



County of San Diego

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CEQA Initial Study - Environmental Checklist Form (Based on the State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G)

1. Title; Project Number(s); Environmental Log Number:

Jacumba Solar Major Use Permit Environmental Impact Report; PDS2014-MUP-14-041, PDS2014-ER-14-22-001

2. Lead agency name and address:
County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue
San Diego, California 92123

3. a. Contact: Ashley Gungle, Project Manager
b. Phone number: (858) 495-5375
c. E-mail: Ashley.Gungle@sdcounty.ca.gov

4. Project location:

The project property totals approximately 304 acres within the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan area in unincorporated San Diego County; see Figure 1.1, Regional Location Map. The Mountain Empire Subregional Plan area contains five Subregional Group Areas. The Proposed Project would disturb an approximately 108-acre area located adjacent to the U.S.–Mexico International Border, in the vicinity of the Jacumba Subregional Group Area; see Figure 1.2, Specific Location Map.

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5. Project Applicant name and address:
Jacumba Solar LLC, 700 Universe Boulevard, Florida, 94104

6. General Plan	
Community Plan:	Mountain Empire Subregional Plan
Land Use Designation:	Rural Lands 80 (RL-80)
Density:	1 du/80 acres
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	N/A

7. Zoning
Use Regulation: S92 (General Rural)
Minimum Lot Size: 8 acres
Special Area Regulation: N/A/ "C"

8. Description of project:

The project involves the development of a 20-megawatt (MW) solar energy project (Proposed project). As described above, the Proposed Project site is located in the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan Area and the Jacumba Subregional Group Area. Figure 1.1 (Regional Location Map) shows the Proposed Project site's relationship within San Diego County. Figure 1.2 (Specific Location Map) shows the project vicinity and conveys its relationship to the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan Area and Jacumba Subregional Group Area.

The Proposed Project would produce up to 20 MW of alternating current (AC) generating capacity and would consist of approximately 81,108 photovoltaic (PV) modules fitted on 2,253 fixed-tilt rack panels. In addition to the panels and direct current (DC) to AC conversion equipment (i.e., inverter and transformer units), the Proposed Project would include the following primary components:

- A 1,000-volt to 1,500-volt DC underground collection system and a 34.5-kilovolt (kV) underground collection system linking the inverters to the on-site project substation.
- A 110-foot x 215-foot on-site private collector substation site encompassing a fenced pad area and a maximum height of 35 feet to surrounding equipment.
- An approximately 10 MW battery energy storage system that would be located within the collector substation fenced boundaries.
- A 138 kV overhead transmission line (gen-tie) connecting the on-site substation to San Diego Gas and Electric's (SDG&E's) new East County (ECO) Substation.

Components of the Proposed Project would include installation of individual fixed-tilt-mounted PV modules which generate electricity by safely converting the energy of the Sun's photons into DC electrons. The PV module arrays (a row of PV modules) would be supported by a fixed-tilt system that would be oriented along an east–west axis. The mounting structures are typically mounted on tubular shaped piles or beams. The PV modules, at their highest point, would be approximately 8 feet above the ground surface.

The east–west arranged fixed-tilt arrays would be constructed approximately 25 feet apart (centerline to centerline) in a north–south direction, with an east–west array spacing of approximately 12.5 feet. PV modules would be electrically connected to adjacent modules via underground wiring.

Inverters are a key component of solar PV power-generating facilities because they convert the DC generated by the PV module array into AC that is compatible for use with the transmission network. The inverters, medium-voltage transformers, and other electrical equipment would sit on site, mounted on concrete foundation pads. A 10 MW battery energy storage system is proposed adjacent to the on-site substation in the northeast section of the Proposed Project site.

The Proposed Project would interconnect to the ECO Substation, which is owned and operated by SDG&E. A 138 kV line interconnecting the Proposed Project to the ECO Substation would be constructed above-grade.

The project site would be fenced along the entire property boundary for security with 9-foot high fencing that meets National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) requirements for protective arrangements in electric supply stations. There are two different types of roads for the Proposed Project that would be improved to different load-bearing standards: fire access roads and service roads. All road surfaces would be gravel and have a permeable nontoxic soil binding agent in order to reduce fugitive dust and erosion. To comply with the fire code, clearing and grubbing, as necessary, in localized areas would be required for construction and access to the project sites. Additionally, a Fire Protection Plan will be prepared for the Proposed Project.

Construction: The construction of the Proposed Project would consist of several phases including site preparation, development of staging areas and site access roads, solar PV system assembly and installation, and construction of electrical transmission facilities. After site preparation, initial project construction would include the development of the staging and assembly areas, and the grading of site access roads for initial PV system installation.

Project construction would then include several phases occurring simultaneously with the construction of: (1) PV systems including the assembly of fixed-tilt racks, pile driving of support masts, and placement of panels and racks on support masts; (2) trenching and installation of the DC and AC collection system; (3) electrical transmission facilities including the construction of an on-site substation and a gen-tie; (4) a battery energy storage system; and (5) the grading of access and service roads.

Operation: Operation activities include the following: (1) routine inspection of overhead components and underground portions of cable systems; (2) routine maintenance including, but not limited to, PV panel washing, equipment testing, monitoring, and repair; routine procedures to ensure service continuity; and standard preventative maintenance; (3) maintenance and repair of transmission facilities, including pole or structure vegetation removal, application of herbicides, equipment repair, and replacement.

The Proposed Project is anticipated to operate, at a minimum, for the life of its long-term Power Purchasing Agreement (PPA). The initial term of the PPA for the project is for 20 years, with additional terms anticipated. At the end of the useful project life, decommissioning would commence involving the removal of the panels for sale into a secondary solar PV panel market. The projects' components and on-site materials can be readily recycled.

Dismantling the project would entail disassembly of the solar facilities and substantive restoration of the site. Impacts associated with closure and decommissioning of the project site would be temporary and would span three basic activities: (1) disassembly and removal of all detachable above-ground elements of the installation; (2) removal of panel and racks and any other structural elements including those that penetrate the ground surface to a depth of 2 feet below grade; and (3) reuse of the land consistent with the Zoning Ordinance, which could include ground surface restoration to surrounding grade and reseeded with appropriate native vegetation.

Permits/Approvals: The Proposed Project would require a Major Use Permit (MUP) to authorize the development the solar project, which is classified as a Major Impact Utility, pursuant to Sections 1350, 2705, and 2926 of the Zoning Ordinance.

All anticipated project permits and approvals required from the County are listed in Table 1, County Permit/Actions Required, and in other public agency permits/approvals are listed in Table 2 (Section 10).

