

# Appendix B

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Initial Study

# Sacramento Municipal Utility District

## Cordova Park Underground Cable Replacement Project

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Initial Study •  
April 2022



Powering forward. Together.



# Sacramento Municipal Utility District

## Cordova Park Underground Cable Replacement Project

Initial Study • April 2022

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.0	Project Overview .....	5
1.1	Purpose of Document .....	5
1.2	CEQA Process .....	6
1.3	SMUD Board Approval Process .....	6
1.4	Document Organization .....	6
1.5	Environmental Factors Potentially Affected .....	7
1.6	Determination .....	8
<b>2.0</b>	<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION .....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.0	Introduction .....	9
2.1	Project Objectives .....	9
2.2	Project Location .....	9
2.3	Project Description .....	11
2.4	Potential Permits and Approvals Required .....	14
<b>3.0</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION .....</b>	<b>15</b>
3.0	Evaluation of Environmental Impacts .....	15
3.1	Aesthetics .....	17
3.2	Agriculture and Forestry Resources .....	20
3.3	Air Quality .....	22
3.4	Biological Resources .....	24
3.5	Tribal Cultural Resources .....	26
3.6	Cultural Resources .....	28
3.7	Energy .....	29
3.8	Geology and Soils .....	33
3.9	Greenhouse Gas Emissions .....	39
3.10	Hazards and Hazardous Materials .....	42
3.11	Hydrology and Water Quality .....	46
3.12	Land Use and Planning .....	51
3.13	Mineral Resources .....	52
3.14	Noise .....	54
3.15	Population and Housing .....	60
3.16	Public Services .....	61
3.17	Recreation .....	64
3.18	Transportation .....	65
3.19	Utilities .....	66
3.20	Wildfire .....	68
3.21	Mandatory Findings of Significance .....	70
<b>4.0</b>	<b>LIST OF PREPARERS .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>74</b>

## APPENDICES

- A Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Modeling Data
- B Noise Technical Data



**TABLES**

Table 3.8-1	Project Alignment Soil Characteristics.....	35
Table 3.14-1	Typical Noise Levels .....	55
Table 3.14-2	Noise Emission Levels from Construction Equipment .....	58

**ACRONYMS AND OTHER ABBREVIATIONS**

BMP	best management practice
CAA	Clean Air Act
Cal EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CH <sub>4</sub>	methane
CO <sub>2</sub>	carbon dioxide
dB	decibels
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
EIR	environmental impact report
EO	Executive Order
FTA	Federal Transit Authority
HFC	hydrofluorocarbons
IS	Initial Study
kV	kilovolt
L <sub>dn</sub>	Day-Night Level
L <sub>eq</sub>	Equivalent Continuous Sound Level
L <sub>max</sub>	Maximum Noise Level
MMRP	mitigation monitoring and reporting program
MS4	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer
MTCO <sub>2e</sub>	metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent

MW	megawatts
N <sub>2</sub> O	nitrous oxide
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service
PFC	perfluorocarbons
PPV	peak particle velocity
PRC	Public Resources Code
RCPD	Rancho Cordova Police Department
RMS	root-mean-square
SB	Senate Bill
SF <sub>6</sub>	sulfur hexafluoride
SMFD	Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District
SMUD	Sacramento Municipal Utility District
SPL	sound pressure level
SQIP	Stormwater Quality Improvement Plan
SVAB	Sacramento Valley Air Basin
SWPPP	stormwater pollution prevention plan
UST	underground storage tank
VdB	vibration decibels
WDR	waste discharge requirements

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.0 Project Overview

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) replaces aging electrical infrastructure as part of its routine maintenance and upgrade protocols. Accordingly, SMUD proposes to install approximately 0.6 miles of 12 kilovolt (kV) underground cable, approximately 2.12 miles of 69kV underground cable and up to 13 new utility vaults in the City of Rancho Cordova, near the location of existing 12kV and 69kV underground cables that are approaching the end of their operational lives. Installation of the new cable, conduit and utility vaults would be done by open trenching. Where possible, the new conduit will be installed to align with the existing cable, which would be abandoned in place.

