

# **Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration**

## **County of San Bernardino Department of Public Works**

**Glacier Solar and Gas Project**  
**Yermo, California**

*Lead Agency:*



County of San Bernardino Land Use Services

385 N. Arrowhead Ave.,  
San Bernardino, CA 92415

*Technical assistance provided by:*

**LILBURN**  
**CORPORATION**

909.890.1818 [www.lilburncorp.com](http://www.lilburncorp.com)

Lilburn Corporation

1905 Business Center Drive  
San Bernardino, CA 92408

**January 2026**

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## SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

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This form and the descriptive information in the application package constitute the contents of Initial Study pursuant to County Guidelines under Ordinance 3040 and Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

### PROJECT LABEL

<b>APNs:</b>	0538-161-29	<b>USGS Quad:</b>	Yermo Quadrangle
<b>Applicant:</b>	Glacier Power and Gas LLC	<b>T, R, Section:</b>	T10N, R2E, Sec. 32, 33
<b>Location</b>	39952 CALICO BOULEVARD, YERMO, CALIFORNIA, SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, 92398		
<b>Project No:</b>	PROJ-2022-00081	<b>Community</b>	Yermo
<b>Rep</b>	Gary Bankers gbankers@aol.com	<b>LUC: Zone:</b>	Resource Land Management (RLM) Resource Conservation (RC)
<b>Proposal:</b>	Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a 10-megawatt solar photovoltaic energy facility on approximately 24.12 acres	<b>Overlays:</b>	Airport Safety & Planning Overlay; Military Influence Overlay

### PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

**Lead agency:** County of San Bernardino  
Land Use Services Department  
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0182

**Contact person:** Amy Rossig / Contract Planner  
**Phone No:** (916) 212.8232      **Fax No:**  
**E-mail:** Amy.rossig@weareharris.com

### INTRODUCTION

Glacier Power and Gas LLC has submitted an Application to the San Bernardino County for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP 2022-00081) for a proposed 10 megawatt (MW) photovoltaic solar energy-generating facility known as the Glacier Power and Gas Solar Project. The Project Site consists of one parcel of approximately 24.12 acres, located in the Community of Yermo, in unincorporated San Bernardino County. The Project Site is located in the west portion of the Mojave Desert (see Figure-1, Regional Location). The proposed solar generating facilities would be constructed as four quadrants of solar arrays with internal circulation roads between quadrants for access to facilities.

### PROJECT SITE SUMMARY

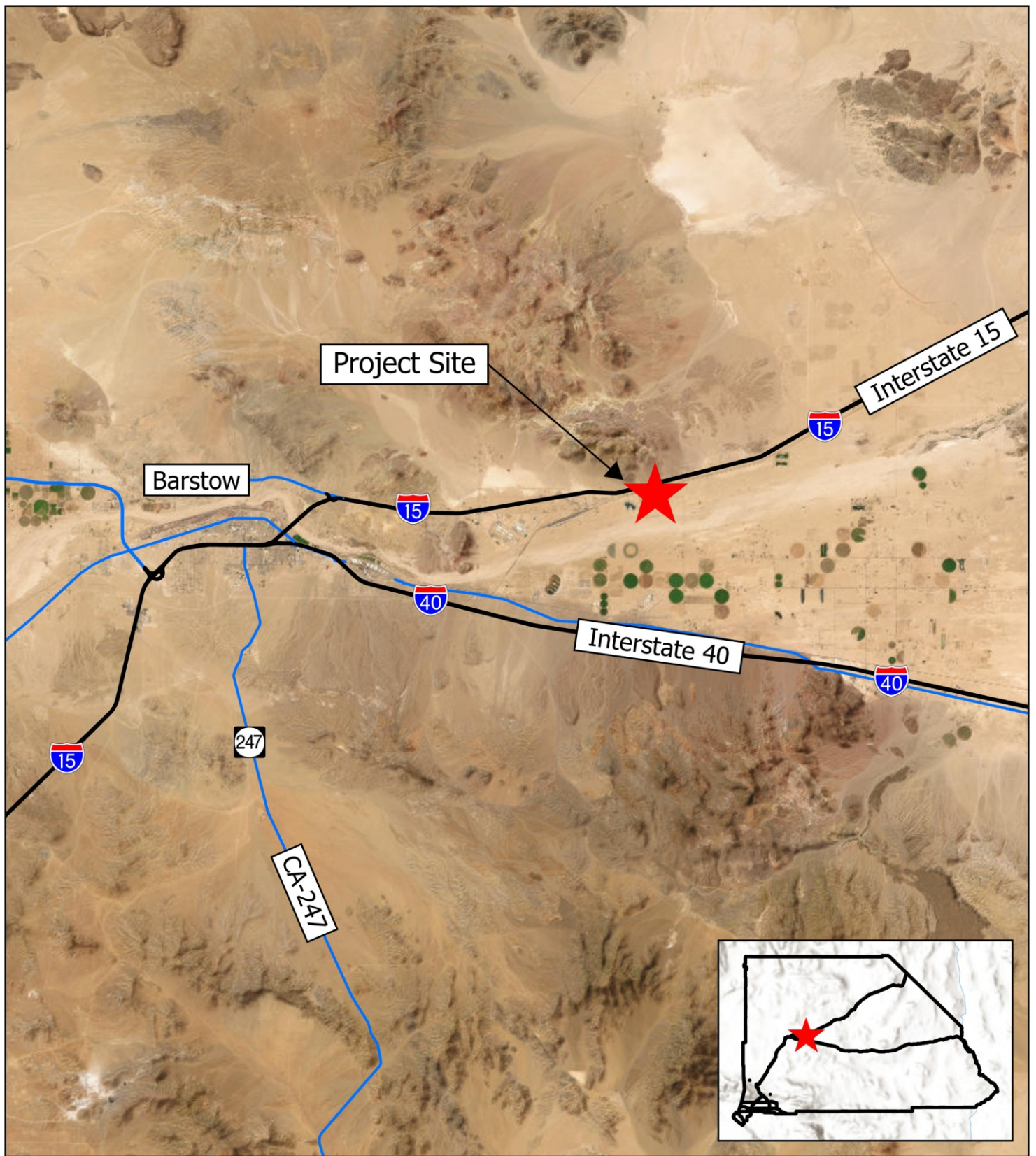
The Project Site is located approximately 0.2 mile south of the I-15 Freeway (I-15) in the unincorporated Community of Yermo in San Bernardino County. It is located on Calico Boulevard approximately one mile west of Minneola Road. (see Figure 1, Regional Location). The Project Site is located in Section 32, Township 10 North, Range 2 East, on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Yermo, California 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle at approximately 34° 54' 37.3" N Latitude and 116° 47' 15.3" W Longitude (See Figure 2, Project Vicinity).

The approximate 24.12-acre site is currently vacant, consisting of desert shrubs. Power poles exist along the southern portions of the Project Site boundary. The Project Site is relatively flat and elevation ranges is approximately 1906 feet to 1913 feet. The Project Site occurs in the Land Use Category of Resource Land Management (RLM) and with Resource Conservation (RC) zoning designation and is within the Military Influence Overlay and Airport Safety & Planning Overlay.

The Project vicinity is rural desert with scattered development and infrastructure. Adjacent to the north of the Project Site is the Union Pacific Railroad. Also, to the north is Yermo Road, vacant land, a single-family residence, I-15 Freeway (I-15), and the Calico Mountains. To the south of the Project Site are single-family residences, vacant land, Calico Boulevard, and Yucca Road. Approximately 0.77 miles to the southwest of the Project Site is a gated single-family residential community. To the east of the Project Site are vacant lands. The undeveloped parcel adjacent to the west shows evidence of human disturbance including trash piles composed of wood, metal, tires, plastic beverage containers, and previous existing foundations of buildings. The table below shows the existing Project Site and adjacent properties' land use and designations as well as existing uses.

AREA	Existing Adjacent Land Use	Land Use Category	Zoning
Site	Vacant	Resource Land Management (RLM)	Resource Conservation (RC)
North	Union Pacific Railroad	RL-Rural Living	RL-Rural Living
South	Vacant Land, Calico Boulevard	RL-Rural Living	RL-Rural Living
East	Vacant Land	Resource Land Management (RLM)	Resource Conservation (RC)
West	Vacant Land, Previously Disturbed	Resource Land Management (RLM)	Resource Conservation (RC)





Scale: 1:325,000

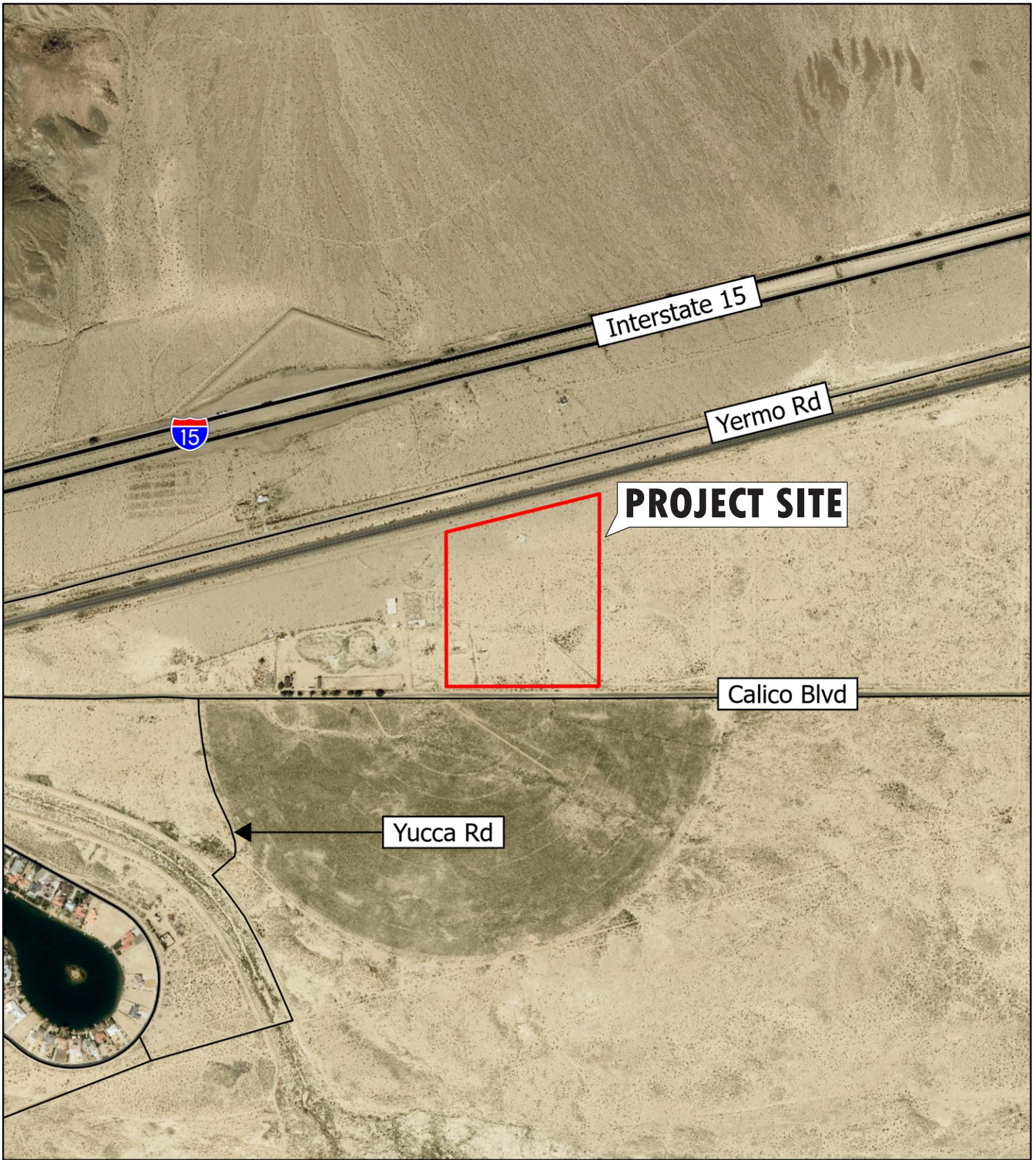


## REGIONAL VICINITY

GLACIER POWER AND GAS SOLAR  
County of San Bernardino, California

FIGURE 1





Scale: 1:12,000



- PROJ-2022-00081
- Freeway
- Local
- Ramp

**VICINITY MAP**  
**GLACIER POWER AND GAS SOLAR**  
County of San Bernardino, California

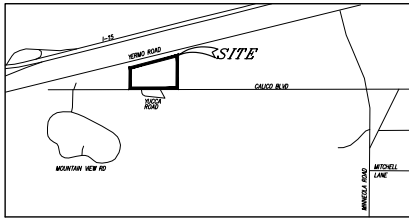
**FIGURE 2**



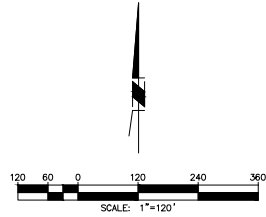
Plotting Date: 09/02/2025 - 10:50am by: J. Langdon



CASE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_



VICINITY MAP  
N.T.S.



# PLOT PLAN

FOR CONDITIONAL USE AND MINOR USE APPLICATIONS ON APN 0538-161-28 AND APN 0538-161-29  
TOWNSHIP 10 NORTH, RANGE 2 EAST, SECTION 32, S.B.M.

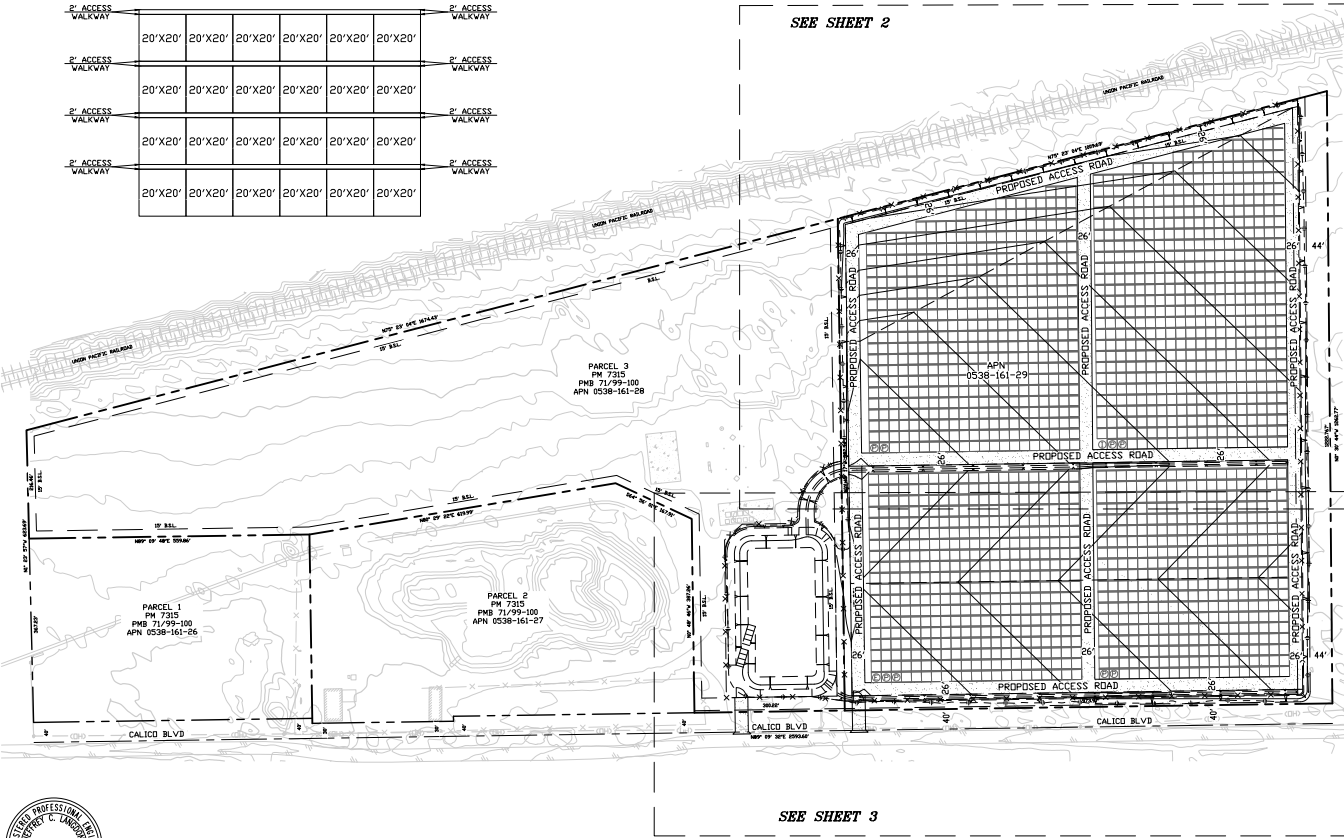
## LEGEND:

- ===== INDICATES RAILROAD TRACKS
- - - - - INDICATES BOUNDARY
- - - - - INDICATES CENTERLINE
- x - x - x - INDICATES PROPOSED CHAIN LINK FENCE
- x - x - x - INDICATES PROPOSED GATE
- ⊙ INDICATES PROPOSED 20'X20' PARKING STALL
- ⊙ INDICATES PROPOSED 20'X20' ELECTRIC CABINET/METER
- INDICATES TREE CANOPY
- INDICATES POWER POLE (PP)
- INDICATES CONCRETE AREA (OR AS NOTED)
- ▨ INDICATES DIRT ACCESS ROAD

## TYP. SECTION

P' ACCESS WALKWAY	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	P' ACCESS WALKWAY
P' ACCESS WALKWAY	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	P' ACCESS WALKWAY
P' ACCESS WALKWAY	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	P' ACCESS WALKWAY
P' ACCESS WALKWAY	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	20'X20'	P' ACCESS WALKWAY

SEE SHEET 2



SEE SHEET 3

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

## PROJECT DATA

### OWNER/APPLICANT

FLYING A PROPERTIES, LLC  
MIKE THIELEN (OWNER)  
962-380-9200  
39952 CALICO BLVD  
YERMO, CA 92398

### SURVEYOR

DANIEL M. MEYER, P.L.S. 9201  
6566 CALENTE RD, SUITE A  
DAY HILLS, CA 92344  
(760) 954-1719

### ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NO.

APN 0538-161-28  
APN 0538-161-29

### UTILITY PROVIDERS

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON  
P.O. BOX 800  
8631 RUSH STREET  
ROSEMARE, CA 91770  
626-302-3377

### Basis of Coordinates

The coordinates shown herein are based upon the California Coordinate System of 1983, CCS83, Zone 5, (Epoch 2017.50) in accordance with the California Public Resources Code Sections 8801-8810; said coordinates are based locally upon field-observed ties to the following California Spatial Reference Network, or equivalent stations:

### Referenced CSRC Control Stations Connected & Held:

Station	Latitude/North (LAT) mm	Longitude/East (LONG) mm	Ellip Hgt (M)	Source	95% ELLIPSE (LAT) mm	95% ELLIPSE (LONG) mm	95% ELLIPSE (ELL) mm
BSEY	48°55'35.75244"	-119°40'17.38529"	589.15	CSRC	2.25	2.33	6.39
PMB	34°40'8.480451"	-119°40'17.38529"	589.15	CSRC	2.25	2.33	6.39
WOMT	34°40'8.480451"	-119°40'17.38529"	589.15	CSRC	2.25	2.33	6.39

All measured distances shown herein are grid distances in reference to CCS83, expressed as U.S. Survey Feet. To calculate ground distances, divide grid distances by the combined factor shown herein below.

