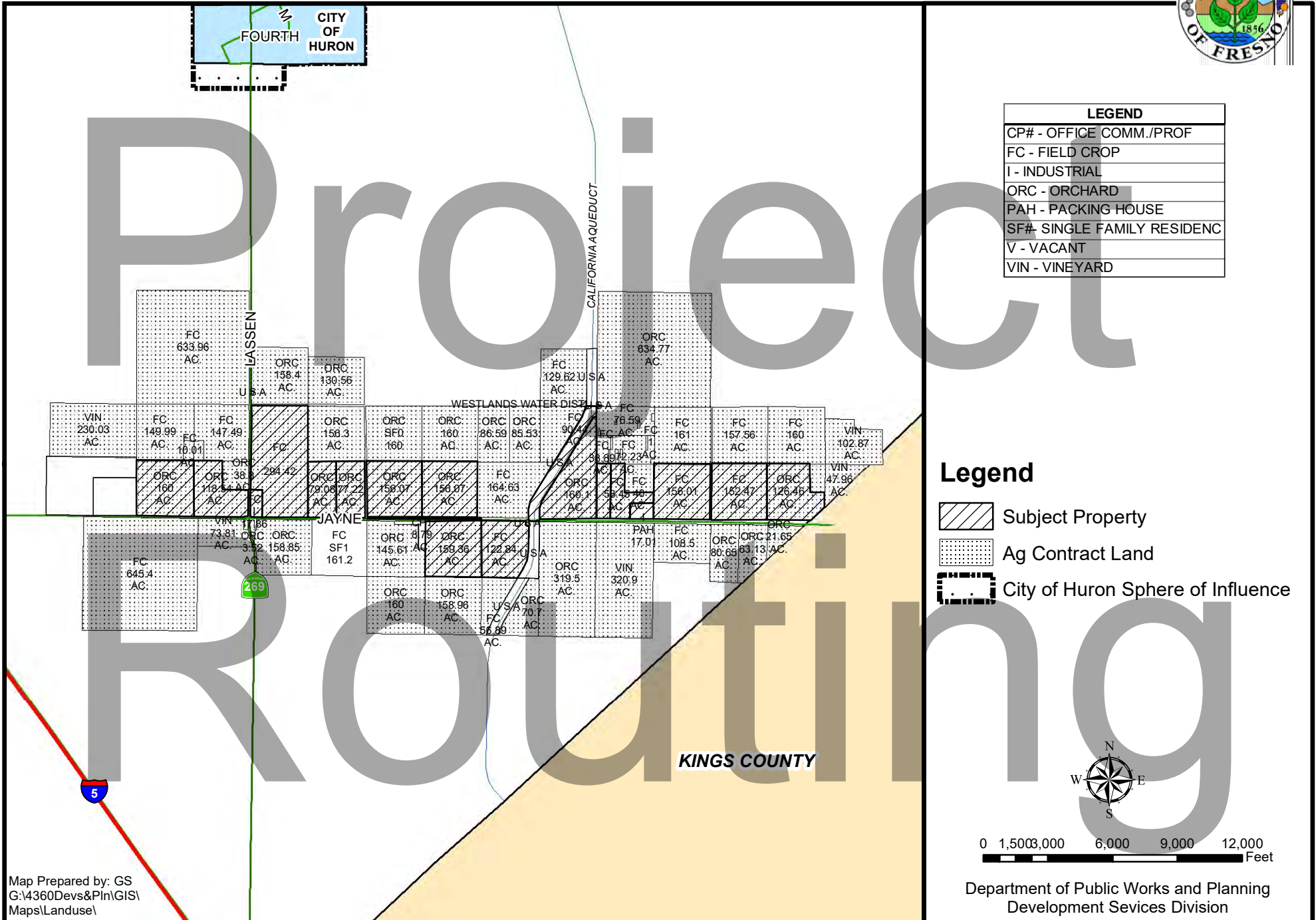
 DENOTES 230 KV CORRIDOR AREA

GEN-TIE CORRIDOR EXHIBIT

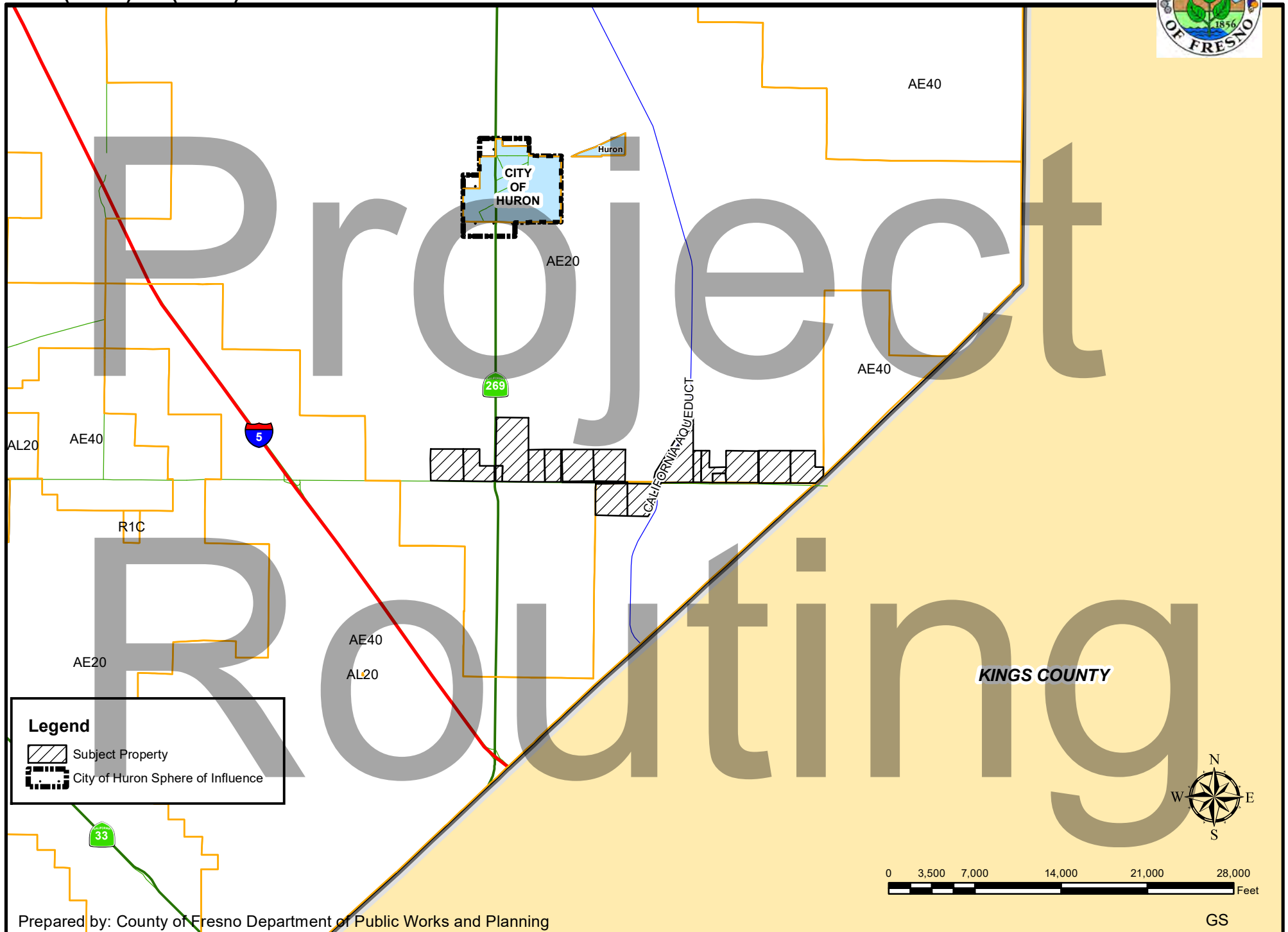
LOCATION MAP



EXISTING LAND USE MAP



EXISTING ZONING MAP



**DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION
AND
SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION**

JAYNE AVENUE GEN-TIE LINE

CUP 3650

Submitted by

Bert Verrips, AICP, Environmental Consulting

May 2019

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INTRODUCTION

CEQA CONTEXT

The Fresno County segment of the Westlands Solar Park Gen-Tie Line is an integral component of the WSP Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan, which was prepared by the Westlands Water District (WWD) to provide policy guidance for the reuse of retired farmlands owned by WWD in Kings County. In compliance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168, the WWD prepared a Program EIR (PEIR) (SCH No. 2013031043) which addressed the potential environmental impacts associated with future solar development under the WSP Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan. The PEIR also addressed the potential impacts associated with the planned gen-tie corridor extending from the WSP to the Gates substation in Fresno County, which is required for the transmission of WSP solar generation to the State electrical grid. On January 16, 2018, the WWD Board of Directors certified the PEIR under CEQA and approved the WSP Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan as a WWD policy document.

TIERING UNDER CEQA

The concept of tiering is addressed in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15152 and 15168(c). "Tiering" refers to the coverage of general environmental matters in broad, program- or plan-level EIRs, such as the WSP Master Plan PEIR, with subsequent focused environmental documents prepared for individual projects that implement the program or plan. The CEQA Statutes and the Guidelines encourage the use of tiered environmental documents to reduce delays and excessive paperwork in the environmental review process. This is accomplished in tiered documents by eliminating repetitive analyses of issues that were adequately addressed in the Program EIR and by incorporating those analyses by reference.

LEAD AGENCY

The WWD was the CEQA Lead Agency responsible for preparation and certification of the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan PEIR. Fresno County is a Responsible Agency under CEQA for purposes of the PEIR since the County is responsible for the approval of the Unclassified Conditional Use Permit for the Fresno County segment of Gen-Tie Line, which is planned to extend along Jayne Avenue from the Kings County line near Avenal Cutoff Road to the Gates Substation.

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15096(a), a Responsible Agency complies with CEQA by considering the EIR or MND prepared by the Lead Agency and by reaching its own conclusions on whether and how to approve the project involved. This provides for the Fresno County Planning Commission's consideration of the WSP Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan PEIR in the course of its CEQA review of the subject portion of the Gen-Tie Line covered by the PEIR.

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15052, a Responsible Agency may assume the role of Lead Agency if it finds that further environmental documentation is required under CEQA in conjunction with a subsequent project-specific approval within its purview. This provides for Fresno County's preparation of a subsequent Initial Study/MND that is tiered from the Program EIR for purposes of UCUP approval. It is noted that the Kings County segment of the Gen-Tie Line is the subject of a separate CUP application being processed by the Kings County Community Development Agency.

DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Overview

Solar generation from the Aquamarine Solar Project (the first solar facility to be constructed in the Westlands Solar Park) will be conveyed to a new 230-kV generation tie-line (Gen-Tie Line) that will connect the Aquamarine project to the Point of Interconnection (POI) with the PG&E system at the Gates Substation. The Gen-Tie Line will be privately constructed, owned and operated. The Gen-Tie Line will commence in Kings County at the southwest corner of the Aquamarine site and run along the east side of the 25th Avenue alignment for a distance of 2.5 miles to Nevada Avenue. The Gen-Tie Line will then turn west and follow the north side of Nevada Avenue for a distance of 6.2 miles to the Fresno County line just west of Avenal Cutoff Road.

