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CHAPTER 6 – OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

6.0 Introduction

In accordance with the CPUC's Information and Criteria List and PEA Checklist (CPUC 2008), this chapter discusses the Proposed Project's potential to induce growth in the area or remove any obstacles to population growth in the area. In addition, this chapter identifies and evaluates cumulative impacts potentially resulting from construction and operation of the Proposed Project in light of current and planned projects in the area. The Proposed Project is intended to provide new facilities to maintain reliable service to SDG&E customers and accommodate customer-driven distribution load growth in the area, as discussed in Chapter 2.0, Project Purpose and Need. Implementing the Proposed Project would not induce growth and would not result in a significant cumulative environmental impact in any resource area considered under CEQA.

6.1 Growth-Inducing Impacts

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines states that environmental documents should "discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment."

A project could be considered to have growth-inducing effects if it would do any of the following:

- either directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing in the surrounding area;
- remove obstacles to population growth;
- require the construction of new community facilities that could cause significant environmental effects; and/or
- encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.

Direct forms of growth include new employees hired for proposed commercial and industrial development projects and population growth resulting from residential development projects. Other examples of projects that may induce growth are expanding urban services into previously undeveloped areas or removing major obstacles to growth, such as transportation corridors and potable water supply.

In contrast, projects that respond to future development that has been analyzed in existing local plans or that will undergo their own CEQA review are typically not considered to induce growth.

6.1.1 Growth Caused by Direct and Indirect Employment

The Proposed Project would be considered growth-inducing if it stimulated population growth or population concentration above projected population growth that is already captured in local and regional plans for the City of Chula Vista, unincorporated San Diego County, or surrounding areas. In addition, the Proposed Project would be considered growth-inducing if growth resulted from direct or indirect employment required to construct, operate, or maintain the Proposed Project, and/or if growth resulted from the additional electrical power that would be transmitted by the Proposed Project.

Construction and operation of the Proposed Project would not affect employment in the area. SDG&E would employ approximately 15 to 35 workers to support construction of the various Proposed Project components, with up to approximately 35 workers on-site at any one time during peak construction times. Construction workers would be drawn from the local labor pool and would not require additional housing. Contractors from outside of San Diego County may be mobilized for all or part of the construction phase and may require lodging; however, they would not cause growth in the area due to the short-term and temporary nature of their employment. In addition, a number of lodging facilities and hotels are proximate to the Proposed Project area.

As the proposed Salt Creek Substation would be unattended, no on-site employees/workers would be present during operation. Current SDG&E employees would maintain the Proposed Project components and, therefore, the Proposed Project would not create new jobs or increase the demand for housing. The Proposed Project was developed to meet forecasted electrical demands in the City of Chula Vista and surrounding areas in unincorporated San Diego County. The Proposed Project is not designed to facilitate growth in the community, either directly or indirectly. It would accommodate growth in the area that is already planned or approved by local land use authorities, and would not, by itself, induce growth.

6.1.2 Growth Related to the Provision of Additional Electric Power

6.1.2.1 Regional Background

The population of San Diego County has increased every year since 1944 (SANDAG 2011). As a result, growth is part of the past, present, and expected future of the region. SANDAG is the regional planning entity for the San Diego region, and is composed of representatives from 18 cities and the county government. SANDAG serves as the forum for regional decision-making. SANDAG makes strategic plans, obtains and allocates resources, and provides information on a broad range of topics pertinent to the region's quality of life.

Cities and the county designated SANDAG as the regional planning board, pursuant to a voter-approved proposition. The cities and county provide SANDAG with information regarding their general plans, local growth patterns, and land use regulations. In return, SANDAG generates regional management plans and population forecasts. As members of SANDAG, cities and the county review and approve all plans and forecasts prepared by SANDAG. Cities and the county use SANDAG's findings to develop and shape their respective general plans and land use regulations. The county and each city are required to adopt a general plan, which must be

updated on a regular basis. All general plans and subsequent amendments are subject to CEQA review.

The SANDAG Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP), last approved in 2004, was prepared to provide policy guidance on accommodating the growth projected by SANDAG. A key element of the RCP is the Integrated Regional Infrastructure Strategy (IRIS), which outlines guidance for planning the region's infrastructure. The goal of IRIS is to ensure internal consistency with respect to long-term regional infrastructure planning to meet the needs based on growth projected by SANDAG. IRIS addresses the energy supply and delivery system as key infrastructure elements. As the primary utility that provides electric service to approximately 3.4 million customers in its service area, which includes all of San Diego County and the southern part of Orange County, SDG&E participates in and supports this aspect of the planning process.

SANDAG has been preparing long-range forecasts of population, housing, and employment since the 1970s. SANDAG's forecasts represent the changes anticipated for the region based on the best available information. The forecast is produced by using established computer models that evaluate land use, demographics, regional and local economics, and transportation patterns. SANDAG forecasts use a complex set of assumptions, input data, computations, and model interactions (SANDAG 2011).

