Initial Study & Environmental Analysis

For:

Desert Valley Company Monofill Expansion Project

GPA 18-0004/ZC 18-0005/IS 18-0020

CUP Amendment 18-0025

Prepared By:

COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

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December 2019

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SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

This document is a ☐ policy-level; ☒ project level Initial Study for evaluation of potential environmental impacts resulting with the proposed New Waste Holding Cell at Desert Valley Company Monofill Project.

B. CEQA REQUIREMENTS AND THE IMPERIAL COUNTY "GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT CEQA AS AMENDED"

As defined by Section 15063 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and Section 7 of the County's "Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA as Amended", an Initial Study is prepared primarily to provide the Lead Agency with information to use as the basis for determining whether an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Mitigated Negative Declaration, Negative Declaration, or other environmental document, would be appropriate for providing the necessary environmental documentation and clearance for any proposed project.

☒ According to Section 15065, an EIR is deemed appropriate for a particular proposal if the following conditions occur:

- The proposal has the potential to substantially degrade quality of the environment.
- The proposal has the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals.
- The proposal has possible environmental effects that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable.
- The proposal could cause direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings.

☐ According to Section 15070(a), a Negative Declaration is deemed appropriate if the proposal would not result in any significant effect on the environment.

☐ According to Section 15070(b), a Mitigated Negative Declaration is deemed appropriate if it is determined that though a proposal could result in a significant effect, mitigation measures are available to reduce these significant effects to insignificant levels.

This Initial Study is prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et. seq.); Section 15070 of the State & County of Imperial's Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, as amended (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000, et. seq.); applicable requirements of the County of Imperial; and the regulations, requirements, and procedures of any other responsible public agency or an agency with jurisdiction by law.

Pursuant to the County of Imperial Guidelines for Implementing CEQA, depending on the project scope, the County of Imperial Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission and/or Planning Director is designated the Lead Agency, in accordance with Section 15050 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Lead Agency is the public agency which has the

principal responsibility for approving the necessary environmental clearances and analyses for any project in the County.

C. INTENDED USES OF INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study is an informational document which is intended to inform County of Imperial decision-makers, other responsible or interested agencies, and the general public of potential environmental effects of the proposed applications. The environmental review process has been established to enable public agencies to evaluate environmental consequences and to examine and implement methods of eliminating or reducing any potentially adverse impacts. While CEQA requires that consideration be given to avoiding environmental damage, the Lead Agency and other responsible public agencies must balance adverse environmental effects against other public objectives, including economic and social goals.

The Initial Study prepared for the project will be circulated for a period of 35 days for public and agency review and comments. At the conclusion, if comments are received, the County Planning & Development Services Department will prepare a document entitled "Responses to Comments" which will be forwarded to any commenting entity and be made part of the record within 10-days of any project consideration.

D. CONTENTS OF INITIAL STUDY

This Initial Study is organized as described below to facilitate a basic understanding of the existing setting and environmental implications of the proposed applications.

SECTION 1

I. INTRODUCTION presents an introduction to the entire report. This section discusses the environmental process, scope of environmental review, and incorporation by reference documents.

SECTION 2

II. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM contains the County's Environmental Checklist Form. The checklist form presents results of the environmental evaluation for the proposed applications and those issue areas that would have either a significant impact, potentially significant impact, or no impact.

PROJECT SUMMARY, LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTINGS describes the proposed project entitlements and required applications. A description of discretionary approvals and permits required for project implementation is also included. It also identifies the location of the project and a general description of the surrounding environmental settings.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS evaluates each response provided in the environmental checklist form. Each response checked in the checklist form is discussed and supported with sufficient data and analysis as necessary. As appropriate, each response discussion describes and identifies specific impacts anticipated with project implementation.

SECTION 3

III. MANDATORY FINDINGS presents Mandatory Findings of Significance in accordance with Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines.

IV. PERSONS AND ORGANIZATION CONSULTED identifies those persons consulted and involved in preparation of this Initial Study.

V. REFERENCES lists bibliographical materials use in the preparation of this document.

VI. FINDINGS

SECTION 4

VIII. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS (IF ANY)

IX. MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM (IF ANY)

E. SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

For evaluation of environmental impacts, each question from the Environmental Checklist Form is summarized and responses are provided according to the analysis undertaken as part of the Initial Study. Impacts and effects will be evaluated and quantified, when appropriate. To each question, there are four possible responses, including:

1. **No Impact**: A "No Impact" response is adequately supported if the impact simply does not apply to the proposed applications.
2. **Less Than Significant Impact**: The proposed applications will have the potential to impact the environment. These impacts, however, will be less than significant; no additional analysis is required.
3. **Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated**: This applies where incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact".
4. **Potentially Significant Impact**: The proposed applications could have impacts that are considered significant. Additional analyses and possibly an EIR could be required to identify mitigation measures that could reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

F. POLICY-LEVEL or PROJECT LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

This Initial Study will be conducted under a ☐ policy-level, ☒ project level analysis. Regarding mitigation measures, it is not the intent of this document to "overlap" or restate conditions of approval that are commonly established for future known projects or the proposed applications. Additionally, those other standard requirements and regulations that any development must comply with, that are outside the County's jurisdiction, are also not considered mitigation measures and therefore, will not be identified in this document.

G. TIERED DOCUMENTS AND INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Information, findings, and conclusions contained in this document are based on incorporation by reference of tiered documentation, which are discussed in the following section.

1. Tiered Documents

As permitted in Section 15152(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, information and discussions from other documents can be included into this document. Tiering is defined as follows:

"Tiering refers to using the analysis of general matters contained in a broader EIR (such as the one prepared for a general plan or policy statement) with later EIRs and negative declarations on narrower projects; incorporating by reference the general discussions from the broader EIR; and concentrating the later EIR or negative declaration solely on the issues specific to the later project."

Tiering also allows this document to comply with Section 15152(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, which discourages redundant analyses, as follows:

"Agencies are encouraged to tier the environmental analyses which they prepare for separate but related projects including the general plans, zoning changes, and development projects. This approach can eliminate repetitive discussion of the same issues and focus the later EIR or negative declaration on the actual issues ripe for decision at each level of environmental review. Tiering is appropriate when the sequence of analysis is from an EIR prepared for a general plan, policy or program to an EIR or negative declaration for another plan, policy, or program of lesser scope, or to a site-specific EIR or negative declaration."

Further, Section 15152(d) of the CEQA Guidelines states:

"Where an EIR has been prepared and certified for a program, plan, policy, or ordinance consistent with the requirements of this section, any lead agency for a later project pursuant to or consistent with the program, plan, policy, or ordinance should limit the EIR or negative declaration on the later project to effects which:

(1) Were not examined as significant effects on the environment in the prior EIR; or

(2) Are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by the choice of specific revisions in the project, by the imposition of conditions, or other means."

2. Incorporation By Reference

Incorporation by reference is a procedure for reducing the size of EIRs/MND and is most appropriate for including long, descriptive, or technical materials that provide general background information, but do not contribute directly to the specific analysis of the project itself. This procedure is particularly useful when an EIR or Negative Declaration relies on a broadly-drafted EIR for its evaluation of cumulative impacts of related projects (Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation v. County of Los Angeles [1986, 177 Ca.3d 300]). If an EIR or Negative Declaration relies on information from a supporting study that is available to the public, the EIR or Negative Declaration cannot be deemed unsupported by evidence or analysis (San Francisco Ecology Center v. City and County of San Francisco [1975, 48 Ca.3d 584, 595]).

When an EIR or Negative Declaration incorporates a document by reference, the incorporation must comply with Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines as follows:

- The incorporated document must be available to the public or be a matter of public record (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15150[a]). The General Plan EIR is available, along with this document, at the County of Imperial Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243, phone (442) 265-1736.
- This document must be available for inspection by the public at an office of the lead agency (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[b]). These documents are available at the County of Imperial Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243; phone (442) 265-1736.
- These documents must summarize the portion of the document being incorporated by reference or briefly describe information that cannot be summarized. Furthermore, these documents must describe the relationship between the incorporated information and the analysis in the tiered documents (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[c]). As discussed above, the tiered EIRs address the entire project site and provide background and inventory information and data which apply to the project site. Incorporated information and/or data will be cited in the appropriate sections.
- These documents must include the State identification number of the incorporated documents (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[d]). The State Clearinghouse Number for the 1993 County of Imperial General Plan Final EIR is SCH #93011023.
- The material to be incorporated in this document will include general background information (CEQA Guidelines Section 15150[f]).

SECTION II. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

1.	**Project Title:**	Desert Valley Company Monofill Expansion Project
2.	**Lead Agency Name and Address:**	Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department
3.	**Contact Person and Phone Number:**	Patricia Valenzuela, Planner IV, 442-265-1749
4.	**Address:**	801 Main Street, El Centro CA, 92243
5.	**E-mail:**	PatriciaValenzuela@co.imperial.ca.us

6. Project Location: The Desert Valley Company (DVC) Monofill Facility is located at 3301 West Highway 86, Brawley, California, 92227. The Project site is located immediately west of the existing monofill on private lands north of Superstition Hills and south of State Route 86 (Highway 86), approximately 12 miles (19.3 km) west of the City of Westmoreland and 4 miles (6.4 km) south of the Salton Sea in the County of Imperial, California **(**See Figures 1 and 2**)**. The Project site is located in Section 33, Range 11 East, Township 12 South within the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Kane Spring, California 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle (Assessor's Parcel No. [APN] 019-100-004-001).