**Table 1
County Permits/Actions Required**

Permit Type/Action
Major Use Permit
County Right-of-Way Permits (Construction Permit, Excavation Permit, and Encroachment Permit)
Grading Permit
Improvement Plans
Exploratory Borings, Direct-push Samplers and Cone Penotrometers Permits
Waiver pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 7060.d to reduce 90-foot setback along U.S.–Mexico border
Waiver of Board Policies I-92 and I-111
Certification of Final EIR

9. Surrounding land uses and setting (Briefly describe the project’s surroundings):

The project area consists of a broad high desert plain on the U.S.–Mexico International Border within the Jacumba Subregional Group Area of the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan area; see Figure 2. The areas surrounding the project site are mostly open space, with the town of Jacumba Hot Springs 3 miles to the west, out of view from the project site. Regional access within the project area is provided by Interstate 8 running east–west, north of the project area, and Old Highway 80 running east–west immediately north of the project area.

Recent developments in the surrounding area have resulted in a change from the natural physical setting that includes both rural elements and large-scale energy generation/transmission projects. Prominent components that contribute to physical setting include large-scale energy infrastructure associated with the Sunrise Powerlink, which consists of 500 kV electric transmission towers, South West Power Link (SWPL), and the ECO Substation adjacent to the project site.

The predominant setting consists mostly of undeveloped terrain with desert terrain of varying topography including mountains, dry washes, and canyons. Prominent components include several natural features and also vertical components consisting 500 kV steel lattice electric towers that are between 110 and 170 feet in height. The international border fence is also prominent on the landscape, and serves as a de-facto southern edge of the Proposed Project.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement), are listed in Table 2:

**Table 2
Other Public Agency Permits/Actions Required**

Permit Type/Action	Agency
Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification	Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)
Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit – Dredge and Fill	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE)
Section 7 – Consultation or Section 10(a) Permit – Incidental Take	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS)
1602 – Streambed Alteration Agreement	California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
Air Quality Permit to Construct	Air Pollution Control District (APCD)
Permit to Operate (potentially required)	APCD
General Construction Storm Water Permit	RWQCB
Fire District Approval	San Diego County Fire Authority and San Diego Rural Fire Protection District; Fire Service Agreement for County Service Area (CSA) 135
Consistency with U.S. Border Patrol	U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Border Patrol

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)	Section 851 Advice Letter
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	Transportation permits for the movement of vehicles or loads exceeding the limitations on the size and weight contained in Division 15, Chapter 5, Article 1, Section 35551, of the California Vehicle Code (1983)

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project and involve at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” or a “Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated,” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- On the basis of this Initial Study, Planning & Development Services finds that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- On the basis of this Initial Study, Planning & Development Services finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- On the basis of this Initial Study, Planning & Development Services finds that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.



Signature

September 11, 2014

Date

for
Ashley Gungle

Printed Name

Land Use/Environmental Planner

Title

INSTRUCTIONS ON EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. “Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are “Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures that were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant

I. AESTHETICS — Would the project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

A vista is a view from a particular location or composite views along a roadway or trail. Scenic vistas often refer to views of natural lands, but may also be compositions of natural and developed areas, or even entirely of developed and unnatural areas, such as a scenic vista of a rural town and surrounding agricultural lands. What is scenic to one person may not be scenic to another, so the assessment of what constitutes a scenic vista must consider the perceptions of a variety of viewer groups.

The items that can be seen within a vista are visual resources. Adverse impacts to individual visual resources or the addition of structures or developed areas may or may not adversely affect the vista. Determining the level of impact to a scenic vista requires analyzing the changes to the vista as a whole and also to individual visual resources.

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project includes the construction and operation of a solar energy system on nearly 108 acres of an approximately 304-acre property in the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan area. The Proposed Project would also include a gen-tie transmission line to the adjacent ECO Substation, an on-site substation and energy storage facility, internal roads, and perimeter fencing. A Visual Impact Analysis will be required to identify and address all potential impacts to scenic resources, and this issue will also be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

State Scenic Highways refer to those highways that are officially designated by Caltrans as scenic as per the California Scenic Highway Program. Generally, the area defined within a State Scenic Highway is the land adjacent to and visible from the vehicular right-of-way. The dimension of a scenic highway is usually identified using a motorist's line of vision, but a reasonable boundary is selected when the view extends to the distant horizon. The scenic highway corridor extends to the visual limits of the landscape abutting the Scenic Highway.

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project includes the construction and operation of a solar energy project utilizing PV panel technology in the southeast corner of San Diego County within the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan area. The Proposed Project would also include a gen-tie transmission line to the adjacent ECO Substation,

an on-site substation and energy storage facility, internal roads, and perimeter fencing. The project site is located near Scenic Highways identified in the Open Space and Conservation Element of the County's General Plan. Although there are no designated State Scenic Highways in the project vicinity, a Visual Impact Analysis will be prepared to identify and address all potential impacts to scenic resources including Scenic Highways, and this issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

- c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project includes the construction and operation of a solar energy project utilizing PV panel technology in the southeast corner of San Diego County within the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan area. The Proposed Project would also include a gen-tie transmission line to the adjacent ECO Substation, an on-site substation and energy storage facility, internal roads, and perimeter fencing. A Visual Impact Analysis will be required to identify and address all potential impacts to scenic resources, and this issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

- d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project includes the construction and operation of a solar energy project utilizing PV panel technology in the southeast corner of San Diego County within the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan area. The Proposed Project would also include a gen-tie transmission line to the adjacent ECO Substation, an on-site substation and energy storage facility, internal roads, and perimeter fencing. A Visual Impact Analysis will be required to identify and address all potential impacts to scenic resources including whether the projects will produce glare from the PV panels and excessive lighting from the facility. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES — Would the project:

- a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance (Important Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, or other agricultural resources, to non-agricultural use?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: According to the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), the project site is categorized as “other land.” Use of this categorized land as the project site would not constitute converting any protected or important farmland; therefore, there is no impact.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project site is zoned S92 General Rural, which is generally reserved for large parcels and open space/lands. The Proposed Project site is not subject to a Williamson Act contract, and the site is considered “other land” by the California Department of Conservation FMMP. Because of these factors and because the site is not considered an important agricultural resource as described above in response a), the Proposed Project would have no impact on existing zoning for agricultural use.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), or timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project site does not contain forest lands or timberland. Therefore, project implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland production zones.

d) Result in the loss of forest land, conversion of forest land to non-forest use, or involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project site, including any off-site improvements, do not contain any forest lands as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g); therefore, project implementation would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land to a non-forest use. In addition, the project is not located in the vicinity of forest resources.

- e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Important Farmland or other agricultural resources, to non-agricultural use?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project does not involve other changes that could result in conversion of Important Farmland or other agricultural resources to non-agricultural resources. The Proposed Project site is not subject to a Williamson Act contract, and the site is considered “other land” by the California Department of Conservation FMMP. Because of these factors and because the site is not considered an important agricultural resource as described above in response a), the project is considered to have a less-than-significant impact on existing zoning for agricultural use.

