

Introduction to the Environmental Analysis

This EIR analyzes those environmental issue areas identified during project scoping as having the potential for significant impacts.

The EIR examines the following environmental topics outlined in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Appendix G Environmental Checklist Form:

- 3.1 Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- 3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- 3.3 Air Quality
- 3.4 Biological Resources
- 3.5 Cultural, Tribal Cultural, and Paleontological Resources
- 3.6 Geology and Soils
- 3.7 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 3.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- 3.9 Hydrology and Water Quality
- 3.10 Land Use and Planning
- 3.11 Noise
- 3.12 Transportation and Traffic
- 3.13 Utilities and Service Systems

The following environmental issue areas are addressed in Section 3.14, Effects Found Not to Be Significant:

- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation

Each potentially significant environmental issue is addressed in a separate section of the EIR (Sections 3.1 through 3.13) and is organized into the following general subsections:

- **Environmental Setting** describes the physical conditions that exist at this time and that may influence or affect the issue under investigation.
- **Regulatory Framework** describes the pertinent policy, standards, and codes that exist at this time and which may influence or affect the regulatory environment of the proposed project.
- **Impact Analysis and Mitigation Measures** identifies direct and indirect environmental effects associated with implementation of the proposed project and identifies proposed measures to mitigate environmental effects, where applicable.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The level of significance identifies the degree or severity of an impact with implementation of the proposed project. Impacts are classified as potentially significant impact, less than significant impact, or no impact. Project impacts are the potential environmental changes to the existing physical conditions that may occur if the project is implemented.

Major sources used in crafting significance criteria include the CEQA Guidelines; San Bernardino County, state, federal, or other standards applicable to an impact category; and officially established significance thresholds. “An ironclad definition of significant effect is not possible because the significance of any activity may vary with the setting” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064[b]). Principally, “a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within an area affected by the project, including land, air, water, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic and aesthetic significance” constitutes a significant impact (CEQA Guidelines Section 15382).

Evidence, based on factual and scientific data, is presented to show the cause-and-effect relationship between the proposed project and the potential changes in the environment. The exact magnitude, duration, extent, frequency, range, or other parameters of a potential impact are ascertained, to the extent possible, to determine whether impacts may be significant when compared to the presented criteria. The discussion considers all of the potential direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect, construction-related (short-term), and operational and maintenance (long-term) effects. Each section also addresses cumulative impacts (described further below) and identifies any significant and unavoidable impacts. The project applicant submitted technical data, information and analysis related to the project and the County conducted a third-party, independent review of all submitted materials before presenting it in this document.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation measures are those project-specific measures that would be required of the proposed project to avoid a significant adverse impact, to minimize a significant adverse impact, to rectify a significant adverse impact by restoration, to reduce or eliminate a significant adverse impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations, or to compensate for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environment. Mitigation measures are included throughout Sections 3.1 through 3.13, where necessary, to address an identified potentially significant impact.

Where significant impacts cannot be feasibly mitigated to less than significant levels, they would be considered significant and unavoidable impacts. To approve a project with unavoidable significant impacts, the lead agency must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations. In adopting such a statement, the lead agency is required to balance the benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental impacts in determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits of a project are found to outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse effects may be considered “acceptable” and the project approved (CEQA Guidelines Section 15093[a]).

CUMULATIVE IMPACT EVALUATION

Cumulative impacts are defined in the State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15355) as “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” A cumulative impact occurs from a “change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, projects taking place over a period of time.” Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a), the discussion in this EIR focuses on the identification of any significant cumulative impacts and, where present, the extent to which the proposed project would constitute a considerable contribution to the cumulative impact. CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) states the following:

The discussion of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. The discussion should be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness, and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact.

METHODOLOGY

To identify the projects to be analyzed in the evaluation of cumulative impacts, CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) requires that an EIR employ either:

- **The List Approach** – entails listing past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency; or
- **The Projection Approach** – uses a summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document that has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.

The approach and geographic scope of the cumulative impact evaluation vary depending on the environmental topic area being analyzed. The individual Cumulative Impact Analysis subsection in the section addressing each environmental topic discusses cumulative impacts and, if necessary, includes mitigation measures for the proposed project. Each impact begins with a summary of the approach and the geographic area relevant to that environmental topic area. The cumulative setting and methodology is discussed in each resource section.

Past projects include those land uses that have been previously developed and comprise the existing environment. Present projects include those projects recently approved or under construction. Probable future projects are those that are reasonably foreseeable, such as those for which an application is on file and in process with a local planning department. The cumulative projects listed in **Table 3.0-1, Cumulative Projects**, have been determined to be reasonably foreseeable and have been developed in consultation with the County Planning Department. These projects are considered in the cumulative impact analysis as appropriate. Refer to **Exhibit 3.0-1, Cumulative Projects Map**, for the location of each project relative to the project site.