7.	**Project Sponsor's Name and Address:**	**CalEnergy, 7030 Gentry Road, Calipatria, CA 92233**
8.	**General Plan Designation:**	**Recreation and Open Space**
9.	**Zoning:**	**S-2: Open Space Preservation**

10. Description of Project:

The Desert Valley Company Monofill (DVCM) is an active Class II Solid Waste Management Facility (SWMF) used for the disposal of certain geothermal non-hazardous waste streams and byproducts generated by CalEnergy Operating Corporation's (CalEnergy) geothermal power plant operations in Imperial County, California. The Desert Valley Company Monofill Facility is located at 3301 West State Route in Brawley, California and is permitted under Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 05-0020, Solid Waste Facility (SWF) Permit No. 13-AA-0022, and Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) R7-2016-0016. CalEnergy (Applicant) is requesting an amendment to CUP No. 05-0020, a General Plan Amendment and a Zone Change to facilitate expansion of the existing Desert Valley Company Monofill for construction, operation, closure and post-closure of a new waste storage cell (referred to herein as Cell 4). At the current rate of waste disposal, Cell 3 is projected to reach its design capacity in 2025 (CalRecycle, 2019a). CalEnergy thus needs to have Cell 4 operational by January 2024 to transition waste storage activities from Cell 3 to Cell 4.

The purpose of the Project is to provide additional disposal capacity through continued operation of the DVCM to meet the solid waste management needs of CalEnergy's geothermal plants. Development of additional economically viable disposal capacity, in a reasonable timeframe, is of vital importance to meet CalEnergy's projected needs, as the existing monofill approaches capacity. The proposed Project will capitalize on the unique opportunity to utilize infrastructure at the existing DVCM facility to facilitate the additional disposal capacity.

The existing DVC Monofill Facility (DVCM), which began operations in May 1991, has three (3) storage/disposal cells (Cell 1, Cell 2 and Cell 3). The total site occupies 181.5 acres, of which approximately 68 acres (the total permitted area) is enclosed by fencing which surrounds the landfill operating area. A total of 28.9 acres of the site is permitted for disposal operations. Cells 1, 2 and the tie-in area in between the cells were closed in 2008 and a permanent cap was constructed. Cell 3, with a design capacity of approximately 1.3 million cubic yards (cy), is the only active cell currently receiving waste. Existing improvements at the DVCM are listed on **Table 1**.

TABLE 1. EXISTING IMPROVEMENTS AT THE DESERT VALLEY MONOFILL

— Monofill Cells 1, 2 and 3 (a)	— Meteorology collection station
— Private single-lane road from State Route 86	— Four (4) air quality total particulate sampling stations;
— Office and administration building	— Seven (7) vadose zone monitoring wells
— Two (2) Leachate Ponds for Cells 1 and 2	— Six (6) radon monitoring probes in Cells 1 and 2 (b)
— One (1) Leachate Pond for Cell 3	— Pole gate at entrance on SR-86
— Equipment storage building	— Manual gate at Monofill fence
— On-site septic tank /leach field	— Fuel tank (aboveground)
— One (1) water well (c)	— Hazardous Material Storage Containment Structure
— Two (2) above ground water storage tanks	— Chain link fencing surrounding entire Monofill Facility
— Eleven (11) groundwater monitoring wells	

Notes:
(a) Cells 1 and 2 Closed in May 2008. Cell 3 is the only(the only active cell currently receiving waste
(b) Six additional radon monitoring probes are planned for Cell 3 upon closure.
(c) Provides water to the office/administrative building and for the soil stabilize

As identified in CUP No. 05-0020 and SWFP Permit No. 13-AA-0022, the waste stream accepted at the DVCM is limited to geothermal filter cake, drilling mud materials and cuttings, soils containing geothermal materials, and incidental plastic sheeting used as truckbed liners by the waste transport trucks. These materials contain a number of substances including arsenic, salts, metals, and organic hydrocarbons and Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials (NORM)[1]**.** No municipal solid waste is accepted at the DVCM and it is not open for public and/or commercial use at any time. The permitted hours and days of operation are 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Sunday. The amount of non-hazardous wastes that can be received is limited to a maximum of 750 tons per day and 273,750 tons annually in accordance with current CUP and SWFP.

Solid waste materials are delivered to the monofill by truck. The covered loads are transported from the Salton Sea area, via a designated truck haul route that includes Sinclair Road, Gentry Road, Bowles Road, Lack Road and State Routes 78 / 86. The use of alternate truck routes for deliveries to the DVCM and the use of an alternative truck scale in Calipatria, California are also allowed. The DVCM is accessed via a single lane road that connects to State Route 86 (Highway 86). The access road is approximately 1.25 miles long and is asphalt surfaced.

[1] The monofill operates in conformance with a "Radiation Monitoring Plan", that requires monitoring of workers stationed at the site to ensure that they are not subject to any impacts from radiation.

Trucks arriving at the DVC facility are inspected prior to off-loading and incoming materials are analyzed based upon present sampling and analysis requirements. Next, the trucks are cleared for access to the operational cell and offloaded. After off-loading, site equipment is used to grade and compact the materials. Once the material is graded and compacted, the surface is sprayed with a polymer-based sealant (Soil Seal), which penetrates the graded surface and creates a stable crust and provides for wind protection. The current Monofill typically employs four (4) full-time staff.

The proposed Project includes the expansion of the existing Desert Valley Company Monofill with the addition of waste storage Cell 4 and associated facilities that include:

- a new leachate pond for Cell 4 (1.2 acres);
- the addition and extension of stormwater diversion dikes to divert surface water runoff around the Project site;
- minor extensions/modifications to internal roads to provide access to Cell 4; and,
- installation of a new water well for use during construction
- Additional air quality particulate sampling stations, and additional groundwater monitoring wells

The proposed site plan is shown on **Figure 3**. The design of Cell 4 would be consistent with Cell 3, with a liner system designed to a Class I hazardous waste standard and other criteria that conform to Class II designated waste standards and the existing monofill's permits. All other aspects of the proposed Project, such as operations, maintenance, monitoring, closure/post closure activities, recordkeeping and financial assurances would also be consistent with those of the existing monofill.

Cell 4 would be built in two (2) phases – Phase 1 and 2, referred to herein as Cells 4A and 4B, respectively. Similar to Cell 3, Cells 4A and 4B would have a combined capacity of approximately 1.3 million CY; a projected lifespan of 28.6 years; and, would occupy a surface area of approximately 50 acres (CalEnergy, 2018). Construction of Cell 4A, with an overall area of 24 acres, would be constructed first and would take approximately 12 months to complete. Cell 4A, upon issuance all required permits, would begin to receive solid waste once Cell 3 reaches capacity. Construction of Cell 4B, with a surface area of 21 acres, would commence when there is a demand for additional waste storage capacity (approximately two years prior to Cell 4A reaching capacity). Each cell would include a multi-layer leachate collection and liner system designed and constructed per State of California Title 23, Division 3, Chapter 15, Article 4; Construction Standards for Class I Units.

To prepare the disposal site, required construction activities include access road improvements; onsite grading, berm and levee development, soil compaction, installation of two plastic membranes; and other ancillary improvements required for safe operation. To maintain operational integrity, a series of diversion berms would be extended and/or constructed around the south and western perimeter of Cell 4 to divert surface water runoff from multiple existing ephemeral surface water features around the Project site. The surface water flow would be routed around the landfill facilities and allowed to rejoin the existing surface waters downstream. A 50-foot buffer would also be established along the outer edge of Cell 4 and a new leachate pond would be constructed along the eastern edge of Cell 4B. During construction, portable office trailers may be placed on the Project site to accommodate the construction personnel.

11. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The area surrounding the Project site is very similar to the site on which the existing monofill is located. Man-made disturbances are evident in some sections but not to a major extent. The most prominent feature in the area is State Route 86 (Highway 86), which is located to the north and east of the existing monofill. Kane Springs Jeep Trail crosses Section 29 northeast of the Project site. An Imperial Irrigation District electrical transmission line and its maintenance road cross Sections 27, 28 and 34, running diagonally from northwest to southeast less than a mile from the Project site. Aside from the Kane Jeep Trail, no other man-made features are evident in the immediate area. The Elmore Desert Ranch Community is approximately 1.75 miles northeast of the Project site.

12. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

In order to construct and operate Cell 4, an amendment to CUP No. 05-0020; a General Plan amendment and Zone Change is required (See Figures 4 and 5). Other agency permits and approvals are listed below:

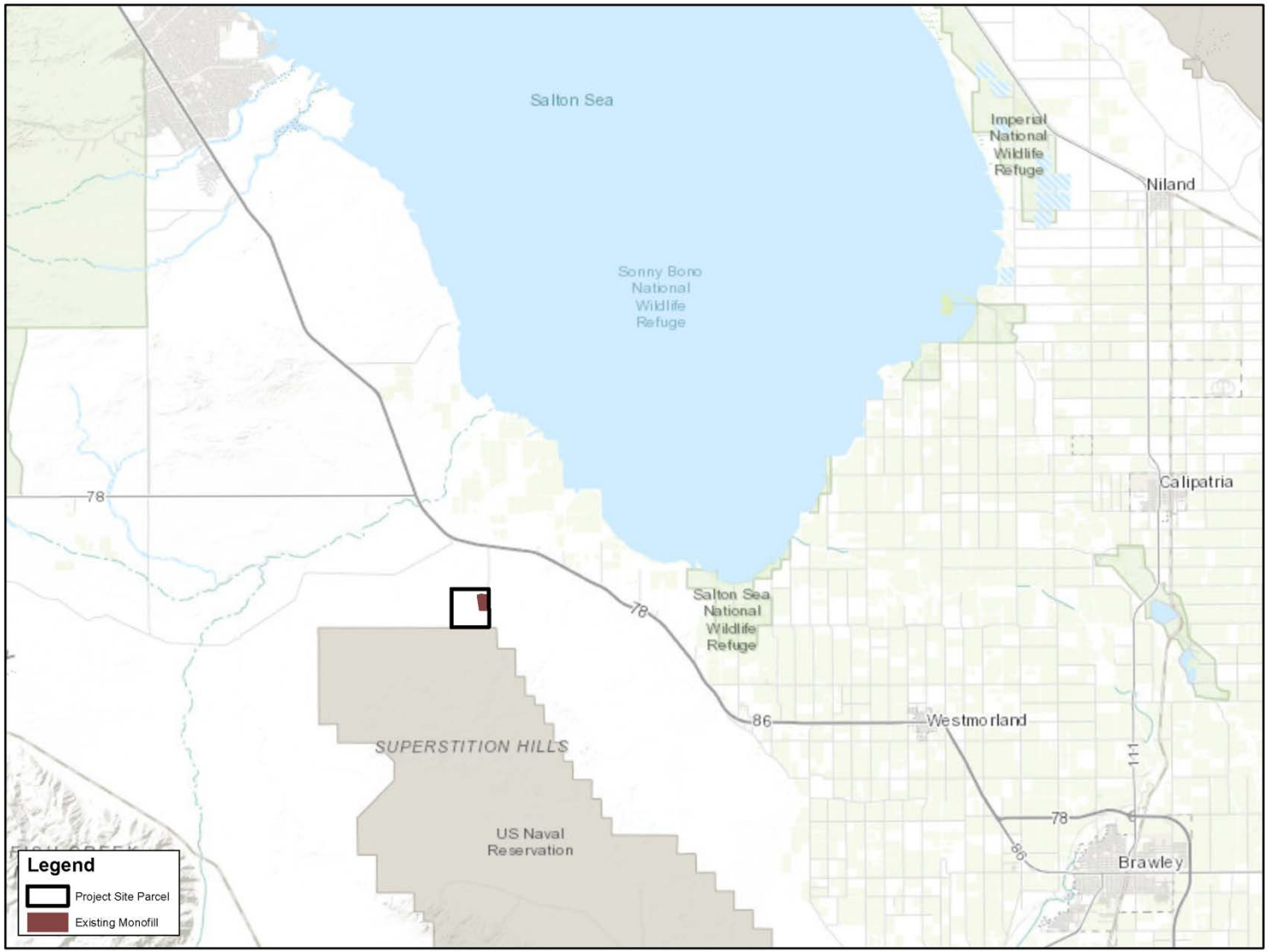
- Imperial County Public Health – Solid Waste Facility Permit Department
- Imperial County Air Pollution Control District – Authority to Construct and Permit to Operate
- State Water Resources Control Board – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit
- Regional Water Quality Control Board (Region 8) – Waste Discharge Requirements
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – 404 of the Clean Water Act Permit
- California Dept. of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) – 1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement

13. Native American Consultation: Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1?

In compliance with Senate Bill 18 (SB 18; Government Code Section 65352.3), the Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department (ICPDSD) sent letters to 12 federally recognized California Native American Tribes and 4 tribal representatives on November 19, 2018, providing notification of the Project and an invitation to participate in consultation. By law, tribes have 90 days from the date of receipt of the notice to request consultation (Government Code 65352.3(a)(2)).

In compliance with Assembly Bill 52 (Chapter 532, Statutes 2014), the ICPDSD sent letters to two (2) California Native American Tribes on November 21, 2018, providing notification of the Project and an invitation to participate in consultation. Under AB-52, California Native Tribes have 30 days from the date of receipt of the notice to request consultation.

As of the date of this Initial Study, no consultation requests have been received.