III. AIR QUALITY — Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management 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 San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) or applicable portions of the State Implementation Plan (SIP)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: An air quality study will be completed to identify and address any direct and/or cumulative air quality impacts resulting from the Proposed Project, specifically construction. Air quality will be addressed in the DEIR.

- b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

In general, air quality impacts from land use projects are the result of emissions from motor vehicles, and from short-term construction activities associated with such projects. The San Diego County Land Use Environment Group has established guidelines for determining significance which incorporate the APCD established screening-level criteria for all new source review in APCD Rule 20.2. These screening-level criteria can be used as numeric methods to demonstrate that a project's total emissions (e.g., stationary and fugitive emissions, as well as emissions from mobile sources) would not result in a significant impact to air quality. Since APCD does not have screening-level criteria for emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), the use of the screening level for reactive organic compounds (ROCs) from the South Coast Air Quality Management District for the Coachella Valley (which are more appropriate for the San Diego Air Basin) are used.

Potentially Significant Impact: An air quality study will be completed to identify and address any direct and/or cumulative air quality impacts resulting from the project, particularly project construction. Air quality will be addressed in the DEIR.

- c) 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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

San Diego County is presently in nonattainment for the 1-hour concentrations under the California Ambient Air Quality Standard (CAAQS) for ozone (O₃). San Diego County is also presently in nonattainment for the annual geometric mean and for the 24-hour concentrations of particulate matter less than or equal to 10 microns (PM₁₀) under the CAAQS. O₃ is formed when VOCs and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) react in the presence of sunlight. VOC sources include any source that burns fuels (e.g., gasoline, natural gas, wood, oil), solvents, petroleum processing and storage, and pesticides. Sources of PM₁₀ in both urban and rural areas include motor vehicles, wood burning stoves and fireplaces, dust from construction, landfills, agriculture, wildfires, brush/waste burning, and industrial sources of windblown dust from open lands.

Potentially Significant Impact: Air quality emissions associated with the Proposed Project could include emissions of PM₁₀, NO_x, and VOCs from construction/grading activities. An air quality study will be completed to identify and address any direct and/or cumulative air quality impacts resulting from the project. Air quality will be addressed in the DEIR.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Air quality regulators typically define sensitive receptors as schools (preschool–12th Grade), hospitals, resident care facilities, or day-care centers, or other facilities that may house individuals with health conditions that would be adversely impacted by changes in air quality. The County of San Diego also considers residences as sensitive receptors since they house children and the elderly.

Potentially Significant Impact: An air quality study will be completed to identify and address any direct and/or cumulative air quality impacts resulting from the Proposed Project on sensitive receptors. Air quality will be addressed in the DEIR.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: An air quality study will be completed to identify and address any direct and/or cumulative air quality impacts resulting from the Proposed Project. Air quality will also be addressed in the DEIR.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES — Would the project:

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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The project site contains sensitive biological habitats with the potential for use by sensitive and/or protected species. A biological resources report will be completed to identify and address any direct and/or cumulative biological resources impacts resulting from the project. Biological resources will be addressed in the DEIR.

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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The project site contains sensitive biological habitats with the potential for use by sensitive and/or protected species. A biological resources report will be completed to identify and address any direct and/or cumulative biological resources impacts resulting from the Proposed Project. Biological resources will be addressed in the DEIR.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The project site contains sensitive biological habitats with the potential for use by sensitive and/or protected species. A biological resources report will be completed to identify and address any direct and/or cumulative biological resources impacts resulting from the project. Biological resources will be addressed in the DEIR.

- 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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The project site contains sensitive biological habitats with the potential for use by sensitive and/or protected species. A biological resources report will be completed to identify and address any direct and/or cumulative biological resources impacts resulting from the project. Biological resources will be addressed in the DEIR.

- e) Conflict with the provisions of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan or any other local policies or ordinances that protect biological resources?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The project site contains sensitive biological habitats with the potential for use by sensitive and/or protected species. A biological resources report will be completed to identify and address any direct and/or cumulative biological resources impacts resulting from the project. Biological resources will be addressed in the DEIR.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES — Would the project:

- a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in 15064.5?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: Cultural resources have been identified on the project site and nearby, the significance of which will be evaluated within a Cultural Resources Report. Any direct and/or cumulative impacts to cultural resources that result from the project will be addressed in the DEIR.

- b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to 15064.5?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: Cultural resources have been identified in the vicinity of the project site, the significance of which will be evaluated within a Cultural Resources Report. Any direct and/or cumulative impacts to cultural resources that result from the project will be addressed in the DEIR.

- c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique geologic feature?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

San Diego County has a variety of geologic environments and geologic processes which generally occur in other parts of the state, country, and the world. However, some features stand out as being unique in one way or another within the boundaries of the County.

No Impact: The site does not contain any unique geologic features that have been listed in the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance for Unique Geology Resources nor does the site support any known geologic characteristics that have the potential to support unique geologic features.

d) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: A review of the County's Paleontological Sensitivity Map indicates that the project site is located in an area with paleontological resource potential. The project vicinity has paleontological resource sensitivity that varies from "low" to "high." Sensitivity refers to the likelihood of finding significant fossils within a geologic unit. Impacts to potentially significant paleontological resources require mitigation in the form of monitoring during grading. Section 87.430 of the Grading Ordinance provides for the requirement of a paleontological monitor at the discretion of the County. The ordinance gives the County official the authority to determine the appropriate resource recovery operation, which the permittee shall carry out prior to the County official's authorization to resume normal grading operation. The goal of paleontological resources mitigation is the recovery, curation, and permanent archival storage of significant fossil remains, thus preserving what would otherwise have been destroyed and lost by excavation activities. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

e) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: Cultural resources have been identified on the project site, the significance of which will be evaluated within a Cultural Resources Report. Any direct and/or cumulative impacts to cultural resources that result from the project will be addressed in the DEIR.

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS — Would the project:

- a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
- 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? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The project site is not located in a fault rupture hazard zone identified by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, Special Publication 42, Revised 2007, Fault-Rupture Hazards Zones in California, or located within any other area with substantial evidence of a known fault. The project would not involve construction of any habitable structures or the construction of facilities in close proximity to existing habitable structures. Therefore, there will be no impact from the exposure of people or structures to adverse effects from a known fault-rupture hazard zone as a result of this project.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: To ensure the structural integrity of all structures, the Proposed Project must conform to the Seismic Requirements as outlined within the California Building Code. The County Code requires a soils compaction report with proposed foundation recommendations to be approved before the issuance of a building permit. Therefore, compliance with the California Building Code and the County Code ensures the project will not result in a potentially significant impact from the exposure of people or structures to potential adverse effects from strong seismic ground shaking.