The 6.3-mile long Fresno County segment of the Gen-Tie Line is planned to be constructed within a 100- to 350-foot private easement running parallel and adjacent to the Jayne Avenue roadway right-of-way. Commencing at the Kings County line, the Gen-Tie Line is planned to run along the north side of Jayne Avenue until it reaches the California Aqueduct where it is planned to cross over to the south side of the roadway. It will follow the south side of Jayne Avenue for approximately 0.6 miles and then cross back over to the north side of the roadway where it will continue on to the Gates Substation. The construction staging yard for the Gen-Tie project is planned for a former cotton gin site located at the northeast corner of Jayne Avenue and Lassen Avenue (SR-269). The terminations at the PG&E Gates Substation will be performed by PG&E subject to the approval authority of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).

The Fresno County portion of the Gen-Tie Line is included in the subject UCUP application to Fresno County. The Kings County segment of the Gen-Tie Line is the subject of a separate Conditional Use Permit application to the County of Kings. As mentioned, the entire Gen-Tie corridor (in Kings and Fresno Counties) extending to the Gates Substation received programmatic CEQA clearance with WWD's certification of the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan Program EIR in January 2018.

Gen-Tie Towers and Conductors

Gen-Tie Towers

The Fresno County portion of the Gen-Tie Line is planned to include about 44 transmission towers over its 6.3-mile length. The tower structures will consist of self-supporting tubular steel poles (TSPs or monopoles) ranging in height from 110 to 175 feet. The conductor spans between the monopoles would range from about 600 to 1,320 feet. The monopoles would be sited as near to existing roads and farm roads as practicable in order to minimize disturbance to agricultural operations. The Gen-Tie Line would consist of a single circuit; however, the towers would be capable of supporting two circuits, with one side remaining unstrung until additional transmission capacity is needed in the corridor.

The monopole footings would consist of steel-reinforced concrete piers which would be cast in place. The concrete piers would be to 30 to 60 feet deep and up to 8 feet in diameter, with actual dimensions depending on load and soil conditions, and whether the monopole is at a bend in the line which would require a more robust pole and foundation. The concrete footings would extend 2 to 4 feet above ground level.



Source: Google Earth, 2018

Project Vicinity

Conductors and Tower Components

Each pole structure carries conductors (“wires” or “cables”), insulators, and ground wires. Each circuit consists of three phases, each of which is carried on a separate conductor cable. Conductors must meet minimum ground clearances (at the bottom of the conductor sag), typically 27 to 30 feet above the ground. Greater ground clearances would be required in certain areas to avoid tree crops or other vegetation that could pose a risk to operation of the Gen-Tie Line. Minimum safety clearance requirements and local topography would dictate the exact height of each tower.

Insulators are used to connect the conductors to the tower structures while inhibiting the flow of electric current from energized conductors to the ground or other energized system elements. Insulators and their associated hardware are configured to support conductors while maintaining required distances between phases and grounded structures.

To protect conductors from the hazard of direct lightning strikes, overhead ground wires (shield wires) or fiber optic ground wire is installed on top of tower structures in order to transfer lightning currents into the ground.

Construction of Gen-Tie Line

Construction Overview

It is estimated that the construction of the full Gen-Tie Line to the Gates Substation would be completed in approximately 12 months, with the Fresno County segment requiring about 4 months to complete. The construction of the Gen-Tie Line would include the following a general sequence of activities: right-of-way acquisition; surveying and pre-construction activities; preparation of staging areas; construction of temporary access roads; tower installation; conductor installation; installing substation tie-ins; and site reclamation. Each of these activities is described below.

Right-of-way Acquisition

The Gen-Tie Line would require the acquisition of right-of-way (ROW) from the landowners whose properties are traversed by the corridors. The Gen-Tie Line would have a total length of about 15.0 miles, of which approximately 6.3 miles would be in Fresno County. The ROW would be in the form of easements, which would allow agricultural activities to continue within the right-of-way. The easement width for the gen-tie would be 100 feet, although some short segments would be wider. It is anticipated that the project applicant would acquire a wider easement along Jayne Avenue, approximately 350 feet wide, in order to accommodate a second gen-tie line in the future. It is noted that the wider Gen-Tie corridor has received programmatic CEQA clearance with WWD’s certification of the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan Program EIR in January 2018.

Surveying and Pre-Construction Activities

For surveying on private lands, the project proponent would negotiate rights-of-entry with the affected landowners. Construction survey work would consist of locating the centerline, tower locations, ROW boundaries, and temporary disturbance areas for pulling and tensioning activities, and temporary tower access roads. Once the centerline and disturbance areas have been surveyed and clearly marked in the field, preconstruction surveys for biological resources would be conducted. Geotechnical investigations would also be conducted to determine soil densities and strength for use in soils engineering and structural design.

Construction of Access Driveways

Each monopole site would require vehicular access during construction, and also during Gen-Tie Line operation to allow access for inspection and maintenance. Since the Gen-Tie right-of-way would run adjacent to Jayne Avenue, access would be gained directly from this County road without the need for tower access driveways.

Clearing Gen-Tie Right-of-Way

In order to reduce hazards associated with direct contact with trees and vegetation, minimum electrical safety clearances would be required as specified by national electrical safety standards. As such, some trimming or removal of mature vegetation within the Gen-Tie ROW may be required. Trees that could fall onto the lines or affect lines during wind-induced line swing would be removed. Normal clearing procedures would be to top or remove large trees and not disturb smaller trees.

The lands with permanent crops such as nut and fruit orchards would be most affected. Site clearing would be required at the tower sites including a specified permanent clear area surrounding each tower. The temporary clearance area for construction of the monopoles would typically be about 0.75 to 1.0 acres for each pole, and permanent displacement would be about 700 square feet (0.016 acres) for each pole. As mentioned, the monopoles would be sited at the edges of fields near the public right-of-way and farm roads to avoid cultivated lands to the extent practicable. In some locations, taller towers would be required in order to provide higher conductor ground clearances in order to avoid removal of existing orchard trees beneath the conductor sags.

Preparation of Staging Area

It is anticipated that one construction yard or staging area would be required for the Gen-Tie project to provide for storage of materials (e.g., tower steel, conductor reels, structure hardware, etc.), construction equipment and vehicles, parking areas for crew vehicles, temporary construction offices, and portable sanitation facilities. This staging area is planned for a former cotton gin site on a 17-acre parcel at the northeast corner of Jayne Avenue and SR-269 in Fresno County.

Tower Installation

The first step in tower installation would be to prepare a cleared work area at the tower site to accommodate the construction of the tower footings, laydown areas for materials, work areas for the assembly of the tower structure, and sufficient area to allow necessary crane maneuvers for tower installation. As mentioned, the cleared work area for a typical monopole site would be approximately 0.75 to 1.0 acres in area. The sites would be cleared, graded, and compacted where necessary to accommodate heavy vehicles.

Next, the holes for tower foundations would be bored or augured, and concrete poured in place over the pre-assembled reinforcing steel cages set into the holes. Depending on load requirements and soil characteristics, 100 to 150 cubic yards (cy) of concrete would be delivered to each tower site to install footings or piers (an average of 125 cy is assumed until individual footing depths are determined based on a geotechnical study). Once the concrete has cured, the towers would be bolted to the piers. Sections of pole would be hauled to each tower site and lifted into place with a crane and bolted together. It is expected that the soils excavated from the tower foundation holes would be distributed over the adjacent lands and would not be exported from the tower sites.

Upon completion of construction activity, a permanent setback area would be kept clear around each tower structure for maintenance access and fire safety purposes. It is expected that the typical finished

tower pad, including clearance area, would be approximately 30 feet in diameter and occupy an area of up to 700 square feet (0.016 acres) within a 100-foot wide easement.

Conductor Installation

After the towers are completed, the conductors and ground wires would be installed. This would begin by stringing pilot lines from tower to tower. The pilot lines would guide the pulling of conductors and ground wires, which would be kept under tension to prevent contact with the ground and obstacles. Given the height of most of the monopoles and the length of the spans, it is anticipated that a helicopter would be utilized for most, if not all, conductor stringing along the Gen-Tie Line. Helicopter services would be obtained on a short-term contract basis from aviation firms in the region. The helicopter landing zone would be located at the staging yard in Fresno County at the northwest corner of Jayne Avenue and SR-269.

Conductors and ground wires would be strung and tensioned using powered pulling equipment at one end and powered braking or tensioning equipment at the other end of a conductor segment. Pulling and tensioning sites would be spaced about 2 miles apart and would temporarily occupy areas of areas of 6 acres on average. These stringing equipment sites would mainly be located within the Gen-Tie easements. In locations where the gen-tie alignment changes course, the pulling and tensioning sites could extend beyond the gen-tie easement at these angles or corners, but would not extend more than 1,000 feet from the permanent easement. As with the monopoles, the precise locations and dimensions of the pulling and tensioning sites would be determined at the engineering design stage.

There are several locations along the Gen-Tie alignment where the conductors would cross over public roads and highways, aqueducts, and electrical distribution and transmission lines. To protect these underlying features during conductor stringing, guard structures are typically installed to intercept cables and prevent them from dropping below a specified height. Typical guard structures consist of standard wood poles, 60 to 80 feet high, connected by a similar wood cross member to form an “H-frame.” Typically, guard structures would be placed on either side of the protected feature, with protective netting strung from the cross members on one guard structure to the cross members on the opposite structure. Guard structures would be designed and installed in accordance with applicable safety requirements. At each crossing location, the guard structure would be removed once the overhead conductors have been secured to towers.

Substation Tie-ins

The Gen-Tie Line would extend to the property line of the Gates Substation located just west of Trinity Avenue in Fresno County. To make the interconnection, PG&E will construct a new 230-kV service line up to approximately 1,400 feet in length, starting near the intersection of Jayne and Trinity Avenues and extending into the Gates Substation. The service line will hang on approximately three new tubular steel poles, up to approximately 160 feet tall, to be located within PG&E’s existing Gates Substation property. Within the substation, modifications may include addition of new bays, circuit breakers, capacitor banks, shunt capacitors, and other electrical equipment. The details of the interconnection at the Gates Substation would be determined during the engineering design phase. .

Site Management during Construction

Dust Control

During construction, water trucks would be used for regular application of water to minimize dust generation. Gen-Tie construction would include compliance with the fugitive dust measures specified in Regulation VIII of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD).

Drainage and Erosion Control

Measures to prevent erosion during construction would be specified in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs) required for the Gen-Tie project by the State Water Resources Control Board. The SWPPPs would specify Best Management Practices (BMPs) for erosion control and hazardous material containment to be implemented during construction. Drainage control features would be installed, as appropriate, to minimize stormwater runoff from construction areas.

Construction Waste

During construction, the waste generated would primarily consist of non-hazardous waste materials such as waste lumber, scrap metal, greenwaste, sanitation waste, and common trash. These waste materials would be collected and taken to the construction staging yard where they would be segregated for recycling or disposal at the appropriate facilities.

Soil excavated for tower footings would be spread over the area immediately surrounding the tower sites. Soil disposal would not be permitted on slopes exceeding 10 percent or within 100 feet of a stream or water body.

Some quantities of hazardous wastes would be generated during construction. These waste materials would include fuels, lubricants, and cleaning solvents, etc. Hazardous wastes generated during construction would be either recycled or disposed of at a Class I disposal facility, as required.

Land Disturbance and Restoration

The construction of the Gen-Tie Line would result in temporary and permanent land disturbance at tower locations and in temporary land disturbance at work sites and staging areas. Table 1 contains estimates of land areas that would be permanently and temporarily disturbed.