### 1.1 Purpose of Document

This Initial Study (IS) has been prepared by SMUD to evaluate potential environmental effects resulting from the Cordova Park Underground Cable Replacement Project (project). Chapter 2, "Project Description," presents the detailed project information.

This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 15000 et seq.). Under CEQA, an IS can be prepared by a lead agency to determine if a project may have a significant effect on the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15063[a]), and thus to determine the appropriate environmental document. For this project, the lead agency has prepared the following analysis that identifies potential physical environmental impacts and mitigation measures that would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level. SMUD is the lead agency responsible for complying with the provisions of CEQA.

In accordance with provisions of CEQA, SMUD distributed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an environmental impact report (EIR) to solicit comments on the scope and analysis of the EIR. The NOP was distributed to property owners within 500 feet of the project alignment, as well as to the State Clearinghouse/ Governor's Office of Planning and Research and each responsible and trustee agency. The NOP was available for a 30-day scoping period during which time comments were submitted to SMUD. The scoping period began on March 7, 2022 and ended on April 6, 2022.

This IS was prepared by SMUD to identify technical resources areas where the project may have a significant environmental impact, and to identify mitigation measures where needed to reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level. This IS will be included as an appendix to the Draft EIR.



## 1.2 CEQA Process

The purpose of an NOP is to provide sufficient information about the project and its potential environmental impacts to allow agencies and interested parties the opportunity to provide a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIR, including mitigation measures that should be considered and alternatives that should be addressed (CCR Section 15082[b]). Comments submitted in response to the NOP are used by the lead agency to identify broad topics to be addressed in the EIR. Comments on environmental issues received during the NOP public comment period are considered and addressed, where appropriate, in the Draft EIR

The Draft EIR will be released for a 45-day public review period during which time agencies and individuals may submit written comments regarding the Draft EIR. Following public review of the Draft EIR, a Final EIR will be prepared that will include both written and oral comments on the Draft EIR that were received during the public review period. The Final EIR will also include responses to those comments and any revisions to the Draft EIR.

Before taking action on the project, the lead agency is required to certify that the EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, that the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information in the EIR, and that the EIR reflects the independent judgment of the lead agency.

## 1.3 SMUD Board Approval Process

The SMUD Board of Directors must certify the EIR and approve the mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP) before it can approve the project. Prior to that, the project and relevant environmental documentation will be formally presented at a SMUD Environmental Resources and Customer Service Committee meeting for consideration, discussion, and recommendation to the Board. The SMUD Board of Directors will then consider certification of the EIR and adoption of the MMRP at its next regular meeting. Meetings of the SMUD Board of Directors are generally held on the third Thursday of each month.

## 1.4 Document Organization

This IS is organized as follows:

**Chapter 1: Introduction.** This chapter provides an introduction to the environmental review process and describes the purpose and organization of this document.

**Chapter 2: Project Description.** This chapter provides a detailed description of the project.

**Chapter 3: Environmental Checklist.** This chapter presents an analysis of a range of environmental issues identified in the CEQA Environmental Checklist and determines if the project would result in no impact, a less-than-significant impact, a less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated, or a potentially significant impact. Where needed to reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level, mitigation measures are presented.

**Chapter 4: List of Preparers.** This chapter lists the organizations and people that prepared the document.

**Chapter 5: References.** This chapter lists the references used in preparation of this Draft IS.

## 1.5 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.

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources       | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions            | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality       | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing                | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation / Traffic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems     | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None With Mitigation            |  |   |

## 1.6 Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project could not have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find 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.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find 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.
- I find 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 EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.



April 6, 2022

Signature

Date

Rob Ferrera

Environmental Specialist

Printed Name

Title

Sacramento Municipal Utility District

Agency

## 2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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### 2.0 Introduction

SMUD replaces aging electrical infrastructure as part of its routine maintenance and upgrade protocols. Accordingly, SMUD proposes to install approximately 0.6 mile of 12 kilovolt (kV) underground cable, approximately 2.12 miles of 69kV underground cable and up to 13 new utility vaults in the City of Rancho Cordova, near the location of existing 12kV and 69kV underground cables that are approaching the end of their operational lives. Installation of the new conduit (cables would later be pulled through the conduit) and utility vaults would be done by open trenching. Where possible, the new conduit will be installed to align with the existing cable, which would be abandoned in place.

