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4.14 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

Would the project:		Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless APMs Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.	Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of 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?	☐	☐	☐	☑
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?	☐	☐	☐	☑
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?	☐	☐	☑	☐
d.	Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g. sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☑
e.	Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☑	☐
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 supporting alternative transportation (e.g. bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	☐	☐	☐	☑

4.14.1 Introduction

This section of the PEA describes the existing conditions and potential project-related impacts to transportation and traffic as a result of short- and long-term conditions associated with the implementation of the Proposed Project. A summary of the existing roadways, transit services, airports, and bicycle facilities, as well as a description of the regulatory setting for transportation and traffic, are presented. Also, an analysis of transportation and traffic impacts that would result from the Proposed Project is provided. Construction generated traffic would be minimal and limited in duration. Operation and maintenance traffic generation would be the same as that of existing conditions. The Proposed Project is located adjacent to several public roadways, but would not have a significant impact on transportation and traffic in the area and would not conflict with any adopted alternative transportation policies.

4.14.2 Methodology

The data regarding transportation and traffic were primarily obtained through relevant literature and internet research. The *County of San Diego General Plan*, the *Ramona Community Plan*, the *Central Mountain Subregional Plan*, the *North Mountain Subregional Plan*, and the *SANDAG* transportation publications were reviewed. In addition, a site visit was conducted to public roadways that could be directly affected by the Proposed Project.

4.14.3 Existing Conditions

4.14.3.1 Regulatory Setting

Construction projects that cross public transportation corridors are subject to local, state, and federal encroachment permits. Obstruction of navigable air space also may require approval. The following summarizes the transportation and traffic regulations that may be relevant to the construction of electric facilities, such as the Proposed Project.

Federal

All airports and navigable airspace not administered by the Department of Defense are under the jurisdiction of the FAA. Federal Regulation Title 14 Section 77 establishes the standards and required notification for objects affecting navigable airspace. In general, construction projects exceeding 200 feet in height above ground or extending at a ratio greater than 50 to one (horizontal to vertical) from a public or military airport runway less than 3,200 feet long out to a horizontal distance of 20,000 feet are considered potential obstructions, and require notification to the FAA. In addition, the FAA requires a Helicopter Lift Plan for operating a helicopter within 1,500 feet of residences.

State

The use of California state highways for use other than normal transportation purposes may require written authorization or an encroachment permit from Caltrans. Caltrans has jurisdiction over the state's highway system and is responsible for protecting the public and infrastructure. Caltrans reviews all requests from utility companies that plan to conduct activities within its ROW. Encroachment permits may include conditions or restrictions that limit when construction activities can occur within or above roadways under the jurisdiction of Caltrans.

Regional

County of San Diego

San Diego County requires that the placement of any structures on, over, or under county roads obtain an encroachment permit to be approved by the Department of Public Works as required by San Diego County Code of Regulatory Ordinances Section 71.

The *County of San Diego General Plan* provides direction for future growth in the unincorporated areas of San Diego County, and provides policies related to land use, mobility, conservation, housing, safety, and noise. The *County of San Diego General Plan* Mobility

Element provides a framework for a balanced, multi-modal transportation system for the movement of people and goods within the unincorporated areas of the County of San Diego.

The *County of San Diego General Plan* does not contain any policies that apply generally to construction projects.

San Diego Association of Governments

SANDAG serves as the regional planning agency for the entire San Diego County. SANDAG is responsible for planning and allocating local, state, and federal funds for the region's transportation network. State law and the California Transportation Commission require SANDAG to adopt a 20-year regional transportation plan every four years, which considers improvements to freeways, state highways, transit, and regional bicycle and pedestrian routes.

Communities of Ramona and Santa Ysabel

The communities of Ramona and Santa Ysabel are governed by the *Ramona Community Plan*, the *Central Mountain Subregional Plan*, and the *North Mountain Subregional Plan*. The Local Road Network portion of the *Ramona Community Plan* provides guidance on proper road networks to maintain the character of the community. The Circulation and Mobility portion of the *Central Mountain Subregional Plan* describes the existing conditions within the communities and outlines policies that discourage increases in traffic volumes, minimize traffic congestion, and improve traffic flow. The *North Mountain Subregional Plan* has similar policies throughout its Land Use and Circulation sections.