TABLE 1
GEN-TIE LINE – LAND DISTURBANCE ESTIMATES – FRESNO COUNTY

Gen-Tie Project Feature	Quantity	Land Disturbance (Acres)		
		Total Disturbance Area	Temporarily Disturbed/ To be Restored	Permanently Disturbed
Tower Sites	44	44 ¹	43	1 ²
Tower Access Roads	2	0.5	0.5	0
Pulling/Tensioning Sites	5	30	30	0
Staging/Material Storage Sites	1 ³	0	0	0
Totals	--	74.5 acres	73.5 acres	1 acre

Footnotes:

¹ Temporary disturbance area at each tower site = up to 1.0 acre.

² Permanent disturbance area at each tower site = up to 0.016 acres (700 sf) for the planned monopoles.

³ The staging area for gen-tie construction is planned to be located in Fresno County at the northwest corner of Jayne Avenue and SR-269 (Lassen Avenue).

Upon completion of each segment of Gen-Tie Line, the areas disturbed during construction would be restored as appropriate. The disturbed areas would include: construction yards and staging areas; work pads and laydown/assembly areas at tower locations; areas disturbed for pulling and tensioning; and guard structure sites. Reclamation would involve the regrading and restoring soil density the disturbed areas with the objective of returning them to pre-construction conditions. A detailed reclamation plan would be prepared at the engineering design stage and incorporated into the plans and specifications for the Gen-Tie project.

Cultivation of row crops and tree crops are anticipated to continue within the Gen-Tie easements. Within Fresno County, the Gen-Tie Line would pass through approximately 2.9 miles of existing tree crops. In order to provide adequate clearance between the tree tops and the conductor sags, it is anticipated that taller towers would be used to provide greater ground clearance for conductors and avoid removal of tree crops along the conductor sags. Thus it is not anticipated that any permanent tree crops would be removed beneath the conductor sags.

Construction Workforce, Vehicles, and Equipment

Workforce

Based on information provided by the project engineers, Gen-Tie Line is expected to have a maximum workforce of approximately 59 construction workers on any given day. It is expected that most of construction personnel would be drawn from the communities in the region, although some specialized workers may need to be brought in from outside the area and be temporarily lodged in local hotels. Given the dispersed nature of the construction activities along the Gen-Tie corridor, with relatively few employees traveling to any given work site, it likely would not be practical to provide shuttle service; likewise, opportunities for carpooling would be limited. Although some ridesharing would likely occur, it is assumed that all construction workers would be solo commuters.

During construction, the work activities would be distributed along the Gen-Tie Line, with various crews engaged in surveying, ROW clearing, tower foundation installation, tower assembly and erection, conductor installation, and reclamation. Assuming that all 59 workers would commute solo, the peak traffic generated by construction personnel would be 59 AM trips and 59 PM trips.

Typically, construction would take place in 10-hour shifts during the hours of 7 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Saturday, although work could take place outside these hours if needed. For example, highway crossings may be scheduled during nighttime hours to minimize traffic disruption. In such instances, night lighting would be required for safe working conditions, but the lights would be oriented away from any sensitive receptors nearby.

Construction Deliveries

Equipment and Materials

The construction of the Gen-Tie Line is expected to use approximately 100 pieces of construction equipment and support vehicles at various stages of construction. This would include equipment such as dozers, back-hoes, graders, bobcats, auger trucks, concrete mixer and pump trucks, cranes, fork lifts, puller trucks, tensioner trucks, winch trucks, bucket trucks, water trucks, fuel trucks, skip loaders, tractor trailer trucks, pick-up trucks/crew cabs, compressors, and generators. Most equipment would be brought to the individual sites when needed and would remain at those sites throughout the duration of the activities for which they are needed.

Deliveries of tower steel, hardware, conductor spools, concrete, and equipment would occur throughout the construction period. The equipment and material deliveries would originate from

various locations in central California and would utilize regional highways and local roads to reach the work sites along the Gen-Tie corridor.

Concrete and Steel Deliveries

Concrete would be delivered to tower sites by concrete mixer trucks for pouring of the tower footings. It is expected that concrete would be supplied from ready-mix plants located near Coalinga. It is estimated that an average of 125 cubic yards of concrete would be required at each tower location, assuming monopoles with deep footings throughout. Given a concrete mixer truck capacity of 10 cubic yards, an average of 13 concrete deliveries would occur at each tower site. For the 44 tower sites in Fresno County, there would be a total of 572 concrete deliveries over the 66-day construction period, or an average of 8.7 deliveries per day.

Deliveries of tower steel and other materials for tower installation would involve approximately 22 round trips by trucks for each tower. The 44 towers in Fresno County would involve a total of 968 materials deliveries, or an average of 14.7 deliveries per day over the 66-day construction period on the Fresno County Gen-Tie segment.

Operation and Maintenance of Gen-Tie Line

After completion, the Gen-Tie Line would be inspected, maintained, and repaired in accordance with the proponent utilities' procedures and regulatory requirements. Gen-Tie components would be inspected at least once per year for corrosion, equipment misalignment, loose fittings, and mechanical problems. Vegetation, landscaping, and agricultural crops in the vicinity of the towers and conductors would be maintained at clearance distances as required by applicable regulations and safety standards.

SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

1. AESTHETICS

Setting

The visual character of the lands surrounding the gen-tie corridor is defined by the rural and agricultural landscapes of the valley floor, with the lower foothills of the Diablo Range forming a visual backdrop to the west. The agricultural landscapes along the gen-tie corridor includes several different cropping patterns, including tree crops and field crops, which provide some variety and visual interest. A small number of residential and agricultural support facilities are dispersed throughout the sparsely settled lands in the vicinity. The only residences within view of the gen-tie corridor are a series of 8 rural dwellings on the south side of Jayne Avenue west of the California Aqueduct. There are no State or County-designated or proposed scenic highways or routes in the vicinity of the gen-tie corridor, nor are there any historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or other scenic resources within or near the gen-tie corridor. The gen-tie corridor includes a few scattered non-orchard trees, but none that are considered scenic resources. The only scenic vistas in the region are of the Kettleman Hills and Coast Ranges to the west and southwest, which are located at least 4 miles from the Gen-Tie corridor.

Discussion

The dominant visual elements of the gen-tie line would be the towers supporting the power lines. The towers are planned to consist entirely of tubular steel monopoles, which would have a substantially smaller visual profile compared to lattice steel towers which are common in the vicinity. The gen-tie line would run alongside Jayne Avenue which passes entirely through flat agricultural landscapes where scenic value is limited. The only residences along the gen-tie route are the series of 8 dwellings on the south side of the roadway to the west of the California Aqueduct. No monopoles are planned directly opposite these dwellings, and the nearest monopoles would be located 250 feet northeast of the eastern-most dwelling and 400 feet northwest of the western-most dwelling in this row. Also, mature landscaping within the residential properties would partially screen the monopoles from view.

Given the generally low visual quality of the gen-tie setting, and the low level of potential visual effects to existing residences and public vantage points along Jayne Avenue, the visual effects associated with the Gen-Tie Line would be minimal.

With respect to lighting, the majority of construction activity for the gen-tie facilities would occur during daylight hours. However, in the event night construction may occasionally be required, temporary lighting would be required for security and safety. Night lighting may also be required for security at staging areas. However, it is anticipated that any such lighting would be directed inward toward the work areas and that direct lighting beyond the work areas would be avoided. Night lighting at any given work site would be temporary since each tower would be completed in a matter of days, and work sites for conductor stringing would continuously shift along the Gen-Tie corridor. Once completed, the gen-tie line would not include lighting, so no new sources of light would occur.

With regard to glare, the transmission monopoles, conductors, and insulators could have potentially reflective surfaces that could cause glare. However, it is expected that the materials selected for the transmission projects would be non-reflective and non-refractive, or would be treated with non-reflective coatings.

2. AGRICULTURE

Setting

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey of Fresno County, Western Part, the soils within the gen-tie corridor consist of Westhaven loam (51%) and Excelsior sandy loam (49%). Westhaven loam is rated as Land Capability Class 1 (irrigated) and 7c (non-irrigated), and Excelsior sandy loam is rated as Class 2s (irrigated) and 7s (non-irrigated). Class 1 soils have slight limitations that restrict their use, and Class 2 soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or require special conservation practices, or both. Land Class 7 soils have very severe limitations that make them unsuitable for cultivation and that restrict their use mainly to pasture, grazing, forestland, or wildlife habitat. The letter “c” indicates a climatic limitation such as temperature or lack of soil moisture, and letter “s” indicates that the soil has soil limitations in the root zone such as salinity. Westhaven loam has a Storie index rating of 95, and Excelsior sandy loam has a Storie index rating of 80. Soils with a Storie Index rating of 80 or greater are classified as Grade 1 or prime soils (NRCS 2006).

All of the farmland within the gen-tie corridor is mapped as Prime Farmland by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) of the California Department of Conservation (CDOC 2018). In addition, all farmlands within the gen-tie corridor are under Williamson Act contracts (CDOC 2016).

Discussion

Almost the entire gen-tie corridor passes through Prime Farmland. The only exception is the former cotton gin site at the northwest corner of Jayne and Lassen Avenues. The gen-tie line would result in permanent disturbance only at the sites of the monopoles, each of which would result in the permanent removal approximately 700 square feet of Farmland. The approximately 44 monopoles planned on lands mapped as Prime Farmland would result in a total displacement of 30,800 square feet (approximately 0.70 acres) of Prime Farmland.

REFERENCES – AGRICULTURE

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| CDOC 2016 | California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). 2017. <i>Fresno County Williamson Act FY 2015/2016 – Sheet 1 of 2</i> . February. Fresno w 15 16 WA.pdf |
| CDOC 2018 | California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). 2018. <i>Fresno County Important Farmland 2016 – Sheet 1 of 2</i> . September. fre16 w.pdf |
| NRCS 2006 | U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). 2006. <i>Soil Survey of Fresno County California, Western Part</i> . November. http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE MANUSCRIPTS/california/CA653/0/fresno.pdf |

3. AIR QUALITY

This discussion is based on the air quality assessment report prepared by Illingworth& Rodkin (I&R) in December 2018 (I&R 2018). In preparing the air quality assessment, I&R followed the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) guidance for air quality analysis contained in its Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impact (GAMAQI)(SJVAPCD 2015).

Construction Emissions

As shown in Table 2, the unmitigated construction emissions from the gen-tie project would not exceed the applicable Air District thresholds for criteria pollutants.

TABLE 2
CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS IN TONS PER YEAR – UNMITIGATED

Construction Activity	ROG	NO _x	CO	PM ₁₀ *	PM _{2.5} *
General Construction	0.47	4.63	3.03	7.60	1.15
Helicopter Construction	0.52	0.20	0.65	0.01	0.01
Total	0.99	4.83	3.68	7.61	1.16
<i>Significance thresholds</i>	10	10	100	15	--
<i>Exceed threshold?</i>	No	No	No	No	--

* Values reported for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} include fugitive dust emissions and diesel exhaust emissions combined. Fugitive dust emissions do not include the effect of measures implemented under Regulation VIII.
Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, 2018

The operational emissions associated with gen-tie operation would be negligible and thus were not estimated.

Toxic Air Contaminants

The Toxic Air Contaminant (TAC) that is relevant to the gen-tie project is Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM), which would be emitted by diesel-fueled equipment and vehicles during construction.