### 2.1 Project Objectives

SMUD's objectives for the project are to:

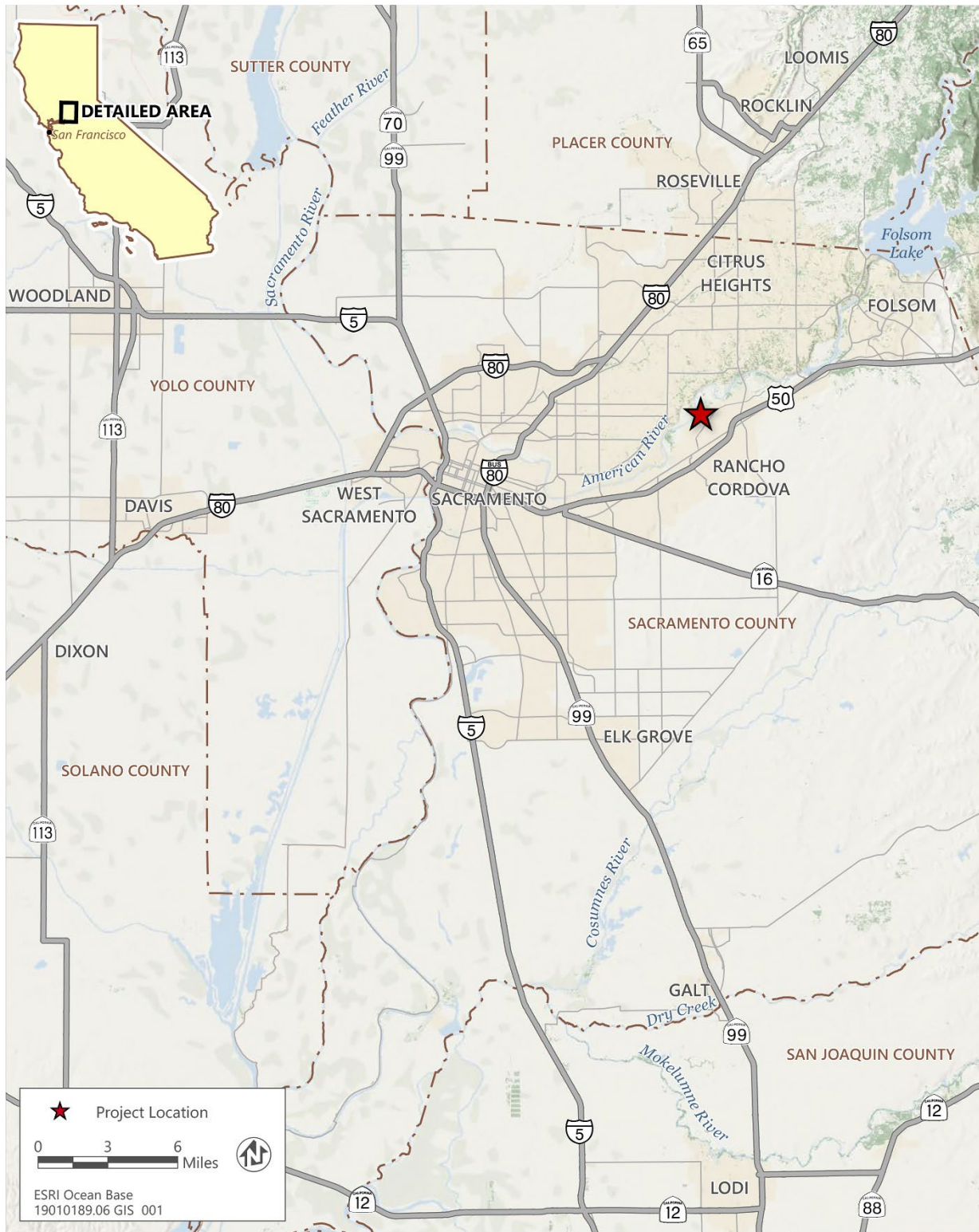
- Provide safe and reliable electrical service to existing and proposed development in the Rancho Cordova area.
- Facilitate efficient maintenance of underground cables and infrastructure.
- Maximize the use of available SMUD property and resources.
- Minimize impacts to nearby sensitive receptors.
- Minimize potential conflicts with existing planning efforts within the City of Rancho Cordova.