The latest Regional Growth Forecast (RGF), published in 2010, was developed for 2050 and provides an update of expected growth from the previous model that was developed for 2030. The 2050 RGF is based on data from local land use jurisdictions plus updated information for all model inputs. Like the 2030 RGF, the 2050 RGF predicts that local population will grow at a steady rate to more than 4 million residents per year between 2010 and 2050. In addition, according to the 2010 RGF, San Diego County employment and income will grow throughout the next 40 years and beyond (SANDAG 2011).

SANDAG and other planning agencies do not perceive the availability of electricity as a driver of growth. Nor is the lack of electricity treated as barrier to growth. Rather, electrical supply responds to planned growth, and that planned growth inherently requires its own, separate environmental review. It is anticipated growth that drives electrical system upgrades, not vice versa. Increasing electrical capacity eases the burdens of meeting existing energy demands and supports already-projected growth. The factors affecting growth are so multifaceted that any potential connection between additional electrical capacity and growth would necessarily be too speculative and tenuous to merit extensive analysis.

SANDAG and its regional growth model recognize investment in energy infrastructure as necessary to support implementation of the RCP. SDG&E coordinates with SANDAG to respond to regional and local planning processes. How and where development occurs within SDG&E's service area is dictated by the land use agencies with land use approval authority. SDG&E responds to these approvals.

6.1.2.2 Proposed Project and Growth

The objectives of the Proposed Project are to meet the area's electric capacity needs while providing improved substation and circuit reliability. The Proposed Project would help to serve existing load in the region, and would increase flexibility and reliability to the distribution system by constructing the proposed Salt Creek Substation. The Proposed Project would not extend infrastructure into previously un-served areas and, therefore, would not create a new service or electrical supply that would indirectly allow for an increase in population and housing.

The Proposed Project would accommodate existing and planned power demands in SDG&E's service area, as well as projected power demands based on state-adopted and locally adopted plans and projections. The demand for electricity is a result of, not a precursor to, development in the region that has been planned for and analyzed by local agencies with land use jurisdiction. The Proposed Project would increase the reliability with which electricity is made available, but the objective of the Proposed Project is not to provide a new source of electricity.

6.1.3 Obstacles to Population Growth

Obstacles to population growth in the region served by the Proposed Project are primarily due to feasibility of development, economic constraints, permitting, and other development restrictions and regulations administered by local agencies. Electrical capacity is not an obstacle to growth. The Proposed Project would not affect the feasibility of developing in the area, remove an obstacle to growth, or affect development regulations administered by local agencies because it serves already-planned-for growth. SDG&E responds to projected development and forecasts, rather than inducing growth by extending infrastructure for future unplanned development; therefore, the Proposed Project would not induce population growth in the area.

6.2 Cumulative Impacts

The CEQA Guidelines, Section 15355, identify cumulative effects as "two or more individual effects, which when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." The CEQA Guidelines further state that a project may have cumulatively considerable environmental impacts when "the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15065[a][3]). In addition, Section 15064(h)(1) requires that the lead agency consider "whether a cumulative impact is significant and whether the effects of the project are cumulatively considerable." The CEQA Guidelines states that "the mere existence of significant cumulative impacts caused by other projects alone shall not constitute substantial evidence that the proposed project's incremental effects are cumulatively considerable" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064[h][4]).

This analysis of potential cumulative impacts generally extends approximately 1 mile from the Proposed Project's components, as this distance was estimated to be the farthest that Proposed Project impacts would extend. Some cumulative projects are located greater than 1

mile away, but are included here in an abundance of caution for a complete and thorough analysis. An approximate 1-mile radius is appropriate based on the Proposed Project's location and the minimal impacts associated with the Proposed Project.

The Proposed Project would be developed on land that is either already owned by SDG&E or is within existing SDG&E easements, and no change to land use patterns would occur except for the proposed substation site. Both the proposed Salt Creek Substation site and the power line route are primarily surrounded by residential development. The Proposed Project is not part of a critical habitat linkage or wildlife corridor. As an unattended substation, the Salt Creek Substation would not generate a substantial amount of traffic that would be distributed into nearby intersections or roadways. For these reasons, the 1-mile radius is an appropriate distance to determine the potential for other reasonably foreseeable projects to be cumulatively considerable.

Data on cumulative projects used for this evaluation was obtained through discussion with City of Chula Vista staff; review of relevant documents and websites of affected agencies, and correspondence with agency staff. Those agencies or organizations listed below were included with regard to current or anticipated development projects in the Proposed Project area:

- County of San Diego
- City of Chula Vista
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)
- California Energy Commission

"Reasonably foreseeable" projects considered in the cumulative analysis herein are projects that SDG&E, federal, state, or local agency representatives were aware of when the PEA was prepared. These projects are listed in Table 6-1 and shown in Figure 6-1. A total of 13 projects were identified.