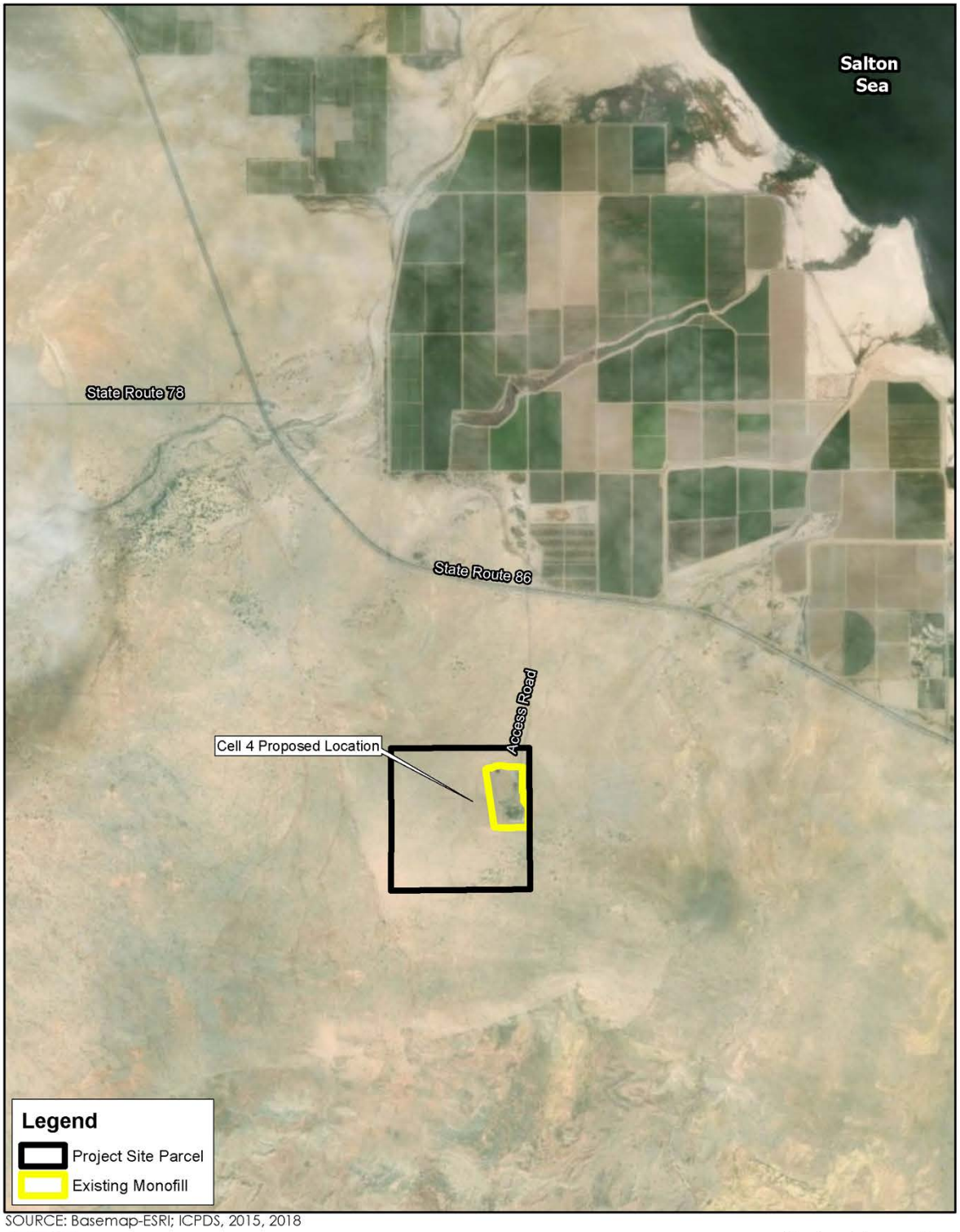


SOURCE: Basemap-ESRI; ICPDS, 2015, 2018

Regional Location

Desert Valley Company Monofill Expansion Project, Cell 4

Figure 1



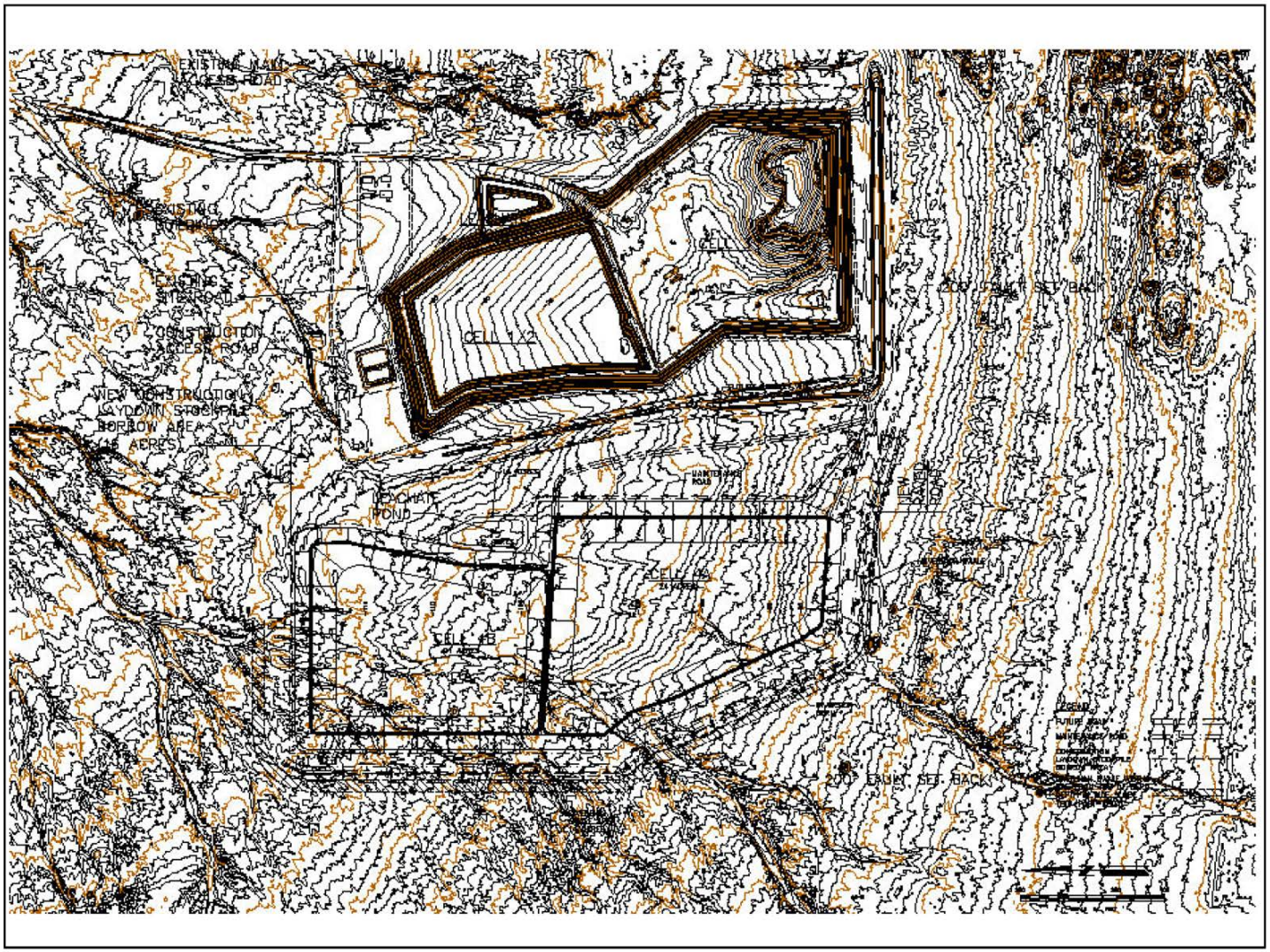
SOURCE: Basemap-ESRI; ICPDS, 2015, 2018

BRG CONSULTING, INC.

Project Location

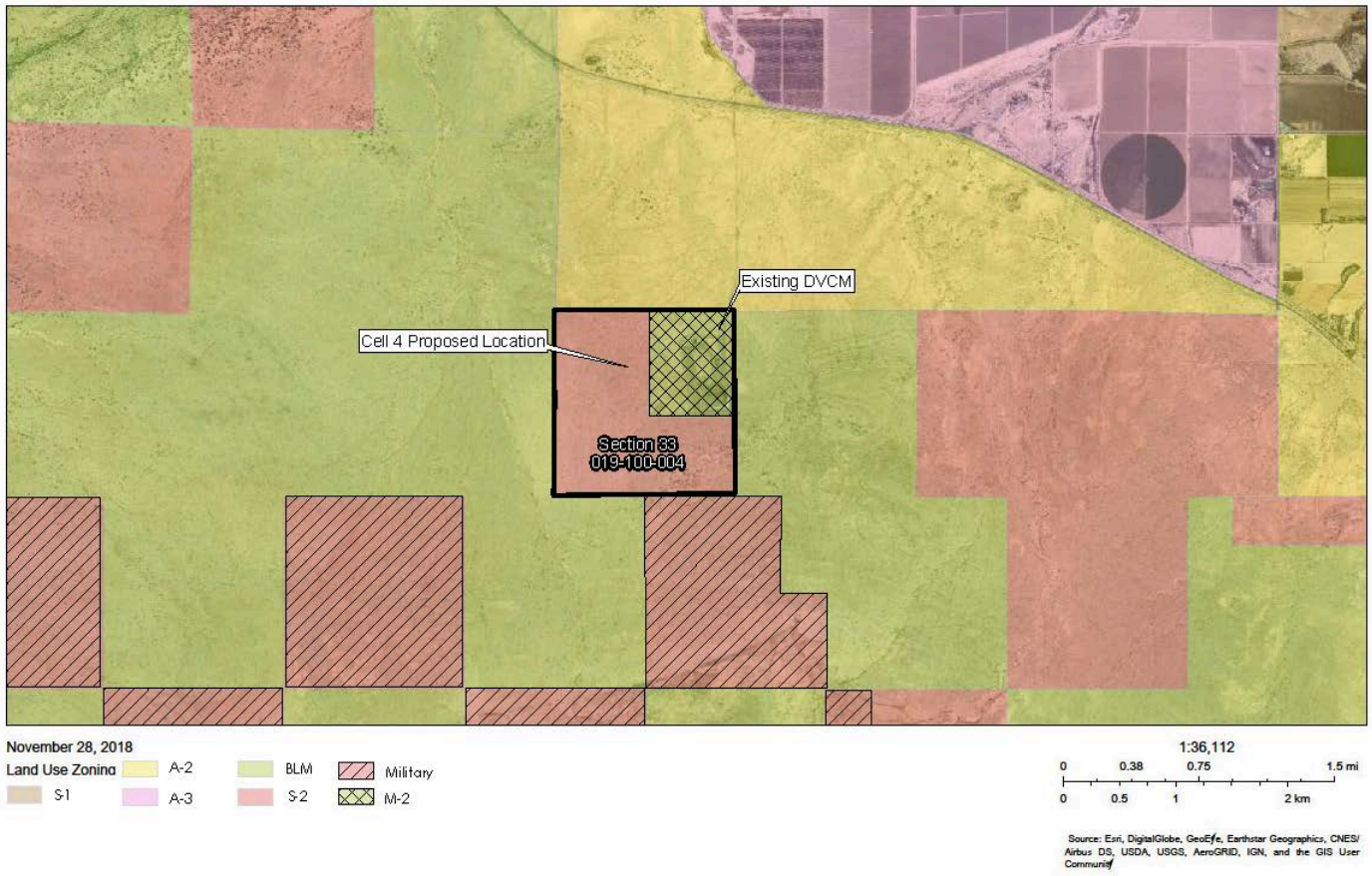
Desert Valley Company Monofill Expansion Project, Cell 4

Figure 2



SOURCE: Veizades + Associates, 2019

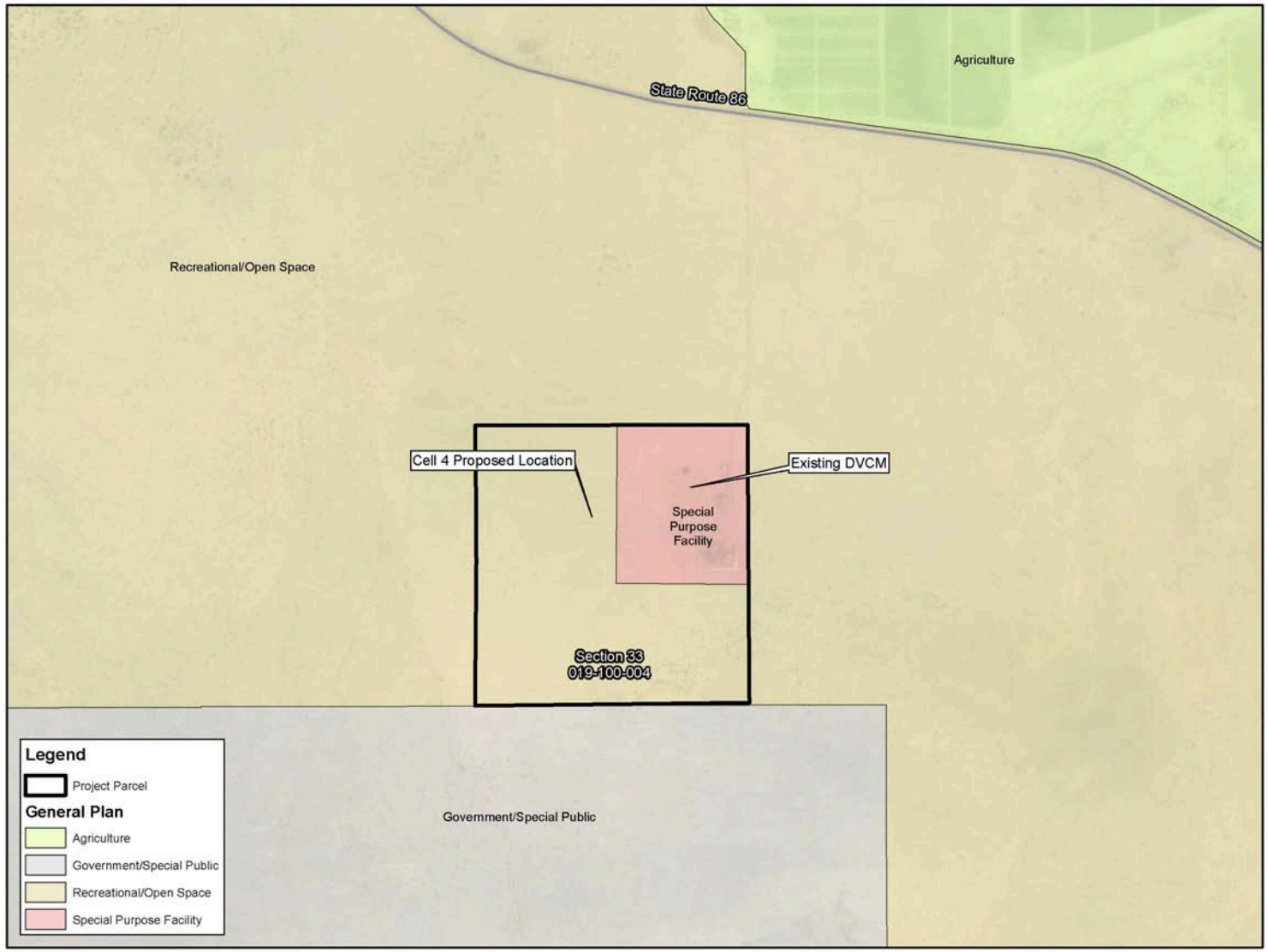
Site Plan
Desert Valley Company Monofill Expansion Project, Cell 4
Figure 3



SOURCE: Imperial County Planning & Development Services, Land Use Zoning, 2018

N

Proposed Zone Change
Desert Valley Company Monofill Expansion Project, Cell 4
Figure 4



General Plan Amendment

Desert Valley Company Monofill Expansion Project, Cell 4

Figure 5

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources	☒ Air Quality
☒ Biological Resources	☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Energy
☒ Geology /Soils	☒ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☒ Hazards & Hazardous Materials
☒ Hydrology / Water Quality	☐ Land Use / Planning	☐ Mineral Resources
☐ Noise	☐ Population / Housing	☐ Public Services
☐ Recreation	☒ Transportation/Traffic	☒ Tribal Cultural Resources
☒ Utilities / Service Systems	☐ Wildfire	☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance

ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE (EEC) DETERMINATION

After Review of the Initial Study, the Environmental Evaluation Committee has:

☐ Found that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ Found that 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.