### 2.2 Project Location

The project is in the City of Rancho Cordova (see Figure 2-1). The proposed 12kV alignment begins at SMUD's Cordova Park Substation located near the intersection of Ambassador Drive and Trails Court. The 12kV path travels to Ambassador Drive where it follows the road for approximately 0.6 mile until it connects to existing riser poles just east of Ellison Drive.

The proposed 69kV alignment begins on the northwest side of Coloma Road, approximately 200 feet southeast of Sierra Madre Court. The 69kV alignment heads northwest from Coloma Road, crossing through the property of Mills Middle School and Cordova High School, until it connects to SMUD's Cordova Park Substation. From the substation, the 69kV alignment heads northeast nearly adjacent to, but outside, the backyards of homes facing Ambassador Drive until it reaches Rossmoor Drive. At Rossmoor Drive, the 69kV alignment turns and heads north towards the American River. The 69kV alignment stays along Rossmoor Drive until its termination near the American River, when the 69kV alignment connects to existing riser poles located between the boundaries of Rossmoor Drive and the American River. The proposed 69kV alignment is approximately 2.12 miles in length.

The existing 12kV and 69kV lines that run through the American River Parkway would be abandoned in place, and new conduit containing the new lines would be installed in separate



Source: adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2022

**Figure 2-1. Regional Location**

trenches within the alignments described above. The proposed 12kV and 69kV alignments are highly disturbed due to vehicle traffic, including areas of pavement and dirt. There are residences adjacent to portions of the proposed 12kV and 69kV alignments. Along Ambassador Drive, the 12kV circuit would be installed beneath existing roadways, sidewalks, or curbs and gutters. Along Rossmoor Drive, the 69kV circuit would be installed beneath existing pavement or within an existing fuel break adjacent to the pavement.

Figure 2-2 shows both the 12kV and 69kV proposed alignments.

## **2.3 Project Description**

### **2.3.1 Project Elements**

The project involves the installation of approximately 0.6 miles of new underground 12kV electrical lines (cable) and approximately 2.12 miles of new underground 69kV cable to replace existing underground 12kV and 69kV cable buried directly in the ground (direct-buried) that was installed in the 1970s. The new 12kV cable would be installed in conduits buried in dirt while the new 69kV cable would be installed in conduits housed in concrete-encased duct banks to provide pathways and adequate spacing. The proposed project also involves installation of up to 13 new utility vaults along the 69kV alignment to allow access for electric cable pulling, splicing and maintenance.