Table 6-1: Planned and Proposed Projects in the Proposed Project Vicinity

#	Project	Project Type	Project Description/Size	Project Location	Permitting Status/ Schedule
1	Caltrans Concrete Median Barrier at SR-54/SR-125*	Roadway improvement	Install concrete median barriers on existing SR-54 and SR-125; approximately 2 miles northwest of Proposed Project site	On SR-54, east of Briarwood Road to west of the SR-54/-125 interchange; on SR-125 from SR-54/-125 intersection to the Elkelton Boulevard overcrossing	Completion scheduled winter 2012

#	Project	Project Type	Project Description/Size	Project Location	Permitting Status/ Schedule
2	San Miguel Ranch	Residential/ mixed-use master plan community	Ongoing development of master planned community with residential and mixed-use development	East and west of SR-125, bisected by San Miguel Ranch Road and Mountain Miguel Road; north of Proctor Valley Road	Construction ongoing
3	Village 11, Winding Walk	Residential with a mixed-use core	2,300 residential units and commercial development	Adjacent to the south of Olympic Parkway and northeast of Hunte Parkway	Ongoing construction, approximately 90% complete
4	Freeway Commercial	Residential with hotel uses	550 multi-family residential units, two hotels	South of Olympic Parkway, east of SR-125, north of Birch Road, west of Eastlake Parkway	Permitting process ongoing
5	Millenia (Eastern Urban Center)	Mixed-use development	3,000 residential units, 3.8 million square feet of commercial	South of Birch Road, East of Eastlake Parkway, North of Hunte Parkway alignment, east of SR-125	Permitted, grading likely to begin in 2013
6	Village 10	Residential development	Single- and multi-family development	Southeast of Eastlake Parkway and Otay Valley Road intersection alignment	Permitting process ongoing
7	Village 9	Residential development with mixed-use town core	4,000 residential units, 1.7 million square feet of commercial	Immediately east of SR-125, south of Hunte Parkway	Permitting process ongoing
8	Village 8 East	Mixed use	Single- and multi-family and commercial development	Immediately west of SR-125, south of Hunte Parkway	Permitting process ongoing
9	Village 8 West	Mixed use	2,050 residential units, 300,000 square feet of commercial	South of Hunte Parkway, west of SR-125 and Village 8 east, generally north of Otay Valley Road alignment	Permitting process ongoing
10	TL 643 (near Existing Substation)	Power line improvements	Wood to steel	Existing Substation (within SDG&E property)	Construction in 2013
11	TL 628 (near Existing Substation)	Power line improvements	Wood to steel	Existing Substation (within SDG&E property)	Construction in 2013

#	Project	Project Type	Project Description/Size	Project Location	Permitting Status/ Schedule
12	TL 6910	Power line improvements	Wood to steel	Existing Substation (within SDG&E property) and east and south of the proposed Salt Creek Substation	Construction Completed in 2013
13	Floit Property, south of Eastlake Drive	Land swap	Land swap with SDG&E to construct a residential development	South of Eastlake Drive and west of SR-125	Application not yet submitted
14	RV and Boat Storage	Commercial development	Storage project within SDG&E easement	West of SR-125 and south of Eastlake High School	Application not yet submitted

* Source: Caltrans 2012

The cumulative impacts analysis considers the Proposed Project's construction duration, as well as post-construction operation and maintenance periods. Construction of the Proposed Project is anticipated to require approximately 18 to 24 months from initial site development through energization and testing, with completion expected in 2016.

6.2.1 No Cumulative Impacts

This section provides discussion and analysis of all technical resource areas, none of which would result in cumulative impacts.

Aesthetics

Overall, the Proposed Project would not substantially alter the visual character of the area. The proposed Salt Creek Substation site would undergo the most visual change because the natural topography of this undeveloped site would be altered into a graded area and would be developed with new substation structures and elements. The proposed TL 6965 and TL 6910 loop-in would be located in an existing Transmission Corridor with existing overhead power lines and towers, and the addition of a new power line within the existing Transmission Corridor would have a relatively minor change in the visual character of the corridor.

Surrounding lands are being developed with large-scale mixed-used development. Other future projects within the Proposed Project area would be evaluated for their potential to contribute to a significant change to the existing visual environment, and subject to mitigation or design measures, as appropriate, to reduce potential visual impacts. Cumulative effects on aesthetics would be minimized by implementing SDG&E's project design features. For these reasons, the Proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact on aesthetics, and a less-than-significant impact would result.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance does not occur in the Proposed Project area; however, the proposed Salt Creek Substation site is located on Grazing

Land and the proposed power line route traverses Farmland of Local Importance. The Existing Substation is not located on any designated farmland. The proposed Salt Creek Substation site currently consists of vacant, undeveloped land previously used for grazing, but is not currently used for agricultural purposes. The Existing Substation is not used for agricultural purposes.

Developing many large mixed-use cumulative projects (Table 6-1) would potentially result in the loss of agricultural lands. However, the Proposed Project would not convert agricultural land to another use or preclude surrounding farm land from continued agricultural activities. For this reason, the Proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable loss of agricultural lands, and a less-than-significant impact would result.

No forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production exists on-site or in the surrounding area of the Proposed Project; thus, implementation would not result in a cumulatively considerable loss of forestry resources.