Station	Northing	Easting	Elevation	Ellip Hgt (FT US)	Combined Scale Factor	Meridian Convergence Angle
100	2155752.56	8924533.10	1906.40	1803.09	0.99983971	0°41'23.720"

### Vertical Datum

Elevations shown herein are based on the North American Datum of 1988 (NAD83) and were determined by vertically constraining to the published ellipsoid height of the station(s) shown herein in the table below, per the data sheet computed by the California Spatial Reference Center (CSRC) on 12/21/2017, and derived from the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) gravity model GEoid18.

### Referenced CSRC Control Stations Connected & Held:

Station	Name	Ellip Hgt (M)	Source	95% ELLIPSE (ELL) mm	Calculated Orthometric Height (FT US)
BSEY	CGN05/BSEY, SCGN, CS1988	614.19	CSRC	6.1	2318.15
PMB	CGN05/PMB, SCGN, CS1988	589.15	CSRC	6.4	2096.22
WOMT	CGN05/WOMT, SCGN, CS1988	1353.74	CSRC	6.1	4588.30

DESIGNED/DRAWN AV		CHECKED JL	
DATE 09/02/2025		APPROVED DATE	
PLOT PLAN IN THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO			
PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF: JEFFREY C. LANGDON R.C.E. 42429		APPROVED: DATE: 09/02/2025	

**PROACTIVE**  
ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS  
27051 Towne Centre Drive, Suite 270  
Foothill Ranch, CA 92610 (949) 716-7480

**PLOT PLAN**  
GLACIER POWER AND GAS - PAUL LAMPERT  
39952 CALICO BLVD. YERMO, CA 92398

PLOT PLAN

DESIGNED/DRAWN AV
CHECKED JL
DATE 09/02/2025
SCALE 1"=120'
MIS. JOB NO. 23_008
REP. JOB NO.
SHEET NO. 1 OF 3

# PLOT PLAN SHEET 1

GLACIER POWER AND GAS SOLAR  
County of San Bernardino, California

**LILBURN**  
CORPORATION

FIGURE 3A

# PLOT PLAN

FOR CONDITIONAL USE AND MINOR USE APPLICATIONS ON APN 0538-161-28 AND APN 0538-161-29  
TOWNSHIP 10 NORTH, RANGE 2 EAST, SECTION 32, S.B.M.

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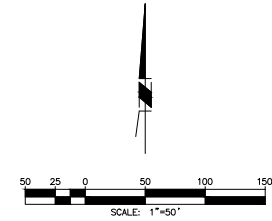
**PROACTIVE**  
ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS  
2780 Town Center Drive  
Foothill Ranch, CA 92610 (949) 716-7460

## PLOT PLAN

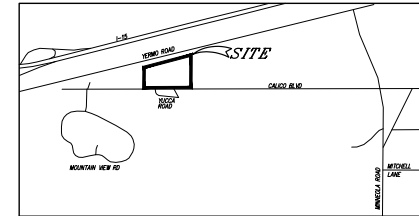
GLACIER POWER AND GAS - PAUL LAMPERT  
39952 CALICO BLVD. YERMO, CA 92398

DESIGNED/DRAWN  
BY  
CHECKED  
DATE  
08/29/2025  
SCALE  
1" = 50'  
MIS JOB NO.  
23\_008  
RFP JOB NO.  
SHEET NO.  
2 OF 3

PLOT PLAN



- LEGEND:**
- +++++ INDICATES RAILROAD TRACKS
  - - - - - INDICATES BOUNDARY
  - - - - - INDICATES CENTERLINE
  - x - x - x - INDICATES PROPOSED CHAIN LINK FENCE
  - x - x - x - INDICATES PROPOSED GATE
  - ⊙ INDICATES PROPOSED 20'X20' PARKING STALL
  - ⊙ INDICATES PROPOSED 20'X20' ELECTRIC CABINET/METER
  - INDICATES TREE CANOPY
  - PP INDICATES POWER POLE (PP)
  - INDICATES CONCRETE AREA (OR AS NOTED)
  - ▨ INDICATES DIRT ACCESS ROAD



**VICINITY MAP**  
N.T.S.

NO.	REVISIONS	APPROVED	DATE
<p align="center"><b>PLOT PLAN</b> <b>IN THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO</b></p>			
PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF:  JEFFREY C. LANGDON E.C.C. #2429		APPROVED:  DATE: 09/02/2025	

## PLOT PLAN SHEET 2

GLACIER POWER AND GAS SOLAR

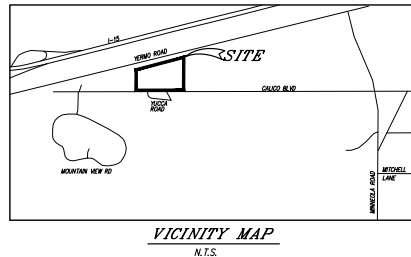
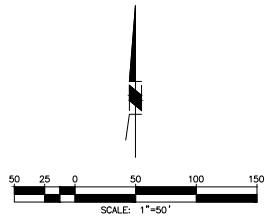
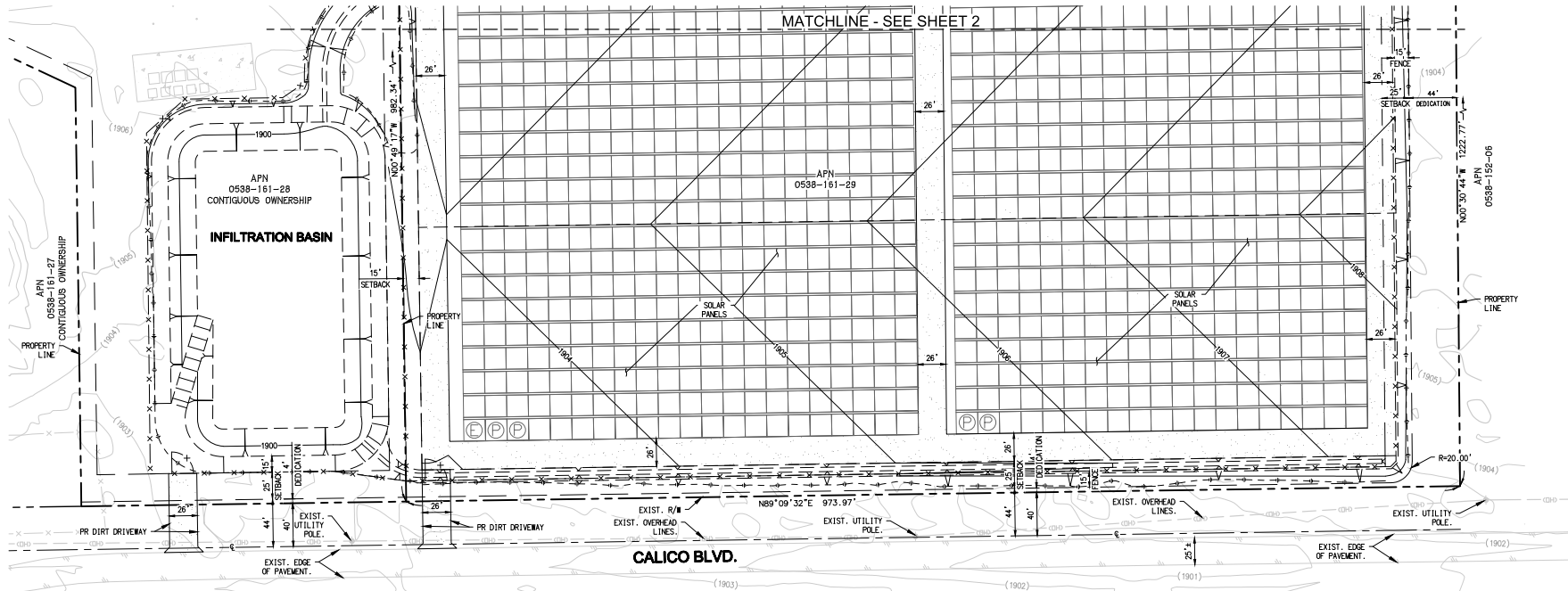
County of San Bernardino, California

FIGURE 3B

# PLOT PLAN

FOR CONDITIONAL USE AND MINOR USE APPLICATIONS ON APN 0538-161-28 AND APN 0538-161-29  
TOWNSHIP 10 NORTH, RANGE 2 EAST, SECTION 32, S.B.M.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY



- LEGEND:**
- +++++ = INDICATES RAILROAD TRACKS
  - = INDICATES BOUNDARY
  - = INDICATES CENTERLINE
  - x-x-x- = INDICATES PROPOSED CHAIN LINK FENCE
  - x-D-x- = INDICATES PROPOSED GATE
  - = INDICATES PROPOSED 20'X20' PARKING STALL
  - = INDICATES PROPOSED 20'X20' ELECTRIC CABINET/METER
  - = TREE CANOPY
  - = POWER POLE (PP)
  - = CONCRETE AREA (OR AS NOTED)
  - = DIRT ACCESS ROAD

NO.		REVISIONS		APPROVED		DATE	
<b>PLOT PLAN</b>							
<b>IN THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO</b>							
PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF:				APPROVED:			
JEFFREY C. LANGDON R.C.E. 42429				09/02/2025 DATE:			

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AV  
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DATE  
08/29/2025  
SCALE  
1"= 50'  
MLS JOB NO.  
23\_008  
RFP JOB NO.  
SHEET NO.  
3 OF 3



## **SOLAR EXAMPLE**

**GLACIER POWER AND GAS SOLAR**  
County of San Bernardino, California

**FIGURE 4**

## ADDITIONAL APPROVAL REQUIRED BY OTHER AGENCIES

Federal: N/A

State of California: Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District

County of San Bernardino: Land Use Services - Building and Safety, DPW Traffic, Land Development Engineering - Roads/Drainage; Public Health - Environmental Health Services; Public Works, Surveyor; and County Fire

Regional: None known

Local: None known

## CONSULTATION WITH CALIFORNIA NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

On June 12, 2023, the County of San Bernardino mailed notification pursuant to AB52 to the following tribes: Colorado River Indian Tribes, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians and San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. The table below shows a summary of comments and responses.

### AB-52 Consultation

Tribe	Comment Letter Received	Summary of Response	Conclusion
Colorado River Indian Tribes	No Response	-	-
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe	No Response	-	-
Morongo Band of Mission Indians (MBMI)	August 23, 2023	Requested further information	Consultation complete.
Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (YSMN)	June 29, 2023	Requested further information	Recommended mitigation/monitoring included herein.
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians	No Response	-	-
Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians	No Response	-	-

Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

## DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Proposed Project is a 10 megawatt (MW) photovoltaic solar energy-generating facility known as the Glacier Power and Gas Solar Project consisting of solar arrays, access roads, fencing, electrical transformers and other miscellaneous connecting infrastructure on the approximately 24.12-acre Project Site. A 26-foot perimeter road shall surround the solar panels with 20-foot interior access roads every 300 feet throughout the arrays per San Bernardino County Fire. An access driveway will be constructed from Calico Blvd with an additional 4-foot road dedication. As the existing terrain is flat, minimal grading, limited to leveling for equipment, will not alter the current drainage patterns. The existing surface material, which is a silt/sand/salt mixture, will remain. All equipment foundations/anchors will interact with the more stable soil below. All equipment will be elevated above expected floodwater elevation. The Proposed Project includes a total of eight parking spaces for use during maintenance activities. A 20'x20' Electric Cabinet/Meter is proposed near the southwest corner of the Project Site. Figure 3 shows the Proposed Project's Site Plan.

The photovoltaic panels will face due west and be mounted on dual axis tracking arrays. The height of each mounted panel is approximately 67-80 inches (5.5 feet - 6.6 feet above grade). The panel spacing will allow optimum collection of solar energy and provide access for maintenance. (Refer to Figure 4) for an example of a typical solar panel.

Direct current electricity from each of the approximately 25,000 photovoltaic panels will be converted to low voltage alternating current by inverters. The alternating current will be routed to a 66 kVA transformer to achieve the plant distribution high voltage. This high voltage is then collected at a collector switchgear for connection to the Southern California Edison (SCE) grid. All on-site electrical cables will be in buried conduit. Connection to the grid will be via elevated (pole mounted) electrical lines. The applicant has entered into an agreement with SCE to bring the necessary transmission lines to the Project Site. Approvals related to the construction of these lines will be initiated and obtained by SCE as a separate project.

Utility purveyors for the modular building would be:

- Electricity: SCE (diesel generator during construction).
- Phone: wireless
- Gas: none
- Water and Sewer: bottled water, portable toilets

## PROJECT CONSTRUCTION

The Proposed Project is the development of a 10 megawatt (MW) photovoltaic solar energy-generating facility. Construction is expected to begin in 2025 and be operational within a year. Construction activities would include grading, trenching, placing components securely, etc. (generally consist of several arrays of photovoltaic modules). There would be no soil import nor export as the site is balanced and relatively flat (and photovoltaic modules can be adjusted for variations in grade). Minimal grading would be required. The main purpose of grading would be to clear vegetation.

Trenching would be required to place various components of the Proposed Project underground. The placement of components aboveground may include various methods; however, ground disturbance would largely be created by grading.



Construction staging areas would be used to keep construction equipment and materials nearby and would be located along the existing or proposed dirt roads or central locations within the construction area. Forty-foot Street legal trailer trucks will be delivering PV modules, inverters, tables, piers, pier caps, wire, collection gear, and other hardware to the Project Site. A total of six (6) delivery trucks per day are anticipated. Construction traffic would include approximately 40 commuting construction workers (carpenters, electricians, laborers, operating engineers, and technicians), accounting for approximately 40 round trips per day. Therefore, a total of 46 daily trips is anticipated. Refer to Table 2 for Construction Emissions. The Project Applicant provided the offroad equipment and anticipated construction schedule. Refer to the attached CalEEMod data table for additional information.

## **PROJECT MAINTENANCE**

Once the Proposed Project is operational, there will be minimal maintenance required. Maintenance would primarily consist of washing the photovoltaic modules two (2) to four (4) times per year. A minimal amount of water would be used to clean and then drain without ponding or collecting dirt. The site would utilize de-ionized wash water for washing the modules, which would be delivered to the site via 4,000-gallon water trucks. Each wash cycle would consume approximately 100,000 gallons of water (0.30-acre feet).

There would be no on-site staff; therefore, no on-site water or sewer infrastructure would be required, thereby eliminating maintenance of water and sewer utilities. Security cars would randomly patrol the area twice per day. In addition, there would be surveillance cameras with remote security monitoring the site 24 hours/day.

## **DECOMMISSIONING**

At the end of the Project Site's operational term, the applicant may determine that the site should be decommissioned and deconstructed. When the solar arrays, panels, fencing, etc. are removed after the Project's lifetime, the land will be largely restored to its pre-project condition. The Project would utilize BMPs to ensure the collection and recycling of the solar arrays, panels, fencing, etc. to the extent feasible.