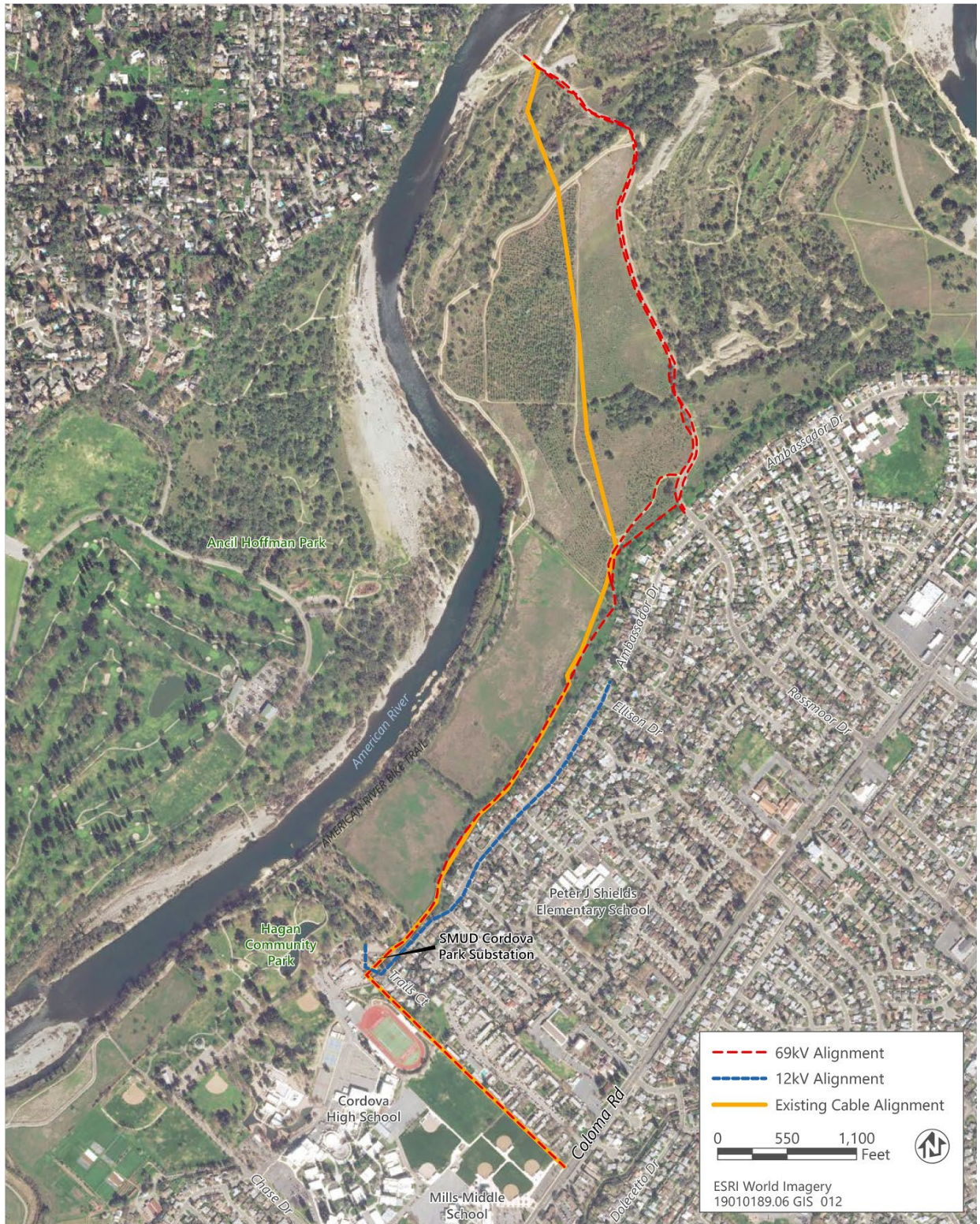
The existing direct-buried 12kV cable begins at SMUD's Cordova Park Substation and extends approximately 0.6 miles east, where it connects to existing riser poles.

The existing direct-buried 69kV cable begins on the northwest side of Coloma Road, approximately 200 feet southeast of Sierra Madre Court, and extends north across the eastern property lines of Mills Middle School, Cordova High School and Hagen Park until it enters SMUD's Cordova Park Substation located near the intersection of Ambassador Drive and Trails Court (approximately 0.45 mile). From SMUD's substation, the existing 69kV cable extends east beneath a dirt path for approximately 0.70 miles when it turns north and cuts across the American River Parkway towards the American River for approximately 0.75 mile. Note that the total existing 69kV alignment is approximately 1.9 miles and the proposed 69kV alignment is approximately 2.12 miles. The extra mileage is due to deviating from the existing route to align with Rossmoor Drive.

Since installation of the existing 12kV and 69kV cable in the 1970s, native trees have established within the existing alignment along the Parkway. SMUD has coordinated with Sacramento County to install the new conduit outside of the existing alignment to reduce potential impacts to these trees and other biological resources within the American River Parkway and to facilitate easier access for future maintenance.