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: Portions of the project site contain potential liquefaction areas as found in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards. Feasible foundation designs exist that can mitigate the liquefaction hazard (including liquefaction-induced lateral spreading). Prior to issuance of building permits, a geotechnical study shall be reviewed and approved which specifies foundation design adequate to preclude substantial damage to the proposed structures due to liquefaction. With a site-specific engineering design, impacts due to liquefaction would be less than significant. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

iv. Landslides?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The project site is not within a "Landslide Susceptibility Area" as identified in the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Geologic Hazards. Landslide Susceptibility Areas were developed based on landslide risk profiles included in the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, San Diego, CA (URS 2004). Landslide risk areas from this plan were based on data including steep slopes (greater than 25%); soil series data (San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) based on U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 1970s series); soil-slip susceptibility from USGS; and Landslide Hazard Zone Maps (limited to western portion of the County) developed by the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology. Also included within Landslide Susceptibility Areas are gabbroic soils on slopes steeper than 15% in grade because these soils are slide prone. Since the project is not located within an identified Landslide Susceptibility Area and the geologic environment has a low probability to become unstable, the project would have a less-than-significant impact from the exposure of people or structures to potential adverse effects from landslides.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: The project will develop a stormwater management plan that will detail how erodible soils will be protected during grading, construction, and operation of the proposed facilities. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

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 an on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Proposed Project involves site grading for installation of PV solar panels that would result in the creation of areas of cut and areas underlain by fill. In order to assure that any proposed buildings (including those proposed on the project site) are adequately supported (whether on native soils, cut, or fill), a Soils Engineering Report is required as part of the Building Permit process. This Report would evaluate the strength of underlying soils and make recommendations on the design of building foundation systems. The Soils Engineering Report must demonstrate that a proposed building meets the structural stability standards required by the California Building Code. The report must be approved by the County prior to the issuance of a Building Permit. With this standard requirement, impacts would be less than significant. For further information regarding landslides, liquefaction, and lateral spreading, refer to VI Geology and Soils, Question a., iii-iv listed above.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less-Than-Significant Impact: The Proposed Project does not contain expansive soils as defined by Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994). The soils on site are coarse sandy loams, loamy coarse sand, and loamy alluvial land. These soils have a shrink-swell behavior classified as low and represent no substantial risks to life or property. Therefore, the project will not create a substantial risk to life or property. This was confirmed by staff review of the Soil Survey for the San Diego Area, prepared by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation and Forest Service dated December 1973.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The project does not include the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems.

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS — Would the project:

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are said to result in an increase in the Earth's average surface temperature commonly referred to as global warming. This rise in global temperature is associated with long-term changes in precipitation, temperature, wind patterns, and other elements of the Earth's climate system, known as climate change. These changes are now broadly attributed to GHG emissions, particularly those emissions that result from the human production and use of fossil fuels.

GHGs include carbon dioxide, methane, halocarbons, and nitrous oxide, among others. Human induced GHG emissions are a result of energy production and consumption, and personal vehicle use, among other sources. A regional GHG inventory prepared for

the San Diego Region¹ identified on-road transportation (cars and trucks) as the largest contributor of GHG emissions in the region, accounting for 46% of the total regional emissions. Electricity and natural gas combustion were the second (25%) and third (9%) largest regional contributors, respectively, to regional GHG emissions.

Climate changes resulting from GHG emissions could produce an array of adverse environmental impacts including water supply shortages, severe drought, increased flooding, sea level rise, air pollution from increased formation of ground level ozone and particulate matter, ecosystem changes, increased wildfire risk, agricultural impacts, ocean and terrestrial species impacts, among other adverse effects.

In 2006, the State of California passed the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, commonly referred to as Assembly Bill (AB) 32, which set the GHG emissions reduction goal for the state into law. The law requires that by 2020, state emissions must be reduced to 1990 levels by reducing GHG emissions from significant sources via regulation, market mechanisms, and other actions.

According to the San Diego County Greenhouse Gas Inventory (2008), the region must reduce its GHG emissions by 33% from “business-as-usual” emissions to achieve 1990 emissions levels by the year 2020. “Business-as-usual” refers to the 2020 emissions that would have occurred in the absence of the mandated reductions.

Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), passed in 2008, links transportation and land use planning with global warming. It requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to set regional targets for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. Under this law, if regions develop integrated land use, housing, and transportation plans that meet SB 375 targets, new projects in these regions can be relieved of certain review requirements under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). SANDAG has prepared a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) which is a new element of the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The strategy identifies how regional GHG reduction targets, as established by CARB, will be achieved through development patterns, transportation infrastructure investments, and/or transportation measures or policies that are determined to be feasible. The County of San Diego has also adopted Climate Change policies in the General Plan.

In addressing the potential for a project to generate GHG emissions that would have a potentially significant cumulative effect on the environment, a 900-metric-ton threshold was selected to identify those projects that would be required to calculate emissions and implement mitigation measures to reduce a potentially significant impact. The 900-metric-ton screening threshold is based on a threshold included in the California Air

¹ San Diego County Greenhouse Gas Inventory: An Analysis of Regional Emissions and Strategies to Achieve AB 32 Targets. University of San Diego and the Energy Policy Initiatives Center (EPIC), September 2008.

Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) white paper² that covers methods for addressing GHG emissions under CEQA. The CAPCOA white paper references the 900-metric-ton guideline as a conservative threshold for requiring further analysis and mitigation. The 900-metric-ton threshold was based on a review of data from four diverse cities (Los Angeles in Southern California, and Pleasanton, Dublin, and Livermore in Northern California) to identify the threshold that would capture at least 90% of the residential units or office space on the pending applications list. This threshold will require a substantial portion of future development to minimize GHG emissions to ensure implementation of AB 32 targets is not impeded. By ensuring that projects that generate more than 900 metric tons of GHG implement mitigation measures to reduce emissions, it is expected that a majority of future development will contribute to emission reduction goals that will assist the region in meeting its GHG reduction targets.

It should be noted that an individual project's GHG emissions will generally not result in direct impacts under CEQA, as the climate change issue is global in nature; however, an individual project could be found to contribute to a potentially significant cumulative impact. CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(f) states that an EIR shall analyze GHG emissions resulting from a proposed project when the incremental contribution of those emissions may be cumulatively considerable.

The project consists of a 20 MW solar project that will provide renewable energy. Although the Proposed Project facilitates the development of renewable energy sources in place of a typical fossil fuel-based electrical generation resulting in long-term air quality benefits, the development could have the potential to result in emissions related to construction activities and vehicle trips. Emissions from the construction activities are anticipated to be minimal, temporary, and localized. Operational emissions are anticipated to be minimal and would be generated from vehicle trips for ongoing operation and maintenance activities. The project is expected to offset GHG emissions by serving as a long-term renewable energy source, thereby decreasing overall emissions attributable to electrical generation in California and assisting the state in meeting its 33% by 2020 Renewable Portfolio Standard. An air quality study will be completed that will include an analysis of GHG emissions to quantify those emissions and determine whether the project has any potential impact. This subject will be addressed in the DEIR.