4.14.3.2 Local Transportation System Overview

The Proposed Project is located in a mostly rural area between the communities of Ramona and Santa Ysabel. The Detailed Route Map (refer to Appendix 3-B) shows the location of the Proposed Project area and the existing roadway network. The daily traffic volumes and Level of Service (LOS) E Capacity of major local roadways is shown in Table 4.14-1, Average Weekday Traffic Volumes for Project Area Major Roadways. This list also includes the classification and number of lanes information for each roadway.

Most of the roadways in the Ramona community area operate at an LOS of D or better.

4.14.3.3 Freeways and State Routes

Access to the Proposed Project is primarily provided by Hwys 78, 79, and 67. These routes are two-lane roads, except for a portion of Hwy 67, which was improved to four lanes from the Ramona Community Plan Area boundary to Archie Moore Road. Although regional access is provided by Hwy 67, the Proposed Project is located in closer proximity to Hwy 78, as well as various arterial, collector, and private roads. Hwy 78 is a rural highway that provides interregional access from the City of Escondido, through the communities of Ramona and Julian, to the Salton Sea. Hwy 79 is a paved north-south, two-lane highway traversing central San Diego County. The Proposed Project ROW is located west of Hwy 79. Hwys 79 and 78 merge in Santa Ysabel.

4.14.3.4 Arterial Roads

An arterial road is a major or main route with traffic capacity just below that of highways. Arterial roads are designed to transfer traffic between neighborhoods and communities, and have intersections with collector and other arterial streets. The major arterial road in the vicinity of the Proposed Project is San Vicente Road.

San Vicente Road is classified as a Major Road in the County of San Diego Circulation Element. A "Major Road" in the County of San Diego is classified as having four lanes of travel; and access to these roads is managed through requiring new development to provide access roads, signalized intersections, and common driveways. San Vicente Road is a paved four-lane, east-west road within the San Diego Country Estates development. The Proposed Project ROW is located east and north of San Vicente Road.

4.14.3.5 Collector Roads

A collector road has a lower traffic capacity than any other type road. Collector roads function as connecting road links between arterial roads and local roads to lead traffic throughout communities and occasionally to freeways. The public collector and local roads in the vicinity of the Proposed Project include Ashley Road, Creelman Lane, Warnock Drive, Keyes Road, Big Sky Road, Arena Way, Open View Road, Harvest Point Way, Vista Ramona Road, Rutherford Road, Del Amo Road, Gunn Stage Road, Old Julian Highway, Littlepage Road, Sawday Truck Trail, Grutly Street, Cabrillo Street, Helvetia Street, William Tell Street, Columbia Street, and Washington Street. Private local roads in the vicinity of the Proposed Project include Cinnamon Rock Road, Oak Hollow Road, and West Side Road.

Table 4.14-1: Average Weekday Traffic Volumes for Project Area Major Roadways

Roadway	Cross Street	Jurisdiction	Classification	Number of Lanes	Average Weekday Traffic Volume	LOS E Capacity
Hwy 78	3rd Street	Caltrans	Highway	2	12,100	16,200
Hwy 67/ Main Street	10th Street/ Hwy 78	Caltrans	Highway	2 - 4	26,700	16,200 – 34,200
Hwy 79	Hwy 78	Caltrans	Highway	2	1,800	16,200
San Vicente Road	Gunn Stage Road	San Diego County	Major Road	4	7,000	34,200
Ashley Road	7th Street	San Diego County	Minor Collector	2	2,000	8,000
Keyes Road	Old Julian Highway	San Diego County	Community Collector	2	1,600	16,200
Vista Ramona Road	Old Julian Highway	San Diego County	Community Collector	2	3,200	16,200

Table 4.14-1 (cont): Average Weekday Traffic Volumes for Project Area Major Roadways

Roadway	Cross Street	Jurisdiction	Classification	Number of Lanes	Average Weekday Traffic Volume	LOS E Capacity
Gunn Stage Road	San Vicente Road	San Diego County	Community Collector	4	4,600	16,200
Old Julian Highway	Vista Ramona Road	San Diego County	Community Collector	2	1,300	16,200
Sources: County of San Diego General Plan Update Traffic and Circulation Assessment 2010, Appendix G Traffic And Circulation Assessment; SANDAG. Transportation Data and Traffic Counts.						