Accordingly, SMUD proposes to install the conduit for the new 12kV cable beneath the pavement, sidewalks, or curbs and gutters of Ambassador Drive. The proposed 69kV alignment would deviate from the existing alignment by continuing east until it heads north at Rossmoor Drive. While the exact location of the 69kV alignment along Rossmoor Drive is not yet known and would be determined once existing utilities beneath the pavement are identified, the 69kV alignment would generally be within Rossmoor Drive or the fuel break immediately west of the pavement. The 69kV alignment would continue along Rossmoor Drive as it intersects with the American River Parkway bike trail and continue beyond the edge of pavement at the end of





Source: adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2022

**Figure 2-2. Project Alignment**

Rossmoor Drive. The 69kV alignment would connect to existing riser poles located between the boundaries of Rossmoor Drive and the edge of the American River. Within the American River Parkway, the existing direct-buried 69kV cable would be abandoned in place.

The project would include up to 13 utility vaults to be installed at various points along the 69kV alignment. The proposed utility vaults would consist of pre-cast concrete, measuring 8 feet x 14 feet x 8 feet inside, requiring an excavation area of approximately 15 feet x 20 feet x 15 feet, and would generally be spaced evenly throughout the alignment to allow for cable pulling, splicing and maintenance.

### **2.3.2 Project Construction**

Construction activities would occur in two phases. Phase 1 would include the 12kV alignment, while Phase 2 would include the 69kV alignment and utility vaults. Construction activities would occur during hours identified in City of Rancho Cordova Zoning Code Section 6.68.090(E). If there is a need for work to occur outside of these hours, SMUD will provide additional notification to customers adjacent to the project boundary.

Most construction would include open trenching to a maximum depth of 7 feet, though some deeper excavation may be necessary to avoid conflicts with existing utility lines. Removing water from the construction area (dewatering) may be necessary due to the high water-table of the area. SMUD would use Baker tanks and/or filtration bags, if needed, to treat water prior to discharge into the existing storm drain system in a manner consistent with regulatory requirements. For the 12kV alignment, the 12kV cable would be installed in conduit in the trenches. The 69kV electrical cable would be placed in a duct bank, which is a series of conduits encased in concrete. The trenches would then be backfilled with a cement-like slurry mixture or compacted aggregate base to the roadway subgrade elevation followed by replacement of the appropriate cover (e.g., pavement or dirt). Construction activities would generally be conducted in existing alignments or along the roadway and would include the temporary closure of footpaths and roads. Alternative routes of travel will be provided where feasible. Following construction activities each day, the open trenches would be covered, and equipment removed to allow safe use of footpaths and roadways.

### **2.3.3 Project Operation**

As the project includes construction and installation of underground utility infrastructure, project operation would include the active use of these facilities in replacement of existing infrastructure. There would not be any above-ground structures installed as part of the project, and operation of project elements would not create sources of noise, light, or other features that would be noticeable to residents and recreationists in the area.

### **2.3.4 Project Schedule**

Construction for Phase 1 (12kV alignment) is anticipated take up to 3 weeks and would begin in the summer of 2022. Phase 2 (69kV alignment) construction would take approximately 12 months once initiated and is anticipated to begin in the next 5 to 7 years.



## 2.4 Potential Permits and Approvals Required

Elements of the project could be subject to permitting and/or approval authority of other agencies. As the lead agency pursuant to the CEQA, SMUD is responsible for considering the adequacy of the environmental impact report (EIR) and determining if the project should be approved. Other potential permits required from other agencies could include:

### 2.4.1 State

- State Water Resources Control Board/Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board: Construction Storm Water Discharge Permits for projects that disturb more than one acre of land.
- California Department of Transportation: permits for movement of oversized or excessive loads on State Highways.

### 2.4.2 Local

- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District: Authority to Construct/Permit to Operate pursuant to Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District Regulation 2 (Rule 201 et seq.).
- City of Rancho Cordova:
  - Tree removal permit.
  - Encroachment permit.
- County of Sacramento:
  - Encroachment permit.

## 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION

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### 3.0 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.