**Table 3.0-1:
Cumulative Projects**

| Map No. | Project Number | Project Name | Community | Description |
|---------|---------------------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| 1 | P201700679 | Daggett Solar Power (proposed project) | Daggett | 650-MW photovoltaic solar and energy storage facility on approximately 3,500 acres. |
| 2 | P201700750 | Sienna Solar (North and South) | Lucerne Valley | 150-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on approximately 400 acres. An active Interconnection Agreement (IA) is in place; the project would ultimately connect to the (proposed) Calcite Substation. |
| 3 | P201600510 | Ord Mountain Solar, LLC | Lucerne Valley | 60-MW photovoltaic solar and energy storage facility on approximately 484 acres. |
| 4 | P20180004 | Minneola Solar ¹ | Daggett | 200-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on approximately 1,200 acres. |
| 5 | P201600176 | Camp Rock Solar Farm, LLC | Lucerne Valley | 4-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on approximately 20 acres. An active IA is in place; the project would not interconnect at the (proposed) Calcite Substation. |
| 6 | P201600569 | Siena Solar East and West (formerly Yucca Solar Farm) – 99MT 8ME, LLC | Lucerne Valley | 300-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility with associated on-site energy storage component, and a 3,200-square foot (sf) operations and maintenance building and 500 sf substation control building on two non-contiguous locations comprising 990 acres in Lucerne Valley. Site A (Siena East) is located on 650 acres, and Site B (Siena West) is located on 340 acres. Project coincides with SCE's proposal for the construction of the Calcite Substation at an off-site location, north of the project site, along SR 247. An active IA is in place; the project would ultimately connect to the (proposed) Calcite Substation. |
| 7 | P201700392 (Revises P200900523) | Kramer North Solar Farm – 12AT 8ME, LLC | Kramer Junction | 70-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on approximately 191 acres. An active IA is in place; the project would not interconnect at the (proposed) Calcite Substation. |

¹ The project application for Minneola Solar was withdrawn in January 2019.

Table 3.0-1, continued

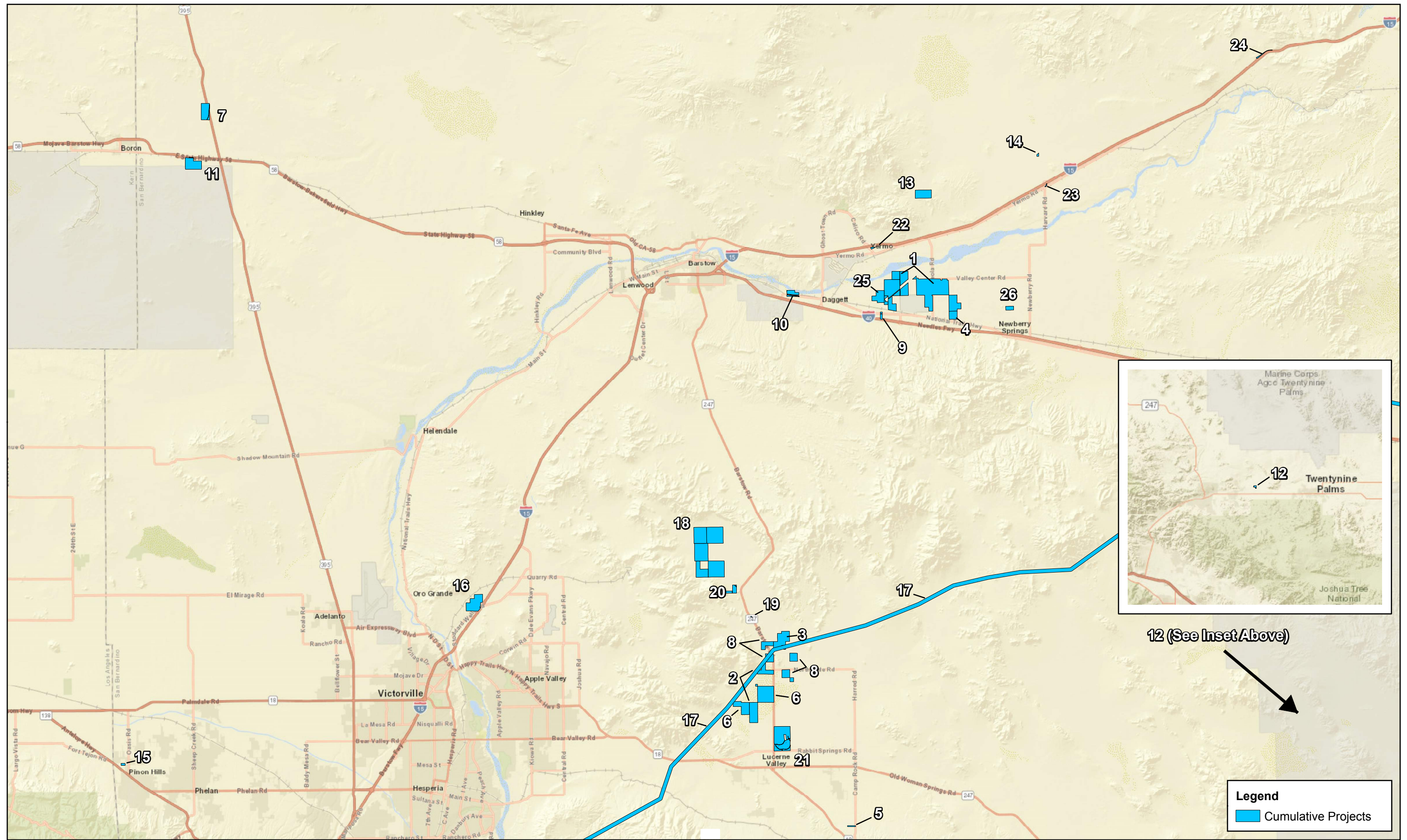
| Map No. | Project Number | Project Name | Community | Description |
|---------|----------------|---|------------------------------|--|
| 8 | P201700480 | Calcite Solar I - Lendlease Energy Development, LLC | Lucerne Valley | 100-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on four separate units located on a total of 664 acres in Lucerne Valley (Calcite Solar I). Property 1 (25.6 MW) is located on 162 acres; Property 2 (23.1 MW) is located on 166 acres; Property 3 (25.6 MW) is located on 154 acres; Property 4 (30.7 MW) is located on 182 acres. Project coincides with SCE proposal for the construction of the Calcite Substation at an off-site location, north of the project site, along SR 247. |
| 9 | P201800520 | Solar 33 | Daggett | 4.8-MW photovoltaic solar power facility on approximately 35 acres. |
| 10 | P201800521 | Solar 66 | Daggett | 7-MW photovoltaic solar power facility on approximately 34 acres. |
| 11 | P201700466 | Kramer South Solar Farm – 37BF 8ME, LLC | Kramer Junction | 130-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on approximately 386 acres. |
| 12 | P201400482 | NextEra Energy Resources/Joshua Tree Solar Farm | Joshua Tree | 20-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on approximately 115 acres. |
| 13 | P201000223 | Silver Valley | Yermo | 20-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on approximately 105 acres. |
| 14 | P201000018 | Ned Araujo (formerly Soltech Solar, Inc./ Newberry Springs) | Newberry Springs | 2-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on approximately 14 acres. |
| 15 | P201300251 | SunEdison – Pinon Hills | Phelan | 1.3-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on approximately 20 acres. |
| 16 | P201400141 | Victorville Landfill Solar, LLC | Victorville | 10-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on approximately 90 acres. |
| 17 | - | Eldorado-Lugo-Mojave | Newberry Springs to Hesperia | The project increases capacity on existing transmission lines by installing capacitors. This will allow additional renewable energy to flow from Nevada to Southern California. The project will include the following major components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modifying Southern California Edison's (SCE's) existing Eldorado, Lugo, and Mohave electrical substations to accommodate the increased current flow from Nevada to Southern California. |

