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5.15 RECREATION

Would the project:		Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless APMs Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.	Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b.	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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5.15.1 Introduction

This section of the PEA describes the existing conditions and potential project-related impacts to recreational areas¹ as a result of short or long-term conditions associated with the implementation of the Proposed Project. In addition, this section analyzes consistency with any applicable recreational plans or policies. The Proposed Project is not anticipated to increase the use of parks and recreational facilities such that substantial deterioration would occur, nor would it require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities; therefore, no impacts will occur. Direct impacts to parks and recreational facilities from construction of the Proposed Project are discussed and analyzed within Section 5.14, Public Services.

5.15.2 Methodology

The recreation analysis included a review of various plans, policies, and regulations for the City and County of San Diego. The planning and natural resources management documents that were reviewed include the following: *City of San Diego General Plan*, *County of San Diego General Plan*, *Black Mountain Ranch Subarea Plan*, *Rancho Bernardo Community Plan*, and *City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan*. Other relevant

¹ A recreational area is defined herein as any site or facility that is used for recreational activities; including national, state, county, city, or private parks, bicycle paths, and/or trails; open space preserves; or private recreational sites, such as golf courses.

government planning documents and online information sources, including the use of GIS data, were reviewed to identify potential recreational resources within the Proposed Project area.

5.15.3 Existing Conditions

5.15.3.1 Regulatory Background

Local

Because the California Public Utilities Commission has exclusive jurisdiction over the siting, design, and construction of the Proposed Project, the Proposed Project is not subject to local discretionary land-use regulations. The following discussion of the local regulations relating to recreation is provided for informational purposes. As outlined in the following subsections, the construction and operation of the Proposed Project will not conflict with any environmental plans, policies, or regulations related to recreation.

County of San Diego

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 recreation, conservation, housing, safety, and noise, among other topics. The *County of San Diego General Plan’s* Vision and Guiding Principles Section (Chapter 2) provides the following principles relevant to parks and recreation:

- Reinforce the vitality, local economy, and individual character of existing communities when planning new housing, employment, and recreational opportunities.
- Promote environmental stewardship that protects the range of natural resources and habitat that uniquely define the County’s character and ecological importance.

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the *San Diego County General Plan* contains the following relevant goals and policies regarding parks and recreation:

- GOAL COS-21 Park and Recreation Facilities. Park and recreation facilities that enhance the quality of life and meet the diverse active and passive recreational needs of County residents and visitors, protect natural resources, and foster an awareness of local history, with approximately ten acres of local parks and 15 acres of regional parks provided for every 1,000 person in the unincorporated County.
- Policy COS-21.2 Location of Parks. Locate new local parks and recreation facilities near other community-oriented public facilities such as schools, libraries, and recreation centers where feasible, so that they may function as the “heart” of a community.
- Policy COS-21.5 Connections to Trails and Networks. Connect public parks to trails and pathways and other pedestrian or bicycle networks where feasible to provide linkages and connectivity between recreational uses.

City of San Diego

The *City of San Diego General Plan* provides guidance for development within the City of San Diego. It is comprised of ten elements, including the Recreation and Open Space Elements, and was comprehensively updated by the City Council in 2008. The *City of San Diego General Plan*, Recreation and Open Space Elements, contain the following applicable goals and policies:

Recreation Element

- Park and Recreation Guidelines Goal. A sustainable park and recreation system that meets the needs of residents and visitors.
- Policy RE-A.3. Take advantage of recreational opportunities presented by the natural environment, in particular beach/ocean access and open space.
- Accessibility Goal. Provision of an inter-connected park and open space system that is integrated into and accessible to the community.
- Policy RE-D.6. (1) Provide safe and convenient linkages to, and within, park and recreation facilities and open space; and (2) Improve public access through development of, and improvements to, multi-use trails within urban canyons and other open space areas.
- Policy RE-E.6. Use underutilized or unnecessary City right-of-ways (ROW) and utility easements to help meet recreational needs, where appropriate.
- Open Space Lands and Resource-Based Parks Goal. Preservation of the natural terrain and drainage systems of San Diego's open space lands and resource-based parks.
- Policy RE-F.1. Protect and enhance park lands from adjacent incompatible uses and encroachments.
- Policy RE-F.4. Balance passive recreation needs of trail use with environmental preservation.
- Policy RE-F.5. Utilize open space lands for outdoor recreation purposes, when doing so is compatible with cultural, historic preservation, and Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) conservation goals and surrounding land uses, including, but not limited to:
 - Corridors that link recreation facilities and open space areas such as utility easements, river and stream corridors, trails, and scenic highway corridors.
- Policy RE-F.7. (1) Create or enhance open space multi-use trails to accommodate, where appropriate, pedestrians/hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians; and (2) Locate canyon and other open space trails to take advantage of existing pathways and maintenance easements where possible and appropriate.