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

² CAPCOA (California Air Pollution Control Officers). 2008. "CEQA & Climate Change: Evaluating and Addressing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Projects Subject to the California Environmental Quality Act." January 2008. <http://www.capcoa.org/rokdownloads/CEQA/CAPCOA%20White%20Paper.pdf>.

Less Than Significant Impact: In 2006, the state passed the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, commonly referred to as AB 32, which set the GHG emissions reduction goal for the State of California into law. The law requires that by 2020, state emissions must be reduced to 1990 levels by reducing GHG emissions from significant sources via regulation, market mechanisms, and other actions.

SB 375, passed in 2008, links transportation and land use planning with global warming. It requires CARB to set regional targets for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. Under this law, if regions develop integrated land use, housing, and transportation plans that meet SB 375 targets, new projects in these regions can be relieved of certain review requirements under CEQA. SANDAG has prepared an SCS which is a new element of the 2050 RTP. The strategy identifies how regional GHG emissions reduction targets, as established by CARB, will be achieved through development patterns, transportation infrastructure investments, and/or transportation measures or policies that are determined to be feasible.

To implement state mandates to address climate change in local land use planning, local land use jurisdictions are generally preparing GHG emissions inventories and reduction plans and incorporating climate change policies into local General Plans to ensure development is guided by a land use plan that reduces GHG emissions. The County of San Diego has incorporated climate change policies into its General Plan. These policies provide direction for individual development projects to reduce GHG emissions and help the County meet its GHG emissions reduction targets.

Until local plans are developed to address GHG emissions, such as a local SCS and updated General Plan policies, the project is evaluated to determine whether it would impede the implementation of AB 32 GHG emissions reduction targets. For the reasons discussed in response VII (a), the Proposed Project is not anticipated to impede the implementation of AB 32 reduction targets. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. An air quality study will be completed to further analyze the project. This subject will be addressed in the DEIR.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS — Would the project:

- a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or wastes or through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Proposed Project includes the construction and operation of solar energy systems in the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan area and, more specifically, the Jacumba Subregional Group Area. The Proposed Project would also include a transmission line, internal roads, and perimeter fencing.

Solar projects typically involve the use of the following chemicals: insulating oil, lubricating oil, solvents/detergents, and gasoline. However, the project will not result in a significant hazard to the public or environment because all storage, handling, transport, emission, and disposal of hazardous substances will be in full compliance with local, state, and federal regulations. California Government Code Section 65850.2 requires that no final certificate of occupancy or its substantial equivalent be issued unless there is verification that the owner or authorized agent has met, or is meeting, the applicable requirements of the Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.95, Article 2, Sections 25500–25520.

The San Diego County Department of Environmental Health – Hazardous Materials Division (DEH HMD) is the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for San Diego County responsible for enforcing Chapter 6.95 of the Health and Safety Code. As the CUPA, the DEH HMD is required to regulate hazardous materials business plans and chemical inventory, hazardous waste and tiered permitting, underground storage tanks, and risk management plans. The hazardous materials business plan is required to contain basic information on the location, type, quantity, and health risks of hazardous materials stored, used, or disposed of on site. The plan also contains an emergency response plan which describes the procedures for mitigating a hazardous release, procedures and equipment for minimizing the potential damage of a hazardous materials release, and provisions for immediate notification of the HMD, the Office of Emergency Services, and other emergency response personnel such as the local Fire Agency having jurisdiction. Implementation of the emergency response plan facilitates rapid response in the event of an accidental spill or release, thereby reducing potential adverse impacts. Furthermore, the DEH HMD is required to conduct ongoing routine inspections to ensure compliance with existing laws and regulations; to identify safety hazards that could cause or contribute to an accidental spill or release; and to suggest preventative measures to minimize the risk of a spill or release of hazardous substances.

Therefore, due to the strict requirements that regulate hazardous substances outlined above and the fact that the initial planning, ongoing monitoring, and inspections will occur in compliance with local, state, and federal regulation, the Proposed Project will not result in any potentially significant impacts related to the routine transport, use, and disposal of hazardous substances or related to the accidental explosion or release of hazardous substances.

b) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The project is not located within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. Therefore, the project will not have any effect on an existing or proposed school.

c) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, or is otherwise known to have been subject to a release of hazardous substances and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: Based on a site visit and regulatory database search, the project site has not been subject to a release of hazardous substances that would create a significant hazard to the public or environment. The project site is not included in any of the following lists or databases: the State of California Hazardous Waste and Substances sites list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5., the San Diego County Hazardous Materials Establishment database, the San Diego County DEH Site Assessment and Mitigation Case Listing, the Department of Toxic Substances Control Site Mitigation and Brownfields Reuse Program Database ("CalSites" Envirostor Database), the Resource Conservation and Recovery Information System listing, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Superfund Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) database or the EPA's National Priorities List. Additionally, the Proposed Project does not include structures for human occupancy or significant linear excavation within 1,000 feet of an open, abandoned, or closed landfill; is not located on or within 250 feet of the boundary of a parcel identified as containing burn ash (from the historic burning of trash); is not on or within 1,000 feet of a Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS); does not contain a leaking Underground Storage Tank (UST); and is not located on a site with the potential for contamination from historic uses such as intensive agriculture, industrial uses, a gas station or vehicle repair shop. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment.

d) 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, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project is located partially within the Airport Influence Area, Review Area 2 of the Jacumba Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). The proposed project is located within the FAA Height Notification Surface due to its proximity to the Jacumba airport, which requires that notice be filed with the FAA. The applicant will complete FAA Form 7460-1 Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration and submit it to the FAA for review. The FAA will conduct an aeronautical study and determine if the project would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

e) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project is not within 1 mile of a private airstrip. As a result, the project will not constitute a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

The following sections summarize the project's consistency with applicable emergency response plans or emergency evacuation plans.

i. OPERATIONAL AREA EMERGENCY PLAN AND MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN:

Less Than Significant Impact: The Operational Area Emergency Plan is a comprehensive emergency plan that defines responsibilities, establishes an emergency organization, defines lines of communications, and is designed to be part of the statewide Standardized Emergency Management System. The Operational Area Emergency Plan provides guidance for emergency planning and requires subsequent plans to be established by each jurisdiction that has responsibilities in a disaster situation. The Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan includes an overview and discussion of the risk assessment process, hazards present in the jurisdiction, hazard

profiles, and vulnerability assessments. The plan also identifies goals, objectives, and actions for each jurisdiction in the County of San Diego, including all cities and the County's unincorporated areas. The Proposed Project will not interfere with this plan because it will not prohibit subsequent plans from being established or prevent the goals and objectives of existing plans from being carried out.