There is a series of 8 sensitive receptors (residences) on the south side of Jayne Avenue west of the California Aqueduct. The nearest transmission towers are planned to be located approximately 250 feet from the eastern-most of these dwellings, and 400 feet from the western-most dwelling. Construction of the gen-tie towers would proceed quickly. The total time required at each tower site for clearing, grading, excavation of footings, and tower assembly and erection, and clean up, would be 1 to 2 weeks. The area subject to temporary grading at each tower site would be approximately one acre, so the duration of grading equipment operation would be brief. Similarly, the time required for auguring holes for the concrete footings at each tower site would also be short.

The maximally exposed sensitive receptors along Jayne would be 250 to 400 feet or more away from the nearest tower site. Even under worst-case conditions, the total duration of nearby construction could be up to two weeks at any residence, but likely much shorter, with total operating time for diesel equipment shorter still. Construction of other towers in the vicinity would occur at least 800 feet away and farther. At this distance, most diesel particulates would be dispersed and the concentrations reaching the receptor locations would be low. Operational emissions would be negligible given the very low frequency of inspection and maintenance activities that would take place at the nearest tower.

Given the very brief duration of construction that would occur at the nearest residential receptor, and considering the negligible operational emissions, and the lifetime exposure period (70 years) considered in evaluating cancer risk, it is expected that the increased cancer risk at the maximally exposed receptor would be very low and would be well below the risk threshold of 20 in 1 million.

REFERENCES – AIR QUALITY

- I&R 2018 Illingworth & Rodkin (I&R). 2018. *Aquamarine Solar Project and Gen-Tie Line – Air Quality Assessment*. December.
- SJVAPCD 2014a San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). 2014. *Air Quality Thresholds of Significance – Criteria Pollutants*. July.
<http://www.valleyair.org/transportation/0714-GAMAQI-Criteria-Pollutant-Thresholds-of-Significance.pdf>
- SJVAPCD 2014b San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). 2014. *Air Quality Thresholds of Significance – Toxic Air Contaminants*. July.
<http://www.valleyair.org/transportation/0714-GAMAQI-TACs-Thresholds-of-Significance.pdf>
- SJVAPCD 2015 San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). 2015. *Guidance for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts (GAMAQI)*. March.
http://www.valleyair.org/transportation/GAMAQI_3-19-15.pdf

4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This discussion is based on the biological assessment report prepared by Live Oak Associates (LOA) in May 2019.

Setting

The gen-tie corridor consists of agricultural lands devoted to orchards and row crops with a few dispersed agricultural residences and farm buildings. A few irrigation canals and ditches pass through or alongside the gen-tie corridor, all of which will be avoided by gen-tie construction.

Due to extensive and long-term agricultural disturbance of the project area, no special-status plant species are present within or near the gen-tie corridor.

A number of special-status wildlife species utilize the project area for foraging, but potential breeding or nesting habitat is present in the vicinity only for burrowing owls, Swainson's hawk, and other raptors. The San Joaquin kit fox may utilize the project area for transiting between habitat areas, but is unlikely to occupy burrows in the project area. The American badger may also potentially occupy dens in the area.

There are no designated Critical Habitat areas or Habitat Conservation Plans in effect in the area.

Discussion

There is a potential for several wildlife species to be adversely affected by the gen-tie project. These include nesting burrowing owls, Swainson's hawks, and other raptors. San Joaquin kit fox, which may potentially move through the area, could also be affected. American badgers which may establish dens in the vicinity may also be affected. While none of these species has been found to occupy the gen-tie corridor or adjacent lands in recent wildlife surveys conducted by LOA, it is possible that these species may occur within or adjacent to the gen-tie corridor prior to or during gen-tie construction. In order to avoid potential impacts to these species, the LOA biological assessment sets forth detailed mitigation measures to be implemented for the avoidance and protection of these species from harm.

The gen-tie project would not adversely affect wildlife movement corridors, or aquatic or riparian habitat.

REFERENCES – BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| LOA 2019 | Live Oak Associates (LOA). 2019. <i>Aquamarine Solar Project and Gen-Tie Line – Biological Assessment</i> . May. [Contained in Appendix C of this document.] |
| WWD 2017b | Westlands Water District (WWD). 2017. <i>Draft Program Environmental Impact Report – Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan</i> . October. https://cs.westlandswater.org/resources/resources_files/misc/Environmental_Docs/201710/Vol1.pdf |

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES

This discussion is based on the cultural resources report prepared by Basin Research Associates in December 2018. The Basin Research Associates report is kept administratively confidential pursuant to Government Code Section 6254, subdivision (r) and Section 6254.10.

The research conducted for the cultural resources report by Basin Research Associates included a prehistoric and historic site records search through the California Historical Resources Information System, Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center, California State University (CSU) Bakersfield. In addition, Basin Research conducted a review of pertinent literature and archival records, and cultural resources compliance reports on other projects in the area, among other sources.

Basin Research Associates conducted archaeological field reviews within the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan Area, including the Aquamarine Project Site and Gen-Tie Corridor, from 2009 to 2018. No evidence of prehistoric or historically significant cultural resources was observed during the field reviews.

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted concerning resources listed on the *Sacred Lands Inventory*. The NAHC record search was negative for Native American resources in the immediate project area, and 14 tribes or knowledgeable individuals associated with Native American individuals/groups were sent letters soliciting additional information, and no responses were received. The County of Kings has completed consultation with the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe pursuant to AB 52 with respect to the Aquamarine Solar Project and the Kings County portions of the gen-tie line.

Discussion

Although no records or other evidence of cultural resources or tribal cultural resources within the gen-tie corridor were found, it is possible the cultural resources, including human remains could be inadvertently discovered during grading and excavation associated with gen-tie construction. To avoid potential impacts to cultural resources, the cultural resources report by Basin Research Associates sets forth detailed measures to be implemented in the event that cultural resources or human remains are discovered during grading and construction for the project.

REFERENCES – CULTURAL RESOURCES

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Basin 2018 | Basin Research Associates. 2018. <i>Cultural Resources Assessment Report – Aquamarine Solar Project and Gen-Tie Line, Kings and Fresno Counties, California</i> . December. |
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6. ENERGY

Consistent with Public Resources Code Section 21100(b)(3), the potential for the project to result in a substantial increase in energy demand and/or wasteful use of energy during project construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning is to be evaluated.

Discussion

The construction of the gen-tie line would involve the consumption of fuels for vehicles and equipment. Energy would also be used in the manufacture of transmission towers and electrical cables, some of which would be recyclable. Construction materials would also be required to be recycled to the extent practicable pursuant to the applicable utility construction standards.

Operationally, the main objective of the gen-tie line is to deliver the renewable solar energy generated by the WSP solar generating facilities to the state electrical grid. This would help achieve the statewide goal of converting from fossil-fueled power generation to renewable power generation. Thus the relatively small amount of energy consumed in construction of the gen-tie line would be off-set by the critical role of the gen-tie facility in enabling the delivery of the renewable solar generation to the state electrical grid. Thus the minimal energy demand from the Gen-Tie Line would not constitute a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary use of energy.

The State's primary mandate for renewable energy is embodied by AB 32 – The California Global Warming Solutions Act, which is implemented through its Scoping Plan. The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan adopted by the California Air Resources Board outlines the strategies for achieving the emissions reduction target mandated in AB 32. One of the key strategies is the Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS), which currently requires all electric utilities in California to include a minimum of 60 percent renewable generation sources in their overall energy mix by 2030 (CARB 2017). The gen-tie line will help increase the proportion of renewables in the statewide energy portfolio, thereby furthering the implementation of RPS by the target year instead of obstructing its implementation. This will help facilitate the retirement of existing older fossil-fueled generation plants, thereby avoiding or offsetting those sources of GHG emissions. Therefore, the gen-tie line would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

REFERENCES – ENERGY

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| CARB 2017 | California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2017. <i>The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan – The Strategy for Achieving California's 2030 Greenhouse Gas Target</i> . October 27. https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/revised2017spu.pdf |
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7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Setting

The gen-tie corridor is located in the Great Valley Geomorphic Province, a topographic and structural basin bounded on the east by the Sierra Nevada and on the west by the Coast Ranges. The Sierra Nevada are part of a fault block which dips gently to the southwest which forms the bedrock beneath the valley. This basement complex is composed of igneous and metamorphic rocks of pre-Tertiary age. These are in turn overlain by Quaternary period alluvium, including material from the Pleistocene Epoch (about 2.6 Million to about 10,000 years ago), which is covered by layer of Holocene Epoch (about 10,000 years ago to present) of varying thickness.

There are no Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones mapped in the vicinity of the gen-tie corridor. However, there are several active faults in the Coast Ranges to the west, including the San Andreas Fault Zone, the Nunez Fault Zone, and the Great Valley Fault System. The nearest segments of these faults are located 23 miles, 19 miles, and 15 miles, respectively, from the western end of the gen-tie corridor.

The soils within the gen-tie corridor consist of Westhaven loam (51%) and Excelsior sandy loam (49%). The Westhaven loam has moderate permeability, moderate shrink-swell potential, slight erosion hazard, and is highly corrosive to uncoated steel and moderately corrosive to concrete. The Excelsior sandy loam has moderate permeability, low shrink-swell potential, slight erosion hazard, and is highly corrosive to uncoated steel and moderately corrosive to concrete (NRCS 2006).

With respect to paleontological resources, the Fresno County segment of the gen-tie corridor is located within the area mapped as Quaternary fan deposits, which are considered to have a high sensitivity for paleontological resources. These Quaternary deposits are overlain by more recent Holocene deposits. Although the depth of the Holocene layer within the gen-tie corridor is unknown, lack of reported fossils in the area suggest that fossils are not common, at least in the upper portions of the local sedimentary deposits. If fossils are present in the gen-tie corridor, it is likely that they are at depths shallower than 5 feet below the ground surface.

There are several major fossil localities in western Kings County, including the Witt site located 15 miles south/southeast of the Aquamarine project site on the southwest shoreline of former Tulare Lake. The Witt site, which is associated within Quaternary lake deposits, has yielded numerous vertebrate species including mammoth, camel, horse, bison, dire wolf, and many fish species (Gobalet 1993).

Other well-known fossil beds occur in the Kettleman Hills, located approximately 15 miles the southwest of the Aquamarine project site and 7 miles southwest of the Gen-Tie corridor, beyond the western margins of the San Joaquin Valley where the deep alluvium has transitioned to shallow soils covering bedrock outcrops. The fossil-bearing rock formations include geologic deposits of the Etchegoin, San Joaquin, and Tulare Formations which date from the Pliocene age (roughly 4.5 to 2.0 million years old).

Discussion

The geologic condition of concern to the gen-tie line is the potential for soils expansion (shrink-swell). The standard mitigation for expansive soils is to conduct a subsurface geotechnical investigation to serve as the basis for soils engineering recommendations for any expansive soils that may be present.

Potential seismic impacts are typically addressed through compliance with the California Building Code, and adherence to recommendations by the project geotechnical engineer.

Erosion and siltation would be addressed through the preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) which would be subject to review and approval by the Central Valley RWQCB.

Potential impacts to paleontological resources would be avoided through implementation of standard mitigations requiring work to be stopped within 100 feet of a fossil discovering, and implementation of measures recommended by a qualified paleontologist.