Air Quality

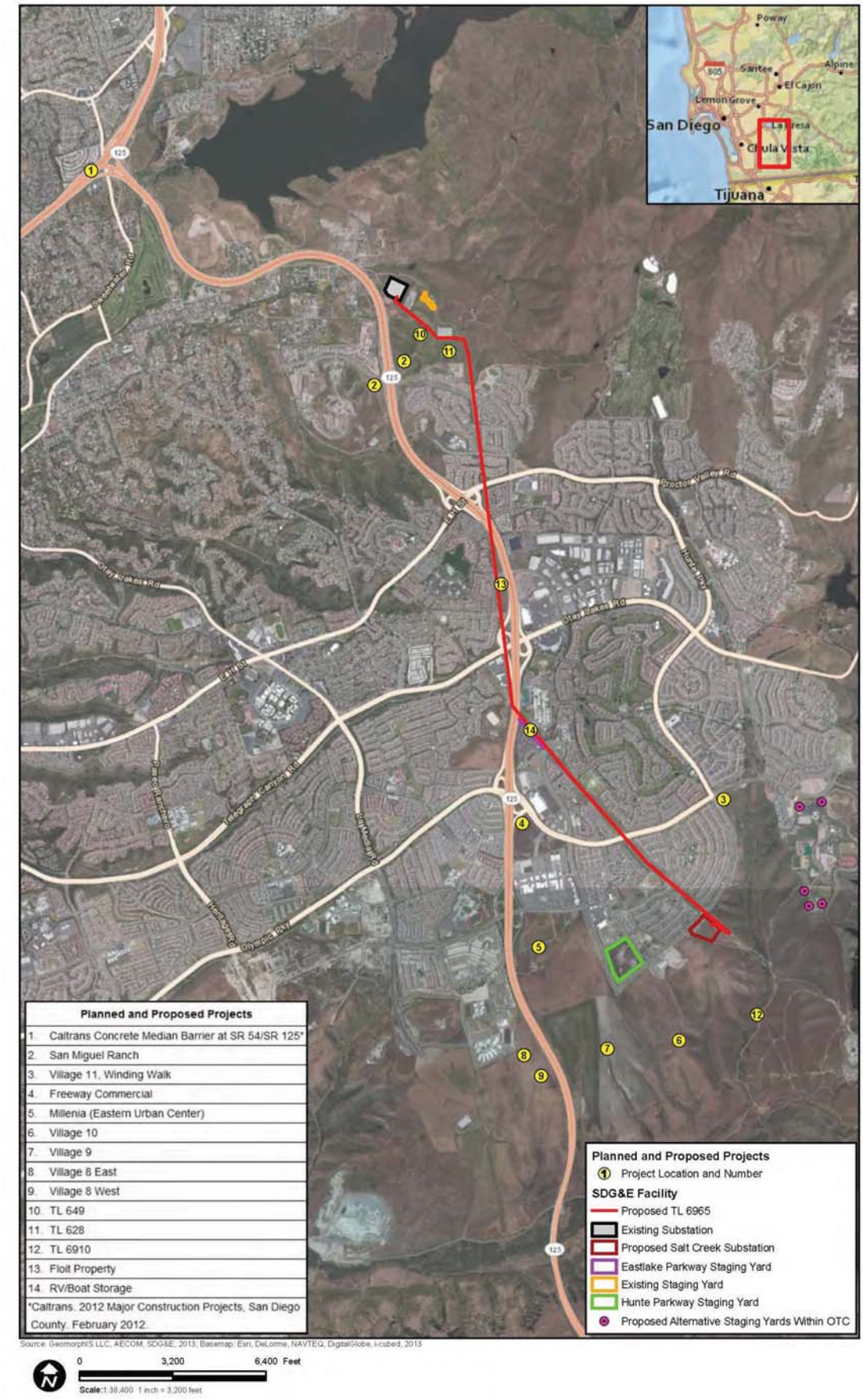
Air quality is a regional resource and is neither defined nor limited by jurisdictional boundaries, political boundaries, or project boundaries. The cumulative study area for air quality primarily focuses on the regional air basin, which includes the Proposed Project area and most of San Diego County, as detailed in Section 4.3. Some specific pollutants can result in localized impacts, such as CO hotspots or fugitive dust conditions.

Construction of the Proposed Project, along with construction of other cumulative projects, would result in a temporary addition of pollutants to the local air basin caused by soil disturbance, fugitive dust emissions, and combustion pollutants from construction equipment and vehicles. Pollutants generated during the construction phase of such projects would have the potential to impact ambient air quality if construction activities occur within proximity and during the same time as the Proposed Project. Emissions associated with the Proposed Project are less than significant and their incremental effect on air quality would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants. As discussed in Section 4.3, the Proposed Project's construction activities would not generate substantial pollutants levels that would exceed applicable thresholds for any pollutant type.