☐ Found that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ Found that 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.

☐ Found that 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 Final EIR pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier Final EIR, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE DE MINIMIS IMPACT FINDING: ☐ Yes ☐ No

EEC VOTES	YES	NO	ABSENT
PUBLIC WORKS	☐	☐	☐
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SVCS	☐	☐	☐
OFFICE EMERGENCY SERVICES	☐	☐	☐
APCD	☐	☐	☐
AG	☐	☐	☐
SHERIFF DEPARTMENT	☐	☐	☐
ICPDS	☐	☐	☐

Jim Minnick, Director of Planning/EEC Chairman

Date:

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Location

The Desert Valley Company (DVC) Monofill Facility is located at 3301 West Highway 86, Brawley, California, 92227. The Project site is located on private lands north of Superstition Hills and south of State Route 86 (Highway 86), approximately 12 miles (19.3 km) west of the City of Westmoreland and 4 miles (6.4 km) south of the Salton Sea in the County of Imperial, California. The Project site is located in Section 33, Range 11 East, Township 12 South within USGS Kane Spring, California 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle (APN 019-100-004-001).

Project Summary

The proposed Project includes the expansion of the existing Desert Valley Company Monofill with the addition of waste storage Cell 4 and associated facilities that include:

- a new leachate pond for Cell 4;
- the addition and extension of stormwater diversion dikes to divert surface water runoff around the Project site;
- minor extensions/modifications to internal roads to provide access to Cell 4; and,
- installation of a new water well for use during construction

The design of Cell 4 would be consistent with Cell 3, with a liner system designed to a Class I hazardous waste standard and other criteria will conform to Class II designated waste standards and the existing monofill's permits. The proposed site plan is shown on Figure 3. All other aspects of the Project, such as operations, maintenance, monitoring, recordkeeping and financial assurances will also be consistent with those of the existing monofill.

The Project includes an amendment to the General Plan due to change the land use designation on approximately three-quarters of the parcel (458.5 acres) from "Recreational/ Open Space" to "Special Purpose Facility". The Project also includes a Zone Change for this same area to change the zoning from S-2 (Open Space/Preservation) to M-2 (Medium Industrial).

Environmental Setting

The Project site is immediately adjacent to the existing Desert Valley Company Monofill and is surrounded by open desert on the north, south and west. Surrounding properties exhibit the same desert features as the Project site, namely sparse vegetation, seasonal washes, and with the exception of the monofill facilities, few man-made uses. San Sebastian Marsh-San Felipe Creek, a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), is located approximately mile north of the Project site. This ACEC is a protected wildlife habitat. Surface water drainage from the existing monofill flows towards to the Salton Sea, which is located approximately four (4) miles northeast of the Project site. The Superstition Hills are located south of the existing monofill.

General Plan Consistency

The Project is located within the unincorporated area of Imperial County. The existing General Plan land use designation is " Recreation and Open Space" and the existing zoning is S-2 (Open Space/Preservation). With a General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation from "Recreational/ Open Space" to "Special Purpose Facility" and a Zone Change to change the zoning from S-2 (Open Space/ Preservation) to M-2 (Medium Industrial), construction and operation of the expanded monofill will be allowed with an amendment to the existing Conditional Use Permit.

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).

5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

    a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.

    b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.

    c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.

7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9) The explanation of each issue should identify:

    a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and

    b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	No Impact **(NI)**
I. AESTHETICS.				
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially degrade the 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 point). If the Project is in an urbanized area, would the Project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

a) Less than Significant. The Project site, which is surrounded by open desert to the north, south and west, and by the existing DVC monofill on the east, is not considered to be a scenic vista nor is it an area designated as a scenic route in Imperial County (County of Imperial, 2008b). There are no designated scenic vistas or viewpoints on or near the Project site that would include views of the proposed expansion area. No adverse impacts on a scenic vista have been identified and this environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

b) No Impact. State Route (Highway) 86, the highway nearest the Project site, is located more than 1 ¼ miles from the northern and western boundary of the existing DVC Monofill. State Route (Highway) 86 is not designated, nor is it eligible for designation, as a State scenic highway per Caltrans State Scenic Highway Program (Caltrans 2017). The Project site does not contain scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, or state scenic highways. No impacts have been identified for this issue area and this environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

c) Less than Significant. The DVC Monofill is an existing facility in operation since 1991 and has become an established and accepted part of the landscape. The proposed Project includes the addition of a new solid waste disposal cell (Cell 4) immediately west of, and adjacent to the existing monofill. The Project would expand an existing use and increase the permitted disposal area from 28.9-acres to 74.3-acres. Similar to the existing monofill, the final heights of the perimeter dikes and the waste disposal cells would be approximately 20 feet and 30 feet above existing grades, respectively (Veizades & Associates, 2019). Given the distance between the Project site and the nearest public viewers (motorists on State Route (Highway) 86) and the similarity in the height of existing and proposed features, the visual character and quality of public views of the Project site and its

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

surroundings would not be substantially degraded. This environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

d) Less than Significant. The existing DVC Monofill operates mainly during daylight hours, Monday through Sunday, from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. However, lighting that is shielded and directed to on-site areas, is provided for Monofill operations that occur after sunset or before sunrise (CalEnergy, 2014). Lighting for the employee parking lot and maintenance areas is also provided.

Operations at the expanded Cell 4 would also be conducted from 6 AM to 6 PM, as allowed under the current CUP 05-0020. In the event the Project requires nighttime construction, directional lighting fixtures would be used to avoid light spillage onto adjacent properties and to minimize nighttime glare. Impacts would be less than significant, and this environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

II. AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES.

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 Department 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b)	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d)	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

Discussion:

a) No Impact. According to the 2016 Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Map for Imperial County, the Project site does not contain Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance (California Dept. of Conservation, 2016a). No impacts related to the conversion of FMMP farmlands to non-agricultural use would occur. This environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

b) No Impact. The Project site is located within an S-2 Zone, which is considered to be the Open Space Preservation Zone. While the storage of agricultural products is an allowable use within the S-2 Zone, agricultural operations or other agricultural uses are not allowed (County of Imperial, 2017). Additionally, the Project site is not covered under a Williamson Act contract (California Dept. of Conservation, 2016b). For these reasons, the proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. No impacts are identified for this issue area. This environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

c) No Impact. Neither the Project site nor surrounding areas are used for timber production or are defined as forest lands. The proposed Project would not conflict with any zoning designations designed to preserve timber or agricultural resources. No impacts are identified for this issue area. This environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

d) No Impact. There are no existing forest lands either on-site or in the immediate vicinity of the Project site. The proposed Project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, no impact would occur under this threshold. This environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

e) No Impact. The proposed Project does not include changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, would result in the conversion of neighboring farmland to non-agricultural use. The Project site is surrounded by open desert and the nearest agricultural lands occur approximately one mile to the north, across State Route 86/Highway 86. The proposed Project would not result in the conversion of farmlands off-site to non-agricultural uses. No impacts are identified for this issue area. This environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

III. AIR QUALITY.

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district 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?	☒	☐	☐	☐
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?	☒	☐	☐	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	*No Impact* (NI)
c) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

a) Potentially Significant Impact. The Project site is located within the Salton Sea Air Basin (Basin), which includes all of Imperial County and a portion of central Riverside County. The existing DVC Monofill is under the jurisdiction of the Imperial County APCD (ICAPCD) and operates in compliance with ICAPCD PTO #21208-3.

Implementation of the Project would result in additional air pollutant emissions generated by construction activities, disposal operations, soil disturbance activities, windblown dust and post-closure/maintenance activities. This may conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, and impacts may be potentially significant. Potential radiological air quality impacts from the proposed Monofill Facility include radon emission from the geothermal filter cake material and suspension of dust during loading, off-loading, and placement and compaction of the geothermal filter cake material. An air quality and greenhouse gas emission analysis will be prepared for the Project and the EIR will evaluate these potentially significant air quality impacts.

b) Potentially Significant Impact. Currently, the Salton Sea Air Basin is either in attainment or unclassified for all federal and state air pollutant standards, with the exception of O_3 (8-hour), PM_{10} (total suspended particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter) and $PM_{2.5}$ (total suspected particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter).

The proposed Project would extend the operational life of the DVCM, thereby increasing the duration of air pollutant emissions generated during construction, operation and closure/post closure activities. The proposed Project, in combination with cumulative projects, could result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of O3, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ due to its longer operational life, increased total refuse to be disposed, and continued truck traffic associated with the monofill's operation. Also, of concern are the potential air quality impacts associated with the naturally occurring radioactive materials in the geothermal filter cake. The EIR will evaluate these potentially significant adverse air quality impacts.

c) Less Than Significant Impact. Atmospheric impacts from landfill disposal sites are typically associated with odors and gaseous emissions from organic matter decay processes. The proposed expansion of the DVC Monofill would not accept residential or commercial refuse, but rather nonhazardous geothermal filter cake and geothermal drilling mud materials, soils containing geothermal materials and incidental planning sheeting used transport truckbed lining (as specified in Solid Waste Facility Permit 13-00-0020). The nature of the material disposed minimizes "traditional" odor impacts associated with disposal site operations.