ii. SAN DIEGO COUNTY NUCLEAR POWER STATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

No Impact: The Proposed Project will not interfere with the San Diego County Nuclear Power Station Emergency Response Plan due to the location of the project and the specific requirements of the plan. The emergency plan for the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) includes an emergency planning zone within a 10-mile radius. All land area within 10 miles of SONGS is not within the jurisdiction of the unincorporated County and, as such, a project in the unincorporated area is not expected to interfere with any response or evacuation.

iii. OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY ELEMENT

No Impact: The Proposed Project is not located along the coastal zone or coastline; therefore, it will not interfere with the Oil Spill Contingency Element.

iv. EMERGENCY WATER CONTINGENCIES ANNEX AND ENERGY SHORTAGE RESPONSE PLAN

No Impact: The Proposed Project would not alter a major water or energy supply infrastructure, such as the California Aqueduct; therefore, it will not interfere with the Emergency Water Contingencies Annex and Energy Shortage Response Plan.

v. DAM EVACUATION PLAN

No Impact: The Proposed Project is not located within a dam inundation zone; therefore, it will not interfere with the Dam Evacuation Plan.

g) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: The site is located within the Wildland-Urban Interface. A fire protection plan (FPP) will be prepared for the Proposed Project that will describe how the project will comply with requirements related to emergency access, water supply, and fire suppression design measures in consideration of the high concentration of electrical equipment that will be present on

the project site. The FPP will identify and address any direct and/or cumulative impacts resulting from the project regarding fire hazards, and will be discussed in the DEIR.

- h) Propose a use, or place residents adjacent to an existing or reasonably foreseeable use that would substantially increase current or future resident's exposure to vectors, including mosquitoes, rats or flies, which are capable of transmitting significant public health diseases or nuisances?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project does not involve or support uses that allow water to stand for a period of 72 hours (3 days) or more (e.g., artificial lakes, agricultural irrigation ponds). Also, the project does not involve or support uses that will produce or collect animal waste, such as equestrian facilities, agricultural operations (e.g., chicken coops, dairies), solid waste facilities, or other similar uses. Therefore, the project will not substantially increase current or future residents' exposure to vectors, including mosquitoes, rats, or flies.

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:

- a) Violate any waste discharge requirements?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The project site or off-site areas along a proposed transmission corridor may contain jurisdictional areas, and the project may propose discharges (in the form of soil material) to those areas during the construction phase of the project. If this occurs, the project may be required to obtain a Section 401 Water Quality Certification, General Construction Storm Water Permit, and Waste Discharge Requirements Permit from the San Diego Basin or Colorado River Basin RWQCBs. It is also important to note that the project would involve discharge of domestic waste to on-site wastewater systems, also known as septic systems. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

- b) Is the project tributary to an already impaired water body, as listed on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list? If so, could the project result in an increase in any pollutant for which the water body is already impaired?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: According to the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list, the nearest impaired water body is the Tijuana River approximately 40 miles west of the project site and outside watershed of the project site. Therefore, it is unlikely that any

pollutants that might be generated by the project would contribute to this impaired water body. However, a stormwater management plan will be prepared for the project that will address all necessary best management practices (BMPs) to ensure that potential pollutants will be reduced in any runoff to the maximum extent practicable so as not to impact receiving waters. Water quality will be discussed in the DEIR.

- c) Could the proposed project cause or contribute to an exceedance of applicable surface or groundwater receiving water quality objectives or degradation of beneficial uses?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: A stormwater management plan will be prepared for the Proposed Project that will address all necessary BMPs to ensure that potential pollutants will be reduced in any runoff to the maximum extent practicable so as not to impact receiving waters. Water quality will be discussed in the DEIR.

- d) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The project will rely on offsite groundwater and/or imported water from a water service agency within the County Water Authority for water supply for the construction and operational phases of the project. A Groundwater Investigation report will be prepared to evaluate whether the project poses significant impacts to groundwater resources. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

- e) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: The Proposed Project would include access roads, driveways, or other improvements which may impede or redirect flood flows. The applicant is required to provide a drainage study indicating runoff quantities and conditions before and after development of the project, including analysis

of existing and proposed drainage facility capacity and lines of inundation by a 100-year flood. In addition, the applicant will also provide preliminary grading plans showing drainage patterns, improvements to storm drain system, inlets, points of entry into natural drainage channels, energy dissipaters, and any other applicable drainage features. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

- f) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: The Proposed Project would include access roads, driveways, or other improvements which may impede or redirect flood flows. The applicant is required to provide a drainage study indicating runoff quantities and conditions before and after development of the project, including analysis of existing and proposed drainage facility capacity and lines of inundation by a 100-year flood. In addition, the applicant will also provide preliminary grading plans showing drainage patterns, improvements to storm drain system, inlets, points of entry into natural drainage channels, energy dissipaters, and any other applicable drainage features. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

- g) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: A drainage study will be prepared for the Proposed Project that will evaluate all potential drainage facilities of the project and will ensure that adequate drainage facilities are included in the project design. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

- h) Provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less than Significant Impact: No substantial additional sources of polluted runoff are anticipated to occur as a result of the Proposed Project beyond those discussed in responses a through c above. A stormwater management plan will be prepared for the project that will address all necessary BMPs to ensure that potential pollutants will be

reduced in any runoff to the maximum extent practicable so as not to impact receiving waters. Water quality will be discussed in the DEIR.

- i) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map, including County Floodplain Maps?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project does not include any housing as part of project and therefore would have no impact.

- j) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: The project site contains drainage swales, which are identified as being 100-year flood hazard areas. In addition, the Proposed Project would include access roads, driveways, or other improvements which may impede or redirect flood flows. The applicant is required to provide a drainage study indicating runoff quantities and conditions before and after development of the project, including analysis of existing and proposed drainage facility capacity and lines of inundation by the 100-year flood. In addition, the applicant will also provide preliminary grading plans showing drainage patterns, improvements to storm drain system, inlets, points of entry into natural drainage channels, energy dissipaters, and any other applicable drainage features. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

- k) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project would include access roads, driveways, or other improvements which may impede or redirect flood flows. The applicant is required to provide a drainage study indicating runoff quantities and conditions before and after development of the project, including analysis of existing and proposed drainage facility capacity and lines of inundation by the 100-year flood. In addition, the applicant will also provide preliminary grading plans showing drainage patterns, improvements to storm drain system, inlets, points of entry into natural

drainage channels, energy dissipaters, and any other applicable drainage features. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

l) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The project site lies outside a mapped dam inundation area for a major dam/reservoir within San Diego County. In addition, the project is not located immediately downstream of a minor dam that could potentially flood the property. Therefore, the project will not expose people to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding.

m) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

i. SEICHE

No Impact: The project site is not located along the shoreline of a lake or reservoir; therefore, it could not be inundated by a seiche.

ii. TSUNAMI

No Impact: The project site is located more than 1 mile from the coast; therefore, in the event of a tsunami, it would not be inundated.

iii. MUDFLOW

No Impact: Mudflow is type of landslide. The site is not located within a landslide susceptibility zone. In addition, though the project does propose land disturbance that will expose unprotected soils, the project is not located downstream from unprotected, exposed soils within a landslide susceptibility zone. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the project will expose people or property to inundation due to a mudflow.