Proposed Project design features and construction restrictions were identified to minimize potential impacts on air quality (see Section 4.3). Similarly, other cumulative projects within the study area would be required to comply with local ordinances and regulations regulating air quality, including dust control during construction activities. Because the Proposed Project and each of the cumulative projects would implement procedures for fugitive dust control, effects would be limited to immediate areas only. Thus, potential cumulative impacts on air quality would not be cumulatively considerable and would be less than significant.

In addition, a significant impact may occur if a project were inconsistent with the rules and regulations of the San Diego APCD or if it would induce growth in excess of that anticipated by the San Diego APCD Regional Air Quality Strategy, neither of which is reasonably foreseeable.

Figure 6-1: Cumulative Projects



Note: SDG&E is providing this map with the understanding that the map is not survey grade.

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Long-term operation of the Proposed Project would not include any permanent, stationary sources of pollution, and would not induce population growth or area employment. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable air quality impact associated with operation, power generation, or population growth.

Biological Resources

As described in Section 4.4, Biological Resources, there are a variety of sensitive biological resources that occur within the Proposed Project BSA that have the potential to be directly or indirectly impacted, such as Otay tarplant, Quino checkerspot butterfly, avian species, and sensitive habitats and vegetation communities. As shown in Table 6-1, there are a number of large development projects that are planned within the Proposed Project vicinity. Some of these large master-planned developments within the City of Chula Vista would be located on expansive areas of previously undisturbed land that likely host a variety of sensitive biological resources. Although the full extent of those biological impacts is not known at this time (but would be studied for future projects), it is possible that a cumulative impact could result from a combination of all the cumulative projects. Like the Proposed Project, other projects in the area would be subject to federal, state, and local requirements protecting biological resources that would minimize the potential for adverse impacts and require mitigation if impacts were anticipated.

The Proposed Project was designed to best avoid sensitive biological resources, and, as outlined in Section 4.4.5 and the SDG&E NCCP, would implement the APMs and Operational Protocols designed to avoid and/or minimize impacts on biological resources. The Proposed Project would also provide appropriate mitigation where impacts are unavoidable to ensure the protection and conservation of Covered Species. The NCCP Operational Protocols would be applied to the Proposed Project to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts resulting from Proposed Project implementation. In addition, implementation of APM-BIO-1 would ensure that Proposed Project impacts to western burrowing owl would remain less than significant. For these reasons, potential impacts from the Proposed Project would be avoided, minimized, or compensated for, reducing them to a less-than-significant level. As a result, the Proposed Project would not present an incrementally considerable contribution to potential cumulative biological impacts that may result from implementation of all cumulative projects.

No impacts to wetlands or other waters under federal or state jurisdiction are anticipated from the Proposed Project; thus, there would be no contribution to a cumulative wetland impact. None of the Proposed Project component locations function as a wildlife movement corridor and, thus, construction and operation of the Proposed Project would not contribute to a cumulative impact to wildlife movement and corridors.

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources, including archaeological and historical, are generally affected by ground-disturbing activities associated with development. As discussed in Section 4.5, the Proposed Project was designed to avoid cultural resources to the extent feasible. However, it is not feasible to entirely avoid all cultural resources, given the high number of discoveries that have

been made in recent years. Although previously recorded archaeological resources are located within specific construction areas for the Proposed Project, and several isolated finds were found during the survey, the Proposed Project is not anticipated to result in impacts to these cultural resources. Nonetheless, the Proposed Project includes implementing APM-CUL-1 through -CUL-3 to reduce impacts to less than significant, including providing an archaeological construction monitoring program when ground-disturbing activities are undertaken. In addition, SDG&E has standard internal programs and practices that are designed to avoid impacts to cultural resources; those programs and practices would not change as a result of the Proposed Project.

Projects included in the cumulative project list, and any other development within the Proposed Project vicinity, would likely involve some form of ground disturbance. If located in previously undisturbed areas, ground disturbance would have the potential to damage or destroy important cultural resources. Like the Proposed Project, other projects in the area would be subject to federal, state, and local requirements protecting cultural resources; these requirements would minimize the potential for adverse impacts and require mitigation if impacts were anticipated. Additionally, SDG&E would implement APMs (i.e., monitoring of ground-disturbing activities) to minimize the potential for impacts to occur with regard to unknown resources. For these reasons, the Proposed Project would not destroy cultural resources. Thus, the Proposed Project would not add incrementally to a cumulatively considerable impact to cultural resources that may result from development of other projects.

The Proposed Project would be located in areas of moderate to high sensitivity for paleontological resources. The record search revealed the presence of 20 localities recorded within the vicinity of the Proposed Project. Anticipated grading and earthmoving activities at the proposed Salt Creek Substation would likely result in the removal of previously undisturbed Otay Formation strata. As such, the Proposed Project includes implementing APM-CUL-4 through -CUL-7 to provide paleontological monitoring when ground-disturbing activities are undertaken. With implementation of monitoring during ground-disturbing activities, impacts would be less than significant.