Potential sources of odors during construction and operation activities include diesel exhaust from construction equipment and diesel vehicles. These odors would not affect a substantial number of people and dissipate as a

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

function of distance from the source. While the proposed Project's odor impact is expected to be less than significant, this impact will be further evaluated in the EIR.

d) Less than Significant Impact. The Elmore Desert Ranch Community, approximately 1.75 miles northeast of the DVCM, is the nearest sensitive receptor in terms of potential human exposure outside the monofill facility area. While the Project is not expected to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations this impact is considered potentially significant and will be further evaluated in the EIR.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.

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?	☒	☐	☐	☐
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?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c)	Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☒	☐	☐	☐
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?	☒	☐	☐	☐
e)	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☒	☐	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

Discussion:

a) Potentially Significant Impact. The Project has the potential to adversely affect candidate, sensitive, or special status species including flat-tailed horned lizard, Palm Springs pocket mouse, Burrowing owl and Le Conte's thrasher. Field surveys confirmed the presence of the flat-tailed horned lizard and the Palm Spring pocket mouse. The Project area is suitable or marginally suitable for special status plant species including the Salton milk vetch, Gravel milk vetch , Ashen forget me not, Torrey's box thorn, Thurber's pilostyles, and, Mojave indigo bush; however, recent surveys for rare plants were negative (Chambers Group, 2019). Implementation of the proposed Project has the potential to have a substantial adverse effect on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status. This impact is considered potentially significant. A biological resources technical study that will address the proposed Project's potential impacts on biological resources will be prepared and included in the EIR. This will include impacts to any wildlife movement corridors or native wildlife nursery sites.

b) Potentially Significant Impact. Four vegetation communities were observed within the project area including Creosote Bush Scrub, Creosote Bush–Honey Mesquite Scrub, Rigid Spineflower– Hairy Desert Sunflower Sparsely Vegetated Desert Pavement Alliance, and Tamarisk – Honey Mesquite – Four Wing Saltbush Scrub (CalEnergy, 2019). Implementation of the Project has the potential to have substantial adverse effects on sensitive natural communities. This impact is considered potentially significant and will be further evaluated in the EIR.

c) Potentially Significant Impact. Ephemeral streams in the project area are characterized as a braided channel system that contains multiple channels that divide and rejoin to form a pattern of gently curved channel segments, separated by exposed ephemeral islands or channel bars (Chambers Group, 2019a). The majority of the streams are tributaries to San Felipe Creek and the Salton Sea.

The proposed Project and its associated roadways and laydown areas within Section 33 would result in the permanent removal and or interruption of jurisdictional drainages, and temporary interruption of additional jurisdictional drainages during construction. These impacts are considered potentially significant and will be further evaluated in the EIR.

d) Potentially Significant Impact. See Response to Item IV.b.

e) Potentially Significant Impact. The Imperial County General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element (County of Imperial 2016) contains an Open Space Conservation Policy that requires detailed investigations to be conducted to determine the significance, location, extent, and condition of natural resources in the County, and to notify any agency responsible for protecting plant and wildlife before approving a project which would impact a rare, sensitive, or unique plant or wildlife habitat. As noted above, the Project has the potential to result in significant impacts to candidate, sensitive, or special status species, ephemeral streams and wildlife corridors. Such impacts could conflict with Open Space and Conservation Element and are considered potentially significant. a biological resources technical study will be prepared for the Project and the results will be included in the EIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

f) No Impact. The Project site is not located within an area that is subject to a Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. No impact would occur.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES.

Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion:

a, b, and c) Potentially Significant Impact. A Phase I Cultural Resources report was prepared for the Project in 2019. The Phase I report included a records search of the South Coast Information Center and a pedestrian survey of the 359-acre project area encompassing the existing DVCM and extending past the monofill facility to the west (Chambers, 2019b). The records search indicated that 34 cultural resources were previously recorded within the area of potential effect (APE). The records search identified an additional 36 cultural resources within a one-half-mile radius of the Project, all of which are prehistoric. A record search of the Sacred Lands File by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) in November 2017 did not indicate the presence of any sacred sites or locations of religious or ceremonial importance within the area. A review of additional historic sources did not indicate the presence of any historic resources within the project. Aerial photographs indicated no structures were ever located on or near the APE until facilities for the existing DVCM were constructed in the early 1990s.

The field survey resulted in the relocation of four (4) previously recorded sites (CA-IMP-6144, CA-IMP-6145, CA-IMP-6262, CA-IMP-6269), and the documentation of ten (10) newly discovered prehistoric isolated artifacts. Project-related ground disturbing activities could cause a substantial adverse change in a historical or archaeological resource. Although unlikely, there is a potential for unknown human remains to be unearthed during earthwork activities. Therefore, a potentially significant impact is identified for these resources. The findings of the cultural resources report will be included in the EIR analysis.

VI. ENERGY.

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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

a) Less Than Significant. During construction energy usage will primarily be diesel engines, and during operation energy use will not change significantly from current consumption levels. No wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation would occur. This is considered a less than significant impact and will be further evaluated in the EIR.

b) No Impact. Approval of the project will allow the continued operations of CalEnergy's geothermal facilities; which contribute positively to California's renewal energy goal. The Project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and no impacts would occur under this criteria.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS.

Would the project:

a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving:				
1) 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?	☒	☐	☐	☐
2) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☒	☐	☐	☐
3) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
4) Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☒	☐	☐	☐
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 on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☒	☐	☐	☐

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	*No Impact* (NI)
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion:

a.1) and a.2) Potentially Significant Impact. The Project site is located in southern California, an area known to be geologically active and which is subject to seismic events. However, according to the Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42, the Project site is not located in an area of a known earthquake fault as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map.

The proposed Project would not result in exposing people to impacts beyond those normally anticipated within the region. The existing DVCM operates under a seismic monitoring program approved by the Imperial County Public Works Department (CalEnergy, 2018), with a data reported monthly to regulatory agencies. The expansion of the monofill would result in changes to topography and would be designed to meet stringent landfill regulatory requirements for seismic stability identified in Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations. A soils and geology report was prepared for the Project (Terraphase Engineering, 2019) and will be discussed in the EIR. The EIR will evaluate the potentially significant adverse impacts related to seismicity, fault-rupture and ground failure.

a.3 and a.4) Less Than Significant. Groundwater, at between 58 and 66 feet below the ground surface, is too deep across the Project site to produce significant liquefaction settlements. Additionally, seismically-induced landsliding is not considered a significant hazard on the Project site due to the predominantly level topography (Terraphase Engineering, 2019).

b) and c) Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed Project would result in changes to the current topography because of grading and filling. Although these changes will be designed to meet stringent landfill regulatory requirements, there is a potential for soil erosion, loss of topsoil, and geologic instability. The EIR will evaluate these potentially significant adverse impacts.

d) Potentially Significant Impact. Sediments encountered during preliminary geotechnical investigations contain significant quantities of clay (Terraphase Engineering, 2019). These materials may exhibit expansive (shrink-swell) characteristics due to the water-holding capacity of clay minerals. Significant shrink-swell behavior can adversely affect the integrity of foundations, fill slopes, and associated structures. The EIR will evaluate the potentially significant adverse impacts related to expansive soils.

e) No Impact. Soils in the project area currently support the existing septic system and leach field that provide the small amount of wastewater needed for monofill employees. This same infrastructure would be used for the proposed Project. No impacts are expected.

f) Potentially Significant Impact. A paleontological resources report was prepared for the Project which included a paleontological literature review and record search for a study area consisting of all of Section 33, plus a half-

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

mile buffer (Chambers, 2019c). The Project area was found to be underlain by Quaternary Alluvium (Qal), the Brawley Formation (Qb) and the Lake Cahuilla Beds (Qs). While museum collection records indicate that no fossil localities have been recorded within a half mile of the study area, the Brawley Formation and the Lake Cahuilla Beds have a high paleontological potential. Ground disturbing activities associated with the Project could destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature. This impact is considered potentially significant and will be discussed in the EIR.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS.

Would the project:

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan or policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion:

a) Potentially Significant. Greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted by human activity are implicated in global climate change or global warming. The principal GHGs are Carbon Dioxide (CO_2), Methane (CH_4), Nitrous Oxide (N_2O), and Fluorinated Gases. The transportation sector (e.g., on-road motor vehicles, off-highway vehicles, aircraft) is the single largest source of GHG emissions and accounts for one-half of GHG emissions globally. Short-term greenhouse gas emissions from construction could come from construction equipment, construction support vehicles, material truck trips, and worker vehicle trips. Long-term emissions would come from combustion of natural gas and diesel fuel (producing greenhouse gas emissions of CO2 and CH4), as well as from fugitive emissions (a component of fugitive emissions is methane). Indirect emissions associated with electrical generation and with worker and truck transportation offsite could also result. An air quality and greenhouse gas emission analysis will be prepared for the Project and potentially significant impacts related to GHG emissions will be addressed in the EIR.

b) Potentially Significant. The Project would be considered to have a significant impact if it would be in conflict with State plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. GHG emissions and the Project's consistency with applicable GHG plans, policies, and regulations will be evaluated in the EIR.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.

Would the project:

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

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**
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?	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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 or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

a) Less Than Significant. The existing DVCM is a Class II solid waste management facility that is permitted to accept non-hazardous waste streams and byproducts generated by CalEnergy's geothermal power plant operations in Imperial County. The waste stream includes geothermal filter cake, geothermal drilling mud materials, soils containing geothermal materials and incidental plastic sheeting used as truckbed liners of the geothermal waste transport trucks. The disposal of hazardous waste (as defined in 40 CFR Part 26) and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) wastes (as defined in 40 CFR Part 761) is prohibited under SWF Permit No. 13-AA-002.