All decommissioning and restoration activities would adhere to the requirements of the appropriate governing authorities and in accordance with all applicable federal, State, and County regulations. Following the implementation of a decommissioning plan, all equipment, foundations, and fencing would be removed and the Project Site would be re-vegetated so that the end use and site condition are consistent with the surrounding agricultural landscape. End uses would be consistent with the existing zoning. The funding requirements for the implementation of the decommissioning plan will be provided in the form of a bond estimate by the project proponent prior to construction of the Project.

## EVALUATION FORMAT

This Initial Study is prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq. and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Section 15000, et seq.). Specifically, the preparation of an Initial Study is guided by Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This format of the study is presented as follows. The project is evaluated based on its effect on 20 major categories of environmental factors. Each factor is reviewed by responding to a series of questions regarding the impact of the project on each element of the overall factor. The Initial Study checklist provides a formatted analysis that provides a determination of the effect of the project on the factor and its elements. The effect of the project is categorized into one of the following four categories of possible determinations:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant	No Impact
--------------------------------	--	-----------------------	-----------

Substantiation is then provided to justify each determination. One of the four following conclusions is then provided as a summary of the analysis for each of the major environmental factors.

**No Impact:** No impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Less than Significant Impact:** No significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated:** Possible significant adverse impacts have been identified or anticipated and the following mitigation measures are required as a condition of project approval to reduce these impacts to a level below significant. The required mitigation measures are: (List of mitigation measures)

**Potentially Significant Impact:** Significant adverse impacts have been identified or anticipated. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required to evaluate these impacts, which are (List of the impacts requiring analysis within the EIR).

At the end of the analysis the required mitigation measures are restated and categorized in the required Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact requiring mitigation to be reduced to a level that is less than significant as indicated in the checklist on the following pages.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agricultural / Forest Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Air Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Biological Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Energy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Geology / Soils	<input type="checkbox"/>	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hazards / Hazardous Materials
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hydrology / Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	Land Use / Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	Noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	Population / Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Services
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tribal Cultural Resources
<input type="checkbox"/>	Utilities / Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wildfire	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mandatory Findings of Significance

## LEAD AGENCY DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the following finding is made:

	The proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
X	Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
	The proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
	The proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
	Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Amy Rossig  
Signature: (Planner)

01-06-2025  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: (Supervising Planner)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## I. AESTHETICS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade an existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(Check ☐ if project is located within a view-shed of any Scenic Route listed in the General Plan):

### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan/Policy Plan 2020 (Countywide Plan); Natural Resources Policy Map *NR-3 Scenic Routes & Highways*; Visual Impact Assessment for Glacier Power and Gas Solar Project dated March 2024, Appendix A.

The Project Site is located approximately 0.2 mile south of the I-15 Freeway (I-15) in the unincorporated Community of Yermo in San Bernardino County. It is located on Calico Boulevard one mile west of Minneola Road. The Project Site is bordered on the north by the Union Pacific Railroad, south by Calico Road, and east and west by vacant land.

### **Impact Analysis**

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

**Less than Significant Impact.** The Project Site is located approximately 0.20 miles south of Interstate 15. An approximate 3.5-mile portion of Interstate 15, located east of Ghost Town Road and west of the Yermo Road on/off ramps, is designated a State Scenic Highway.<sup>1</sup> The Project Site occurs 0.20 miles south of the portion of Interstate 15 that is designated a State Scenic Highway. Due to existing topography and distance, the Project Site would be visible from this portion of Interstate 15.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=01c32a4480954deba20af965275b81e7>  
Accessed March 26, 2024.

In March 2024, a Visual Assessment was prepared for the Proposed Project that analyzed views of the Project Site and potential impacts to travelers along Interstate 15. The report is summarized herein and included as Appendix A. As concluded in the Visual Assessment, the Proposed Project and related equipment would be visible but would not significantly distract from the scenic aspects of the area.

The Project Site occurs within an unincorporated area of the County and is not under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). According to Visual Resource Management (VRM) Manual 8431, in the event that BLM Resource Management Plan generated objectives are not available for an area, then interim VRM classes shall be developed using the guidelines in Handbook H-8410-1.

The purpose of Visual Resource Classes is to establish categories assigned to public lands to serve as: 1) an inventory tool that portrays the relative value of the visual resources; and 2) a management tool that portrays the visual management objectives. There are a total of four classes (I, II, III, and IV) that may be assigned.

Visual resource inventory classes are assigned through the inventory process. Class I is assigned to those areas where a management decision has been made previously to maintain a natural landscape. This includes areas such as national wilderness areas, the wild section of national wild and scenic rivers, and other congressionally and administratively designed areas where decisions have been made to preserve a natural landscape. Classes II, III and IV are assigned based on a combination of scenic quality, sensitivity levels, and distance zones, and accomplished by combining the three overlays for scenic quality, sensitivity levels, and distance zones and using the guidelines within Handbook H-8410-1 to assign the proper class. According to the BLM Handbook H-8410-1, inventory classes are informational and provide the basis for considering visual values, and do not establish management direction and should not be used as a basis for constraining or limiting surface disturbing activities.

The nearest BLM Visual Resource Inventory (VRI) Scenic Quality Rating Unit Polygon area occurs at the southeast corner of Minneola Road and Calico Boulevard immediately southeast of the Project Site. The area was assessed as VRI Class IV with a total score for scenic quality of 6.002. The area was logged as being a low, flat valley floor differentiated by the density of urban development and the level of cultural modification compared with surrounding units. The overall sensitivity level rating is of low value.

Since the Project Site is adjacent to lands assessed as VRI Class IV, the visual impacts of the Proposed Project were assessed under the BLM VRM Class IV category.

As discussed in the Visual Assessment prepared for the Project, the overall sensitivity rating of the Project area is of low value, and therefore, the level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high.

VRM Class IV Objective is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. Allowed Level of Change: The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. Ground disturbing activities such as removal of vegetation and installation of fencing, solar panels and new landscaping at the entry and southern perimeter may dominate the view and may be the major focus of viewer attention. However, the impact of these activities should be minimized through careful siting, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture within

the existing setting.<sup>2</sup> The introduction of rectangular forms, thin, vertical and horizontal lines would occur in the midground. Given the speed of travel (65 miles per hour [mph]) the Proposed Project would be in view for a few seconds. As the solar panels are a maximum of 4 feet in height, the project would not interfere with existing public views for travelers on Interstate 15. Currently, views towards the Project Site include vast vacant desert land as well as transmission lines and lattice structures in the distance running roughly parallel to the interstate and would not be substantially changed with Project implementation. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less than Significant Impact.** Although, the Project Site is located within 0.20 miles of Interstate 15, a designated State and County Scenic highway as recognized by the Countywide Plan Natural Resources Element, the portion of the designation occurs 0.2 miles southwest of the Project Site. Given the nature and proposed size and height (approx. 67-80 inches (5.5 feet - 6.6 feet above grade) of the Project, there would be minimal obstruction to the south from Interstate 15. According to the Visual Assessment, the Project Site is not disguisable from other parcels as no notable vegetation, buildings, or rock outcroppings occur on site. The Proposed Project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- c) *Substantially degrade an existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** Impacts to visual resources are based on changes to the existing character of the landscape, viewer sensitivity, and the number of viewers that may view the project activities. The level of change associated with the Proposed Project is considered to be low as the Proposed Project is a conditionally acceptable use within the RC zone as demonstrated by Table 82-4, Allowed Land Uses and Permit Requirements for Agricultural and Resource Management Land Use Zoning Districts, of the San Bernardino County Development Code.<sup>3</sup> According to the Visual Impact Analysis, the Proposed Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character of the Project Site and its surroundings. The Proposed Project is located within a rural desert with scattered development and infrastructure. Adjacent to the north of the Project Site is the Union Pacific Railroad. Also located to the north is Yermo Road, vacant land, a single-family residence, I-15 Freeway and the Calico Mountains. To the south of the Project Site are single-family residences, vacant land, Calico Boulevard and Yucca Road. Approximately 0.77 miles to the southwest of the Project Site is a gated single-family residential community. To the east of the Project Site are vacant lands.

During the Proposed Project operations, the Proposed Project would be visible but would not significantly distract from the scenic aspects of the area as the use would be relatively small

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<sup>2</sup> [Bureau of Land Management Visual Resource Management Classes](#) accessed March 13, 2025

<sup>3</sup> San Bernardino County Code of Ordinances Title 8 Development Code, Division 2: Land use Zoning Districts and Allowed Land Uses, American legal Publishing, [TITLE 8: DEVELOPMENT CODE \(amlegal.com\)](#)

on a 24.12-acre Project Site. The Proposed Project would include low profile (4-feet high) solar equipment and an 8-foot-high chain link fence. The Proposed Project would not degrade the visual quality and character of the Project Site and its immediate vicinity as the public would still retain views of the mountain foothills to the north. The Proposed Project is therefore anticipated to comply with the visual quality of the existing surrounding area. The Proposed Project would be required to comply with Section 84.29.040 of the County Development Code, Solar Energy Development Standards addressing setbacks, glare, and night lighting. The Proposed Project would comply with the San Bernardino County policies and zoning development standards and regulations, including Section 84.29.050, Special Fencing Standards as the Proposed Project's fencing would not exceed eight feet in height. The Proposed Project would comply with the following policies as listed below.

**The Countywide Plan sets forth the following policies pertaining to visual resources and aesthetics:**

- **Policy LU-2.4: *Land use map consistency.*** We consider proposed development that is consistent with the Land Use Map (i.e., it does not require a change in Land Use Category), to be generally compatible and consistent with surrounding land uses and a community's identity. Additional site, building, and landscape design treatment, per other policies in the Policy Plan and development standards in the Development Code, may be required to maximize compatibility with surrounding land uses and community identity.
- **Policy LU-2.5: *Hillside preservation.*** We require that new development in sloping hillside areas preserve the natural character of the surrounding environment and does not further exacerbate natural hazards or erosion.
- **Policy LU-4.1: *Context-sensitive design in the Mountain/Desert regions.*** We require new development to employ site and building design techniques and use building materials that reflect the natural mountain or desert environment and preserve scenic resources.
- **Policy LU-4.5: *Community Identity.*** We require that new developments be consistent with and reinforce the physical and historical character and identity of our unincorporated communities, as described in Table LU-3 [of the Policy Plan] and in the values section of Community Action Guides. In addition, we consider the aspirations section of Community Action Guides in our review of new developments.
- **Policy LU-4.7: *Dark skies.*** We minimize light pollution and glare to preserve views of the night sky, particularly in the Mountain and Desert regions where dark skies are fundamentally connected to community identities and local economies. We also promote the preservation of dark skies to assist the military in testing, training, and operations.
- **Policy NR-4.1: *Preservation of scenic resources.*** We consider the location and scale of development to preserve regionally significant scenic vistas and natural features, including prominent hillsides, ridgelines, dominant landforms, and reservoirs.

The Proposed Project would be required to be consistent with these policies. Therefore, impacts related to the proposed solar panels would not create a new source of substantial glare, would be consistent with the land use category, would preserve the natural character of the surrounding environment, would minimize light pollution, and not impact preservation

of scenic resources. No significant adverse impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

Furthermore, following the life of the facility, decommissioning shall take place in order to revegetate disturbed areas of the Project to minimize aesthetic impacts. Travelers along the paved roadway have a clear view of the Project Site. The southern portion of the Project Site is level with the roadway, then gradually descends an average of five feet before increasing to 1,914 feet near the northern property boundary. The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) is visible along the northern boundary followed by the I-15 and the foothills of the Calico Mountains. Vegetation on-site is similar to the surrounding area and can be described as mostly sparse with an average soil visibility of 85 percent. Manmade objects include street signs, UPRR, I-15, and power lines are visible in the immediate vicinity. With implementation of the required Decommissioning Plan including a revegetation plan, and adherence to San Bernardino County Development Code, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area as no permanent new light sources are proposed. Solar panels would not be reflective and would be positioned to face east to west away from the highway. In the event temporary lighting at the Project Site is needed, the operator shall comply with the requirements outlined by County Development Code Section 83.07.040, Glare and Outdoor Lighting – Desert Regions. This includes fully shielding lights as required to preclude light pollution or light trespass on adjacent property, other property (directly or reflected), and members of the public on adjacent roads. Additionally, solar projects would be required to comply with solar development standards as outlined in Chapter 84.29 *Renewable Energy Generation Facilities*<sup>4</sup>. With adherence to existing regulations, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**No significant adverse impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

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<sup>4</sup> San Bernardino County Code Chapter 84.29. “Renewable Energy Generation Facilities” Accessed February 2, 2024.



## II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(Check ☐ if project is located in the Important Farmlands Overlay):

### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020; California Department of Conservation, California Important Farmland Finder

## **Impact Analysis**

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

**No Impact.** No Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance is identified on-site or on adjacent parcels as demonstrated by the Department of Conservation's California Important Farmland Finder.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, no impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project is a conditionally acceptable use within the RC zone as demonstrated by Table 82-4, Allowed Land Uses and Permit Requirements for Agricultural and Resource Management Land Use Zoning Districts, of the San Bernardino County Development Code.<sup>6</sup> The Project parcel is not involved in a Williamson Act Contract through the California Department of Conservation's Division of Land Resource Protection. As such, the Proposed Project does not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. No impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** The Project Site and surrounding area do not occur within forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned production; it is located in the Desert Region of the County.<sup>7</sup> Impacts to these resource lands would not result with implementation of the Proposed Project. No impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- d) *Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site does not support forest land and implementation of the Proposed Project would not convert forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, no impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project would not involve other changes in the existing environment, which due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. The Proposed Project is a conditionally acceptable use within the RC

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<sup>5</sup> [DLRP Important Farmland Finder \(ca.gov\)](https://dwr.ca.gov/resources/farmland-finder/)

<sup>6</sup> San Bernardino County Code of Ordinances Title 8 Development Code, Division 2: Land use Zoning Districts and Allowed Land Uses, American legal Publishing, [TITLE 8: DEVELOPMENT CODE \(amlegal.com\)](https://www.amlegal.com)

<sup>7</sup> San Bernardino County Countywide Plan/Policy Plan, Land Use Element

zone with the approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).<sup>8</sup> The proposal will be in compliance with the San Bernardino Countywide Plan and Development Code and not involved in the conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**No impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

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<sup>8</sup> San Bernardino County Code of Ordinances Title 8 Development Code, Division 2: Land use Zoning Districts and Allowed Land Uses, American legal Publishing, [TITLE 8: DEVELOPMENT CODE \(amlegal.com\)](https://amlegal.com)

### III. AIR QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Discuss conformity with the South Coast Air Quality Management Plan, if applicable):

#### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020; CalEEMod Data Tables (Appendix B) prepared by Lilburn Corporation dated December 12, 2024.

The Project Site is located approximately 0.2 mile south of the I-15 Freeway (I-15) in the unincorporated Community of Yermo in San Bernardino County. The MDAB encompasses the desert portion of San Bernardino County. The Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) has jurisdiction over air quality issues and regulations within the County area that includes the Project Site.<sup>9</sup> To assist local agencies in determining if a project's emissions could pose a significant threat to air quality, the MDAQMD has prepared the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Federal Conformity Guideline (February 2020).<sup>10</sup> The air and dust emissions from the construction and operational use of the Proposed Project were evaluated and compared to the MDAQMD air quality thresholds to determine significance.<sup>11</sup>

Air emissions from the Proposed Project are subject to federal, State and local rules and regulations implemented through provisions of the federal Clean Air Act, California Clean Air Act, and the rules and regulations of the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and MDAQMD. The federal Clean Air Act and California Clean Air Act were established in an effort to assure that acceptable levels of air quality are maintained. These levels are based upon health-related exposure limits and are referred to as National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). The ambient air quality standards establish maximum allowable concentrations of specific pollutants in the atmosphere and characterize the amount of exposure deemed safe for the public. Areas that meet the standards are designated

<sup>9</sup> [Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District | Home \(ca.gov\)](https://www.mojaveair.org/home)

<sup>10</sup> [Rules & Regulations | Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District \(ca.gov\)](https://www.mojaveair.org/rules-regulations)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/data.htm>

attainment and if found to be in violation of primary standards are designated as nonattainment areas.<sup>12</sup>

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the CARB have designated portions of the MDAQMD as nonattainment for a variety of pollutants, and some of those designations have an associated classification. Table 1 lists these designations and classifications. The MDAQMD has adopted attainment plans for a variety of nonattainment pollutants.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 1**  
**State and Federal Air Quality**  
**Designations and Classifications**

<b>Ambient Air Quality Standard</b>	<b>Status</b>
Eight-hour Ozone (Federal 70 ppb (2015))	Expected non-attainment; to be determined.
Ozone (State)	Non-attainment; classified Moderate
PM <sub>10</sub> (24-hour Federal)	Non-attainment: classified Moderate (portion of MDAQMD in Riverside County is unclassifiable/attainment)
PM <sub>2.5</sub> (Annual Federal)	Unclassified/attainment
PM <sub>2.5</sub> (24-hour Federal)	Unclassified/attainment
PM <sub>2.5</sub> (State)	Non-attainment (portion of MDAQMD outside of Western Mojave Desert Ozone Non-attainment Area is unclassified/attainment)
PM <sub>10</sub> (State)	Non-attainment
Carbon Monoxide (State and Federal)	Unclassifiable/Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide (State and Federal)	Unclassifiable/Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (State and Federal)	Attainment/unclassified
Lead (State and Federal)	Unclassifiable/Attainment
Particulate Sulfate (State)	Attainment
Hydrogen Sulfide (State)	Unclassified (Searles Valley Planning Area is non-attainment)
Visibility Reducing Particles (State)	Unclassified

Source: MDAQMD CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines, February 2020

## **Impact Analysis**

### *a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** The Project Site is located in the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB). The MDAB encompasses the desert portion of San Bernardino County. The MDAQMD has jurisdiction over air quality issues and regulations within this portion of San Bernardino County. MDAQMD has adopted the California Environmental Quality Act and Federal Conformity Guideline (February 2020) which is a policy document intended to assist preparers of environmental analysis or review documents for projects within the jurisdiction of the MDAQMD by providing background information and guidance on the preferred analysis approach. MDAQMD requires a consistency evaluation with adopted federal and state Air

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> [Rules & Regulations | Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District \(ca.gov\)](https://www.mojaveairqualitymanagement.com/rules-regulations)

Quality Management Plans (AQMPs). If a project is deemed consistent with the existing land use plan, it is considered consistent with the AQMPs. Zoning changes, specific plans, general plan amendments, and similar land use plan changes that do not increase dwelling unit density, do not increase vehicle trips, and do not increase vehicle miles traveled are also deemed to not exceed this threshold<sup>14</sup> (MDAQMD 2016).