4.14.3.6 Airports

The Ramona Airport is located approximately 3.2 miles west (4.6 miles by road) of the western terminus of the Proposed Project and is operated by the San Diego County Department of Public Works. The Ramona Airport is classified as a "general aviation airport," and the airport has an Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan in place. The runway is paved and is approximately 5,000 feet in length. The Ramona Airport is the third busiest airport in the County's regional air transportation network with an average of approximately 155,000 operations annually.

4.14.3.7 Public Transportation

Bus

Public transportation in the vicinity of the Proposed Project is provided on a limited basis by the North County Transit District. The only two bus routes in the vicinity of the Proposed Project are the Ramona FLEX Commuter and the Ramona FLEX Midday. These two bus routes both travel from the Escondido Transit Center to downtown Ramona, off of Main Street. Both of these bus lines also require reservations. The route travels along Hwy 78 from Escondido to Ramona, where it then turns onto Main Street to continue to downtown Ramona. Therefore, the bus lines are not located along the Proposed Project route.

Bicycle Facilities

There are no designated bicycle paths within the Proposed Project.

4.14.4 Potential Impacts

The Proposed Project would involve the replacement of existing poles to improve the reliability of the utility system. The Proposed Project is more likely to affect transportation facilities or increase traffic during the construction phase of the Proposed Project than during the operation and maintenance phase, as operations and maintenance activities currently occur on TL 637. The TL 637 poles and lines already exist in the area and no increase in activity is expected once the new facilities are in service. Therefore, the transportation analysis focuses on the construction phase and potential construction-related impacts to traffic and transportation.

4.14.4.1 Significance Criteria

Thresholds of impact significance were derived from Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*. Under these guidelines, the Proposed Project could have a potentially significant impact to transportation and traffic if it would:

a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of 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;

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;

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

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

e) Result in inadequate emergency access; or

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.

4.14.4.2 Question 14a - Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of 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?

Construction – No Impact

Project activities would not result in the generation of traffic that would substantially affect existing circulation. Local traffic may be temporarily affected by the movement of construction vehicles and equipment to and from the areas where pole replacements would occur.

For areas where Proposed Project construction activities may potentially affect traffic (the poles immediately adjacent to roadways), SDG&E would prepare and implement a traffic control plan to ensure the efficient routing and movement of vehicle traffic through or around construction areas. Roads that could potentially need traffic control due to adjacent pole work are listed in Table 4.14-2, Potential Roadways Impacted by Pole Work.

Table 4.14-2: Potential Roadways Impacted by Pole Work

Roadway	Pole Number(s)
Creelman Lane	R1, P3, D1, P5, D6 D7, D8, R9, D167, R10, P168, R11, D12, R171, D16, R17, P173, R18, D19, D174, R174, P20
Arena Way	P41, D42, and two guard structures
Littlepage Road	P93, and two guard structures
SR78	P161, P162, and two guard structures
SR 79	Two guard structures

It is anticipated that approximately 50 vehicles would be at each staging area at any given time, including construction personnel vehicles and construction vehicles operating out of the staging area. In general, construction personnel vehicles would make two trips daily: one trip to the staging area at the beginning of the day and one trip from the staging area at the end of each day. Similarly, each construction vehicle typically would make two trips daily: one trip from the staging area at the beginning of the construction day and one trip back to the staging area at the end of the construction day. Therefore, construction traffic in the vicinity of each staging yard would result in temporary increase of approximately 100 daily vehicle trips. As shown in Table 4.14-1, the major roadways for the Proposed Project route are operating well below the LOS E level. Therefore, the temporary minor increase in daily vehicle trips will not significantly increase congestion or cause the roadways to operate at a LOS E or LOS F as a result of the Proposed Project.