### 3.1 Aesthetics

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>I. Aesthetics</b>				
Except as provided in Public Resources Code section 21099 (where aesthetic impacts shall not be considered significant for qualifying residential, mixed-use residential, and employment centers), would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) In non-urbanized areas, 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 points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.1.1 Environmental Setting

Topography within the project alignments is generally flat. The 12kV alignment extends through a residential neighborhood characterized by single-family homes and associated landscaping, mainly mature trees, shrubs, and lawns. The 69kV alignment runs between school and residential properties, as well as between the open space of the American River Parkway and single-family residences. Part of the 69kV alignment runs along Rossmoor Drive as it traverses the Parkway, until the alignment meets with existing riser poles near the edge of the American River. Most structures in the area are one to two stories tall. Landscaping along the 69kV alignment includes many mature trees and a variety of other medium and large trees, shrubs, and lawns.

The visual character of the project alignments and the surrounding area is typical of the City of Rancho Cordova’s residential areas, which includes school buildings, single and multi-family residential units, landscaping, lawns, and open space. Distant views consist of the Sierra Nevada foothills, although existing buildings, trees, and other city infrastructure preclude/limit these views in many locations. The American River is also visible from the northern end of the 69kV alignment, though the view is partially obscured by trees and vegetation along the river’s edge.

#### 3.1.2 Discussion

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

**Less than significant.** A scenic vista is generally defined as a distant public view along or through an opening or corridor that is recognized and valued for its scenic quality, or a natural or cultural resource that is characteristic of the area. The Lower American River (from the Folsom Dam to its confluence with the Sacramento River) is classified as a “Recreation” river, as defined by the

Federal and State Wild and Scenic Rivers System due to its aesthetic qualities and wealth of recreational opportunities that it provides (City of Rancho Cordova 2006:4.13-2). Scenic vistas of the American River are provided at various public access points within the American River Parkway, including the areas of the project alignments. The *American River Parkway Plan 2008* recognizes the importance of the Parkway's aesthetic resources and includes policies that regulate uses within the Parkway (Sacramento County 2008).

The closest scenic resource to the project alignment is the American River, located approximately 200 feet from the riser pole at the northern terminus of the 69kV alignment. Between the project alignment and the American River, there is extensive open space and vegetation that blocks views of the American River. Views in the project area are limited to the open space and vegetation of the Parkway, primarily because of the flat terrain and the level of development/landscaping that preclude long-range views. Views along the 12kV alignment are short- to mid-range and typically reflect the suburban character of the surroundings, which are not considered scenic vistas. Views along the 69kV alignment within the American River Parkway are short- to mid-range views of Parkway vegetation and features. While project construction activities, particularly the temporary and short-term presence of construction equipment, would temporarily interfere with views of the river and the Parkway, these impacts would cease upon completion of construction. Further, the project would not involve the operation of above-ground facilities that could permanently impede long-distance views in the area. Therefore, the project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, and no mitigation is required.

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

**No impact.** The project alignments are not near any eligible or designated state scenic highways. The nearest designated scenic roadway is Route 160, more than 13 miles southwest of the project area (Caltrans 2022). Because there are no designated state scenic highways within, adjacent to, or visible from the project area, the project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. The project would have ***no impact***, and no mitigation is required.

**c) In non-urbanized areas, 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 points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?**

**Less than significant.** During project construction, views in the area would be modified as a result of the temporary presence of construction equipment and activities. However, the appearance of construction equipment and activities would be a minor feature relative to the overall views of the Parkway. Once construction activities are complete, the project alignments would appear nearly identical to existing conditions, with no above ground structures installed as part of the project, though new utility vault covers would be visible to motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists on road and trail surfaces along the project alignments. However, there are existing utility covers along the project alignments, and the addition of up to 13 more utility vault covers over a distance of more than two miles would not substantially degrade the existing visual character of the project area. Because impacts would be largely limited to construction, and the

project would be minimally visible during operation, the project would have a ***less-than-significant*** impact related to a scenic quality, and no mitigation is required.

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

**No impact.** Construction activities would occur during daylight hours and would not require nighttime lighting. Construction equipment is unlikely to have reflective surfaces and would not be a substantial source of glare in the area. During project operation, all project features would be underground or flush with the ground surface (i.e., utility vault covers) and would not require any lighting during operation or create substantial glare. Therefore, the project would have ***no impact*** related to light and glare, and no mitigation is required.