REFERENCES – GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- CGS 1965 California Department of Conservation (CDOC), California Geological Survey (CGS). 1965. *Geologic Atlas of California – Fresno Sheet (Map No. 005)*. Compilation by Robert A. Matthews and John L. Burnett. http://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dmg/pubs/gam/GAM_005_Fresno/
- CGS 2010 California Department of Conservation (DOC), California Geological Survey (CGS). 2010. *2010 Fault Activity Map of California*. CGS Geologic Data Map No. 6. <http://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/fam/>
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- NRCS 2006 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2006. *Soil Survey of Fresno County California, Western Part*. November. http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_MANUSCRIPTS/california/CA653/0/fresno.pdf
- WWD 2017 Westlands Water District (WWD). 2017. *Draft Program Environmental Impact Report – Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan*. October. https://cs.westlandswater.org/resources/resources_files/misc/Environmental_Docs/201710/Vol1.pdf

8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Setting

In an effort to avert the consequences of climate change, the California State Legislature enacted the California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) in 2006. AB 32 established a state goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (a reduction of approximately 25 percent from forecast emissions levels), and required the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to establish a comprehensive program to implement this goal. In 2016, the legislature passed SB 32 which extended the goals of AB 32 and set a 2030 goal of reducing 2030 emissions by 40 percent from 2020 levels.

One of the key implementation programs is the Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) which mandates that renewable generation sources comprise at least 33 percent of electrical utilities' total power generation by 2020. Qualifying renewable generation sources include solar, wind, small hydro, geothermal, and biomass. In September 2018, Governor Brown signed SB 100, which updated the required renewables content of electricity generation to 50 percent by 2025 and 60 percent by 2030, and puts California on the path to implement a zero-carbon electricity grid by 2045.

Discussion

The GHG emissions resulting from gen-tie construction were estimated by Illingworth & Rodkin using the CalEEMod model. (Note: operational emissions from gen-tie operation were considered negligible and were not calculated. Additionally, since decommissioning of the gen-tie is not foreseen, emissions associated with decommissioning were also not calculated.) The estimated emissions for the Fresno County portion of the gen-tie estimated to total 1,623 Metric Tons of CO₂e during 2019, the only construction year (i.e., 1,384 MTCO₂e for general construction plus 238 MTCO₂e for helicopter construction. This is below the significance threshold of 7,000 MTCO₂e per year.

REFERENCES – GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| CARB 2017 | California Air Resources Board (CARB). 2017. <i>The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan – The Strategy for Achieving California's 2030 Greenhouse Gas Target</i> . October 27. https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/scopingplan/revised2017spu.pdf |
| I&R 2018 | Illingworth & Rodkin (I&R). 2018. <i>Aquamarine Solar Project and Gen-Tie Line – Air Quality Assessment</i> . December. [Contained in Appendix B of this document.] |

9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The following discussion of hazards and hazardous materials is partially based on the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) prepared on the gen-tie corridor by ENGEO in May 2019.

Setting

Based on a review of regulatory records and databases, there are no listed regulatory cleanup or open investigation sites within or near the gen-tie corridor. A review of the DTSC's EnviroStor Database and SWRCB's GeoTracker database identified the following site within one mile of the Jayne Avenue gen-tie corridor (DTSC 2016, SWRCB 2019).

Indian Auxiliary Field #3. This former military facility is located south of Jayne Avenue approximately 0.6 miles south of Jayne Avenue, midway between the California Aqueduct and SR-269 (Lassen Avenue). The EnviroStor entry indicates that the site was used as an auxiliary landing field by the Army Air Corps in connection with the Lemoore Basic Flying School during World War II. Improvements included hard surfaced runway and support buildings. The lead agency (DTSC) indicates that this site is inactive and needs evaluation. Thus far no hazards have been identified. The lead agency (DTSC) indicates that no further action is required on this site.

No oil or natural gas wells (operating or abandoned) are within the gen-tie corridor or their immediate vicinity. There are three abandoned oil wells (all dry holes) located at distances of 0.5 to 1.0 miles from Jayne Avenue. The nearest natural gas fields are located southeast of Kettleman City, approximately 6 miles south of the gen-tie corridor. The wells in these fields have been abandoned, except for one remaining active gas well located 12 miles southeast of the gen-tie corridor in the Tulare Dry Lakebed (DOGGR 2019).

Discussion

The construction and maintenance of the gen-tie line would involve the handling and use of hazardous materials such as fuels, lubricants, solvents, welding supplies and other materials. The safe handling, storage, transport, and appropriate cleanup of any hazardous materials during construction or operation would be addressed through implementation of a Hazardous Materials Business Plans (HMBP) and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), as required under existing statutes and regulations.

There is a potential for worker exposure to Valley Fever spores resulting from ground disturbing activities during gen-tie construction. The potential for exposure is low in areas where soils have been subject to regular cultivation and disturbance, as is the case along the gen-tie corridor. The potential release of spores would be minimized through implementation of the Dust Control Plan that will be prepared, approved and implemented for the project, as required by the San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD).

Based on the previous analyses of soils on similar agricultural lands in the vicinity, it is concluded that residual agricultural pesticides are highly unlikely to be present within the gen-tie corridor in hazardous concentrations.

REFERENCES – HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- CDC 2019 Centers for Disease Control. 2019. *Fungal Diseases – Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis)*. January.
<http://www.cdc.gov/fungal/diseases/coccidioidomycosis/index.html>
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<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/CDPH%20Document%20Library/ValleyFeverFactSheet.pdf>
- DOGGR 2019 California Department of Conservation (CDOC), Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources. 2019. *Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources Well Finder*. March. Accessible at
<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dog/Pages/WellFinder.aspx>
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http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/palmdale/documents/2011-02-02_Exhibits_FSA_TN-59585.pdf
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<http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public>
- ENGEO 2019 ENGEO Inc. 2019. *Phase I Environmental Assessment – Westlands Solar Park Gen-Tie*. April.
- MTA 2018b Moore Twining Associates (MTA). 2018. *Soil Sampling and Pesticide Analysis - Aquamarine Solar Project Kings County, California*. November.
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- SWRCB 2019 State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). 2019. *GeoTracker Database*.
<http://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/>
- UCD 2014 University of California-Davis (UCD) et al. 2014. *Exttoxnet – Pesticide Information Profiles (PIPs)*. Accessible at
<http://exttoxnet.orst.edu/pips/ghindex.html>

10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Setting

The land traversed by the Fresno County segment of the gen-tie corridor are formed by an alluvial fan that descends very gradually from the Diablo Range in the west toward the Kings River to the east. There are no natural drainage courses or artificial canals in the immediate vicinity, with the exception of the California Aqueduct, which passes the Jayne Avenue gen-tie corridor at its approximate mid-point. The nearest natural drainage system in the area is Arroyo Pasajero (also known as the “Los Gatos Creek System”), which includes Arroyo Pasajero and its tributaries Warthan, Jacalitos, and Zapato-Chino Creeks. Arroyo Pasajero flows from the Diablo Range eastward through the City of Coalinga and Pleasant Valley and then passes under I-5 between El Dorado and Jayne Avenues. Stormwater from Arroyo Pasajero is collected in a large detention basin on the west side of the California Aqueduct north of the City of Huron.

The entire Jayne Avenue gen-tie corridor is located in a FEMA-mapped 100-year flood zone (Zone X – Area of Minimal Flood Hazard). The nearest mapped 500-year flood zone is located south of the City of Huron approximately 6 miles north of the Gen-Tie Line (FEMA 2009). The nearest DWR flood zone is mapped as a long strip of land running parallel and northeast of the California Aqueduct, which is located approximately 2 miles southwest of the gen-tie line at its nearest point (DWR 2018).

Discussion

Groundwater

During construction of the gen-tie line, water would be needed for dust suppression, cleaning, and in mixing of concrete for tower foundations. Non-potable water would be purchased from local water purveyors and hauled to each tower site, temporary access driveway, and staging area. The overall acreage subject to temporary disturbance would be relatively small (~75 acres) and would occur at isolated locations over the 6.3 miles of gen-tie corridor, or equivalent to approximately 12 acres of disturbed area per mile. It is estimated that the total water demand for gen-tie construction would be approximately 15 acre-feet, based on a consumption rate of 0.2 af/acre. This would be equivalent to the irrigation requirements of about 6 acres of agricultural land for one year (assuming the average WWD water application rate of 2.5 afy per acre). Assuming all construction water is obtained from groundwater wells, this very small amount of groundwater pumping would have a negligible effect on groundwater levels.

During operation of the Gen-Tie Line, very little water would be used in maintenance and repair activities. While the Gen-Tie Line would be constructed over the groundwater basin of the San Joaquin Valley, the total area of impervious surfaces resulting from the Gen-Tie Line would be very small (less than 1.0 acre), consisting mainly of concrete footings for the monopoles, which would not interfere with groundwater recharge.

Runoff and Flooding

The gen-tie line would result in placement of very few permanent features on the ground surface. These features would consist primarily of concrete footings for monopoles, which would add a negligible amount of impervious surface area. The very small volume of additional runoff from these impervious surfaces would be readily absorbed into the ground adjacent to these features. Although the gen-tie line would be located in mapped flood zone, the flooding would be minimal and would be unlikely to affect the monopoles which would have foundation piers raised at least 2 feet above ground level. There is no

potential for gen-tie line to result in increased flood hazard by increasing the depth of floodwaters or by impeding the flow of floodwaters.

Erosion and Sedimentation

The potential for erosion and sedimentation during construction would be minimized through implementation of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that would be required to be implemented for the gen-tie project. The SWPPP would also include pollution control measures to address potential spills or leaks of oils and lubricants from construction equipment and vehicles.

Inundation Flooding, Tsunamis, and Seiches

No portion of the Jayne Avenue gen-tie corridor is subject to inundation in the event of dam failure at a reservoir in the region. The potential for inundation in the event of failure of the Pine Flat Dam or Terminus Dam in the Sierra Nevada is generally confined to lands east of the Kings River approximately 10 miles east of the Jayne Avenue gen-tie corridor.

There are no other impoundments or diked areas nearby which would pose a risk of seiches or flooding due to levee failure. Due to the project's inland location more than 75 miles from the Pacific Ocean, there is no potential for tsunamis.

REFERENCES – HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- | | |
|-----------|---|
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| FEMA 2009 | Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), National Flood Insurance Program, <i>Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), Fresno County Unincorporated Areas 060529, Map No. 06019C3275H</i> , Effective Date: February 18, 2009. Available at https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search |
| WRP 2019 | Water Resources Planning (WRP). 2019. <i>Water Supply Assessment – Aquamarine Solar Project and Gen-Tie Line, Fresno and Kings Counties, California</i> . April. |
| WWD 2017 | Westlands Water District (WWD). 2017. <i>Draft Program Environmental Impact Report – Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan</i> . October. https://cs.westlandswater.org/resources/resources_files/misc/Environmental_Docs/201710/Vol1.pdf |

11. LAND USE AND PLANNING

Setting

The lands within and along the gen-tie corridor consist primarily of agricultural lands in cultivation for row crops and tree crops, along with related features such as irrigation pipelines, standpipes, power lines, agricultural wells and pump stations, and unimproved agricultural roads. Approximately 1 mile west of the Kings County line, the corridor shifts northward about 800 feet to avoid the Giovannetti cooling facility and then shifts south to again run parallel to Jayne Avenue. The corridor continues westward across the San Luis Canal/California Aqueduct and along agricultural fields along Jayne Avenue for 4 miles to former cotton gin site at northeast corner of Lassen Avenue/SR-269. A series of 8 ranch dwellings is located on the south side of Jayne Avenue, approximately 1.3 miles east of SR-269.