The DVCM is subject to California's Hazardous Materials Business Plan requirements, specified by Sections 2729 to 2732 of Title 19 of the California Code of Regulations (CalEnergy, 2018). The regulations require:

- Annual updates of the site's chemical inventory to the Department of Toxic Substances Control, (as the State Emergency Response Commission and the Local Emergency Planning Committee).

- An Emergency Response Plan to minimize the impact of any possible releases.
- Training of employees on emergency response procedures.

The proposed Project would require the limited transport, storage, and use of fuels, polymer-based sealants, and other fluids for the fueling/servicing of construction equipment. These practices are already in place for current operations and the Project would not substantially increase the transport or use of hazardous materials above current levels.

Transportation, storage, and disposal/recycling of such products are extensively regulated at the local, state and federal levels. Current and future construction and operations are, and will be, required to be in compliance with these regulations. The current inventory of chemicals on site are not expected to increase markedly due to the addition of Cell 4 and the current Hazardous Materials Business Plan for the monofill would be updated to reflect any changes. Because operations for Cell 4 would be similar to operations at Cell 3, impacts would be less than significant and will be evaluated in the EIR.

b) Potentially Significant. Based on a search of the Government Code Section 65962.5 "Cortese" list, the Desert Valley Company Monofill is not listed as a hazardous materials site and is not near any superfund or cleanup sites. According to the State Water Resources Control Board, there are no Underground Storage Tanks in the vicinity of the landfill. This environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

c) No Impact. The proposed project would not emit hazardous emissions, handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. The nearest schools (Westmore Elementary School and Westmoreland Junior High School) are located 13 miles east of the Project site.

d) No Impact. Based on a search of the Government Code Section 65962.5 "Cortese" list, the DVCM is not listed as a hazardous materials site. No impacts would occur, and this environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

e) No Impact. The Project is noted located within the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for Imperial County Airports (County of Imperial, 1996) or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The nearest public use airport, Salton Sea Airport, is located 13 miles northwest the Project site. For these reasons, the Project would not result in a safety hazard or expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels. No impacts have been identified for this issue area and this environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

f) No Impact. An Emergency Response/Contingency Plan for the existing DVCM is included in the Desert Valley Company's Hazardous Materials Business Plan. Post-project operations would be similar to existing operations and no feature of the proposed Project would impair implementation of or physically interfere with any adopted emergency plan. The proposed Project would not generate large amounts of traffic due to the SWFP's limitation of 38 vehicles per day. Additionally, the proposed Project would not involve the modification of existing roadways along the designated or alternative truck haul routes, such that off-site evacuation routes would be affected. Therefore, the proposed Project would not interfere with any adopted emergency response plans, and no impact would occur. This environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

g) Less than Significant. The Project site is located in the unincorporated area of Imperial County. According to the Seismic and Public Safety Element of the General Plan, the potential for a major fire in the unincorporated areas of the County is generally low (County of Imperial, n.d.). This is considered a less than significant impact.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY.

Would the project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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:				
1) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☒	☐	☐	☐
2) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☒	☐	☐	☐
3) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional resources of polluted runoff; or	☒	☐	☐	☐
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to Project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

a) Potentially Significant Impact. The permitted waste stream accepted at the DVCM includes geothermal drilling muds and cuttings, geothermal filter cake, soils containing geothermal materials [(2)]; and, incidental plastic sheeting used as truckbed liners in waste transport trucks. These materials contain a number of substances

2 Includes soils filter cake, drilling mud materials or geothermal brines.

including arsenic, salts, metals, and organic hydrocarbons and Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials (NORM). The introduction of these materials into surface or groundwater resources through percolation or inundation would result in significant water quality impacts. Impacts to water quality could also occur through sedimentation of local runoff associated with erosion, and the discharge of substances indirectly related to Project construction or operation (e.g., diesel or automobile fuels).

The proposed Project will be subject to Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) that require compliance with water quality standards aimed at avoiding impacts to receiving waters. Prior to construction of Cell 4 one year of background groundwater monitoring would be conducted and submitted to the Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) to establish pre-construction groundwater quality. This test data would be included in an application to the RWQCB for an amended Waste Discharge Permit that includes Cell 4 and existing waste storage areas (Cells 1, 2 and 3). An application will be filed to include the proposed Cell 4 area in a Notice of Intent for coverage under California's General Industrial Storm-water Permit. Storm water runoff could have excessive iron concentrations during qualifying storm events. Prior to construction an application will be submitted to obtain coverage under the state's General Storm-water Construction permit. A Hydrology and Water Quality Analysis Report has been prepared for the Project (EMKO, 2019a) which evaluates potentially significant water quality impacts. Potential significant water quality impacts will be evaluated in the EIR.

b) Less than Significant. Non-potable water for the existing landfill is provided via an existing on-site water well and a new groundwater supply well would be required for the construction of Cell 4. A water supply assessment for the Project (EMKO, 2019b) indicates that the region has sufficient water to supply the Project while maintaining supplies for other users. Potential impacts to groundwater resources are expected to be less than significant and will be addressed in the EIR.

c.1), c.2) and c.3) Potentially Significant Impact. Jurisdictional drainages would be disrupted for the Project (see section IV. Biology) and stormwater flows would be diverted around Cell 4 and returned to the disrupted drainages. While the proposed diversion dikes would be designed to convey the runoff from a Probable Maximum Precipitation event without causing erosion or sedimentation, impacts related to the surface water runoff are potentially significant and will be addressed in the EIR.

d) No Impact. The Project site is not located within a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone. No impacts are identified for this issue area and this environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

e) Less than Significant. The DVCM operates under Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) Order R7-2016-0016 issued in accordance with the Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin. The Project would require an updated, amended or new WDR for Cell 4, consistent with the Water Quality Control Plan for the Colorado River Basin. With the issuance of the WDR, the proposed Project would be consistent with, and would not conflict or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan.

The Project site located within the Ocotillo-Clark Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin Number 7-25), as defined by the California Department of Water Resources. The Ocotillo-Clark Valley Groundwater Basin does not fall within the basin classification that requires implementation of a sustainable groundwater management plan (also known as a groundwater sustainability plan, or GSP, under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act definitions). However, in April 2017 the County amended a comprehensive Groundwater Management Ordinance to preserve,

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

protect and manage groundwater resources. The Groundwater Ordinance, codified as Division 22 of Title 9 of the Imperial County Code, aims to avoid or minimize impacts on existing and proposed groundwater extraction activities and groundwater resources. The Groundwater Ordinance requires that existing extraction facilities be permitted and registered with the County. New extraction facilities must also obtain a permit from the County. The Project would apply for an extraction permit for the new well proposed for construction of Cell 4, in compliance with the Groundwater Ordinance, and less than significant impacts are expected. These issues will be evaluated in the EIR.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING.

Would the project:

a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion:

a) No Impact. The Project represents an expansion of an existing monofill and would not divide an established community. No impact would occur.

b) Potentially Significant. The existing DVCM is located within the northeast quarter of Section 33, Township 12 South, Range 11 East, SBBM (APN 019-100-004), and the northernmost 20 acres of the southeast quadrant of Section 33. Collectively, this area has a land use designation of "Special Purpose Facility" and is zoned M-2 (Medium Industrial). The remainder of Section 33 (approximately 458.5 acres) is designated as "Recreational/ Open Space" and is zoned S-2 (Open Space/Preservation).

The Project will require an amendment to Imperial County's General Plan Land Use Element to change the land use designation on the remainder of Section 33 from "Recreational/ Open Space" to "Special Purpose Facility" and a Zone Change to change the zoning from S-2 (Open Space/Preservation) to M-2 (Medium Industrial). The Project will also require an amendment to Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 05-0020 to facilitate expansion of the existing monofill. Any conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations could be potentially significant and will be addressed in the EIR.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES.

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site	☐	☐	☐	☒

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**
delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				

Discussion:

a, b) No Impact. A number of mineral resources are currently being extracted in Imperial County including gold, gypsum, sand, gravel, lime, clay, stone, kyanite, limestone, sericite, mica, tuff, salt, potash, and manganese. According to the Existing Mineral Resources Map (Figure 8) in the Conservation and Open Space Element of the County of Imperial General Plan (2016), no known mineral resources occur within the Project vicinity nor are there any mapped mineral resources within the boundary of the Project site (County of Imperial, 2016). Thus, no impacts related to the loss of availability of a known mineral resource would occur.

XIII. NOISE.

Would the project result in:

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☒	☐	☐	☐
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☒	☐	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

a and b) Potentially Significant. Construction activities for Cell 4 could result in temporary or periodic increases in noise and groundborne vibration. Construction activities include site preparation and soil compaction; berm, levee and perimeter dike development; installation of internal access roads; installation of a new leachate collection system/pond, leak detection and liner system and other ancillary improvements required for safe operation of the disposal process (i.e. air monitoring stations, water supply wells, groundwater monitoring wells, etc.). Operation activities, such as trucks hauling and unloading waste materials at the monofill, bulldozers placing/compacting waste materials, and water trucks spraying soil sealant polymer on waste materials to protect from wind erosion could result in long-term increases in noise and groundborne vibration. Although the Project is not expected to expose people to excessive noise or vibration levels, further analysis is warranted, and impacts are considered potentially significant. A noise report will be prepared for the Project and included in the EIR.

c) No Impact. The Project is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip and the nearest privately-owned/public use airport, Salton Sea Airport, is located 13 miles northwest the Project Site. Additionally, the Project is not located within the Imperial County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (County of Imperial, 1996).

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

For these reasons, the Project would not expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels; therefore, no impact would occur.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING.

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 road or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

a and b) No Impact. The Project is an expansion of an existing monofill and does not include the demolition of existing housing, nor the construction of new housing or public infrastructure that would directly or indirectly induce unplanned population growth. Operations of proposed Cell 4 would be similar to current operations at Cell 3, with increases in personnel required only during construction (15 to 25 workers). No impacts to population or housing would occur.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES.