Cumulative projects may also be proposed in areas of additional known localities and/or within geologic formations with a moderate to high sensitivity for paleontological resources. Similar to the discussion for cultural resources, above, cumulative projects have the potential to impact significant paleontological resources through ground-disturbing activities associated with development if located in previously undisturbed areas. Like the Proposed Project, other projects in the area would be subject to federal, state, and local requirements protecting paleontological resources that would minimize the potential for adverse impacts and require mitigation if impacts were anticipated. Additionally, SDG&E would implement APMs-CUL-4 through -CUL-7 (i.e., monitoring of ground-disturbing activities) to minimize the potential for impacts to occur with regard to unknown paleontological resources. For these reasons, implementation of the Proposed Project would not destroy paleontological resources. Thus, the Proposed Project would not add incrementally to a cumulatively considerable impact to paleontological resources that may result from development of other projects.

Geology and Soils

Proposed Project design and construction would conform to the specific, mandated structural design and performance requirements to protect against the effects of strong seismic shaking. As such, potential impacts as a result of damage caused by strong seismic shaking or fault rupture would be reduced to less than significant. Additionally, SDG&E would implement design features as outlined in the Proposed Project geotechnical reports to minimize the potential for impacts to occur with regard to ground failure, landslides, slope instability, or liquefaction.

Other planned or future projects within the study area would also have the potential for impacts related to geologic resources due to site improvement activities such as grading or landform modification, and due to site-specific soil conditions. Mitigation and/or design measures would be required for these projects to minimize construction-related impacts to or resulting from such resources, and to conform with state and local regulations pertaining to seismic design requirements. For these reasons, potential cumulative effects of construction-related impacts remain at a level that would be less than significant and not cumulatively considerable.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

GHGs are global pollutants, unlike criteria air pollutants and TACs, which are pollutants of regional and local concern. GHGs have long atmospheric lifetimes of 1 year to several thousand years, which allow GHG dispersal across the Earth. Similarly, GHG impacts are global, as opposed to the localized air quality effects of criteria air pollutants and TACs. The quantity of GHGs required to ultimately result in climate change is not precisely known. However, the quantity is enormous, and a single project is very unlikely to measurably contribute to a noticeable incremental change in the global average temperature or to the global, local, or micro climate.

GHG emissions would result from construction of the Proposed Project and other foreseeable projects in the surrounding area. Heavy-duty construction vehicles and other equipment would generate GHG emissions. Emissions generated during Proposed Project construction would be negligible when compared to existing baseline GHG emissions in the area, although such emissions have the potential to contribute to an overall cumulative increase in GHG; refer to Section 4.7. SDG&E adheres to the standards and requirements established by the San Diego Air Pollution Control District, thus minimizing the potential for Proposed-Project-related construction activities to contribute to potential cumulative GHG impacts. Similarly, implementing SDG&E's standard procedures and design features, as stated in Section 3.8, would minimize the Proposed Project's incremental effect such that cumulative effects would remain less than significant and not cumulatively considerable.

In addition, during operation, various projects may potentially contribute to GHG accumulation by emitting CO_2, N_2O, CH_4, HFCs, PFCs, and SF_6. While these emissions have the potential to contribute to a cumulative increase in GHG, Proposed-Project-related GHG emissions would not result in a significant impact on global climate because such impacts are incremental. Moreover, the Proposed Project would be consistent with the goals of AB 32. With

implementation of SDG&E's standard procedures and design features, as discussed in Section 3.8, Proposed-Project-related cumulative air quality effects, including GHG emissions, would be minimized to a level that would be less than significant and not cumulatively considerable.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The cumulative impact analysis for hazards and hazardous materials focused on the immediate vicinity of the Proposed Project. This limited geographic scope is appropriate because risks related to public health and safety are typically localized, and they are generally related to on-site existing hazardous conditions and/or hazards caused by the construction or operation of a project.

A review of regulatory records and historical aerial photography, and a site reconnaissance survey did not identify areas with affected or potentially affected soil and/or groundwater that would likely be encountered during construction and operation of the Proposed Project; therefore, the Proposed Project would not contribute to potential cumulative impacts related to hazardous materials. However, planned or future projects in the area surrounding the Proposed Project may be developed on properties that contain hazardous materials or represent a potential hazard. There are multiple regulations and requirements regarding the use, transport, and storage of hazardous materials. Like the Proposed Project, all cumulative projects would be required to comply with all applicable safety requirements related to hazardous materials. These requirements would reduce potential for accidental release of hazardous materials that might result in an individual or cumulative impact.

The Proposed Project would not contribute to a significant effect when considered with the cumulative projects identified in Table 6-1 relating to fire, public safety, or emergency response. The proposed Salt Creek Substation would be unattended, and improvements to the Transmission Corridor would not increase public safety hazards. In addition, the Proposed Project would not alter fire-suppression policy, alter emergency response or evacuation plans, or create a public safety hazard at a local or regional level. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to public safety hazards would not be cumulatively considerable.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Water resources are based on the hydrologic conditions of the land topography and nature of the subsurface geology that dictate how surface or groundwater flows through an area. Cumulative consideration for water resources would include the Otay Valley and Lower Sweetwater hydrologic areas (i.e., groundwater basins) because the Proposed Project is located within these basins. As described in Section 4.9, grading required for the proposed Salt Creek Substation would substantially alter existing on-site drainage patterns, but would not create substantial sources of polluted runoff because the substation design includes a water quality detention basin to control runoff from the substation. In addition, with implementation of SDG&E's SWPPP, BMP Manual, Chula Vista's SUSMP, and the Water Quality Technical Report, and with adherence to applicable federal, state, and local regulations, impacts on hydrology and water quality resulting from the Proposed Project were found to be less than significant.