Fresno County General Plan

All lands crossed by the gen-tie corridor in Fresno County are designated “Agriculture” in the Fresno County General Plan. The Agriculture and Land Use Element of the General Plan allows electrical substations in Agriculture-designated lands, but transmission lines are not specifically mentioned (Fresno County 2000c).

Fresno County Zoning Code

All lands crossed by the gen-tie corridor in Fresno County are zoned as either “AE 20 Exclusive Agricultural” or “AE 40 Exclusive Agricultural” (Fresno County 2017c). The Fresno County Zoning Code permits electrical substations in agricultural zones subject to Director’s review and approval. Utility structures such as transmission lines are permitted with an Unclassified Conditional Use Permit under Zoning Code Section 853(B)14 (Fresno County 2011).

Discussion

The construction of the Fresno County segment of the gen-tie line corridors would be consistent with the applicable provisions of the Fresno County General Plan. The gen-tie line would be consistent with the applicable Zoning Code provisions upon the granting of an Unclassified Conditional Use Permit.

REFERENCES – LAND USE AND PLANNING

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Fresno County 2000 | County of Fresno. 2000. <i>Fresno County 2000 General Plan –Policy Document</i> . October.
http://www2.co.fresno.ca.us/4510/4360/General_Plan/GP_Final_policy_doc/Table_of_Contents_rj_blue.pdf |
| Fresno County 2011 | County of Fresno. 2011. <i>Fresno County Zoning Ordinance. The Ordinance Code of the County of Fresno, Part VII. Land Use Regulation and Planning, Division VI- Zoning Division</i> . Last Date Amended: December 6, 2011.
http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/ViewDocument.aspx?id=53760 |

12. MINERAL RESOURCES

Setting

Fresno County has an abundance and wide variety of mineral resources that have been extracted for many years. In western Fresno County, present-day production includes aggregates (sand and gravel), fossil fuels (oil and natural gas), metals (chromite), and construction and industrial materials (asbestos, gypsum, and limestone). The nearest sand and gravel quarries are located approximately 8 miles southwest and 14 miles west near Coalinga (Fresno County 2000).

Oil and natural gas production has long been a major industry in western Fresno County, particularly in the Kettleman Hills to the west and in the Westhaven oil field located to the northeast. There are three abandoned oil/gas wells located within one mile of the gen-tie corridor in western Fresno County. These range in distance from 0.5 to 1.0 miles from the corridor (DOGGR 2019).

Discussion

There are no mineral resource sites or oil and gas wells within the gen-tie corridor or in its immediate vicinity.

REFERENCES – MINERAL RESOURCES

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| DOGGR 2019 | California Department of Conservation (DOC), Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR). 2019. <i>Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources Well Finder</i> . Available at https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dog/Pages/Wellfinder.aspx |
| Fresno County 2000 | County of Fresno. 2000. <i>Fresno County General Plan – Background Report</i> . October. Available at http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/viewdocument.aspx?id=5696 |

13. NOISE

The following discussion of noise is based on the *Noise and Vibration Assessment* prepared by Illingworth & Rodkin in December 2018 (I&R 2018).

Setting

The only noise sensitive receivers along the gen-tie corridor are those included in a series of 8 dwellings located on the south side of Jayne Avenue approximately 1.0 miles west of the California Aqueduct. The noise measurements taken by Illingworth & Rodkin documented the existing daily trend in noise levels due to traffic on the roadway. The day-night average noise level at this site was 75 dBA L_{dn} . Typical daytime hourly average noise levels were approximately 65 to 74 dBA L_{eq} .

Project Noise Sources

Construction Noise

The Fresno County segments of the gen-tie line are planned to be constructed over a 3-month period commencing in late 2019. The general sequence of activities for construction of the gen-Tie Line would involve the following steps: clearing of right-of-way and staging areas; construction of access roads; installation of tower footings and structures; and conductor stringing. These construction activities would proceed in step-wise fashion from one end of the Gen-Tie corridor to the other, and as such the duration of construction at any given location would be relatively brief.

The noisiest construction activity would occur during site preparation of tower sites and staging areas, when most construction equipment would be used. This equipment typically includes dozers, graders, compactors, auger drill rigs, and trucks, which produce maximum noise levels ranging from 80 to 85 dBA at 50 feet. The maximum noise level generated by several pieces of equipment operating continuously at a distance of 50 feet would be about 90 dBA. At the series of 8 dwellings on the south side of Jayne Avenue, the nearest existing dwellings would be 140 feet from the nearest edge of the gen-tie right-of-way. At this distance, the maximum noise level at the nearest residence would be up to 81 dBA, given that maximum noise levels would decrease at the rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance from a point source. However, it is expected that the nearest monopoles would be sited at least 250 feet from the nearest dwelling, where maximum noise levels would be up to 78 dBA. Almost all gen-tie construction would occur at distances of 600 feet or more from the affected residences, where maximum noise levels would be 70 dBA or lower.

Helicopter construction would be used for stringing pilot wires for conductors between monopoles. The operation of a helicopter for construction would generate maximum noise levels of approximately 80 dBA at 200 feet (USBLM 2013, p. 3.23-11). The stringing of conductor pilot wires by a helicopter would occur along the pole line located near the center of the right-of-way. The nearest conductor arm would be at least 30 feet from the edge of the right-of-way, or 170 feet from the nearest dwellings on the south side of Jayne Avenue. At this distance, the maximum noise level at the nearest residence would be 81 dBA.

Construction noise sources are exempt from the Fresno County noise standards, provided the construction activities do not take place before 6 AM or after 9 PM on weekdays, or before 7 AM or after 5 PM on Saturdays or Sundays. It is anticipated that transmission construction would occur only within the hours prescribed in the ordinance. However, if nighttime construction is determined to be necessary (e.g., during conductor stringing over Jayne or Lassen Avenues), a variance would be required from Fresno County prior to such nighttime construction in proximity to any residences. Such a variance

would be conditioned to minimize noise and nuisance effects. Construction of the gen-tie line segments in Fresno County would not violate the noise provisions of the Fresno County Municipal Code.

Construction Traffic Noise

The construction of the Gen-Tie Line would involve truck trips for hauling equipment and materials to and from the construction sites, and also commute trips by construction workers arriving and departing the construction sites. During the busiest construction phase, when all construction activities would be ongoing, the maximum workforce would be 59 workers, and there would be an average of 15 daily deliveries of equipment and materials. This would result in 108 worker commute trip ends and 30 haul trip ends daily. The worker trips would be concentrated at the beginning and end of work shifts, resulting in 59 AM trips and 59 PM trips. The haul truck trips would occur throughout the day and would average about 4 trips per hour for an 8-hour workday.

The roadway network in the vicinity of the gen-tie line is subject to relatively low traffic volumes typical of the rural setting. Since these roadways currently serve local agricultural operations, dispersed dwellings, and agricultural processing and support facilities, the areas along the roads are currently subject to occasional noise from farm equipment and heavy trucks, as well as light passenger vehicle traffic. The addition of haul truck traffic and commute traffic associated with Gen-Tie Line construction would likely be noticeable in the areas immediately adjacent to the travel routes. The noise associated with this traffic would increase noise levels by less than 1 dBA L_{dn} .

REFERENCES – NOISE

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Caltrans 2013 | California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2013. <i>Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual</i> . September.
http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/noise/pub/TCVGM_Sep13_FINAL.pdf |
| Fresno County 2000 | County of Fresno. 2000. <i>Fresno County 2000 General Plan – Health and Safety Element</i> . October.
http://www2.co.fresno.ca.us/4510/4360/General_Plan/GP_Final_policy_doc/Health%20Element_rj.pdf |
| Fresno County 2019 | County of Fresno. 2017. <i>Fresno County Ordinance Code</i> . As amended through February 12, 2019.
https://www.municode.com/library/ca/fresno_county/codes/code_of_ordinances |
| I&R 2018 | Illingworth & Rodkin (I&R). 2018. <i>Aquamarine Solar Project and Gen-Tie Line – Noise and Vibration Assessment</i> . December. |
| USBLM 2013 | U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). 2013. <i>Final Environmental Impact Report for the Gateway West Transmission</i> . April 2013.
https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/docset_view.do?projectId=65164&currentPageId=92763&documentId=78833 |

14. POPULATION and HOUSING

The gen-tie line would not include a residential component so it would not directly induce population growth in the area. During construction, the Gen-Tie Line is expected to require a total workforce of about 59 workers over a construction period of approximately 3 months for the Fresno County segment. It is expected that most of construction personnel would be drawn from the communities in the region, although some specialized workers may need to be brought in from outside the area and be temporarily lodged in local hotels. Upon completion, the operation of the Gen-Tie Line would require no on-site staff, and would receive intermittent inspections and maintenance activities by utility workers.

There are no dwellings within the gen-tie corridor, with the nearest residences consisting of 8 dwellings located on the south side of Jayne Avenue, on the opposite side of the roadway from the gen-tie corridor. None of these dwellings would be removed or encroached upon by the gen-tie line.

15. PUBLIC SERVICES

Fire Protection

Fire protection services to the gen-tie line would be provided by the Fresno County Fire Protection District, as well as CalFire and other fire departments in the area that participate in automatic aid or mutual aid agreements. During construction of the gen-tie line, the contractors would be required to implement standard safety plans related to working with electrical equipment; however, medical services from the Fire Department may occasionally be called upon in the event of medical emergencies. Construction and operation of the gen-tie line is not anticipated to result in an increase in demand of fire protection services leading to the construction of new or physically altered facilities.

Police Protection

Police protection services to the Gen-Tie Line would be provided by the Fresno County Sheriff's Department and the California Highway Patrol. During construction, the gen-tie project may require police services due to possible theft of construction equipment and/or vandalism that might occur during the construction period. Gen-tie line construction may also require temporary partial closure of roadways, especially where conductors would be strung over public roadways. Deliveries by heavy transport trucks may also require traffic control measures. Any temporary road closures or major traffic disruptions would involve coordination with local law enforcement. Any potential traffic hazard impacts would be minimized through implementation of the traffic control measures which would result in a minor temporary use of Sheriff's Department's resources. Construction and operation of the gen-tie line is not anticipated to result in an increase in demand of police protection services leading to the construction of new or physically altered facilities.

16. RECREATION

Discussion

The gen-tie line would not include a residential component and thus would not result in substantially increased use of or demand for neighborhood or regional parks, or other recreational facilities.

The gen-tie line would not include recreational facilities, and thus would not result in impacts associated with such facilities.

17. TRANSPORTATION

Setting

State highways in the vicinity that serve the project area include Interstate 5 located to the west, and SR-269 which bisects the gen-tie corridor from north to south. The Fresno County roads serving the project area include Jayne Avenue, and the Kings County roads serving the project area include Avenal Cutoff Road and Nevada Avenue.

The nearest public use airports in the project area include those at Coalinga and Harris Ranch airports, which are located 10 miles northwest and 13 miles west of the gen-tie corridor, respectively. There are two private airstrips within a 5-mile radius of the gen-tie corridor. These are both located in Kings County, and include the airstrip at the Stone Land Company Ranch, located 1.6 miles east on the south side of Nevada Avenue, and the airstrip at Shannon Ranch, located 4.3 miles northeast at Avenal Cutoff Road and Gale Avenue.