The Proposed Project is the development of a photovoltaic solar energy-generating facility that would not increase dwelling unit density. Vehicle trips would only be generated during temporary construction and bi-annual maintenance activities. The Proposed Project does not require a General Plan Amendment, nor a Zone Change and is therefore consistent with the land use and growth intensities reflected in the adopted in the Countywide Plan. Moreover, as demonstrated below, the Proposed Project would not exceed MDAQMD thresholds. The Proposed Project would be consistent with the AQMP. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) *Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** Construction emissions of the Project Site were screened using CalEEMod 2022 Data Table (see Appendix B).

The Proposed Project is the development of a 10 megawatt (MW) photovoltaic solar energy-generating facility. Construction is expected to begin in 2025 and be operational within a year. Construction activities would include grading, trenching, placing components securely, etc. (generally consist of several arrays of photovoltaic modules). There would be no soil import nor export as the site is balanced and relatively flat (and photovoltaic modules can be adjusted for variations in grade). Minimal grading would be required. The main purpose of grading would be to clear vegetation.

Construction staging areas would be used to keep construction equipment and materials nearby and would be located along the existing or proposed dirt roads or central locations within the construction area. Forty-foot Street legal trailer trucks will be delivering PV modules, inverters, tables, piers, pier caps, wire, collection gear, and other hardware to the Project Site. A total of six (6) delivery trucks per day are anticipated. Construction traffic would include approximately 40 commuting construction workers (carpenters, electricians, laborers, operating engineers, and technicians), accounting for approximately 40 round trips per day. Therefore, a total of 46 daily trips is anticipated. Refer to Table 2 for Construction Emissions. The Project Applicant provided the offroad equipment and anticipated construction schedule. Refer to the attached CalEEMod data table for additional information.

As shown, both summer and winter season operational emissions are below MDAQMD thresholds. The Proposed Project does not exceed applicable MDAQMD thresholds. Operational emissions were not modeled as maintenance of the cells would be considered negligible. The Proposed Project would not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. Therefore, less than significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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<sup>14</sup> [Ch 05-03-AQ.pdf](#) page 5.3-24 accessed March 13, 2025

**Table 2**  
**Construction Emissions Summary**  
**(Pounds per Day)**

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>ROG</b>	<b>NO<sub>x</sub></b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>SO<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>PM<sub>10</sub></b>	<b>PM<sub>2.5</sub></b>
Daily Summer-Daily Max	4.8	45.7	64.5	0.1	2.7	1.7
Daily Winter-Daily Max	4.7	45.8	62.3	0.1	2.7	1.7
MDAQMD Threshold (lbs/day) <sup>15</sup>	137	137	548	137	82	65
<b>Significant</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

Source: CalEEMod 2022

*c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** Sensitive receptors are more susceptible to the effects of air pollution than the general population. Sensitive populations (sensitive receptors) that are in proximity to localized sources of toxins and carbon monoxide are of particular concern. Sensitive receptors are defined as facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Examples of these sensitive receptors are residences, schools, hospitals, daycare centers, and outdoor recreation areas. The Project Site is in a vacant area and located over 1,000 feet from the nearest residences to the west and to the northwest. Project impacts are short-term and negligible. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

*d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** Electricity generation via the use of photovoltaic systems does not generate chemical emissions that would negatively contribute to air quality or produce objectionable odors. Potential odor generation associated with the Proposed Project would be limited to construction sources such as diesel exhaust and dust. No significant odor impacts related to Project implementation are anticipated due to the nature and short-term extent of potential sources, as well as the intervening distance to sensitive receptors. Therefore, the operation of the Project would have a less than significant impact associated with the creation of objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**No significant adverse impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

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<sup>15</sup> MDAQMD CEQA Guidelines. Page 9, February 2020. Accessed on September 15, 2023.

#### IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

☐ Check if project is located in the Biological Resources Overlay or Contains habitat for any species listed in the California Natural Diversity Database

#### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020; *Biological Resources Assessment, Jurisdictional Delineation, and Native Plant Protection Plan for the Glacier Power Project, August 2023*, Jennings Environmental, LLC.

#### **Impact Analysis**

a) *Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans,*



*policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

**Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** A Biological Resources Assessment, Jurisdictional Delineation, and Native Plant Protection Plan (BRA) prepared for the Proposed Project by Jennings Environmental; LLC dated August 2023 is summarized herein (see Appendix C)<sup>16</sup>. As part of the BRA, Jennings Environmental LLC (Jennings) conducted a background data search for information on plant and wildlife species known occurrences within the vicinity of the Project Site. The survey identified vegetation communities, the potential for the occurrence of special status species, or habitats that could support special status wildlife species, and recorded all plants and animals observed or detected within the Project boundary. The assessment was designed to address the potential effects of the Proposed Project on designated critical habitats and/or any species currently listed or formally proposed for listing as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) or species designated as sensitive by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). The data review described in the BRA includes biological text on general and specific biological resources, and resources considered to be sensitive by various wildlife agencies, local government agencies and interest groups.

A general reconnaissance survey was conducted on July 30<sup>th</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, to identify the potential for the occurrence of special status species, vegetation communities, or habitats that could support special status wildlife species. Further, based on the literature review and personal observations made in the immediate vicinity, no State and/or federally listed threatened or endangered species are documented/or expected to occur within the Project site. Additionally, no plant species with the California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) of 1 or 2 were observed on-site or documented to occur on-site in the relevant databases. No other sensitive species were observed within the project area or buffer area.

#### *Species of Special Concern*

According to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), CNPSEI, and other relevant literature and databases, 21 sensitive species including 3 listed species, have been documented in the Yermo, Mineola, Harvard Hill, and Newberry Springs quads. This list of sensitive species and habitats includes any State and/or federally listed threatened or endangered species, CDFW-designated Species of Special Concern (SSC), and otherwise Special Animals. "Special Animals" is a general term that refers to all of the taxa in the CNDDDB that CDFW is interested in tracking, regardless of their legal or protection status. This list is also referred to as the list of "species at risk" or "special status species." The CDFW considers the taxa on this list to be those of greatest conservation need.

An analysis of the likelihood of the occurrence of all CNDDDB-sensitive species documented in the Yermo, Mineola, Harvard Hill, and Newberry Springs quads are provided in Appendix C.<sup>17</sup> This analysis takes into account species range as well as documentation within the vicinity of the project area and includes the habitat requirements for each species and the

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<sup>16</sup> *Biological Resources Assessment, Jurisdictional Delineation, and Native Plant Protection Plan for the Glacier Power Project, in Unincorporated Yermo, San Bernardino County, California.* Jennings Environmental, LLC. August 2023.

<sup>17</sup> *Biological Resources Assessment, Jurisdictional Delineation, and Native Plant Protection Plan for the Glacier Power Project, in Unincorporated Yermo, San Bernardino County, California.* Jennings Environmental, LLC. August 2023. Appendix D, Pages 34-40

potential for their occurrence on the site, based on required habitat elements and range relative to the current site conditions. According to the databases, USFWS-designated critical habitat occurs within or adjacent to the project site.

The literature search indicated 21 species that could occur. Field surveys indicated no habitat for the 21 species. No federal or state-listed species were observed on the site during field investigations. In addition, there are no documented observations of federal or state-listed species either on the site or in the immediate area. The Mineola, Harvard Hill and Newberry Springs quads and nesting birds may occur.

The site is not expected to support populations of the desert tortoise based on the absence of sign and minimal suitable habitat. However, the habitat within the southeast corner of the site is minimally suitable for desert tortoise and burrowing owl as further discussed below. No suitable habitat exists for the desert kit fox or the American badger thus they are not further discussed.

**Desert Tortoise:** The habitat within the southeast corner of the site is minimally suitable for desert tortoise. However, because the site is within designated critical habitat, protocol surveys were completed for this species. Protocol surveys were conducted using the 2018 USFWS Desert Tortoise Protocol. However, no sign of desert tortoise (i.e., burrows, tracks, or pellets) was observed during the survey. Additionally, no desert tortoise individuals or carcasses were observed. As shown in the biological study, the southeast corner of the Project Site contains minimally suitable habitat. The remainder of the parcel contains rocky compacted soils that are not suitable for burrow construction. Therefore, desert tortoises are considered absent from the Project Site. Although desert tortoise was absent from the site during the protocol surveys, there is suitable habitat within the southeast corner of the parcel. As such, it is recommended that pre-construction surveys be completed for this species prior to any ground-disturbing activities. These surveys should be conducted by a qualified biologist and at an appropriate time of day/year to observe signs of desert tortoise as described in mitigation measure **BIO-1** below to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Surveys should also be conducted using the current survey protocol from the USFWS.

**Burrowing Owl:** Based on the August 2023 field survey, the site does contain minimally suitable habitat for this species, within the southeast corner of the parcel. However, no burrowing owls were observed during Lilburn Corporation's site visit and Jennings' field survey. No burrows of suitable size and shape were located within the Project Site. No portion of the Project Site showed any evidence of past or present BUOW activity. No feathers, whitewash, or castings were found, and no suitable burrow surrogate species are present on-site. Although the burrowing owl was absent from the site during the survey, there is a suitable habitat within the southeast corner of the parcel. As such, it is recommended that protocol surveys as described in mitigation measure **BIO-2** below be completed for this species to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The protocol should follow the recommended guidance from CDFW.

**Nesting Birds:** The Project Site and immediate surrounding area does contain marginal habitat suitable for nesting birds. As such the Proposed Project is subject to the following nesting bird regulations:

### Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. This Act implements four international conservation treaties that the U.S. entered into with Canada in 1916, Mexico in 1936, Japan in 1972, and Russia in 1976. It is intended to ensure the sustainability of populations of all protected migratory bird species. The Act has been amended with the signing of each treaty, as well as when any of the treaties were amended, such as with Mexico in 1976 and Canada in 1995. The Act prohibits the take (including killing, capturing, selling, trading, and transport) of protected migratory bird species without prior authorization by the Department of Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

### California Fish and Game Code

The Project site is also subject to Sections 3503 and 3503.5 of the Fish and Game Code. Section 3503 states, "It is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto". And Section 3503.5 states, "It is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto".

Recommendations for avoidance and minimization are in section 4 of the Biological Resources Assessment. Since there is some of the habitat within the Project Site and adjacent area that is marginally suitable for nesting birds in general, mitigation measure **BIO-3** shall be implemented to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

**Native Plant Habitat:** The habitat on-site consists of disturbed desert vegetation such as Creosote bush-white bursage scrub (*Larrea tridentata*-*Ambrosia Dumosa* Shrubland Alliance), and non-native vegetation. The plant species observed on-site include Creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*), Asian mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*), White bursage (*Ambrosia dumosa*), Schismus grass (*Schismus spp.*), Oleander (*Nerium oleander*), Nevada Ephedra (*Ephedra nevadensis*), Tamarisk (*Tamarix spp.*), Silver Cholla (*Cylindropuntia echinocarpa*). Among the documented vegetation species, no State and/or federally listed threatened or endangered species were observed on-site. However, mitigation measure **BIO-4** would reduce the impact to a less than significant level should a state or federally listed plant species be discovered during construction.

- b) *Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

**No Impact.** According to the BRA, no riparian vegetation (e.g., cottonwoods, willows, etc.) exist on the Project Site or in the adjacent habitats and no drainage channels, wetlands, or vernal pools were observed on the Project Site during the surveys. The Project Site is not identified in local plans, policies, and regulations of the CDFW or USFWS. Development of the Project Site as proposed would not result in impacts to riparian vegetation or to a sensitive natural community because these resources do not occur on the Project Site or within the area of project impacts. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- c) *Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project would have no impact on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has the authority to permit the discharge of dredged or fill material in Waters of the U.S. (WOUS) under Section 404 CWA. The USACE has the authority to permit the discharge of dredged or fill material in WOUS under Section 404 of the CWA. The Regional Water Quality Control Board has authority over the discharge of dredged or fill material in Waters of the State under Section 401 CWA as well as the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. The Project area was surveyed with 100 percent visual coverage and no drainage features were present on site that met the definition for WOUS. As such, the subject parcel does not contain any wetlands, WOUS, or Waters of the State. No impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- d) *Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?*

**No Impact.** Wildlife movement and the fragmentation of wildlife habitat are recognized as critical issues that must be considered in assessing impacts to wildlife. Habitat fragmentation is the division or breaking up of larger habitat areas into smaller areas that may or may not be capable of independent sustaining wildlife and plant populations. Habitat linkages provide connections between larger habitat areas that are separated by development. Wildlife corridors are similar to linkages but provide specific opportunities for animals to disperse or migrate between areas.

The Project Site is not mapped within an area for wildlife movement and is not within a habitat conservation plan. However, the Project Site is within a desert linkage as mapped by the Mojave Desert Land Trust. As documented in the BRA, wildlife will have access to the portion of the linkage that would not be developed with solar panels. Additionally, based on the surrounding land uses (BNSF Railroad and Interstate 15) and personal observations from the site visit, wildlife is more likely to use the vacant land to the east or west of the Project Site as there are other existing developments within the vicinity of the Project Site. No Impacts or restrictions to the movement of wildlife within the linkage or transect have been identified or anticipated, The and no mitigation measures are required.

- e) *Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

**No Impact.** As stated above, the existing vegetation does not include trees or plant species that are considered rare. This project will not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- f) *Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?*

**No Impact.** According to the BRA, the Project Site is not mapped within a habitat conservation plan. The San Bernardino Countywide Plan Draft EIR Biological Resources does not identify the Project Site, nor the vicinity to be within a Habitat Conservation Plan. The Proposed Project will not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state Habitat Conservation Plan since there is no adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan in the Project area or local region. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**BIO-1. Desert Tortoise Survey.** Although desert tortoise was absent from the site during the survey, there is suitable habitat within the southeast corner of the parcel. As such, it is recommended that pre-construction surveys be completed for this species prior to any ground-disturbing activities. These surveys should be conducted by a qualified biologist and at an appropriate time of day/year to observe signs of desert tortoise. Surveys should also be conducted using the current survey protocol from the USFWS.

**BIO-2: Burrowing Owl Survey:** A Burrowing Owl Protocol Survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to any ground disturbance activities. Surveys shall be completed following the recommendations and guidelines provided within the Burrowing Owl Survey Instructions of the 2012 BUOW Staff Report provided by the CDFW. Surveys should be conducted during weather that is conducive to observing owls outside their burrows and detecting burrowing owl signs. Surveys will not be accepted if they are conducted during rain, high winds (> 12.5 mph), dense fog, or temperatures over 90° F. Surveys should be conducted between morning civil twilight and 10:00 AM and two hours before sunset until evening civil twilight. Count and map all burrowing owl sightings, occupied burrows, and burrows with owl sign. Record the location of all owls including numbers of pairs and juveniles and any behavior such as courtship and mating. Map the extent of all suitable habitat. It should be noted that owl signs may not be detectable if surveys are conducted within 5 days following rain. This survey is in addition to the required 30-day pre-construction survey.

**30-Day Pre-Construction Survey**

After protocol surveys have been completed and before any construction starts, a 30-day pre-construction survey should be conducted. Surveys shall be completed following the recommendations and guidelines provided within the 2012 BUOW Staff Report provided by the CDFW.