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING — Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Proposed Project includes an approximately 304-acre site with approximately 108 acres of land for the development of a solar project, a substation, energy storage facility, and gen-tie equipment. The project will not disrupt or divide the surrounding area which consists of high desert. Access along Old U.S. Highway 80 would not be disrupted or divided by the Proposed Project.

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project is subject to the General Plan Rural Lands Regional Category and contains lands within the Rural Lands 80 (RL-80) Land Use Designation. The project is also subject to the policies of the Mountain Empire Subregional Plan. The properties are zoned S92. The proposed use can only be allowed with the approval of an MUP on the project site. The DEIR will analyze the Proposed Project with regard to land use plans and policies and determine if there are any conflicts.

XI. MINERAL RESOURCES — Would the project:

- 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?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The lands within the project site have not been classified by the California Department of Conservation – Division of Mines and Geology (Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Western San Diego Production-Consumption Region, 1997). The project site is underlain by Quaternary alluvium, which may contain mineral resource deposits suitable for crushed rock. A mining claim also exists just to the west of the project site, though no evidence of mining, either currently or in the past, is present. However, due to the expensive mining and processing of crushed rock combined with transportation costs, this currently restricts crushed rock operations to urbanized areas within the Western San Diego Consumption Region of the County. Therefore, no potentially significant loss of availability of a known mineral resource of value to the region and the residents of the state will occur as a result of this project. Moreover, if the resources are not considered significant mineral deposits, loss of these resources cannot contribute to a potentially significant cumulative impact.

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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The project site is not located in an area that has MRZ-2 designated lands. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of locally important mineral resource(s).

XII. NOISE — Would the project result in:

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project may produce noise during construction and operation phases of the project. A Noise Analysis Report will be prepared for the project that will evaluate noise generating sources of the project for conformance with the County Noise Ordinance and General Plan, and in comparison with existing noise levels on the project site. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project may produce noise during construction and operation phases of the project. A Noise Analysis Report will be prepared for the project that will evaluate noise generating sources of the project for conformance with the County Noise Ordinance and General Plan, and in comparison with existing noise levels on the project site. Analysis will include the potential for groundborne vibration and groundborne vibration noise levels during the construction phase of the project. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project may produce noise, principally during construction. A Noise Analysis Report will be prepared for the project that will evaluate noise generating sources of the project for conformance with the County Noise Ordinance and General Plan, and in comparison with existing noise levels on the project site. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project may produce noise, principally during construction. A Noise Analysis Report will be prepared for the project that will evaluate noise-generating sources of the project for conformance with the County Noise Ordinance and General Plan, and in comparison with existing noise levels on the project site. Analysis will include the potential for temporary or periodic increases in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

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, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project is located partially within the Airport Influence Area, Review Area 2 of the Jacumba Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). The proposed project is located within the FAA Height Notification Surface due to its proximity to the Jacumba airport, which requires that notice be filed with the FAA. The applicant will complete FAA Form 7460-1 Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration and submit it to the FAA for review. The FAA will conduct an aeronautical study and a Noise Analysis Report will be prepared for the project to evaluate whether the project would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project is not located within a 1-mile vicinity of a private airstrip; therefore, the project will not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive airport-related noise levels.

XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING — Would the project:

a) Induce substantial 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)?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Proposed Project is for the development of a solar project that would employ approximately 400 people during its construction. However, this physical change will not induce substantial population growth in the Jacumba area because there will be no extension of water, sewer, or roadways into previously unserved areas, and no regulatory changes are proposed that would allow increased population growth.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: No homes are located within the proposed Major Use Permit area proposed by the project. No homes will be displaced by proposed off-site transmission lines.

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: No homes are located within the proposed Major Use Permit area proposed by the project. No homes will be displaced by proposed offsite transmission lines. Therefore, the project will not displace any people.

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, 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 service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

- i. Fire protection?
- ii. Police protection?
- iii. Schools?
- iv. Parks?
- v. Other public facilities?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project does not include residential use and is not expected to significantly alter the need for schools, parks, or sheriff facilities. However, an Fire Protection Plan will be prepared that will address whether new or altered fire protection facilities are required to serve the project. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

XV. RECREATION

a) Would the project 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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project does not involve any residential use, including, but not limited to, a residential subdivision, mobile home park, or construction for a single-family residence that may increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities in the vicinity.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, the construction or expansion of recreational facilities cannot have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

XVI. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC — Would the project:

- a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of the effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths and mass transit?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

The County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance for Traffic and Transportation (Guidelines) establish measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system. These Guidelines incorporate standards from the County of San Diego Public Road Standards and Mobility Element, the County of San Diego Transportation Impact Fee (TIF) Program, and the Congestion Management Program (CMP).

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: The Proposed Project will not have a direct impact related to a conflict with any performance measures establishing measures of effectiveness of the circulation system because the project trips do not exceed any of the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance for direct impacts related to traffic and transportation. As identified in the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance for Traffic and Transportation, the project trips would not result in a substantial increase in the number of vehicle trips, volume of capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections in relation to existing conditions. In addition, the project would not conflict with policies related to non-motorized travel such as mass transit, pedestrian, or bicycle facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not have a direct impact related to a conflict with policies establishing measures of the effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system.

Project average daily vehicle trips (ADTs) will be distributed on Mobility Element roadways in the County. The County of San Diego has developed an overall programmatic solution that addresses existing and projected future road deficiencies in the unincorporated portion of San Diego County. The TIF program creates a mechanism to proportionally fund improvements to roadways necessary to mitigate

potential cumulative impacts caused by traffic from future development. These new projects were based on SANDAG regional growth and land use forecasts; the SANDAG Regional Transportation Model was used to analyze projected buildout (year 2030) development conditions on the existing Mobility Element roadway network throughout the unincorporated area of the County. Based on the results of the traffic modeling, funding necessary to construct transportation facilities that will mitigate cumulative impacts from new development was identified. Existing roadway deficiencies will be corrected through improvement projects funded by other public funding sources, such as TransNet, gas tax, and grants. Potential cumulative impacts to the region's freeways have been addressed in SANDAG's RTP. This plan, which considers freeway buildout over the next 30 years, will use TransNet, state, and federal funding to improve freeways to projected Level of Service objectives in the RTP.