Table 3.0-1, continued

| Map No. | Project Number | Project Name | Community | Description |
|---------|----------------|---|-----------------------|--|
| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructing capacitors along SCE's existing transmission lines; capacitors increase power flow through existing lines. Raising some transmission tower heights to meet ground clearance requirements. Installing communication wire on transmission lines to allow for communication between SCE substations. |
| 18 | - | Sorrel I Solar Farm Project | Lucerne Valley | 201-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility. An active IA is in place; the project would ultimately connect to the (proposed) Calcite Substation. |
| 19 | P201500128 | Meander Wireless | Lucerne Valley | Conditional Use Permit to construct a 60-foot high wireless communications facility designed as a faux water tank and a 784 SF equipment shelter on a 4.9-acre site in the Rural Living (RL) land use zoning district. |
| 20 | P201700152 | Monastery | Lucerne Valley | Revision to an approved action for a phased project to build a 14,000 SF hall (Phase I) and a 14,165 SF residence to house monastery residents (Phase II) on approximately 117 acres. |
| 21 | P201700218 | Rancho Lucerne | Lucerne Valley | Extension of time for Preliminary Development Plan (PDP) / 4,257 residential dwelling units on approximately 1,367 acres / Located northwest of the intersection of Rabbit Springs Road and State Highway 247 (Barstow Road). |
| 22 | P201800281 | Eddie's World | Yermo | Conditional Use Permit to construct and operate commercial center. Second phase of existing Eddie's World commercial center. |
| 23 | P201500308 | Harvard Junction | I-15/ Harvard Road | Conditional Use Permit to construct and operate commercial center. |
| 24 | P201600118 | Baker/Afton Commercial, Truck Fuel | I-15/ Afton Road | Conditional Use Permit to construct and operate commercial center. |
| 25 | P201400484 | Sunray Energy 2, LLC | Daggett | 44-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on 333 acres. Conditionally Approved - Construction Complete. |
| 26 | P200900339 | Solutions for Utilities, Inc. Phase 1&2(Now Soitec) | Newberry Springs | 3-MW photovoltaic solar energy facility on 22 acres. Conditionally Approved - Construction Complete. |

Source: 2019, San Bernardino County.

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12 (See Inset Above)

Legend
 Cumulative Projects

DAGGETT SOLAR POWER FACILITY
 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Cumulative Projects Map

Exhibit 3.0-1

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