**BIO-3: Nesting Bird Survey:** Nesting bird nesting season generally extends from February 1 through September 15 in southern California and specifically, March 15 through August 31 for migratory passerine birds. To avoid impacts to nesting birds (common and special status) during the nesting season, a qualified Avian Biologist will conduct pre-construction Nesting Bird Surveys (NBS) prior to Project-related disturbance to nestable vegetation to identify any active nests. If no active nests are found, no further action will be required. If an active nest is found, the biologist will set appropriate no-work buffers around the nest which will be based upon the nesting species, its sensitivity to disturbance, nesting stage, and expected types, intensity, and duration

of the disturbance. The nests and buffer zones shall be field checked weekly by a qualified biological monitor. The approved no-work buffer zone shall be clearly marked in the field, within which no disturbance activity shall commence until the qualified biologist has determined the young birds have successfully fledged and the nest is inactive.

**BIO-4: Special Status Plants:** Any native desert plant protected by the Desert Native Plant Act that may be impacted should be flagged for relocation on-site, to a nursery, or suitable other entity (as determined by the County) prior to land disturbance. Land Disturbance that removes any protected plant species would require a permit from the agricultural commissioner.

**Possible significant adverse impacts have been identified or anticipated and therefore Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3 and BIO-4 are required to reduce these impacts to a level below significant.**

## V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Check if project is located in the Cultural ☐ overlays or cite results of cultural resource review)

### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020; *Cultural Resources Study for the Glacier Power and Gas Solar Project*, July 18, 2023, BFSA Environmental Services, a Perennial Company (Appendix D)

### **Impact Analysis**

The Phase I Cultural Resources Investigation dated July 18, 2023, was prepared for the Proposed Project by Brian F. Smith and Associates, Inc. (BFSA)<sup>18</sup> (Appendix D). The report is available for review at County offices and is summarized herein. Historic land use data was compiled by BFSA Environmental Services through institutional records search, archival research, an intensive cultural resource survey of the entire approximately 24.12-acre study area, and the preparation of a technical report.

The purpose of this investigation was to locate and record any cultural resources within the Project site and subsequently evaluate any resources as part of the County of San Bernardino environmental review process conducted in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The archaeological investigation of the project includes an archaeological records search conducted at the South-Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at California State University, Fullerton (CSU Fullerton) in order to assess previous archaeological studies and identify any previously recorded archaeological sites within the project, or in the immediate vicinity. A Sacred Lands File (SLF) search was also requested from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC).

- a) *Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?*

#### **Less than Significant Impact.**

Research confirms no cultural resources that are eligible for listing in state or federal registers have been identified in the immediate vicinity. Survey conditions were generally good, and visibility was only limited by a few large creosote bushes. Of the previously recorded

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<sup>18</sup> *Phase I Cultural Resources Study for the Glacier Power and Gas Solar Project*, Brian F. Smith & Associates, July 18, 2023.

resources, one (Site P-36-023426) intersects the subject property. Site P-36-023426 consists of a series of poorly preserved segments of the 1910-1917 concrete-lined Yermo Mutual Water Company canal (Yermo Canal). The visible segments of the Canal within the project were found to be similar to other previously recorded sections, generally measuring 10 feet wide with cement walls. Despite Site P-36-023426 containing elements that surpass the 50-year age threshold, the resource is evaluated as not eligible for the CRHR and, therefore, does not meet the requirements to be defined as a historical resource under CEQA. Within the Project area, the canal has almost entirely been filled with sediment with some sections appearing to have been removed from the property. As such, the portion of the resource within the project lacks integrity.

The remaining segments of the canal within the project are of unremarkable construction, lack any association with local or regional historical events or figures, and are lacking in integrity. As such, the canal was evaluated and determined to be ineligible for the CRHR and, therefore, does not meet the requirements to be defined as a historical resource under CEQA. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** On May 30, 2023, staff from BFSa conducted an archaeological survey. Staff Archaeologist Allison D. Reynolds conducted the archaeological survey for the proposed Glacier Solar Project within the approximately 24.12-acre Project Site. The archaeological survey was an intensive reconnaissance consisting of a series of transects conducted across the project alignment. The survey found the Project to consist primarily of vacant desert terrain with sparse vegetation. The survey located the previously recorded Yermo Canal, Site P-36-023426, within the Proposed Project area, which was determined to lack integrity to be eligible for inclusion into the CRHR. As such, impacts are not considered significant.

However, in the event that any historic or prehistoric cultural resources are inadvertently discovered, all construction work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery shall stop and a qualified archaeologist shall be consulted to determine if further mitigation measures are warranted. Mitigation measure **CUL-1** would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

- c) *Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

**Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** No known historic or prehistoric burial sites have been associated with this Project Site. According to County of San Bernardino standard policies, if any human remains are discovered during construction, the developer is required to contact the County Coroner and the County Museum for determination of appropriate mitigation measures. If the remains are determined to be of Native American origin, a Native American representative would also be contacted. Should human remains be discovered, treatment of these remains shall follow the California Public Resources Code. Mitigation measure **CUL-2** would reduce impacts to a less than significant level.



**Mitigation Measures:**

**CUL-1:** In the event that cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the other portions of the project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed within TCR-1, regarding any pre-contact and/or historic-era finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.

**CUL-2:** If significant pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to YSMN for review and comment, as detailed within TCR-1. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the project and implement the Plan accordingly.

**CUL-3:** If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.

All discovered human remains shall be treated with respect and dignity. California state law (California Health & Safety Code 7050.5) and federal law and regulations ([Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) 16 USC 470 & 43 CFR 7], [Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) 25 USC 3001 & 43 CFR 10] and [Public Lands, Interior 43 CFR 8365.1-7]) require a defined protocol if human remains are discovered in the State of California regardless if the remains are modern or archaeological.

**Possible significant adverse impacts have been identified or anticipated and therefore Mitigation Measures CUL-1, CUL-2 and CUL-3 are recommended to reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.**

## VI. ENERGY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020

### **Impact Analysis**

- a) *Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation?*

#### **Less Than Significant Impact.**

#### **Fuel**

During the construction of the Proposed Project, transportation energy consumption is dependent on the type of vehicles used, number of vehicle trips, vehicle miles traveled, fuel efficiency of vehicles, and travel mode. Temporary transportation fuel use such as gasoline and diesel during construction would result from the use of delivery vehicles and trucks, site preparation, building construction/installation. Additionally, most construction equipment during grading would be powered by gas or diesel. Based on output from CalEEMod 2022 (see Appendix B), the Proposed Project construction activities would consume an estimated 65,501.58 gallons of diesel fuel for operation of heavy-duty equipment. Tables 3, 4 and 5 show the modeled fuel consumption for all construction activities.

Construction workers, and vendor fuel consumption are based on CalEEMod's default data for vehicles miles traveled (VMT). As shown in Table 4, all construction worker trips are from light duty autos, it is estimated that 7,400 gallons of fuel will be consumed. Fuel consumption from construction vendor (material delivery) trips is 1,984.86 gallons, as shown on Table 5. Construction would represent a "single event" diesel and gasoline fuel resources. Impacts related to transportation energy use during construction would be temporary and would not require the additional use of energy supplies or the construction of new infrastructure. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Table 3**  
**Construction Equipment Fuel Consumption Estimates**

Phase	Number of Days	Offroad Equipment Type	Amount	Hours per Day	Horsepower	Load Factor	Total Fuel Consumption (gal diesel fuel) <sup>1</sup>
Site Preparation	72	Excavators	2	8	36	0.3	731.57
	72	Cranes	2	8	46	0.3	934.78
	72	Rubber Tired Dozer	2	8	367	0.4	8,946.11
	72	Loader	2	8	150	0.3	2,742.34
	72	Tractors/Loaders/Bachoes	2	8	84	0.3	1,706.99
Building Construction	168	Bore/Drill Rig	4	8	83	0.5	13,118.52
	168	Cranes	2	8	46	0.3	2,181.15
	168	Excavators	4	8	36	0.3	4,324.37
	168	Loaders	4	8	150	0.3	6,398.78
	168	Rollers	4	8	36	0.3	3,413.98
	168	Rubber Tired Dozer	2	8	71	0.3	3,366.56
	168	Tractors/Loaders/Bachoes	4	8	84	0.3	7,965.94
	168	Welders	2	8	46	0.4	3,271.73
Total Fuel Used in Gallons							<b>65,501.58</b>

**Table 4**  
**Construction Worker Fuel Consumption Estimates**

Phase	Number of Days	Worker Trips/Day	Trip Length (miles)	Fuel Consumption (gallons) <sup>1</sup>
Site Preparation	72	40	18.5	2,220
Building Construction Phase	168	40	18.5	5,180
Total Construction Worker Fuel Consumption				<b>7,400</b>

**Table 5**  
**Construction Vendor Fuel Consumption Estimates**

Phase	Number of Days	Worker Trips/Day	Trip Length (miles)	Fuel Used (gallons)
Site Preparation	72	6	10.2	595.46
Building Construction	168	6	10.2	1,389.41
Total Construction Vendor Fuel Consumption				<b>1984.86</b>

b) *Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?*

**No Impact.** Many of the regulations regarding energy efficiency are focused on increasing the energy efficiency of buildings and renewable energy generation, as well as reducing water consumption and reliance on fossil fuels. The Proposed Project which comprises the building of a solar energy facility, would be part of a sustainable solution to enable increasing amounts

of renewable energy-generating sources to be accessed. The County of San Bernardino adopted a Renewable Energy and Conservation Element (RECE) as part of the County's General Plan dated August 8, 2017. The RECE Element includes the following guiding policies and implementing policies related to energy resources.

- Keep large-scale (10 MW or greater) utility-oriented projects separate from or sufficiently buffered from existing communities, to avoid adverse impacts on community development and quality of life.
- Ensure that new renewable energy development is located, designed, and constructed in a manner that reflects Core Values and respects private property rights.
- Ensure that development of County-owned properties is consistent with the goals and policies of the Renewable Energy and Conservation Element.
- Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in response to state mandates.
- Improve air quality.
- Direct renewable energy facilities to suitable areas in the unincorporated county - especially to areas that have been previously disturbed, leverage the existing transmission network, and/or respond to local demand.

The Proposed Project would not include buildings, and therefore the Project would not be required to be compliant with the implementation policies regarding buildings meeting the State energy efficiency standards. No conflicts with renewable energy or energy efficiency plans would occur. The applicable State plans and policies for renewable energy and energy efficiency include SB 350 and SB 100. The Proposed Project is supportive of the County's policies and State's goals and would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**No significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required**

## VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury death involving?				
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv. Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(Check if project is located in the Geologic Hazards ☐ or Paleontological Resources Overlay District ☐):

### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020; Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering Report, Terracon dated November 14, 2023 (Appendix E); *Paleontological Assessment for the Glacier Power and Gas Solar Project (Appendix F)*, dated July 18, 2023, San Bernardino County Policy Plan; Hazards Element, *Map HZ-1 Earthquake Fault Zones*, and *Map HZ-2 Liquefaction and Landslides*.

## **Impact Analysis**

- a) *Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:*
- i. *Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.*
  - ii. *Strong seismic ground shaking?*
  - iii. *Seismic related ground failure, including liquefaction?*
  - iv. *Landslides?*
- i) **Less than Significant Impact.** Southern California is a seismically active region subject to strong ground acceleration from earthquake events along major regional faults. As stated in the Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering Report, the Project Site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone for fault rupture hazard based on a review of the California State Fault Hazard Maps.<sup>19</sup> The Proposed Project would not require substantial ground disturbance that could induce seismic activity and would not include any habitable structures. Nonetheless, the design of any structures on the Project Site would be designed to accommodate seismic loading, pursuant to the latest version of the California Building Code (CBC) and the County's Building Code, and engineering design recommendations in the Geotechnical Engineering Report approved by the County Geologist. Given the required compliance with the California Building Code, and the fact that no habitable structures are proposed, less than significant impacts can be anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
- ii) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The Project Site is located in seismically active southern California with numerous fault systems in the region. Seismic ground shaking is influenced by the proximity of the site to an earthquake fault, the intensity of the seismic event, and the underlying soil composition. The Project Site is not located within the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone for fault rupture hazard based on a review of the California State Fault Hazard Maps. The Proposed Project does not include construction of habitable structures or permanent facilities with foundations that could fail as a result of strong seismic ground shaking. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.
- iii) **No Impact.** Liquefaction is a mode of ground failure that results from the generation of high porewater pressures during earthquake ground shaking, causing loss of shear strength, and is typically a hazard where loose sandy soils exist below groundwater. According to the Storm Water Analysis, the site has not been mapped for liquefaction hazard by the California Geological Survey. The County of San Bernardino has geologic hazard maps for certain areas throughout the county, including liquefaction hazard. Based on a review of these maps the site is not located within a County designated liquefaction hazard zone. Based on the review of County maps, depth to groundwater, the anticipated liquefaction potential is low. Furthermore, other hazards associated with liquefaction, such as lateral spreading are also considered low. Given the required compliance with the

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<sup>19</sup> California Geological Survey. <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse>.

California Building Code, and the fact that no habitable structures are proposed, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- iv) **No Impact.** Seismically induced landslides and other slope failures are common occurrences during or soon after earthquakes. The Project Site is not located in an area susceptible to landslides as demonstrated by San Bernardino County Policy Plan, Hazard Element *Map HZ-2 Liquefaction and Landslides*. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less than Significant Impact.** During construction, the Project Site would be subject to ground-disturbing activities (e.g., excavation, grading, foundation construction, the installation of utilities). These activities would expose soils to potential short-term erosion by wind and water. Since the Proposed Project construction would require greater than one acre of ground-disturbing activities, the project contractor would be required to prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in accordance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The SWPPP incorporates Best Management Practices (BMPs) in accordance with the California Stormwater Best Management Practices Handbook, to control erosion and to protect the quality of surface water runoff during Project construction. Typical BMPs that could be used during construction include good housekeeping practices (e.g., street sweeping, proper waste disposal, vehicle and equipment maintenance, materials storage, proper handling and storage of hazardous materials, and erosion/sediment control measures (e.g., silt fences, fiber rolls, gravel bags, storm water inlet protection, and soil stabilization measures. The SWPPP would be subject to review and approval by the County for compliance with the County's goals for storm water control. Following compliance with the established regulatory framework, the Project's impacts concerning soil erosion and loss of topsoil during construction would be less than significant.

In the proposed solar array field, stripping of topsoil and vegetation may not be necessary if final grades are the same as the existing grades. Keeping existing topsoil and vegetation at the array field could minimize water erosion during construction and maintain overall ground surface stability for solar-energy development. Approval of a SWPPP that incorporates BMPs in accordance with the California Stormwater Best Management Practices Handbook, to control erosion will be required. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

c) *Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** See sections VII.a.iii and VII.a.iv above for discussions on liquefaction and landslides, respectively. Subsidence is commonly caused by the removal of subsurface water and underground mining. Regarding lateral spreading, the amount of movement during seismic shaking depends on the soil strength, duration, and intensity of seismic shaking, topography, and free face geometry. Furthermore, other hazards associated with liquefaction, such as lateral spreading are also considered low. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project does not include construction of habitable structures or permanent facilities; therefore, implementation would not expose people or structures to substantial risks due to expansive soils. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project would be unmanned and does not propose to use septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Temporary sanitary systems will be brought in during construction and removed when the Proposed Project is operational. Therefore, no impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- f) *Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?*

**Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** A Paleontological Resources Assessment Report dated July 23, 2023 was prepared by BFS Environmental Services and is summarized herein and included as Appendix F. As part of the report, a paleontological records search was performed for the Proposed Project by the San Bernardino County Museum (SBCM). While no fossil localities are known by the SBCM to be within the Project site, several fossil localities are located as close as 0.2 mile south of the Project's boundary.

Personnel from BFS Environmental Services, a Perennial Company, under the direction of Principal Investigator Todd A. Wirths, conducted a pedestrian survey of the Proposed Project on May 30, 2023. The field methodology employed for the Proposed Project included walking evenly spaced survey transects set approximately five to ten meters apart while visually inspecting the ground surface. The survey concluded that the surface was generally deflated of fine sand, leaving larger, angular clasts of granules and gravel protecting the underlying, sandier deposits. No paleontological resources, or evidence suggesting the presence of paleontological resources, were observed during the survey.

The existence of Pleistocene old alluvial deposits likely beneath the Proposed Project, along with the High paleontological resource sensitivity assigned to these sediments locally, and the close proximity of previously recorded fossil specimens all support the recommendation that full-time paleontological monitoring be required starting at the surface during grading, excavation, or utility trenching activities at the project. Implementation of mitigation measure GEO-1 will reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

#### **Mitigation Measure:**

**GEO-1:** Prior to land disturbance, a qualified paleontologist shall prepare and implement a Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) for the project. The PRIMP must be consistent with the provisions of CEQA, County of San Bernardino guidelines (2018, Section 82.20.030), and the guidelines of the SVP (2010). If implemented, the PRIMP report would mitigate any adverse impacts (loss or destruction) to potential nonrenewable paleontological resources (fossils), if present,



to less than significant. The PRIMP should include methods for attendance by a qualified paleontologist at the preconstruction meeting to consult with the grading and excavation contractors, and on-site presence of a paleontological monitor to inspect for paleontological resources during the excavation of previously undisturbed deposits. Salvaging and reporting methodologies shall be consistent with recommendations in Appendix F of this Initial Study.

**Possible significant impacts have been identified or anticipated and therefore Mitigation Measure GEO-1 is required as a condition of project approval to reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.**

## VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Substantiation

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020; San Bernardino County GHG Reduction Plan 2011; CalEEMod Data Tables (Appendix B) prepared by Lilburn Corporation dated December 12, 2024.