Open Space Element

Open Space and Landform Preservation Goal. Preservation and long-term management of the natural landforms and open spaces that help make San Diego unique.

Policy CE-B.1. Protect and conserve the landforms, canyon lands, and open spaces that define the City’s urban form; provide public views/vistas; serve as core biological areas and wildlife linkages; are wetland habitats; provide buffers within and between communities; or provide outdoor recreational opportunities.

City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program

The MSCP is a comprehensive, long-term habitat conservation planning program that covers approximately 900 square miles in southwestern San Diego County pursuant to the ESA and California ESA and the California NCCP Act. It has been developed cooperatively by participating jurisdictions/special districts in partnership with federal/state wildlife agencies, property owners, and representatives of the development industry and environmental groups. The MSCP is designed to preserve native habitat for multiple species, which is accomplished by identifying areas for directed development and areas to be conserved in perpetuity. The MHPA is the City’s planned habitat preserve within the MSCP Subarea. Public access is allowed in many areas of the MHPA consistent with species protection and habitat management. Trails (biking, hiking, and/or equestrian uses), passive recreation, bird watching, scientific research, and nature walks are examples of allowable uses in the MHPA that provide opportunities for the public to access. Refer to Section 5.10, Land Use and Planning for more information regarding the MSCP and the MHPA.

City and County Communities

Community plans work together with the City and County General Plans to provide location-based policies and recommendations.

Black Mountain Ranch Subarea Plan

The Open Space Element of the *Black Mountain Ranch Subarea Plan* contains the following relevant goals and principles:

- Contribute to an open space system that promotes resources and provides a critical connection to adjacent active community and neighborhood parks.
- Maintain natural resources such as mature stands of native vegetation, seasonal stream courses, wetlands and significant landforms.
- Provide a critical corridor for the regional MSCP open space system that serves as a wildlife linkage between regional parks and preserves, as well as a multi-resource habitat preservation area.
- Link open space areas with interconnected trails to provide opportunities for recreation, education, and visual relief.

Rancho Bernardo Community Plan

The Open Space, Parks, and Recreation Element of the *Rancho Bernardo Community Plan* contains the following relevant plan objectives regarding parks and recreation:

- Reserve 1,543 acres for open space, park, and recreational uses.
- Provide for the preservation of natural open space areas throughout the community.
- Establish an open space system that provides linkage between various elements of the community. Such linkages should facilitate pedestrian, bicycle, and golf cart movement between recreational facilities, commercial centers, neighborhoods, schools, and parks.

5.15.3.2 Public Parks and Recreation Areas

The Proposed Project is not located near any state or federal parks or recreational facilities. The Proposed Project is located in close proximity to several public neighborhood and community parks, and recreation areas (refer to Figure 5.10-1).

The 4S Ranch Community Park consists of four separate parks, (Homestead, Heritage, Liberty, and Patriot), with a combined total of approximately 17.4 acres (refer to Figure 5.10-1: Proposed Project Land Use Map of Section 5.10: Land Use and Planning). The closest two parks, 4S Heritage Park (5.54 acres) and 4S Patriot Park (5.75 acres), are located approximately 0.12 mile south of the Proposed Project and 0.4 mile north of the Proposed Project, respectively. Both parks offer similar amenities, including playgrounds, basketball courts, picnic areas, and fields. Various Home Owners Association (HOA) parks are west of the Artesian Substation including Mel Driscoll HOA Park, Kristen Glen HOA Park, and Reagan Glen HOA Park. The closest of these, Kristen Glen HOA Park, is located approximately 760 feet west of the Artesian Substation.