Due to the low volume and periodic nature of ingress and egress to the staging yards, impacts to existing traffic load and capacity of the street systems in the Proposed Project area would not result in any conflict with plans, ordinances or policies establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system. Additionally, implementation of a traffic control plan, prepared by the project engineer or contractor and subject to approval by the County, would ensure that potential construction-related traffic impacts would not result in any such conflict.

Operation & Maintenance – No Impact

SDG&E currently maintains and operates extensive existing electric power, distribution and substation facilities throughout the Proposed Project site, and the Proposed Project is the reconstruction of existing electric facilities within existing SDG&E ROW and substation property. SDG&E's existing facilities and operations and maintenance activities are included in the baseline for evaluating the impacts of the Proposed Project. Operations and maintenance activities for the Proposed Project would decrease slightly compared to baseline conditions due to the increased reliability of the new power line components included in a typical wood to steel replacement project, the installation of fewer poles along the alignment, and the relocation of poles outside of jurisdictional features. Any future potential maintenance-related construction projects would be evaluated under G.O. 131-D and CEQA for purposes of assessing whether further CPUC approval is required. Therefore, no impacts to traffic are anticipated.

4.14.4.3 Question 14b – 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 highway?

Construction – No Impact

The congestion management program for the County of San Diego is administered through the SANDAG 2050 Regional Transportation Plan. This plan offers goals, measures, and projects that could help improve the traffic and congestion due to future growth in the region. The plan focuses on providing more comprehensive public transportation, reducing the amount of emissions related to transportation, providing social equity within communities, and reducing travel time. The 2050 Regional Plan does not outline specific areas where problems exist; rather it provides direction on general areas of improvement for the County's transportation system.

In addition, the *Ramona Community Plan* (2011) identifies roads in the community that are subject to traffic impacts. The roadways that become impacted due to local traffic, especially on weekends, include Hwy 67/Main Street which provides the main traffic route through the community of Ramona. The Proposed Project is not located in the vicinity of Hwy 67/Main Street.

As previously discussed in the response to Question 14a, the Proposed Project construction-related traffic would result in minimal, temporary increase in the existing daily traffic.

The Proposed Project will not have a direct impact as the temporary increase of approximately 100 daily vehicle trips will not significantly increase congestion or cause the roadways to operate at a LOS E or LOS F as a result of the Proposed Project, as shown in Table 4.14-1. Construction activities will not conflict with any relevant congestion management programs or any other standards established by the county congestion management agency. Therefore, the Proposed Project will have no impacts relating to existing LOS standards or other adopted traffic control standards.

Operation & Maintenance – No Impact

SDG&E currently maintains and operates extensive existing electric power, distribution and substation facilities throughout the Proposed Project site, and the Proposed Project is the reconstruction of existing electric facilities within existing SDG&E ROW and substation property. SDG&E's existing facilities and operations and maintenance activities are included in the baseline for evaluating the impacts of the Proposed Project. Operations and maintenance activities for the Proposed Project would decrease slightly compared to baseline conditions due to the increased reliability of the new power line components included in a typical wood to steel replacement project, the installation of fewer poles along the alignment, and the relocation of poles outside of jurisdictional features. Any future potential maintenance-related construction projects would be evaluated under G.O. 131-D and CEQA for purposes of assessing whether further CPUC approval is required. Therefore, no impacts to traffic are anticipated.

4.14.4.4 Question 14c – Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that result in substantial safety risks?

Construction – Less than Significant Impact

The Proposed Project would not significantly impact air traffic patterns. Due to site conditions, a helicopter may be used in some areas for replacement of poles during construction. Helicopter operators will coordinate with local air traffic control and comply with relevant FAA regulations to prevent any adverse impacts due to increased air traffic. The poles requiring helicopter use are limited in number; however, the exact number of poles requiring helicopters for installation or removal has not been determined at this time. In addition, a Helicopter Lift Plan would be prepared and implemented for the construction phase of the Proposed Project, as required by the FAA. As a result, project-related impacts on air traffic patterns would be less than significant.