### Background

According to CEQA Guidelines section 15064.4, when making a determination of the significance of greenhouse gas emissions, the “lead agency shall have discretion to determine, in the context of a particular project, whether to (1) quantify greenhouse gas emissions resulting from a project and/or (2) rely on a qualitative analysis or performance-based standards. Moreover, CEQA Guidelines section 15064.7(c) provides that “a lead agency may consider thresholds of significance previously adopted or recommended by other public agencies or recommended by experts” on the condition that “the decision of the lead agency to adopt such thresholds is supported by substantial evidence.”

### San Bernardino County GHG Reduction Plan

In September 2011, the County adopted a Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) Reduction Plan (September 2011) (GHG Plan). The GHG Plan presents a comprehensive set of actions to reduce the County’s internal and external GHG emissions to 15% below current levels (2007 levels) by 2020, consistent with the AB 32 Scoping Plan. GHG emissions impacts are assessed through the GHG Development Review Process (DRP) by applying appropriate reduction requirements as part of the discretionary approval of new development projects. Through its development review process, the County will implement CEQA requiring new development projects to quantify project GHG emissions and adopt feasible mitigation to reduce project emissions below a level of significance. A review standard of 3,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e) per year is used to identify projects that require the use of Screening Tables or a project-specific technical analysis to quantify and mitigate project emissions.<sup>20</sup> Note that the MDAQMD has an annual threshold of 100,000 tons of Carbon Dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) per year or 90,718.5 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e.

<sup>20</sup> [GHG Reduction Plan Update-Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan Update - Adopted 9-21-2021.pdf \(sbcounty.gov\)](#)

## **Impact Analysis**

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** A threshold of 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year has been adopted by the County as potentially significant to global warming. Utilizing the CalEEMod Outputs, annual operation GHG emissions amount to approximately 442 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per day or 14.73 per year (see Table 6).

**Table 6**  
**Greenhouse Gas Construction Emissions**  
**(Metric Tons per Year)**

Source/Phase	CO <sub>2</sub>	CH <sub>4</sub>	N <sub>2</sub> O	R1
Annual Max	442	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e)</b>	442			
Amortized over 30 years	14.73			

Source: CalEEMod.2022 Annual Emissions

As demonstrated in Table 6, constructions would not exceed the County's GHG thresholds. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

## **Required Conditions**

The project emissions are less than significant; however, the applicant will be required to implement GHG reduction performance standards. The GHG reducing performance standards were developed by the County to improve the energy efficiency, water conservation, vehicle trip reduction potential, and other GHG reducing impacts from all new development approved within the unincorporated portions of San Bernardino County. As such, the following Performance Standards establish the minimum level of compliance that development must meet to assist in meeting the 2020 GHG reduction target identified in the County GHG Emissions Reduction Plan. These Performance Standards apply to all Projects, including those that emit less than 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year, and will be included as Conditions of Approval for development projects.

The following are the Performance Standards (Conditions of Approval) that are applicable to the Project:

1. *The “developer” shall submit for review and obtain approval from County Planning of a signed letter agreeing to include as a condition of all construction contracts/subcontracts requirements to reduce GHG emissions and submitting documentation of compliance. The developer/construction contractors shall do the following:*
  - i. *Select construction equipment based on low GHG emissions factors and high-energy efficiency.*

- ii. *All construction equipment engines shall be properly tuned and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications prior to arriving on site and throughout construction duration.*
  - iii. *All construction equipment (including electric generators) shall be shut off by work crews when not in use and shall not idle for more than 5 minutes.*
- b) *Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?*

**Less Than Significant Impact.** According to the County of San Bernardino GHG Reduction Plan, all development projects, including those otherwise determined to be exempt from CEQA will be subject to applicable Development Code provisions, including the GHG performance standards, and state requirements, such as the California Building Code requirements for energy efficiency. With the application of the GHG performance standards, projects that are exempt from CEQA and small projects that do not exceed 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year will be considered consistent with the Plan and determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions. The GHG Reduction Plan also states that "the 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year was chosen as the median value and is used in defining small projects that must include the Performance Standards but do not need to use the Screening Tables or alternative GHG mitigation analysis.

The Proposed Project's total net operational GHG emissions do not exceed the County's screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year. Therefore, the Proposed Project does not need to accrue points using the screening tables and is consistent with the GHG Reduction Plan. The Proposed Project will not result in substantial emissions of greenhouse gases and will not conflict with the GHG Plan. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**No significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

## IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020; San Bernardino County Policy Plan; Hazards Element, *Maps HZ-5 Fire Hazard Severity Zones, HZ-6 Fire Responsibility Area and HZ-9 Airport Safety & Planning*

### **Impact Analysis**

- a) *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** The Proposed Project would develop and construct a utility-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) and energy storage facility including associated infrastructure. Project construction activities would involve the use and transportation of hazardous materials such as fuels, asphalt, lubricants, toxic solvents, pesticides, and herbicides. Construction equipment generally contains a limited number of hazardous materials such as diesel fuel, hydraulic oil, lubricants, grease, solvents, cleaners, adhesives, paints, and other petroleum-based products. The routine use or an accidental spill of hazardous materials could result in

inadvertent releases, which could adversely affect construction workers, the public, and the environment. Project construction activities would occur in accordance with all applicable local standards set forth by the County, as well as State and federal health and safety requirements that are intended to minimize hazardous materials risk to the public, such as Cal/OSHA (California Occupational Safety and Health Administration) requirements, the Hazardous Waste Control Act, the California Accidental Release Protection Program, and the California Health and Safety Code (HSC). For hazardous materials used during construction, contractors, in accordance with State regulations, would be required to properly use and store materials in appropriate containers with secondary containment to contain a potential release. The CFC would also require measures for the safe storage and handling of hazardous materials.

All materials required during construction would be kept in compliance with State and local regulations and would comply with Best Management Practices (BMPs). Operational activities would include standard maintenance that involves the use of commercially available productions, which would not create significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accidental release of hazardous materials into the environment.

Development of the Proposed Project would disturb more than one acre and would therefore be subject to the NPDES permit requirements. Requirements of the permit would include development and implementation of a SWPPP, which is subject to Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) review and approval. The purpose of a SWPPP is to: 1) identify pollutant sources that may affect the quality of discharges of stormwater associated with construction activities; and 2) identify, construct, and implement stormwater pollution control measures to reduce pollutants in stormwater discharges from the construction site during and after construction. The SWPPP would include BMPs to control and abate pollutants. Examples of BMPs include sandbag barriers, geotextiles, storm drain inlet protection, sediment traps, rip rap soil stabilizers, sweep roadway from track-out, and rumble strips. BMPs applicable to the Proposed Project will be subject to inclusion in contract bid documents. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) *Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** As noted above, hazardous or toxic materials transported in association with construction of the Proposed Project may include items such as oils, paints, and fuels. Operational activities include standard maintenance that involves the use of commercially available products. Mandatory compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations on the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials would further reduce the likelihood of an accidental release of hazardous materials into the environment. Therefore, construction and operation of the Proposed Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the likely release of hazardous materials into the environment. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** There are no existing or proposed schools within one-quarter mile of the Project Site. Yermo School (K-8), the nearest school to the Project Site is located approximately 2.1 miles to the west. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing proposed school. Therefore, no impacts will occur, and no mitigation is required.

- d) *Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site is not included on the San Bernardino County list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code 65962.5<sup>21</sup> and would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- e) *For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?*

**No Impact.** According to San Bernardino County Hazards Element Overlay Maps the Project Site is within Airport Safety Review Area (AR4) and subject to military review. However, the Proposed Project is not within two miles of an active airport or private airstrip.<sup>22</sup> The Proposed Project does not include construction of habitable structures or permanent facilities and is an unmanned photovoltaic solar facility; therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Proposed Project area. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Proposed Project area. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** Activities associated with the Proposed Project would not impede existing emergency response plans for the Project Site and/or other land uses in the Proposed Project vicinity. Construction vehicles and equipment would be staged on-site and off of public roads and would not block emergency access routes. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would not impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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<sup>21</sup> <https://dtsc.ca.gov/CaliforniaDepartmentofToxicSubstancesControl/EnviroStor>. Accessed February 2, 2024.

<sup>22</sup> San Bernardino County Policy Plan; Hazards Element, *Maps HZ-9 Airport Safety & Planning*

- g) *Expose people or structure, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?*

**No Impact.** According to the State of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) Map, the Project Site is located in a CAL FIRE Local Responsibility Area (LRA) and is not within a Very High FHSZ.<sup>23</sup> The Project Site is also not within a Fire Safety Overlay District designated by the San Bernardino Countywide Plan 2020.<sup>24</sup> Project design and Project Site access would adhere to San Bernardino regulations. The Proposed Project would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significance risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires as no habitable structures are proposed. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**No significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

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<sup>23</sup> CAL FIRE. San Bernardino County Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA, 2008. <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/03beab8511814e79a0e4eabf0d3e7247/> Accessed February 2, 2024.

<sup>24</sup> San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020, Land Use General Plan Hazard Overlays.



## X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would?				
I. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on – or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
II. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on – or off-site;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
III. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of the existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional resources of polluted runoff; or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IV. Impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020: San Bernardino County Policy Plan; Hazards Element, *Maps HZ-4 Flood Hazards; Storm Water Quality Analysis: Yermo Solar Farm, County of San Bernardino, dated November 7, 2024, prepared by Q3 Consulting (Appendix G); Hydrology Report: Yermo Solar Farm, prepared by Q3 Consulting, County of San Bernardino, dated November 6, 2024 (Appendix H).*

### **Impact Analysis**

- a) *Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** This is an unmanned facility with no requirement for an on-site wastewater treatment system. Proposed on-site construction activities involve minimal

site grading and improvements and would not cause the release of notable amounts of hazardous materials that could be discharged from the property as part of construction activities or as part of a stormwater event, including the use of equipment and any ancillary pollutant discharge from that equipment. Improvement of the adjacent roadway and the type of materials used for that improvement, along with the method of construction, would not result in a violation of water quality standards. As noted further below, a Stormwater Pollution Protection Plan (SWPPP) and associated Best Management Practices (BMP) implemented during construction will minimize pollutant discharge.

The Proposed Project would be responsible for employing all appropriate Stormwater and Erosion Control Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction, and these are incorporated into the Proposed Project specifications. Prior to the start of construction all drain inlets must be protected with BMPs to prevent construction materials and debris from entering drainages. Upon implementation of these measures, this Proposed Project would have minimal impact upon water quality. Temporary construction BMPs may be required by the County's conditions of approval, including wind erosion control, sediment tracking control, street sweeping and vacuuming, stabilized construction roadway, spill prevention control, solid waste management, hazardous waste management, sanitary/septic waste management, material delivery and storage, material use, vehicle and equipment cleaning, vehicle and equipment fueling, and vehicle maintenance.

The Proposed Project scope will include the construction of an infiltration basin along the southern boundary of the Proposed Project will collect all onsite stormwater runoff. The design will involve the treatment and retention, where feasible, of the 85th percentile storm event volume via infiltration and evaporation. No discharge from the site is anticipated, except during extreme storm events. All pollutants of concern will be eliminated. Upon implementation of standard Stormwater pollution prevention plans and designs, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) *Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?*

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project is not proposing water usage from on-site water sources but would truck in any required water for the cleaning of panels or other periodic needs as part of a standard solar facility operation and maintenance. Due to the periodic nature of these activities the amount of water used would be minimal. There are no groundwater recharge facilities in the vicinity of the Project Site. As such, the Proposed Project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- c) *Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would?*

- I. *Result in substantial erosion or siltation on – or off-site;*
- II. *Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or off-site;*

- III. *Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of the existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional resources of polluted runoff; or*
- IV. *Impede or redirect flood flows?*

I) **Less than Significant Impact.** The Project Site does not include a stream, river, or creek, and the Proposed Project would not involve any substantial alteration to the drainage pattern of the area. According to the FEMA Flood Map Service Center, the Proposed Project is located within Zone D, or Area of Undetermined Flood Hazard. Zone D is defined as areas with possible but undetermined flood hazards. According to the Hydrology Report, from the hydraulic model used to determine the extent of potential flood hazards of a 100-year, 24-hour storm event for the Project Site, it is unlikely that a flood hazard would occur within the Project Site. Additionally, the Project Site is not within the Flood Plain Safety Overlay District designated by the San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020. The Proposed Project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation, as BMPs would be implemented during construction (e.g., stabilized construction entrances, vehicle washouts, earthen dikes, fiber rolls, silt fence, and/or erosion control matting) in compliance with the SWPPP and the NPDES General Construction Permit issued for the Proposed Project, which would ensure that erosion and siltation do not result in any off-site water quality impacts. San Bernardino County Development Code Chapter 85.11 requires that the Proposed Project implement measures designed to control soil erosion pollution and regulate construction of proposed structures that are subject to flood hazards due to storm events within local flood hazard areas that are not within County-designated flood districts. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

II) **Less than Significant Impact.** There is little impervious development on the existing site. There are two proposed onsite detention basins which would capture stormwater runoff, located in the middle of the south end of the Project Site. The Project Site receives little offsite runoff from the railroad with an existing swale capturing the flows from railroad tracks and conveying the flow to the east and west along the north boundary of the Project Site. In the existing condition, onsite runoff sheet flows in the southeast direction overtopping Calico Road and continuing southeast into the Mojave River. As such, while the imperviousness of the Project Site would increase, development of the Project would not result in an increase in surface runoff. As such, the Proposed Project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the Project Site or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

III) **Less than significant Impact.** The Proposed Project would include two detention basins to capture some of the stormwater runoff, located in the middle of the south end of the parcels. The Project Site receives little offsite runoff from the railroad with an existing swale capturing the flows from the railroad and conveying the flow to the east and west along the north boundary of the Project Site. Under existing conditions, onsite runoff sheet flows in the southeast direction overtopping Calico Road and continuing southeast into the Mojave River. Therefore, the runoff from the Project Site after development of the solar arrays is not anticipated to significantly change such that flooding on or off-site would occur. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**IV) Less than Significant Impact.** According to the FEMA Flood Map Service Center, the Proposed Project is located within Zone D, an area of undetermined flood hazard. According to the Drainage Report, from the hydraulic model used to determine the extent of potential flood hazards of a 100-year, 24-hour storm event for the Project Site, it is unlikely that a flood hazard would occur.. Nevertheless, all equipment skids and pads would be elevated at a minimum of 12 inches above the 100-year flood elevation to protect equipment from potential ponding or overland stormwater flow. An infiltration basin along the southern boundary of the Project will collect all onsite stormwater runoff. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

d) *In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site is located approximately 115 miles northeast of the Pacific Ocean and therefore is not at risk if a tsunami. As stated above in Threshold X.c.iv, the Hydrology Report concluded that it is unlikely that a flood hazard will occur within the Project Site from a 100-year, 24-hour storm event. The Project Site is not within a Flood Plain Safety Overlay District designated by the San Bernardino Countywide Plan 2020. Furthermore, the Project Site is not within a dam breach inundation zone designated by the San Bernardino Countywide Plan 2020. No major water-retaining structures are located immediately up gradient from the Project Site, and flooding from seismically induced seiche is considered unlikely. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

e) *Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site is located within the Lower Mojave River Valley Groundwater Basin, which is categorized by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) as a very low priority basin.<sup>25</sup> The SGMA requires only medium-and high-priority basins to form groundwater sustainability agencies, develop groundwater sustainability plans, and manage groundwater for long-term sustainability. Therefore, the Lower Mojave River Valley Groundwater Basin does not require a sustainable groundwater management plan.

Furthermore, as mentioned above in the Project Description, the Proposed Project would be unmanned during operations, with no habitable structures or restroom facilities. Any operational water that may be required for routine maintenance would be trucked in from off-site. the majority of the Proposed Project would consist of gravel infill and remain pervious to allow infiltration of precipitation. The incremental amount of impervious surface that would be introduced by the Proposed Project would be small and would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge. As a result, the Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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<sup>25</sup> California Department of Water Resources, SGMA Data Viewer, <https://sgma.water.ca.gov/webgis/?appid=SGMADataViewer#boundaries>. Accessed December 10, 2024.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**No significant adverse impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

## XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Substantiation

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020

### Impact Analysis

a) *Physically divide an established community?*

**No Impact.** The immediate vicinity of the Project Site consists generally of undeveloped land. The nearest residential communities are located approximately 0.5 miles to the southwest and approximately 1.3 miles to the west in addition to scattered single-family residences within two miles of the Proposed Project. The Project would not physically divide an established community, thus, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

b) *Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?*

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project is a conditionally acceptable use within the Resource Conservation (RC) zone as demonstrated by Table 82-4, Allowed Land Uses and Permit Requirements for Resource Land Management (RLM) Land Use Zoning Districts, of the San Bernardino County Development Code. The Proposed Project complies with all hazard protection, resource preservation, and Development Code regulations. No impacts are identified or anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

### Mitigation Measures:

**No impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

## XII. MINERAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020; San Bernardino County Countywide Plan/Policy Plan; Natural Resources Element, Map *NR-4 Mineral Resources Zones*

### **Impact Analysis**

- a) *Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** According to the San Bernardino Countywide Plan, the Project Site is within Mineral Resources Zone 3a (MRZ-3a)<sup>26</sup>. An MRZ-3 designation is an area containing known mineral occurrences of undetermined mineral resource significance. Further exploration work within these areas could result in the reclassification of specific localities into MRZ-2A or MRZ-2b categories which could contain additional mineral resources. where the available geologic information indicates that mineral deposits are likely to exist, however, the significance of the deposit is undetermined. San Bernardino County has not designated the Project Site for mineral recovery. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) *Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site is not designated as a mineral resource recovery site as delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. Additionally, as stated, the Proposed Project is conditionally acceptable use within the RC zone. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

### **Mitigation Measures:**

**No significant adverse impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

<sup>26</sup> San Bernardino Countywide Plan Draft EIR. Mineral Resources page 5.11-19.