Large areas of open space are currently planned for development, as shown in the list of cumulative projects in Table 6-1. The grading and earthwork required for construction of these large-scale mixed-used developments would likely result in significant alteration of the hydraulic conditions of each individual project area and the overall conditions of the watershed. The magnitude of these changes would be many times the size of the Proposed Project.

These large, cumulative construction projects located within close proximity to the proposed Salt Creek Substation site may potentially result in cumulative impacts relative to hydrology within the study area. Improvements required for these projects, such as grading or roadway or utility improvements, may occur at the same time or within close proximity to those required for construction of the proposed substation, thereby combining to create potential cumulative impacts on hydrology or water quality. However, other planned or future projects within the cumulative study area would be required to conform to Chula Vista's regulations and policies, and be required to adopt and implement BMPs. This would minimize the potential for cumulative impacts by reducing potential construction and operational impacts on hydrology and water quality to less than significant for each project. Furthermore, the Proposed Project's impacts, resulting primarily from construction of the proposed Salt Creek Substation, would be less than significant; would have a minor, if any, incremental effect; and would be further reduced through adherence to applicable requirements and implementation of SDG&E's design features and ordinary construction and operations restrictions. Thus, the Proposed Project would not constitute a considerable contribution to an overall cumulative impact.

Land Use and Planning

As discussed in Section 4.10, less-than-significant land use and planning impacts are anticipated with construction and operation of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would not substantially modify currently established or planned-for land uses. SDG&E worked with the City of Chula Vista for approximately 10 years to reach consensus on the preferred site location for the proposed substation to serve the needs of other planned and analyzed projects. No Proposed Project component would divide a community or conflict with land use policies or regulations.

Figure 6-1 shows various proposed cumulative projects that would significantly alter land uses in the vicinity from open space to developed urban mixed-use areas. Although there would be substantial changes in the land use of these areas, the projects are proposed as part of the planned development and expansion of the City of Chula Vista. Cumulative projects would be required to adhere to applicable planning designations and land use requirements. While significant cumulative changes to existing land uses would result from proposed cumulative projects, the Proposed Project would not considerably contribute to a land use conflict or create increased inconsistencies with land use or planning policies or regulations. Rather, it responds to such changes. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to land use and planning would not be cumulatively considerable.

Mineral Resources

Although mineral resources are known in the Proposed Project vicinity (e.g., the Otay River Valley is a major source of construction aggregate), there are no known economically viable mineral resources within the Proposed Project site or in the immediate area. The Proposed Project would not alter or affect any mining or extraction operations. Additionally, implementing the Proposed Project, along with the other cumulative projects, would not preclude the development of mineral extraction operations or interfere with those operations currently in place. None of the listed projects would occur at mining or extraction sites. Therefore, the Proposed Project's effect on mineral resources would not be cumulatively considerable.

Noise

Construction noise from different sources within approximately 0.25 mile of each other could combine to cumulatively create elevated construction noise that may be a significant impact to receptors at any point between the projects. While construction noise associated with the Proposed Project components, including the proposed Salt Creek Substation, Existing Substation modifications, and power line, would be noticeable, the noise levels identified in this analysis are typically considered acceptable for these construction activities during daytime hours. Based on the analysis performed, it was determined that construction of the Proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase in temporary or periodic and permanent ambient noise levels in the Proposed Project area, and the impact would be less than significant.

Figure 6-1 illustrates that the majority of cumulative projects are located at the southern end of the Proposed Project location. Thus, the potential for noise impacts from construction at the Existing Substation or along the power line route at the northern end to combine with other concurrent projects in the vicinity of the Existing Substation is minimized due to the noise attenuation achieved by distance. Additionally, construction of the power line would progressively move along the linear route and would not be concentrated in one location for an extended period of time.

The majority of the cumulative projects are large development projects planned for locations near the proposed Salt Creek Substation. Construction activities associated with these development projects could potentially combine with noise during construction of the proposed Salt Creek Substation. However, to cumulatively combine, construction activities would have to occur simultaneously and in proximity to each other. As many of the cumulative projects are still in the planning phases, it is unknown whether these project construction periods would overlap with the Proposed Project, or whether noise-generating activities would be in proximity to the proposed Salt Creek Substation. Given where the other projects are in the planning pipeline, overlapping of construction is unlikely.