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 public services:

Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

a) No Impact. Implementation of the project would not include the provision of, or the need for, new or physically altered governmental facilities. Additionally, since the opening of the DVCM, no significant impact has been documented on the demand for public services for this area. Because the Project would not result in a substantial increase in population, it does not require additional public facilities beyond that which already exists. No physical impacts related to the provision of new or alternative government facilities would occur.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**
XVI. RECREATION.				
Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

a, and b) No Impact. A monofill does not generate users of park or other recreational facilities except for a small number of employees who may utilize these facilities during off-duty hours. No recreational facilities are included in the Project nor would it require the need to construct or expand existing recreational facilities. No impacts would occur.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION / TRAFFIC.				
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Would the Project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

a) Less than Significant. The current Solid Waste Facility Permit for the DVCM (13-AA-0022) allows up to 38 vehicles per day for incoming waste materials. The Project does not propose to increase the number of allowable vehicle trips, nor would it substantially increase the number of on-site personnel. Therefore, increases in long-term trip generation is not anticipated.

During construction, the Project would result in minor trip increases related to mobilization/demobilization of construction equipment, material delivery trucks and contractor personnel commuting to the Project site. These short-term impacts are not anticipated to be significant and will be evaluated in the Traffic report to be prepared

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	*No Impact* (NI)

for the EIR. Project conflicts with applicable programs, plans, ordinance or policies addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities will also be addressed in the EIR.

b) No Impact. The Project does not propose to modify location(s) where the waste stream is generated, the designated or alternative haul routes, or the maximum number of permitted daily vehicle trips. Therefore, the Project would have no impact on vehicle miles traveled.

Additionally, this threshold is not applicable until July 2020. No impact would occur, and no further analysis is warranted.

c) No Impact. With the exception of a new (interior) road to provide access to Cells 4A and 4B, no alterations or improvements to public roads are proposed as part of the Project. The interior access road would not increase hazards because of design features or incompatible uses and no impact is identified.

d) No Impact. The Project would not block any major thoroughfares and would not result in inadequate emergency access to the monofill. Waste haul trucks would continue to use the designated and alternative truck haul routes approved in the *Addendum to the Final EIR for the Desert Valley Company, SCH No.1989032206 (*County of Imperial, 2008a). No impact is anticipated.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES.

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 the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☒	☐	☐	☐
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.	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion:

a) and b) Potentially Significant. As required by SB 18 and AB 52, the Imperial County Planning and Development Services Department sent consultation notices to Native American tribal representatives regarding the proposed Project in November 2018. Specifically, AB-52 Consultation notices were sent to the Quechan and

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indian Tribes. SB-18 Consultation Letters were sent to the tribes/tribal representatives listed below:

- Augustine Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians
- Campo Band of Mission Indians
- Chemehuevi Reservation
- Cocopah Indian Tribe
- Colorado River Indian Tribe
- Ewiiaapaayp Tribal Office
- Fort Yuma-Quechan Indian Tribe
- Internal Tribal Cultural Resource Protection Council
- Kumeyaay Cultural Repatriation Committee
- La Posta Band of Mission Indians
- Manzanita Band of Kumeyaay Nation
- Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians,
- Native American Heritage Commission,
- Kwaaymii Laguna Band of Mission Indians

As of the date of this Initial Study, no Tribes have requested consultation. Results of any Native American consultation will be included in the EIR. As discussed under Response to Item V. Cultural Resources, the Project could have potentially significant impacts to archaeological resources, which could be considered a significant resource to a California Native American tribe

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS.

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

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	*No Impact* (NI)
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion:

a) Potentially Significant Impact. The DVCM has existing infrastructure, including water, wastewater, electrical power and telecommunication facilities that would be used by the proposed Project. No new construction would be required for these utilities/service systems, and no impacts would result.

To maintain operational integrity, a series of proposed diversion berms would be extended and/or constructed around the south and western perimeter of Cell 4 to divert stormwater runoff from multiple existing ephemeral surface water features around the Project site. The surface water flow would be routed around the landfill facilities and allowed to rejoin the existing surface waters downstream. A 50-foot buffer would also be established along the outer edge of Cell 4 and a new leachate pond would be constructed along the eastern edge of Cell 4B. Construction of these features could cause significant environmental effects which will be addressed in the EIR.

b) Less than Significant. Process water for the proposed Project, would be supplied from a new groundwater well. Project water demand would include water for dust control and construction (e.g. soil compaction) during construction, operation and closure of Cell 4. Potable water for site personnel would trucked to the site by a water delivery service.

According to the Water Supply Assessment prepared for the Project sufficient water would be available for the Project during single dry-year and multiple dry-year periods over the next 20 years and beyond(EMKO, 2019). Although the proposed Project is not anticipated to result in a significant increase in water demand/use, this issue will be addressed in the EIR.

c) No Impact. Wastewater treatment for the existing DVCM is provided by an on-site septic system and leach field. This same infrastructure would be used for the proposed Project. No impacts would occur.

d) Less than Significant. Solid waste generation would be minor for the construction, operation and closure of the Project. Solid waste would be disposed of using a locally-licensed waste hauling service. It is anticipated that solid waste would be hauled to the landfill nearest the Project site. The Salton City Solid Waste Site (13-AA-0011) is located at 935 W. Highway 86 Salton City , CA 92275. As of September 2018, this landfill had approximately 1,264,170 cubic yards of remaining capacity and was estimated to remain in operation through 2038 (CalRecycle, 2019b.). The County has sufficient landfill capacity to receive the minor amount of solid waste generated by construction and operation of the Project.

Also, because construction and operation the proposed Project would generate solid waste, the Project must comply with state and local requirements for waste reduction and recycling. A less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

e) No Impact. The Applicant will comply with federal, state and local statutes related to solid waste. No impacts would occur.

	Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

XX. WILDFIRE.

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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion:

a) No Impact. According to the Draft Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map for Imperial County prepared by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the Project site is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2007). As noted under Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Response IX.f) the proposed Project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No impact is identified for this issue area and this environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

b) No Impact. The Project site is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2007). Therefore, the proposed Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks. No impact is identified for this issue area and this environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

c) No Impact. The project site is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2007). The proposed Project would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that would may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. No impact is identified for this issue area and this environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

Potentially Significant Impact **(PSI)**	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated **(PSUMI)**	Less Than Significant Impact **(LTSI)**	***No Impact*** **(NI)**

d) No Impact. The project site is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2007). The proposed Project would not 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 is identified for this issue area and this environmental parameter is not proposed for further analysis in the EIR.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21083.05, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 65088.4, Gov. Code; Sections 21080(c), 21080.1, 21080.3, 21083, 21083.05, 21083.3, 21093, 21094, 21095, and 21151, Public Resources Code; Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino, (1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296; Leonoff v. Monterey Board of Supervisors, (1990) 222 Cal.App.3d 1337; Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

Revised 2009- CEQA
Revised 2011- ICPDS
Revised 2016 – ICPDS
Revised 2017 – ICPDS
Revised 2019 – CEQA

	Potentially Significant Impact (PSI)	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated (PSUMI)	Less Than Significant Impact (LTSI)	*No Impact* (NI)

SECTION III. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following are Mandatory Findings of Significance in accordance with Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines.

a) Does the project have the potential to 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, 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?	☒	☐	☐	☐
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 project, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☒	☐	☐	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Discussion:

a) Potentially Significant Impact. The EIR's biological resources section will discuss project-specific direct and indirect impacts on plants, fish and wildlife species. The EIR will also evaluate project-specific direct and indirect impacts on cultural and tribal cultural resources. Finally, the EIR will evaluate the project's contribution to cumulative impacts and propose feasible mitigation, as appropriate, to reduce the impacts to less-than-significant levels.

b) Potentially Significant Impact. The Project has the potential to contribute to cumulative impacts related to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, GHG emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, transportation and traffic, tribal cultural resources, and utilities and service systems. The EIR will evaluate the project's contribution to cumulative impacts in these areas as well as other areas as further impacts are identified.

c) Potentially Significant Impact. The Project could potentially result in environmental effects that have adverse impacts on human beings, either directly or indirectly. These impacts will be fully addressed in the EIR.

SECTION IV. PERSONS & ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED/ REFERENCES

A. COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

- Jim Minnick, Director of Planning & Development Services
- Michael Abraham, AICP, Asst. Director of Planning & Development Services
- Patricia Valenzuela, Planner IV
- Imperial County Air Pollution Control District
- Department of Public Works
- Fire Department
- Ag Commissioner
- Environmental Health Services
- Sheriff's Office

B. OTHER AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS

- CDFW
- USFWS
- Cal Trans

SECTION IV. PERSONS & ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED/ REFERENCES

CalEnergy, 2018. Desert Valley Company CUP No. 05-0020 Conditional Use Permit Amendment, Submitted August 20, 2018. Updated November 27, 2018.

_____, 2019a. Desert Valley Company Request for Zone Change, 2019.

_____, 2019b. Desert Valley Company General Plan Amendment Request, 2019.

_____, 2019c. Desert Valley Company Cell 4 Permitting Summary of CalEnergy's Technical Reports, 2019.

_____, 2016. Revisions to the Joint Technical Document for the Desert Valley Company Monofill Facility Solid Waste Permit 13-AA-0022. Prepared for the Imperial County Public Health Department, January 15, 2016.

_____, 2014. Desert Valley Company Operation Plan Revision 3, December 12, 2014.

California Dept. of Conservation, 2016a. Imperial County Farmland and Monitoring Program (FMMP) Imperial County Important Farmland 2016. Available at: ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/Dlrp/FMMP/pdf/2016/. Accessed November 1, 2019.

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