### XIII. NOISE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration of groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### Substantiation

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020; Countywide Plan/Policy Plan, Hazards Element, *Map HZ-9 Airport Safety & Planning Areas*

#### Impact Analysis

- a) *Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** The Proposed Project consists of an unmanned commercial PV solar facility and would not generate ambient noise levels in the area that would violate the San Bernardino Development Code, or San Bernardino Countywide Plan Draft EIR Noise Element. The Project Site occurs in a vacant area and within 0.2 miles are two residences to the west and a residence to the northwest. San Bernardino County has noise standards that would apply at the property lines and are dependent on the zoning of the affected parcels (see below).

The Proposed Project entitlements also include a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the unmanned commercial PV solar facility. The Proposed Project would not affect the nearby residences. These uses are not anticipated to increase ambient noise levels at property lines in the area that would violate the Countywide Plan Noise Element or the San Bernardino Development Code which states an exemption to the regulations in Section 83.01.080 (g)(3) as follows: *Temporary construction, maintenance, repair, or demolition activities between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., except Sundays and Federal holidays.* Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

### Noise Standards for Stationary Noise Sources

Affected Land Uses (Receiving Noise)	7:00 a.m. - 10 p.m. Leq	10:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m. Leq
Residential	55 dB(A)	45 dB(A)
Professional Services	55 dB(A)	55 dB(A)
Other Commercial	60 dB(A)	60 dB(A)
Industrial	70 dB(A)	70 dB(A)
Leq = (Equivalent Energy Level). The sound level corresponding to a steady-state sound level containing the same total energy as a time-varying signal over a given sample period, typically one, eight or 24 hours.		
dB(A) = (A-weighted Sound Pressure Level). The sound pressure level, in decibels, as measured on a sound level meter using a A-weighted filter network. The A-weighted filter de-emphasizes the very low and very high frequency components of the sound, placing greater emphasis on those frequencies within the sensitivity range of the human ear.		

*b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration of groundborne noise levels?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** County Development Code Section 83.09.090, Vibration, establishes standards for acceptable vibration levels: temporary construction, maintenance, repair, or demolition activities between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. are exempt from this vibration limit, except on Sundays and federal holidays, when construction is prohibited. Potential impacts due to groundborne vibration would be short-term and temporary during construction. Motor vehicle use during project operation is also exempt from the County vibration standards. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

*c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** According to San Bernardino County Countywide Plan/Policy Plan 2020 Hazard Overlay Map HZ-9, the Project Site is within the Airport Safety Review *AR-4 overlay* as is most of the County. The AR 4 overlay includes the low altitude/high speed corridors designated for military use. The Proposed Project will be subject to military review as part of the approval process. The nearest airstrip to the Project Site is Daggett-Barstow Airport approximately 3.2 miles south of the Project Site. There will be a less than significant impact in terms of exposing occasional maintenance workers to the site to excessive noise levels. Based on the proposed use and nature of the Proposed Project no significant adverse impacts to a military operation, a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport or expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

### **Mitigation Measures:**

**No significant adverse impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

#### XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### Substantiation

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020

#### Impact Analysis

- a) *Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?*

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project would not induce substantial population growth in an area either directly or indirectly. As an unmanned photovoltaic solar facility, the Proposed Project is not expected to induce population growth or the development of new homes or roads. New infrastructure in the form of an energy-producing facility would be created, however the energy will be sold into the grid and would therefore support existing and projected demands throughout SCE's service area. No new facilities would be constructed that may induce additional residents. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) *Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site is presently vacant and therefore the Proposed Project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing units or require the construction of replacement housing. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

#### Mitigation Measures:

**No impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

## XV. PUBLIC SERVICES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
i. Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii. Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii. Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv. Recreation/Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
v. Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Substantiation

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020; San Bernardino Policy Plan; Hazards Element, *Maps HZ-5 Fire Hazard Severity Zones and HZ-6 Fire Responsibility Area*

### Impact Analysis

- a) *Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services: Fire protection, Police protection, Schools, Recreation/Parks, Other public facilities?*

#### i. Fire Protection

**No Impact.** Fire protection services are provided by Yermo/Calico Volunteer Fire Department Fire Protection District, Yermo Community Services District (CSD) in the event of an onsite fire emergency. The closest Fire Station to the Project Site is Station 1 located at 38321 Yermo Road, Yermo approximately 2 miles west of the Project Site. The Proposed Project does not include any structures or any type of residential use or other land use that may generate a population that would increase the demand for fire services. The SBCFD reviews staffing needs on a yearly basis and adjusts service levels as needed to maintain an adequate level of public protection. Property tax revenues provide funding to offset potential increases in the demand for fire services. The Proposed Project would receive adequate fire protection services and would not result in the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

ii. Police Protection

**No Impact.** Police services will be provided to the Project Site through the Barstow Police Department in the event services are necessary. The station located nearest to the Project Site is located approximately 13 miles west of the site. Increased property and sales tax associated with the direct and indirect improvement of the property would provide funding for necessary service increases pertaining to growth and development. The Proposed Project does not include any type of residential use or other land use that may generate a population that would increase the need for police protection. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

iii. Schools

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project would not create a direct demand for public school services as the Proposed Project does not include any type of residential use or other land use that may induce population growth. It is expected that the employment generated by the Proposed Project would be filled locally and would not result in substantial growth that was not already anticipated by the County. Additionally, increased property and sales tax associated with the direct and indirect improvement of the property would provide funding for necessary service increases associated with growth and development. As such, the development would not generate any new school-aged children requiring public education. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

iv. Parks

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project does not include any type of residential use or other land use that may generate a population that would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities in the vicinity. Employees are anticipated to come from the local labor pool in the city of Needles and implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in an increased use or substantial physical deterioration of an existing neighborhood or regional park. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

v. Other Public Facilities

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project is not expected to result in a demand for other public facilities/services, such as libraries, community recreation centers, and/or animal shelters. Implementation of the Proposed Project would not adversely affect other public facilities or require the construction of new or modified facilities. Increased property and sales tax associated with the direct and indirect improvement of the property would provide funding for necessary service increases associated with growth and development. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**No impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

## XVI. RECREATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Substantiation

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020

### Impact Analysis

- 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?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site involves construction of a solar energy facility in a highly desert area of unincorporated San Bernardino County. No residential use or other land use that may generate a population that would increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities in the vicinity is proposed. Increased property and sales tax associated with the direct and indirect improvement of the property would provide funding for necessary service increases associated with growth and development. Accordingly, implementation of the Proposed Project would not result in the increased use or substantial physical deterioration of an existing neighborhood or regional park. Therefore, no impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- 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?*

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. Therefore, no impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

### Mitigation Measures:

**No impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

## XVII. TRANSPORTATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Substantiation

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020

### Impact Analysis

- a) *Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?*

**No Impact.** As an unmanned solar facility, the Proposed Project would not cause an increase in traffic. Local roads would only be impacted during temporary construction and bi-annual maintenance activities. There are no transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the vicinity. The Proposed Project is an allowable use within the Countywide Policy Map Land Use Map designation and is consistent with the Countywide Plan/Policy Plan Transportation & Mobility Element.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) *Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?*

**No Impact.** As an unmanned solar facility, vehicle trips would only be generated during temporary construction and bi-annual maintenance activities. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b) provides that construction traffic may be analyzed qualitatively. Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) primarily is a metric for assessing project-related GHG emissions impacts. The Proposed Project would generate less than 110 daily vehicle trips during Proposed Project operations. As such, the Proposed Project meets one of the screening criteria identified in the *San Bernardino County Transportation Impact Study Guidelines*. The Proposed Project would not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section

<sup>27</sup> [Transportation & Mobility – San Bernardino County](#), accessed March 14, 2025

15064.3 subdivision (b). The scheduled maintenance activities would result in a negligible increase in VMT. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project would not substantially increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses because the Project Site is adjacent to an established road that is accessed at points with good site distance and properly controlled intersections. There are no incompatible uses proposed by the Proposed Project that would impact surrounding land uses. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- d) *Result in inadequate emergency access?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site is designed to allow emergency vehicles to respond to a possible event. Adequate access to ingress to egress points including turnaround areas, perimeter roads, and interior roads between panel rows that are of adequate width and approval by County Fire during their review of the Proposed Project would be provided. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Mitigation Measures:**

**No impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**



## **XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### **Substantiation**

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020

### **Regulatory Setting**

Effective July 1, 2015, Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) amended CEQA to require that: 1) a lead agency provide notice to those California Native American tribes that requested notice of projects proposed by the lead agency; and 2) for any tribe that responded to the notice within 30 days of receipt with a request for consultation, the lead agency must consult with the tribe. Topics that may be addressed during consultation include Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs), the potential significance of project impacts, the type of environmental document that should be prepared, and possible mitigation measures and project alternatives.

Pursuant to AB 52, Section 21073 of the Public Resources Code defines California Native American tribes as “a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC for the purposes of Chapter 905 of the Statutes of 2004.” This includes both federally and non-federally recognized tribes.

Section 21074(a) of the Public Resource Code defines TCRs for the purpose of CEQA as:

1. Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes (geographically defined in terms of the size and scope), sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
  - a. included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; and/or

- b. included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1; and/or
- c. a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Because criteria a and b also meet the definition of a historical resource under CEQA, a TCR may also require additional consideration as a historical resource. TCRs may or may not exhibit archaeological, cultural, or physical indicators.

Recognizing that California tribes are experts in their tribal cultural resources and heritage, AB 52 requires that CEQA lead agencies provide tribes that requested notification an opportunity to consult at the commencement of the CEQA process to identify TCRs. Furthermore, because a significant effect on a TCR is considered a significant impact on the environment under CEQA, consultation is used to develop appropriate avoidance, impact minimization, and mitigation measures.

### **Environmental Setting**

The Proposed Project is located south of the Calico Mountains, in the central area of the Mojave Desert, within the tectonically active Mojave Desert Block. The path of the intermittent Mojave River lies just south of the project. The subject property primarily contains sediments deposited by the Mojave River which are mapped as early Holocene and late Pleistocene older young wash deposits. These deposits are characterized as “well-stratified, moderately sorted channel gravel, poorly sorted, sandy crevasse splay deposits, muddy to finely sandy floodplain deposits, and muddy marsh deposits with organic materials and groundwater-discharge carbonate blebs.” Along the southern boundary of the project, Phelps et al. (2012) identify a large, modern surficial deposit of disturbed earthen materials. These disturbed/fill deposits are partly associated with the Calico Lakes community southwest of the project where Mountain View Road encircles an artificial lake. The specific soil types found within the property are mapped as Cajon Sand, 2 to 9 percent slopes (113) (NRCS 2019). The subject property is relatively flat with elevations ranging from approximately 1,905 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) to approximately 1,910 feet AMSL. Vegetation within the project consists primarily of sporadic creosote bushes.

### **Sacred Lands File Record Search**

BFSA also requested a Sacred Lands File Record Search (SLF) from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) to search for the presence of any recorded Native American sacred sites or locations of religious or ceremonial importance within one mile of the project. This request is not part of any AB 52 Native American consultation. The SLF search has been returned with negative results for potential sites or locations of Native American importance within the vicinity. The NAHC suggested contacting local Native American groups for further information. This additional outreach will be conducted by the lead agency under the official AB 52 Native American consultation process.

## **Impact Analysis**

- a) *Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?*

**Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** As concluded in Section 5(a), above, the Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report concluded that no “historical resources” are anticipated to be impacted by the Proposed Project. However, the possibility of discovering a significant unanticipated find remains and therefore Mitigation Measure **CUL-1**, **CUL-2** and **CUL-3** shall be implemented to ensure that less than significant impacts to potential historical resources occur. No additional mitigation measures are required.

- b) *A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1?*

**Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** As stated in Section V (Cultural Resources) above, the Proposed Project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance or integrity of Site 36-004276, the only “historical resource” or potential “historical resources” encountered within or partially within the Project Site, and the geoarchaeological analysis suggests that the Proposed Project location is low in sensitivity for archaeological remains of prehistoric or early historic origin in buried deposits. No significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

## **Mitigation Measures**

### **Morongo Band of Mission Indians (MBMI)**

#### **TCR-1: Native American Treatment Agreement Prior to the issuance of grading permits.**

The applicant shall enter into a Tribal Monitoring Agreement with the Morongo Band of Mission Indians for the project. The Tribal Monitor shall be on-site during all ground-disturbing activities (including, but not limited to, clearing, grubbing, tree and bush removal, grading, trenching, fence post placement and removal, construction excavation, excavation for all utility and irrigation lines, and landscaping phases of any kind). The Tribal Monitor shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt the ground-disturbing activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources.

#### **TCR-2: Retention of Archaeologist.** Prior to any ground-disturbing activities (including, but not limited to, clearing, grubbing, tree and bush removal, grading, trenching, fence post replacement and removal, construction excavation, excavation for all utility and irrigation lines, and landscaping phases of any kind), and prior to the issuance of grading permits, the Applicant shall retain a qualified archaeologist who meets the U.S. Secretary of the Interior Standards (SOI). The archaeologist shall be present during all ground-disturbing activities to identify any known or suspected archaeological and/or cultural resources. The archaeologist will conduct a Cultural Resource Sensitivity Training, in conjunction with the Tribe[s] Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), and/or designated Tribal Representative. The training session will focus on the archaeological and tribal cultural resources that may be encountered during ground-disturbing activities as well as the procedures to be followed in such an event.

**TCR-3: Cultural Resource Management Plan.** Prior to any ground-disturbing activities the project archaeologist shall develop a Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) and/or Archaeological Monitoring and Treatment Plan (AMTP) to address the details, timing, and responsibilities of all archaeological and cultural resource activities that occur on the project site. This Plan shall be written in consultation with the consulting Tribe[s] and shall include the following: approved Mitigation Measures (MM)/Conditions of Approval (COA), contact information for all pertinent parties, parties' responsibilities, procedures for each MM or COA, and an overview of the project schedule.

**TCR-4: Pre-Grade Meeting.** The retained qualified archeologist and Consulting Tribe[s] representative shall attend the pre-grade meeting with the grading contractors to explain and coordinate the requirements of the monitoring plan.

**TCR-5: On-site Monitoring.** During all ground-disturbing activities the qualified archaeologist and the Native American monitor shall be on-site full-time. The frequency of inspections shall depend on the rate of excavation, the materials excavated, and any discoveries of Tribal Cultural Resources as defined in California Public Resources Code Section 21074. Archaeological and Native American monitoring will be discontinued when the depth of grading and the soil conditions no longer retain the potential to contain cultural deposits. The qualified archaeologist, in consultation with the Native American monitor, shall be responsible for determining the duration and frequency of monitoring.

**TCR-6: Inadvertent Discovery of Cultural Resources.** In the event that previously unidentified cultural resources are unearthed during construction, the qualified archaeologist and the Native American monitor shall have the authority to temporarily divert and/or temporarily halt ground-disturbance operations in the area of discovery to allow for the evaluation of potentially significant cultural resources. Isolates and clearly non-significant deposits shall be minimally documented in the field and collected so the monitored grading can proceed.

If a potentially significant cultural resource(s) is discovered, work shall stop within a 60-foot perimeter of the discovery and an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) physical demarcation/barrier constructed. All work shall be diverted away from the vicinity of the find, so that the find can be evaluated by the qualified archaeologist and Tribal Monitor[s]. The archaeologist shall notify the Lead Agency and consulting Tribe[s] of said discovery. The qualified archaeologist, in consultation with the Lead Agency, the consulting Tribe[s], and the Native American monitor, shall determine the significance of the discovered resource. A recommendation for the treatment and disposition of the Tribal Cultural Resource shall be made by the qualified archaeologist in consultation with the Tribe[s] and the Native American monitor[s] and be submitted to the Lead Agency for review and approval. Below are the possible treatments and dispositions of significant cultural resources in order of CEQA preference:

- A. Full avoidance.
- B. If avoidance is not feasible, Preservation in place.
- C. If Preservation in place is not feasible, all items shall be reburied in an area away from any future impacts and reside in a permanent conservation easement or Deed Restriction.

- D. If all other options are proven to be infeasible, data recovery through excavation and then curation in a Curation Facility that meets the Federal Curation Standards (CFR 79.1)

**TCR-7: Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains** The Morongo Band of Mission Indians requests the following specific conditions to be imposed in order to protect Native American human remains and/or cremations. No photographs are to be taken except by the coroner, with written approval by the consulting Tribe[s].