5.15.3.3 Open Space and Preserves

The Santa Fe Valley Open Space Preserve lies directly north of the Artesian Substation on the northern side of Camino Del Sur. The preserve encompasses approximately 300 acres, of which approximately 65 acres are located within one mile of the Artesian Substation. Black Mountain Ranch Open Space is located south of the Artesian Substation and falls within MHPA jurisdiction. The Black Mountain Ranch Open Space Park contains 10 trails, 5 parking lots with paved access, and 2 community parks (Black Mountain Ranch Community Park and the Hilltop Community Park). The Greenfield Preserve and Christopher Hill Preserve also lie within one mile of the Proposed Project area.

5.15.3.4 Golf Clubs

The Bernardo Heights Country Club is located approximately 1.0 mile northwest of the Rancho Carmel Substation.

5.15.3.5 Other

There is a dog park located approximately 500 feet southwest of the existing Artesian Substation. In addition to the sports fields described in the community parks in Section 5.15.3.2, Del Norte High School is located approximately 0.5 mile south of Camino Del Norte and includes a track/football field, baseball field, pool, and tennis courts. The Maranatha Christian School, located approximately 420 feet northwest of the existing Artesian Substation, also includes a track/football field, baseball field, and blacktop playground. There is a Boys and Girls Club

located approximately 1 mile south of Camino Del Norte which includes an outdoor pool and various sports fields.

The San Diego County *Community Trails Master Plan* shows a proposed community trail along Artesian Road. This trail will travel west until Top of Crosby and also extend north into the Santa Fe Valley Open Space Preserve at Old Course Road and The Landing Way. Another proposed trail is shown extending north from the intersection of Camino Del Norte and Rancho Bernardo Road into the Lake Hodges area and back down, ultimately terminating approximately 1,000 feet north of the Bernardo Substation. There are no campgrounds near the Proposed Project. There are no designated trails within the Proposed Project’s vicinity.

5.15.4 Potential Impacts

5.15.4.1 Significance Criteria

Standards of significance were derived from Appendix G of the *California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines*. These guidelines note when a proposed project could have a potentially significant impact to recreation, as follows:

- 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; or
- 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.

5.15.4.2 Question 15a – 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?

Construction – No Impact

Construction of the Proposed Project would require a relatively small construction work force that is not anticipated to result in an increase in the local population and would not result in an increase in the utilization of local recreational facilities. Therefore, no substantial physical deterioration would occur from increased utilization of recreational facilities. There may be lane closures during construction, but patrons of the recreational facilities would still have access. In addition, construction of the Proposed Project would remain within existing SDG&E properties and ROWs and would not require the use or alteration of park space or facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in direct substantial physical deterioration of existing parks or other recreational facilities.

Operation & Maintenance – No Impact

As described in Section 5.13, Population and Housing, Proposed Project will not result in any residential or commercial development that will result in increased use of existing parks or other recreational facilities. The Proposed Project would operate unstaffed after construction and maintenance activities would be substantially similar to existing maintenance; therefore, no impacts would occur.

5.15.4.3 Question 15b – 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?

Construction and Operation & Maintenance – No Impact

The Proposed Project would expand the Artesian Substation, install two new underground getaways at the Artesian and Bernardo Substations, reconductor an existing double-circuit overhead power line, replace existing wood power line structures with new steel structures as needed, and remove some wood power line structures from service, all within existing SDG&E ROW, franchise position (city/county streets), and SDG&E-owned property. The Proposed Project does not propose new recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of existing recreation facilities. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

5.15.5 Applicant Proposed Measures

The Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts relating to increased use of nearby existing parks or other recreational facilities and the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, no APMs are being proposed for these impacts.

5.15.6 Detailed Discussion of Significant Impacts

Based on the preceding analysis, no significant impacts relating to increased use of nearby existing parks or other recreational facilities and the construction or expansion of recreational facilities are anticipated from the Proposed Project.

5.15.7 References

- City of San Diego. 2008. *City of San Diego General Plan*. Adopted March 10 (last amended on January 31, 2012). Online: <http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/genplan/>. Site visited on April 29, 2015.
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