Operation & Maintenance – No Impact

As described previously, SDG&E does not anticipate that any additional helicopter use beyond that currently required for their existing facilities would be necessary to operate or maintain the Proposed Project. As a result, there would be no impact to air traffic patterns due to the operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project.

4.14.4.5 Question 14d – Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Construction and Operations & Maintenance – No Impact

Construction of the Proposed Project would not necessitate any temporary or permanent modification to existing public roadways or other transportation facilities, therefore there would be no increase in hazards due to a design feature. In addition, the Proposed Project consists of the replacement of existing electric facilities within existing SDG&E ROW and does not introduce any use that does not currently exist.

None of the proposed power line structures would be located closer to any public roadways than the existing structures. As previously discussed, temporary road or lane closures may be required during construction to provide safety to the public and worker during certain activities. SDG&E would ensure that proper safety measures are in place for those activities including proper signage, orange cones, and flaggers. In addition, the Proposed Project would not require development of additional circulation routes; and therefore, no potentially hazardous roadway design features would result.

Operation and maintenance activities associated with the Proposed Project would occur within SDG&E's ROW. Access for these activities would be provided from existing public roads, or existing access roads. As a result, there would be no impact.

4.14.4.6 Question 14e – Result in inadequate emergency access?

Construction – Less than Significant Impact

The Proposed Project would not result in inadequate emergency access to the areas where construction activities would occur or within the nearby vicinity. All streets would remain open to emergency vehicles at all times throughout construction. SDG&E would prepare a traffic control plan where project construction activities may impact traffic. A County of San Diego traffic control plan will be necessary for the Proposed Project and a Caltrans Encroachment Permit and Caltrans traffic control plan will be necessary for the poles immediately adjacent to Hwy 78 and Hwy 79 for the reconductoring activities across Hwys 78 and 79.

Details regarding emergency access related to low-flying aircraft are addressed in Section 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials. Potential impacts related to low-flying aircraft in emergency response situations are less than significant. Therefore, impacts related to emergency access are considered less than significant.

Operation & Maintenance – No Impact

SDG&E currently maintains and operates extensive existing electric power, distribution and substation facilities throughout the Proposed Project site, and the Proposed Project is the reconstruction of existing electric facilities within existing SDG&E ROW and substation property. SDG&E's existing facilities and operations and maintenance activities are included in the baseline for evaluating the impacts of the Proposed Project. Operations and maintenance activities for the Proposed Project would decrease slightly compared to baseline conditions due to the increased reliability of the new power line components included in a typical wood to steel replacement project, the installation of fewer poles along the alignment, and the relocation of poles outside of jurisdictional features. Any future potential maintenance-related construction projects would be evaluated under G.O. 131-D and CEQA for purposes of assessing whether further CPUC approval is required. Regular operation and maintenance activities would not require any planned road closures. Therefore, no impacts to emergency vehicle access are anticipated.

4.14.4.7 Question 14f – Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

Construction – No Impact

Construction of the Proposed Project would occur almost exclusively within existing SDG&E ROW areas. The Proposed Project would not involve activities that would conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, including bus transportation in the area. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

Operation & Maintenance – No Impact

The operation and maintenance activities for the Proposed Project would not change from the current practices, which require less than one vehicle trip per day, on average. Rail, bus, and bicycle traffic are not affected by current operation and maintenance activities, and there would

be no change to the activities as a result of the Proposed Project. Therefore, no impact to rail, bus, and bicycle traffic are anticipated.

4.14.5 Project Design Features and Ordinary Construction/Operating Restrictions

With implementation of the project design features and ordinary construction restrictions (as outlined within Section 3.8) potential impacts relating to construction traffic will remain less than significant.

4.14.6 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project has no potentially significant impacts relating to transportation and traffic; therefore, no APMs are proposed.

4.14.7 Detailed Discussion of Significant Impacts

Based on the preceding analysis, no significant impacts relating to transportation and traffic are anticipated from the Proposed Project.

4.14.8 References

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