- A. Should human remains and/or cremations be encountered on the surface or during any and all ground-disturbing activities (i.e., clearing, grubbing, tree and bush removal, grading, trenching, fence post placement and removal, construction excavation, excavation for all water supply, electrical, and irrigation lines, and landscaping phases of any kind), work in the immediate vicinity of the discovery shall immediately stop within a 100-foot perimeter of the discovery. The area shall be protected; project personnel/observers will be restricted. The County Coroner is to be contacted within 24 hours of discovery. The County Coroner has 48 hours to make his/her determination pursuant to State and Safety Code §7050.5. and Public Resources Code (PRC) § 5097.98.
- B. In the event that the human remains and/or cremations are identified as Native American, the Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours of determination pursuant to subdivision (c) of HSC §7050.5.
- C. The Native American Heritage Commission shall immediately notify the person or persons it believes to be the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD has 48 hours, upon being granted access to the Project site, to inspect the site of discovery and make his/her recommendation for final treatment and disposition, with appropriate dignity, of the remains and all associated grave goods pursuant to PRC §5097.98
- D. If the Morongo Band of Mission Indians has been named the Most Likely Descendant (MLD), the Tribe may wish to rebury the human remains and/or cremation and sacred items in their place of discovery with no further disturbance where they will reside in perpetuity. The place(s) of reburial will not be disclosed by any party and is exempt from the California Public Records Act (California Government Code § 6254[r]). Reburial location of human remains and/or cremations will be determined by the Tribe's Most Likely Descendant (MLD), the landowner, and the City Planning Department.

**TCR-8: FINAL REPORT:** The final report[s] created as a part of the project (AMTP, isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be submitted to the Lead Agency and Consulting Tribe[s] for review and comment. After approval of all parties, the final reports are to be submitted to the Eastern Information Center, and the Consulting Tribe[s].

#### **Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (YSMN)**

**TCR 9:** The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Management Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed in CUL-1, of any pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources discovered during project implementation, and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), a Cultural Resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall

be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with YSMN, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents YSMN for the remainder of the project, should YSMN elect to place a monitor on-site.

**TCR 10:** Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be supplied to the applicant and Lead Agency for dissemination to YSMN. The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with YSMN throughout the life of the project.

**With implementation of the above-listed measures, less than significant impacts would occur.**

## XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Substantiation

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020

### Impact Analysis

- a) *Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

**No Impact.**

Water: The Project Site is not currently served by any water utility structures or services. Water services to the Project Site would be provided by the Mojave Water Agency (MWA). According to the MWA's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan Update, MWA is responsible for providing water services to its certificated water area, including the Project Site. MWA's water is source almost entirely from groundwater.<sup>28</sup> The Project would not connect to the system but would utilize water provided by MWA during construction for dust suppression and during operation for routine panel and inverter washing. Water would be trucked to the Project Site from an off-site source and utilized as follows:

<sup>28</sup> Mojave Water Agency, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, 2021, page 2-2. <https://www.mojavewater.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/MWA2020UWMPFinal061621.pdf> Accessed December 10, 2024.

### Construction

As determined by the Applicant, construction water usage based on the 24-acre solar array area is anticipated to be approximately 8 AF over an approximately 12-month construction period.

The Applicant anticipates that non-potable water used during Project construction would be supplied from an off-site source via trucked water for dust control. Water would be provided from within the boundaries of the Mojave Water Agency (MWA). MWA's 2020 UWMP assessed existing and projected water supply and demand over the planning period. In doing so, MWA has proven to have a water supply sufficient enough to endure drought periods regardless of State Water Project entitlement allocations. MWA's supplies and groundwater allocations are sufficient to serve their customer base, including groundwater use from Project construction during normal, single-dry, and multi-year drought year conditions.

The groundwater that would be utilized during construction would also be a temporary demand and would not be a long-term depletion of groundwater. Therefore, Project construction would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the Mojave Basin

### Project Operation

Non-potable water would be required for panel washing, equipment washing, and other site maintenance (e.g., dust control). Non-potable water used during Project operation would be supplied from an off-site source via trucked water. Maintenance would primarily consist of washing the photovoltaic modules two (2) to four (4) times per year. A minimal amount of water would be used for cleaning and then would be drained without ponding or collecting dirt. The site would utilize de-ionized wash water for washing the modules, which would be delivered to the site via 4,000-gallon water trucks. Each wash cycle would consume approximately 100,000 gallons of water (0.30-acre feet).

The Project's operational water use would be within the total projected water supplies available to MWA during normal year, single-dry year, and multi-year hydrologic conditions over a 40-year period. There would be no impact.

**Wastewater:** Temporary sanitary facilities would be placed on-site during construction. As the Proposed Project would be unmanned during operation, no wastewater facilities would be required. Therefore, the Proposed Project is not anticipated to generate additional wastewater. Proposed Project construction and operation would not utilize wastewater facilities, and no construction or relocation of wastewater facilities would cause a significant environmental effect. There would be no impact.

**Telecommunications:** The Proposed Project would be provided telecommunications service by Spectrum which has existing facilities in the area. No impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Natural Gas:** The Proposed Project and the surrounding area are serviced by Southwest Gas Corporation. The Proposed Project consists of a CUP to allow for the operation and construction of an unmanned solar facility operation that would not use natural gas. No impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.



Electricity: Direct current electricity from each of the approximately 25,000 photovoltaic panels will be converted to low voltage alternating current by inverters. The alternating current will be routed to a 66 kVA transformer to achieve the plant distribution high voltage. This high voltage is then collected at a collector switchgear for connection to the Southern California Edison (SCE) grid. All on-site electrical cables will be in buried conduit. Connection to the grid will be via elevated (pole mounted) electrical lines. The applicant has entered into an agreement with SCE to bring the necessary transmission lines to the Project Site. Approvals related to the construction of these lines will be initiated and obtained by SCE as a separate project.

The Proposed Project would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities. Therefore, no impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- b) *Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?*

**No Impact.** An on-site water supply is not available to be used for the Proposed Project. Water use on-site will be for construction (dust control) and for maintenance purposes to wash down panels twice per year and would be trucked from the Mojave Water Agency (MWA). The MWA's 2020 UWMP assessed existing and projected water supply and demand at a regional level over the planning period. The analysis shows the agency is projected to have a water supply sufficient to meet demands during drought periods regardless of State Water Project water entitlement allocations. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- c) *Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?*

**No Impact.** No facilities are proposed onsite that would require wastewater treatment or disposal. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- d) *Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?*

**No Impact.** All refuse on-site is anticipated to be limited to construction activities. Refuse will be hauled off-site by the contractor or by a commercial vendor when necessary and disposed of in a facility permitted to accept construction and demolition debris. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- e) *Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?*

**Less than Significant Impact.** Project developer shall provide adequate space and storage bins for both refuse and recycling materials. This requirement is to assist the County in compliance with the recycling requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 2176. A Construction Waste Management Plan would be prepared in two parts to show adequate handling of waste materials: disposal, reuse, or recycling as required by the County Department of Public Works

Solid Waste Management Department. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

**Mitigation Measures**

**Less than significant impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

## XX. WILDFIRE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project?				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Substantiation

San Bernardino County Countywide Plan 2020, Countywide Plan/Policy Plan; Hazards Element, *Maps HZ-4 Flood Hazards, and HZ-5 Fire Hazard Severity Zones*

### Impact Analysis

#### *a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site is located approximately 0.2 mile south of the I-15 Freeway (I-15), which is an evacuation route within the County<sup>29</sup>. Access to the Project Site would be provided by a 26-foot entrance on Calico Boulevard. Fire lines are proposed throughout the Project Site. The Proposed Project is subject to review and approval from the San Bernardino County Fire Marshal. All new construction shall comply with the current Uniform Fire Code requirements and all applicable statutes, codes, ordinances, and standards of the San Bernardino County Fire Department. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

<sup>29</sup> Placeworks. San Bernardino Countywide Policy Plan Draft EIR. Hazards and Hazardous Materials. Table 5.8-10 "Evacuation Routes in San Bernardino County"

- b) *Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?*

**No Impact.** The Proposed Project is located in an area with moderate threat to fire hazards.<sup>30</sup> It is not located within a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The Project Site is located within a rural desert area with scattered development and infrastructure. Development of the Proposed Project would be conditioned to comply with the California Fire Code. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- c) *Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site is located south of Interstate 15 between Calico Road and the BNSF railroad. Access to the site will be from the existing Calico Road. The Proposed Project will not require the construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Project is not anticipated to require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary ongoing impacts to the environment. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

- d) *Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?*

**No Impact.** The Project Site is not located in an area likely to become unstable as a result of on- or off-site landslide. The Proposed Project does not include construction of habitable structures or permanent facilities and, therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks. Therefore, no impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

#### **Mitigation Measures:**

**No impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.**

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<sup>30</sup> San Bernardino County. Countywide Policy Plan web maps: HZ-5 "Fire Hazard Severity Zones." Accessed December 16, 2024.

## SECTION 5 - MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) *Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?*

**Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** The results of the Initial Study show that there are potentially significant impacts to Biological Resources and Cultural Resources. These impacts will be reduced to less than significant levels after incorporation of Biological Resource mitigation measures **BIO-1** thru **BIO-4**, and Cultural Resource mitigation measures **CUL-1** and **CUL-2** as well as compliance with existing rules and regulations. Therefore, the Proposed Project will not substantially degrade the quality of the environment and impacts to habitat, wildlife populations, plant and animal communities, rare and endangered species or important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory; no additional mitigation is warranted.

- b) *Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?*

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Cumulative impacts are defined as two or more individual effects that, when considered together, are considerable or that compound or increase other environmental impacts. The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment that results from the incremental impact of the development when added to the impacts of other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable or probable future developments. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively

significant, developments taking place over a period. The CEQA Guidelines, Section 15130 (a) and (b), states:

- (a) Cumulative impacts shall be discussed when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable.
- (b) 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 of the effects attributable to the project. The discussion should be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness.

Impacts associated with the Proposed Project would not be considered individually adverse or unfavorable. The Proposed Project is a conditionally acceptable use identified in and previously evaluated as part of the San Bernardino County General Plan and EIR. Therefore, no cumulative impacts are identified or are anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

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

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Implementation of the existing rules and regulations, conditions from permit approvals and the mitigation measures identified in this Initial Study Checklist would result in a less than significant impact due to the Proposed Projects implementation. The incorporation of design measures, County policies, standards, and guidelines indicates there would be no substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. No such impacts have been identified by the studies conducted for this Proposed Project or the completion of this Initial Study.

In addition, further environmental mitigation may yet occur as a result of obtaining a Conditional Use Permit from the San Bernardino County Land Use Services Department, a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Game, and possible permitting from the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. There would be no substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, less than significant impacts are identified or anticipated, and no mitigation measures are required.

## SECTION 6 - SUMMARY OF MITIGATION MEASURES

The following mitigation measures were identified to reduce potential impacts to less than significant:

### **BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:**

**BIO-1: Desert Tortoise Survey.** Although desert tortoise was absent from the site during the survey, there is suitable habitat within the southeast corner of the parcel. As such, it is recommended that pre-construction surveys be completed for this species prior to any ground-disturbing activities. These surveys should be conducted by a qualified biologist and at an appropriate time of day/year to observe signs of desert tortoise. Surveys should also be conducted using the current survey protocol from the USFWS.

**BIO-2: Burrowing Owl Survey:** A Burrowing Owl Protocol Survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to any ground disturbance activities. Surveys shall be completed following the recommendations and guidelines provided within the Burrowing Owl Survey Instructions of the 2012 BUOW Staff Report provided by the CDFW. Surveys should be conducted during weather that is conducive to observing owls outside their burrows and detecting burrowing owl signs. Surveys will not be accepted if they are conducted during rain, high winds (> 12.5 mph), dense fog, or temperatures over 90° F. Surveys should be conducted between morning civil twilight and 10:00 AM and two hours before sunset until evening civil twilight. Count and map all burrowing owl sightings, occupied burrows, and burrows with owl sign. Record the location of all owls including numbers of pairs and juveniles and any behavior such as courtship and mating. Map the extent of all suitable habitat. It should be noted that owl signs may not be detectable if surveys are conducted within 5 days following rain. This survey is in addition to the required 30-day pre-construction survey.

30-Day Pre-Construction Survey. After protocol surveys have been completed and before any construction starts, a 30-day pre-construction survey should be conducted. Surveys shall be completed following the recommendations and guidelines provided within the 2012 BUOW Staff Report provided by the CDFW.

**BIO-3: Nesting Bird Survey:** Nesting bird nesting season generally extends from February 1 through September 15 in southern California and specifically, March 15 through August 31 for migratory passerine birds. To avoid impacts to nesting birds (common and special status) during the nesting season, a qualified Avian Biologist will conduct pre-construction Nesting Bird Surveys (NBS) prior to Project-related disturbance to nestable vegetation to identify any active nests. If no active nests are found, no further action will be required. If an active nest is found, the biologist will set appropriate no-work buffers around the nest which will be based upon the nesting species, its sensitivity to disturbance, nesting stage, and expected types, intensity, and duration of the disturbance. The nests and buffer zones shall be field checked weekly by a qualified biological monitor. The approved no-work buffer zone shall be clearly marked in the field, within which no disturbance activity shall commence until the qualified biologist has determined the young birds have successfully fledged and the nest is inactive.

**BIO-4: Special Status Plants:** Any native desert plant protected by the Desert Native Plant Act that may be impacted should be flagged for relocation on-site, to a nursery, or suitable other entity (as determined by the County) prior to construction. Construction that removes any protected plant species would require a permit from the agricultural commissioner

The Project applicant shall acquire permits as necessary and implement and comply with all conditions and measures. Mitigation for the loss of jurisdictional resources would be negotiated with the applicable resource agencies during the regulatory permitting process.

### **CULTURAL RESOURCES:**

**CUL-1:** In the event that cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the other portions of the project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed within TCR-1, regarding any pre-contact and/or historic-era finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.

**CUL-2:** If significant pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to YSMN for review and comment, as detailed within TCR-1. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the project and implement the Plan accordingly.

**CUL-3:** If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.

### **GEOLOGY AND SOILS:**

**GEO-1:** A Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) is recommended for the project. The PRIMP must be consistent with the provisions of CEQA, County of San Bernardino guidelines (2018, Section 82.20.030), and the guidelines of the SVP (2010). If implemented, the PRIMP report would mitigate any adverse impacts (loss or destruction) to potential nonrenewable paleontological resources (fossils), if present, to less than significant. The PRIMP should include methods for:

- Attendance by a qualified paleontologist at the preconstruction meeting to consult with the grading and excavation contractors.
- On-site presence of a paleontological monitor to inspect for paleontological resources during the excavation of previously undisturbed deposits.
- Salvage and recovery of paleontological resources by the qualified paleontologist or paleontological monitor.



- Preparation (repair and cleaning), sorting, and cataloging of recovered paleontological resources.
- Donation of prepared fossils, field notes, photographs, and maps to a scientific institution with permanent paleontological collections.
- Completion of a final summary report that outlines the results of the mitigation program.

**TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES: (INCOMPLETE) TO BE DETERMINED BY THE COUNTY**

**TCR-1 :** The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (YSMN) Cultural Resources Management Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed in CUL-1, of any pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources discovered during project implementation, and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), a Cultural Resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with YSMN, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents YSMN for the remainder of the project, should YSMN elect to place a monitor on-site.

**TCR-2:** Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be supplied to the applicant and Lead Agency for dissemination to YSMN. The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with YSMN throughout the life of the project.

## SECTION 7 – REFERENCES

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- California Department of Conservation, *SMARA Statutes and Regulations*. Accessed on 1.17.24 from [SMARA Statutes and Regulations \(ca.gov\)](https://www.ca.gov/smara/statutes-and-regulations/)
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- South Coast Air Quality Management District. *Off-Road Mobile Source Emission Factors (2023)*. Accessed 12/11/2023 from <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/off-road-mobile-source-emission-factors> .

United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Economy at a Glance: Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA*. Accessed on 11/30/2023 from [https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ca\\_riverside\\_msa.htm](https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ca_riverside_msa.htm)

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### **Project Specific References**

Visual Impact Assessment for Glacier Power and Solar Project, March 2024, prepared by Lilburn Corporation (Appendix A)

CalEEMod Data Tables (Appendix B) prepared by Lilburn Corporation dated December 12, 2024.

Biological Resources Assessment, Jurisdictional Delineation, and Native Plant Protection Plan for the Glacier Power Project, August 2023 (updated July 2025), Jennings Environmental, LLC (Appendix C).

Cultural Resources Study for the Glacier Power and Gas Solar Project, July 18, 2023, BFSA Environmental Services, a Perennial Company (Appendix D).

Preliminary Geotechnical Engineering Report, dated November 14, 2023, by Terracon (Appendix E)

Paleontological Assessment for the Glacier Power and Gas Solar Project, July 18, 2023, BFSA Environmental Services, a Perennial Company (Appendix F)

Storm Water Quality Analysis, November 7, 2024, Q3 Consulting (Appendix G)

Hydrology Report, November 6, 2024, Q3 Consulting (Appendix H)