Discussion

Traffic Volumes

During the 3-month construction period for the Fresno County portion of the gen-tie line, the work activities would be distributed along the gen-tie corridor, with various crews engaged in surveying, ROW clearing, access driveway construction, staging area preparation, tower foundation installation, tower assembly and erection, conductor installation, guard structure installation and removal, and site restoration. The construction of the gen-tie line would involve truck trips for hauling equipment and materials to and from the construction sites, and also commute trips by construction workers.

Deliveries of tower steel, hardware, conductor spools, concrete, and equipment would occur throughout the construction period. The equipment and material deliveries would originate from various locations in northern and southern California, and concrete would be delivered from a ready-mix plant in the Coalinga area. Thus truck deliveries would come from I-5 in the west for regional access and then follow local highways and roads to reach the work sites along the gen-tie line.

Concrete would be delivered to tower sites by concrete mixer trucks for use in construction of the tower footings. As mentioned, it is expected that concrete would be supplied from an existing ready-mix plant located near Coalinga. It is estimated that an average of 125 cubic yards (cy) of concrete would be required at each monopole location. Given a concrete mixer truck capacity of 10 cy, an average of 13 concrete deliveries would occur at each tower site. For the 44 tower sites in Fresno County, there would be a total of 572 concrete deliveries over the 66-day construction period, or an average of 8.7 deliveries per day.

Deliveries of tower steel and other materials for tower installation would involve approximately 22 round trips by trucks for each tower. The 44 towers in Fresno County would involve a total of 968 materials deliveries, or an average of 14.7 deliveries per day. The combined deliveries of concrete and materials would average 24 deliveries per day, or 48 trips ends. To account for large vehicle size, the truck trips are multiplied by 1.5 to derive Passenger Car Equivalent (PCE) trips of 72 trips per day.

Construction workers would generate traffic in commuting to and from the work sites. The gen-tie project is expected to have a maximum workforce of approximately 59 construction workers on any given day. Most construction workers are expected to reside in urban centers in the region, which are largely concentrated along the State Route 99 corridor to the east and northeast of the gen-tie corridor.

Assuming that all 59 workers would all commute solo, the peak traffic generated by construction personnel would be 59 AM trips and 59 PM trips, for a total of 118 daily trip ends.

The combination of daily average truck trips (i.e., 72 PCE trips) plus construction worker commute trips (i.e., 118 daily trips) would result in a total of 190 daily trips on average. These trips would be widely distributed throughout the roadway network. As mentioned, most truck trips would be from I-5 in the west, while most construction workers would commute from population centers to the east and northeast. Thus the truck delivery routes and commute routes would tend to not overlap, except near the construction staging area or the access points to the construction sites. Assuming all worker commute trips occurred during the peak AM and PM periods, the resulting increase in traffic volume would average less than one trip per minute. Truck deliveries would be distributed throughout the day, with an average of 7 PCE truck trips occurring during each peak period. Therefore, the effects of gen-tie construction traffic on roadways and intersections in the area would be minor.

The primary impact associated with gen-tie line construction would be from slow moving construction trucks and the larger turning radii of the trucks compared to passenger vehicles. This may result in intermittent reductions in roadway capacity, but these effects would be temporary and would not result in a significant impact to the roadway service levels. Depending on conditions, restrictions may be placed on heavy truck and oversized vehicle deliveries during the AM and PM peak-hour commute periods. In addition, local transportation agencies may restrict truck traffic to specific haul routes. (

Once construction of the gen-tie line is completed, the traffic generated during inspection and maintenance of the gen-tie line would be negligible.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Comprehensive amendments to the State CEQA Guidelines took effect on December 28, 2018 (OPR 2019). Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) sets forth revised criteria for analyzing transportation impacts of proposed projects, as required under AB 734. For land use projects, this section states that “vehicle miles traveled exceeding an applicable threshold of significance may indicate a significant impact.” The purpose in applying vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the analytical metric is to further the State’s long-term greenhouse gas reduction goals by reducing fuel consumption in the transportation sector, specifically through reductions in per capita VMT associated with new land use projects. The establishment of specific significance thresholds is left up to each lead agency to develop in the course of implementing corresponding amendments to its local CEQA guidelines. In the Technical Advisory issued by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) for guidance in implementing AB 734, the recommended significance threshold for residential projects is defined as VMT exceeding a level of 15 percent below regional VMT per capita, and for office and retail projects a significant transportation impact would occur if project-generated VMT that exceeds a level of 15 percent below regional VMT per employee (OPR 2018, pp. 15-16). OPR’s Technical Advisory does not address other land uses, and suggests that thresholds for other land uses be developed at the local level.

To address transportation impacts from small projects, the OPR Technical Advisory recommends the application of “screening thresholds” to identify when a project would be expected result in a less-than-significant transportation impact without conducting a detailed study. The Technical Advisory states that, in general, projects that generate fewer than 110 trips per day may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact (OPR 2018, p.12).

The OPR Technical Advisory does not address the establishment of significance thresholds for construction VMT. However, Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(3) states: “[f]or many projects, a qualitative analysis of construction traffic may be appropriate.”

Based on the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b), as elaborated upon by OPR in the corresponding Technical Advisory, the following significance thresholds for VMT were applied for purposes of this analysis:

Construction VMT – Significance is to be determined through a qualitative analysis that considers estimated construction VMT as compared with Countywide VMT, and also considers pre-project traffic conditions on the roadways that would be most affected by construction traffic.

Operational VMT – Any project that generates operational traffic volumes of less than the screening threshold of 110 trips per day is presumed to have a less-than-significant transportation impact. Any project that generates 110 daily trips or more shall be quantitatively evaluated for VMT impacts.

During the 3-month construction period for the Fresno County portion of the gen-tie line, the work activities would be distributed along the gen-tie corridor, with various crews engaged in surveying, ROW clearing, access driveway construction, staging area preparation, tower foundation installation, tower assembly and erection, conductor installation, guard structure installation and removal, and site restoration.

Based on the air quality analysis by Illingworth & Rodkin (I&R 2018), the average VMT generated by construction of the Fresno County gen-tie segment is estimated to be approximately 5,015 miles per day. In comparison, the average VMT for Fresno County in 2015 was 12,365,456 miles per day (Caltrans 2015). The VMT generated during construction of the Fresno County segment of the gen-tie project would be equivalent to 0.04 percent (i.e., 1/2,500) of average daily VMT in Fresno County. This very low VMT would occur over a brief 3-month construction period, and would mainly affect Jayne Avenue which is a relatively lightly traveled County road. Therefore, the construction of the gen-tie line and would not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).

Once construction of the Gen-Tie Line is completed, the traffic generated during inspection and maintenance of the Gen-Tie Line would be negligible. Therefore, the operation of the Gen-Tie Line and would not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).

Travel Hazards

Gen-tie line construction would involve the use of slow moving construction vehicles, many of which would have large turning radii. Safety hazards could arise from abrupt changes in traffic flow speeds caused by slow moving vehicles or from large trucks having to cross oncoming traffic lanes to make turns into construction areas such as monopole installation sites and pulling and tensioning sites. Potential hazards created by construction traffic would be addressed through standard traffic safety measures to be implemented during construction.

REFERENCES – TRANSPORTATION

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Caltrans 2015 | California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2015. <i>SB 743 VMT Impact Assessment</i> . November. Available at http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/omsp/SB743.html |
|---------------|--|

- Caltrans 2019 California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Traffic Census Program. 2019. *Traffic Volumes on the California State Highway System*.
<http://dot.ca.gov/trafficops/census/>
- OPR 2018 Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). 2018. *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*. December.
http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf
- OPR 2019 Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). 2019. *Final Adopted Text for Revisions to the CEQA Guidelines*. January.
http://resources.ca.gov/ceqa/docs/2018_CEQA_FINAL_TEXT_122818.pdf

Project Routing

18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) provides protections for tribal cultural resources. As of July 1, 2015, all lead agencies approving projects under CEQA are required, if formally requested by a culturally affiliated California Native American Tribe, to consult with such tribe regarding the impacts of a project on tribal cultural resources prior to the release of any negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration (MND) or a notice of preparation (NOP) for an environmental impact report (EIR). Under PRC Section 21074, tribal cultural resources include site features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places or objects that are of cultural value to a tribe that are eligible or listed on the CRHR or a local historic register or that the lead agency has determined to be a significant tribal cultural resource.

Tribal consultation is to continue until mitigation measures are agreed to, unless the tribe or the lead agency concludes in good faith that an agreement cannot be reached. In the case of agreement, the lead agency is required to include the mitigation measures in the environmental document along with the related Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) (see PRC Section 21084.3). If no agreement is reached, the lead agency must still impose all feasible measures necessary for a project to avoid or minimize significant adverse impacts on tribal cultural resources (PRC Section 21084.3).

Setting

Archival research and reconnaissance of the gen-tie corridor by Basin Research Associates indicated that no significant archaeological resources are present within the project area. The majority of the lands in the study area have been disturbed by agricultural activities, which may have disturbed or archaeological resources at or near the ground surface. However, it is possible that intact archaeological resources may be buried below the disturbed upper layer of soil. If so, the excavation associated with gen-tie could expose as-yet undetected resources. It is also possible that human remains could be encountered as human remains have been associated with several of the prehistoric archaeological resources along the former Tulare Lake shoreline.

Discussion

The Native American Tribe that is culturally affiliated with the project area is the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe. On January 31, 2019, representatives of the Kings County Community Development Agency held a coordination meeting with representatives of the Cultural and Historical Preservation Department of the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi Yokut Tribe pursuant to AB 52. During the consultation meeting the tribal representatives stated that there are no known tribal cultural resources within the gen-tie corridor, although there is a potential for discovery of previously unknown tribal cultural resources during site disturbance and construction. The tribal representatives provided the County staff with recommended mitigation measures for protection of tribal cultural resources. (Please refer to the Aquamarine Solar Project and Gen-Tie Line IS/MND (Kings County) for specific measures.)

REFERENCES – TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Basin 2018 | Basin Research Associates. 2018. <i>Cultural Resources Assessment Report – Aquamarine Solar Project and Gen-Tie Line, Kings and Fresno Counties, California</i> . December. |
|------------|---|

19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Water Supply

During construction, the gen-tie project would require water for dust suppression at work sites and staging areas, and on access roads. The water would be obtained from agricultural wells or municipal water sources in the vicinity and transported in water trucks to the work sites and access roads. Drinking water for work crews would be provided by bottled water. Little or no water would be required during operation of the gen-tie facilities. Existing water supply sources would be adequate to provide the relatively small amount of water required for construction of the gen-tie line, and no expansion of water facilities or additional water entitlements would be required.

Wastewater Treatment

During construction of the gen-tie line, the sanitary needs of construction workers would be provided by portable chemical toilets that would be serviced by a private contractor. Operation of the gen-tie line would involve periodic inspection and maintenance activities by workers visiting the sites, for which there would be no need for permanent wastewater facilities. As such, there would be no permanent wastewater facilities associated with the gen-tie line.

Solid Waste

The construction of the gen-tie line would generate small amounts of solid waste, which would mainly consist of scrap materials and debris. Waste materials would be salvaged for reuse or recycled to the extent practicable. Other non-hazardous construction materials would be disposed of at a municipal landfill. During operation of the completed gen-tie line, little or no solid waste would be generated. The small amounts of solid waste generated by construction of the gen-tie line, and the negligible amount of solid waste generated by its operation, would have minimal effects on the remaining capacities of the landfills in the vicinity.