The potential growth represented by this project was included in the growth projections upon which the TIF program is based. By ensuring TIF funds are spent for the specific roadway improvements identified in the TIF Program, the CEQA mitigation requirement is satisfied and the Mitigation Fee nexus is met. Therefore, payment of the TIF, if required, which will be determined at issuance of building permits, in combination with other components of the program described above, will mitigate potential cumulative traffic impacts to less than significant.

Pursuant to Section 15130(a)(3) of CEQA, analysis will be presented in the DEIR as to whether the project's contribution to a cumulative traffic impact can be considered to be less than cumulatively considerable and not significant.

b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

The designated congestion management agency for the San Diego region is SANDAG. SANDAG is responsible for preparing the RTP of which the CMP is an element to monitor transportation system performance, develop programs to address near- and long-term congestion, and better integrate land use and transportation planning decisions. The CMP includes a requirement for enhanced CEQA review applicable to certain large developments that generate an equivalent of 2,400 or more ADTs or 200 or more peak hour vehicle trips. These large projects must complete a traffic analysis that identifies the project's impacts on CMP system roadways, determines their associated costs, and identifies appropriate mitigation. Early project coordination with affected public agencies, i.e., the Metropolitan Transit System and the North County Transit District, is required to ensure that the impacts of new development on CMP transit performance measures are identified.

Less-Than-Significant Impact: The additional ADTs from the Proposed Project do not exceed the 2,400 trips (or 200 peak hour trips) required for study under the region's CMP. Therefore the Proposed Project will not conflict with travel demand measures or other standards of the congestion management agency.

- c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project is located partially within the Airport Influence Area, Review Area 2 of the Jacumba Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). The proposed project is located within the FAA Height Notification Surface due to its proximity to the Jacumba airport, which requires that notice be filed with the FAA. The applicant will complete FAA Form 7460-1 Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration and submit it to the FAA for review. The FAA will conduct an aeronautical study and determine if the project would result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

- d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: The Proposed Project will not alter existing roadway geometry on Old U.S. Highway 80. A safe and adequate sight distance shall be required at all driveways and intersections to the satisfaction of the Director of the Department of Public Works. All road improvements will be constructed according to the County of San Diego Public and Private Road Standards. The proposed project will not place incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment) on existing roadways. Therefore, the Proposed Project will not significantly increase hazards due to design features or incompatible uses.

- e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: An Fire Protection Plan will be prepared for the project that will describe how the project will comply with requirements related to emergency access, water supply, and fire suppression design measures in consideration of the high concentration of electrical equipment that will be present on the project site. Adequate emergency access will be required of the project and the Fire Protection Plan will identify the necessary emergency access requirements. This issue will be discussed in the DEIR.

f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant Impact: Project implementation will not result in the construction of any road improvements or new road design features that would interfere with the provision of public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities. In addition, the project does not generate sufficient travel demand to increase demand for transit, pedestrian, or bicycle facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project will not conflict with policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities.

XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS — Would the project:

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The project does not propose any buildings or facilities that will discharge domestic waste, and no wastewater treatment plant currently exists in close proximity to the project.

b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project will require water to be trucked to the site for construction and during operation for the washing of the PV modules. No water or wastewater treatment facilities would be required for the project, therefore there is no impact.

- c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated: The Proposed Project will required appropriately sized and designed stormwater drainage facilities for the project to operate safely and efficiently as a solar facility. Any environmental impacts from the construction of drainage facilities would be evaluated with other appropriate technical reports such as drainage, biological, or cultural resources.

- d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: The Proposed Project will rely on off-site water to be trucked in for the construction and operation phases of the project. A water demand estimate will be prepared to evaluate whether the project poses significant impacts to available water resources. This issue will be addressed in the DEIR.

- e) 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?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Impact |

No Impact: The Proposed Project will not produce any on-site wastewater demand; therefore, the project will not interfere with any wastewater treatment provider's service capacity.

- f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Less-Than-Significant Impact: Implementation of the Proposed Project will generate solid waste. All solid waste facilities, including landfills, require solid waste facility permits to operate. In San Diego County, the County DEH, Local Enforcement Agency issues solid waste facility permits with concurrence from the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) under the authority of the Public Resources Code (Sections 44001-44018) and California Code of Regulations Title 27, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4 (Section 21440 et seq.). There are five permitted active landfills in San Diego County with remaining capacity. Therefore, there is sufficient existing permitted solid waste capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.

- g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Less-Than-Significant Impact: Implementation of the Proposed Project will generate solid waste. All solid waste facilities, including landfills require solid waste facility permits to operate. In San Diego County, the County DEH, Local Enforcement Agency issues solid waste facility permits with concurrence from the CIWMB under the authority of the Public Resources Code (Sections 44001-44018) and California Code of Regulations Title 27, Division 2, Subdivision 1, Chapter 4 (Section 21440 et seq.). The project will deposit all solid waste at a permitted solid waste facility, and therefore will comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:

- a) Does the project have the potential to 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?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: Per the instructions for evaluating environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential to 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, 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 were considered in the response to each question in Sections IV and V of this form. In addition to project-specific impacts, this evaluation considered the Proposed Project's potential for significant cumulative effects. As a result of this evaluation, the Proposed Project was determined to have potential significant effects related to biological resources and cultural resources. Therefore, this project has been determined to potentially meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

- b) Does the project 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)?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: Per the instructions for evaluating environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential for adverse cumulative effects were considered in the response to each question in Sections I through XVIII of this form. In addition to project-specific impacts, this evaluation considered the Proposed Project's potential for incremental effects that are cumulatively considerable. As a result of this evaluation, there were determined to be potentially significant cumulative effects related to Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Water Quality, Noise, Land Use Planning, Public Services (Fire Service), and Traffic. Therefore, this project has been determined to potentially meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

- c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Potentially Significant Impact | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than Significant Impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | <input type="checkbox"/> | No Impact |

Potentially Significant Impact: In the evaluation of environmental impacts in this Initial Study, the potential for adverse direct or indirect impacts to human beings were considered in the response to certain questions in sections I Aesthetics, III Air Quality, VI Geology and Soils, VIII Hazards and Hazardous Materials, IX Hydrology and Water Quality, XII Noise, XIII Population and Housing, and XVI Transportation and Traffic. As

a result of this evaluation, there were determined to be potentially significant effects related to Aesthetics, Air Quality, Hazards (Fire Service), Water Quality, Noise, and Traffic. While mitigation has been proposed in some instances that reduce these significant effects to a level below significance, the effectiveness of this mitigation to clearly reduce the impact to a level below significance is unclear. Therefore, this project has been determined to potentially meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

XIX. REFERENCES USED IN THE COMPLETION OF THE INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

All references to federal, state, and local regulations are available on the Internet. For federal regulations refer to <http://www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/>. For state regulations refer to www.leginfo.ca.gov. For County regulations refer to www.amlegal.com. All other references are available upon request.

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