In addition, other projects in the area would be subject to the same noise regulations as the Proposed Project to limit their potential noise generation. Construction activities for the proposed Salt Creek Substation are anticipated to occur for approximately 18 to 24 months,

and noise levels would vary during this time dependent on activity and location. The noise analysis found that construction would not result in a significant impact to ambient noise levels in the Proposed Project area. Because construction of the Proposed Project would be temporary and is not anticipated to result in a significant noise impact, the Proposed Project's construction noise in combination with other cumulative projects in proximity are not expected to exceed significance criteria. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to noise would not be cumulatively considerable.

Population and Housing

The Proposed Project is intended to accommodate existing and planned growth in the vicinity, meet the area's projected electric capacity needs, and provide improved substation and circuit reliability. The provision of this improved electrical service would not extend service into new or previously underserved areas, and would not generate population growth or housing development. As shown in the list of cumulative projects, there are multiple residential and mixed-use developments within the vicinity of the Proposed Project. These large developments are consistent with the planned expansion and development of the City of Chula Vista, would occur independent and regardless of the Proposed Project, and would add to the planned cumulative population and housing growth occurring in the area. Cumulative projects may benefit from future increased reliability of electrical service that would result from the Proposed Project. Therefore, while the Proposed Project may serve planned development in the local area, the Proposed Project itself does not create or add to the cumulative population and housing expansion in the area. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to population and housing would not be cumulatively considerable.

Public Services

As discussed in Section 4.14, implementing the Proposed Project is not likely to affect the use or operation of any public services or facilities within the immediate area, including schools, fire or police protection services, emergency services, hospitals, or other services. The Proposed Project would have no incremental effect on public services and so would not generate the need for new or additional public services. Table 6-1 lists multiple large mixed-use developments planned for the areas surrounding the Proposed Project within the City of Chula Vista. These projects would increase the cumulative demand for public services, and likely be required to mitigate and provide service facilities or funding for expanded services, but the Proposed Project would not. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to public service impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Recreation

There are various recreational opportunities in the Proposed Project vicinity, including Otay Valley Regional Park, Sweetwater Regional Park, Mount San Miguel Community Park, Sunset View Park, Windingwalk Park, and various trails and community centers. The Proposed Project does not include a recreational component and would not increase the use of recreational facilities in the area. If trail closure is necessary, it would be temporary and limited to areas of

active construction along the Transmission Corridor. As such, impacts with regard to recreation specific to implementation of the Proposed Project would not be cumulatively considerable.

Table 6-1 lists multiple large mixed-use developments planned for the areas surrounding the Proposed Project within the City of Chula Vista. These projects would increase the cumulative demand on recreation facilities and opportunities, and likely be required to mitigate and provide recreation facilities or funding for expanded recreation facilities. However, the Proposed Project would not cause an increase in the cumulative demand for recreation facilities use. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to recreation would not be cumulatively considerable.

Transportation and Traffic

Potential impacts from Proposed Project construction and operation-related traffic would be less than significant. The existing roadway system in the area of the Proposed Project has adequate capacity to accommodate any increase in traffic resulting from the relatively small number of vehicular trips associated with construction of the Proposed Project, and there would be no significant change to the existing LOS of any roadways in the vicinity of the Proposed Project. In addition, SDG&E would prepare a traffic control plan as required by the City of Chula Vista when construction activities are located within city streets. Once operational, the Proposed Project would generate minimal traffic associated only with ongoing maintenance.

Table 6-1 lists multiple large mixed-use developments planned for the areas surrounding the Proposed Project within the City of Chula Vista. These projects would increase the cumulative traffic in the area, and would likely be required to provide roadway or intersection improvement mitigation or fair share funding for expanded or new transportation facilities. The Proposed Project would not cause a measurable increase in traffic volumes in the area, or incrementally impact the operating conditions of the transportation system. In addition, since the nearby developments are still in their planning phases, construction of the Proposed Project would likely be finished prior to the beginning of these developments. Thus, the impacts are unlikely to overlap. Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to transportation and traffic impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Utilities and Service Systems

The Proposed Project would require minimal utility service, including nominal water use, no wastewater generation or demand on treatment facilities, and minimal solid waste generation during construction activities. Once constructed, the Proposed Project would create little utility demand, as the unattended facilities would not use or generate high volumes of water, wastewater, or solid waste.

Table 6-1 lists multiple large mixed-use developments planned for the areas surrounding the Proposed Project within the City of Chula Vista. These projects would increase the cumulative demand on utilities and service systems, and likely would be required to mitigate and provide new utilities and service systems or contribute funding for expanded utility and service systems.

Therefore, the Proposed Project's contribution to utilities and services systems would not be cumulatively considerable.

6.2.2 Cumulatively Considerable Impact

As discussed in the individual technical resource area analyses provided above, the Proposed Project would not result in any cumulatively considerable impacts; therefore, no APMs are required.

6.3 References

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). 2012. 2012 Major Construction Projects, San Diego County. February.

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). 2008. Working Draft PEA Checklist. October 7.

San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG). 2011. 2050 San Diego Regional Transportation Plan: Our Region. Our Future. Prepared by SANDAG. Approved October 2011.