20. WILDFIRE

Discussion

The gen-tie corridor is not located within or near a state responsibility area or on lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones. The map of Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) in State Responsibility Area (SRA) for Fresno County prepared by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) shows the project area as being within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA). The nearest areas mapped as being within the SRA are located southwest of Interstate 5, approximately 2 miles southwest of the gen-tie corridor. The nearest area within the SRA that is zoned as Very High Severity on the FHSZ map are located in the Diablo Range west of Coalinga, at least 15 miles from the gen-tie corridor (CalFire 2007a). . CalFire's map of Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Area (LRA) for Fresno County shows the project area as being "unzoned" for fire hazard. The only areas within the Fresno County LRA that are zoned as Very High Severity are two small areas within the Los Gatos Creek drainage corridor, the first of which passes beneath Interstate 5 approximately 5 miles northwest of the gen-tie corridor, and the second of which is unfarmed area of approximately 500 acres located north of Huron, approximately 6 miles north of the gen-tie corridor (CalFire 2007b). .

REFERENCES – WILDFIRE

- CalFire 2007a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire). 2007. *Fire Severity Zones in SRA – Kings County* (map). November.
http://frap.fire.ca.gov/webdata/maps/fresno/fhszl06_1_map.10.pdf
- CalFire 2007b California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire). 2007. *Draft Fire Severity Zones in LRA – Fresno County* (map). October.
http://frap.fire.ca.gov/data/frapgismaps/sra11_2/sramap.10.pdf

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
Supplemental Initial Study Application No. 7635
Conditional Use Permit No. 3650
(Including Conditions of Approval and Project Notes)**

Mitigation Measures					
Mitigation Measure No.*	Impact	Mitigation Measure Language	Implementation Responsibility	Monitoring Responsibility	Time Span
*1.	Air Quality	<p>The following dust control measures of SJVAPCD shall be implemented during construction and decommission to reduce construction PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} to less than 15 tons per year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective dust suppression (e.g. watering) for land clearing, grubbing, scraping, excavation, land leveling, grading, cut and fill, and demolition activities. • Effective stabilization of all disturbed areas of a construction site, including storage piles, not used for seven or more days. • Control of fugitive dust from onsite unpaved roads and offsite unpaved access roads. • Removal of accumulations of mud or dirt at the end of the workday or once every 24 hours from public paved roads, shoulders, and access ways adjacent to the site. • Cease outdoor construction activities that disturb soils during periods with high winds. • Record-keeping for each day dust control measures are implemented. • Limit traffic speeds on unpaved roads to 15 mph. • Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff to public roadways. • Landscape or replant vegetation in disturbed areas as quickly as possible. • Prevent the tracking of mud or dirt on public roadways by limiting access to the construction sites. If necessary, use wheel washers for all exiting trucks, or wash off the tires or tracks of all trucks and equipment leaving the site. 	Applicant	Applicant/Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning (PW&P)/San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District	During all ground-disturbing activities

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suspend trading activity when winds (instantaneous gusts) exceed 25 mph or dust clouds cannot be prevented from extending beyond the site. 			
*2.	Air Quality	<p>The following measures shall be implemented during construction to reduce construction emissions of nitrogen oxides to less than 10 tons per year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a plan to use construction equipment with low nitrogen oxides emissions. This may include the use of equipment that meets US EPA Tier 3 standards (and equipment that meets Tier 4 standards, if available). Set idling time limit of 5 minutes or less for construction equipment. Evaluate the feasibility of a work shuttle or carpool program to reduce emissions from worker travel. Evaluate the feasibility of methods to reduce truck travel for delivery of equipment by reducing the number of necessary truck trips. Any solar project for which the project-specific air quality analysis shows that the above mitigations will not be sufficient to reduce a project's construction emissions of NO_x below 10 tons per year, the project Proponent shall execute a Voluntary Emissions Reduction Agreement (VERA) with SJVAPCD, which provides for further reduction of construction NO_x to reduce the project's NO_x emissions to less than 10 tons per year. 	Applicant	Applicant/Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning (PW&P)/San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District	During all ground-disturbing activities
*3.	Transportation	<p>Prior to the issuance of building permits, the applicant shall implement its fair share of agree-upon roadway improvements or contribute its fair-share of funding to undertake such improvements. The cost of impacts for the gen-tie line is \$179,454.00. Of that amount, approximately 47% of the impacts occur on the Fresno County side of the gen-tie and require payment of impact fees in the amount of \$81,099.00.</p>	Applicant	Applicant/Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning (PW&P)	Prior to the issuance of building permits
Conditions of Approval					
1.	Development of the property shall be in accordance with the Site Plans, Elevations, and Operational Statement approved by the Planning Commission.				

2.	All Mitigation Measures identified as necessary by the Program EIR approved by Westlands Water District on January 18, 2018 (SCH #2013031043) to reduce impacts from the gen-tie portion of the project shall be implemented.
3.	The transmission towers shall be sited such that existing trees provide adequate screening. Narrow profile poles shall be used to further reduce visual impacts from the addition of new industrial features.
4.	All lighting, including temporary installations, shall be hooded and pointed away from adjacent properties and the road right-of-way.

*MITIGATION MEASURE – Measure specifically applied to the project to mitigate potential adverse environmental effects identified in the environmental document.
Conditions of Approval reference recommended Conditions for the project.

Notes	
The following Notes reference mandatory requirements of Fresno County or other Agencies and are provided as information to the project Applicant.	
1.	Unclassified Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Nos. 3642-3647 shall become void unless there has been substantial development within two years of the effective date of approval.
2.	Plans, permits, and inspections are required for the proposed improvements. Contact the Building and Safety Section of the Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning at (559) 600-4540 for permits and inspections.
3.	All survey monumentation – property corners, section corners, County benchmarks, Federal benchmarks and triangulation stations, etc. – within the subject area shall be preserved in accordance with Section 8771 of the Professional Land Surveyors Act and Section 6730.2 of the Professional Engineers Act.
4.	Additional Conditions of Approval and Project Notes may be added as part of the review of the Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3560

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File original and one copy with: Fresno County Clerk 2221 Kern Street Fresno, California 93721		Space Below For County Clerk Only. CLK-2046.00 E04-73 R00-00	
Agency File No: IS 7635	LOCAL AGENCY PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION		County Clerk File No: E-
Responsible Agency (Name): Fresno County	Address (Street and P.O. Box): 2220 Tulare St. Sixth Floor		City: Fresno Zip Code: 93721
Agency Contact Person (Name and Title): Chrissy Monfette, Planner		Area Code: 559	Telephone Number: 600-4245 Extension: N/A
Project Applicant/Sponsor (Name): WESTLANDS TRANSMISSION, LLC		Project Title: Initial Study Application No. 7635 and Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3650	
Project Description: Allow a 6.3-mile-long, double-circuit, 230-kV generation tie-line (gen-tie line) running along Jayne Avenue from the Gates Substation (approximately one mile west of the intersection of Lassen Avenue and Jayne Avenue) to the boundary between Kings County and Fresno County. This gen-tie line would allow various Solar Facilities located in the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan and subject to approval of discretionary use permits by Kings County, to connect to the Gates Substation in Fresno County. The portion of the project under review by Fresno County is located in 100- to 350-foot-wide private easements and includes a temporary staging area and 44 transmission towers between 110 and 175 feet in height. Each monopole will require the clearing of approximately one acre of land for construction purposes, and approximately 700 sf around each pole will remain permanently cleared for safety purposes during operation. Including the staging site, it is anticipated that 74.5 acres of land will be impacted by construction on 18 parcels in the AE (Exclusive Agricultural) Zone District. Three additional power poles may be installed within the Gates Substation. A separate application must be approved by Kings County for the portion of the Gen-tie which will connect to the Westland Solar Project.			
Justification for Negative Declaration: This project represents a small portion of the Westlands Solar Park (WSP) Master Plan. A Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) was prepared for the entirety of the Westlands Solar Park and Gen-Tie Corridors Plan (SCH No. 2013031043). The Westlands Water District (WWD) Board of Directors certified the PEIR under CEQA and approved the WSP Master Plan on January 6, 2018. Pursuant to Section 15168, the County of Fresno identified that the increase in the proposed number of towers caused the contribution from the Gen-Tie construction to nitrogen oxide and particulate matter emissions to create a potentially significant impact which required the adoption of mitigation measures. In addition, new impacts related to compliance with plans and policies addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities were identified and mitigation was required to reduce impacts to less than significant.			
FINDING: The proposed project will not have a significant impact on the environment.			
Newspaper and Date of Publication: Fresno Business Journal – October 14, 2019		Review Date Deadline: Planning Commission – November 14, 2019	
Date:	Type or Print Signature: Marianne Mollring, Senior Planner	Submitted by (Signature): Chrissy Monfette, Planner	

State 15083, 15085

County Clerk File No.: _____

**LOCAL AGENCY
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**



County of Fresno

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING
STEVEN E. WHITE, DIRECTOR

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

To: ☐ Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

☒ County Clerk, County of Fresno
2221 Kern Street
Fresno, CA 93721

From: Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services and Capital Projects
2220 Tulare Street (corner of Tulare and "M") Suite "A", Fresno, CA 93721

Contact: Chrissy Monfette, (559) 600-4245

Subject: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21152 of the Public Resource Code

Project: Supplemental Initial Study Application No. 7635, Unclassified Conditional Use Permit Application No. 3650

Location: The subject parcel is located along Jayne Avenue from the Gates Substation (approximately one mile west of the intersection of Lassen Avenue and Jayne Avenue) to the boundary between Kings County and Fresno County. (Sup. Dist. 4), County of Fresno.

Sponsor: WESTLANDS TRANSMISSION, LLC

Description: Allow a 6.3-mile-long, double-circuit, 230-kV generation tie-line (gen-tie line) running along Jayne Avenue from the Gates Substation (approximately one mile west of the intersection of Lassen Avenue and Jayne Avenue) to the boundary between Kings County and Fresno County. This project is part of the Westlands Solar Park Master Plan. This portion is located in 100- to 350-foot-wide private easements and includes a temporary staging area and 44 transmission towers between 110 and 175 feet in height. Three additional towers may be constructed within the Gates Substation. Each monopole will require the clearing of approximately one acre of land for construction purposes, and approximately 700 sf around each pole will remain permanently cleared for safety purposes during operation. Including the staging site, it is anticipated that 74.5 acres of land will be impacted by construction on 18 parcels in the Exclusive Agricultural Zone Districts (20- and 40-acre minimum parcel size)

This is to advise that the County of Fresno (☒ Lead Agency ☐ Responsible Agency) has approved the above described project on November 14, 2019, and has made the following determination:

1. The project [☐ will ☒ will not] have a significant effect on the environment.

2. ☐ An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
☒ A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures [☒ were ☐ were not] made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [☒ was ☐ was not] adopted for this project.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations [☐ was ☒ was not] adopted for this project.
6. Findings [☐ were ☒ were not] made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the Initial Study with comments and responses and record of project approval is available to the General Public at Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning, 2220 Tulare Street, Suite A, Corner of Tulare and "M" Streets, Fresno, California.

Chrissy Monfette, Planner
(559) 600-4245 /EMAIL cmonfette@fresnocountyca.gov

Date

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