### 3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>II. Agriculture and Forest Resources.</b>				
<p>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, as updated) 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.</p> <p>Would the project:</p>				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.2.1 Environmental Setting

The project alignments are within areas of Parks and Open Space (POS) and Residential, 5 units per acre (RD-5), according to the City of Rancho Cordova Zoning Code. There are no parcels designated for agricultural use within or adjacent to the project alignments.

The project alignments are in areas identified as Farmland of Local Importance, Urban and Built-Up Land, and Other Land by the California Department of Conservation (DOC 2016). No portions of the project alignments or adjacent parcels are held under Williamson Act contracts (DOC 2015).

There are no areas either within or adjacent to the project alignment that have been designated as forest land or timberland or support trees in the concentration or cover that would qualify them as such.

### 3.2.2 Discussion

- a-e) **Would the project 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 uses; conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract; 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)); result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**

**No impact.** The project alignments do not contain any lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, or zoned as forest land or a timberland area. While an area of the project alignment is identified as Farmland of Local Importance, these areas are located within designated park and open space lands and are not actively used for or zoned for agricultural purposes. There are no active agricultural operations within or near the project alignments, and there are no Williamson Act contracts near the project alignments. No existing agricultural or timber-harvest uses are located on or near the project alignments. The project consists of underground cable replacement and installation of new underground utility vaults, and would not result in other changes in the environment that would result in the conversion of agricultural land uses. Therefore, the project would have **no impact** on agriculture or forest land, and no mitigation is required.



### 3.3 Air Quality

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

#### 3.3.1 Environmental Setting

The project alignment is located in the City of Rancho Cordova which is within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB). The SVAB encompasses Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Tehama, Shasta, Yolo, Sacramento, Yuba, and Sutter Counties and parts of Placer, El Dorado, and Solano Counties. The SVAB is bounded on the north and west by the Coast Ranges, on the east by the southern portion of the Cascade Range and the northern portion of the Sierra Nevada, and on the south by the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. Sacramento County is currently designated as nonattainment for both the federal and State ozone standards, the federal PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard, and the State PM<sub>10</sub> standard. The region is designated as in attainment or unclassifiable for all other federal and State ambient air quality standards. (SMAQMD 2021)

### 3.3.2 Discussion

- 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?**
- c) **Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?**
- d) **Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?**

**Potentially significant.** A preliminary evaluation of the air quality impacts of the project indicate that project construction emissions could exceed local thresholds. Therefore, project impacts related to air quality could be ***potentially significant***. These issues will be analyzed further in the EIR.

### 3.4 Biological Resources

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

#### 3.4.1 Environmental Setting

Because the project alignments are adjacent to and within the American River Parkway, an area known for its biological resources, a biological resources technical report and arborist report were prepared for the project. These technical reports will be used in the Draft EIR and will be appended to that document.

### 3.4.2 Discussion

- 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 the 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, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?**
- c) **Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?**
- 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.** Because the 69kV alignment travels through the American River Parkway, a preliminary evaluation suggests that there could be special status species or other biological resources along the project alignments. Therefore, project impacts related to biological resources could be ***potentially significant***. These issues will be analyzed further in the EIR.

### 3.5 Tribal Cultural Resources

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>V. Tribal Cultural Resources.</b>				
Has a California Native American Tribe requested consultation in accordance with Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1(b)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No
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)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### 3.5.1 Environmental Setting

##### *Tribal Consultation*

On June 21, 2021, in response to a Sacred Lands File Search request from Ascent Environmental (Ascent) on behalf of SMUD, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) notified Ascent that the records search results for the project alignment area were positive (NAHC 2021). The NAHC’s letter advised SMUD to contact the Native American Tribes identified on the list provided by NAHC, which provided contact information for Native American Tribes who may have interest in the project.

On August 19, 2021, SMUD sent emails and certified letters to the lone Band of Miwok Indians, United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria, and Wilton Rancheria. The EIR includes more discussion regarding the AB 52 process and the current status of consultation.

### 3.5.2 Discussion

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)?
- 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

**Potentially significant.** The records search identified known Tribal cultural resources at the project site or within 1/8-mile of the project site (NCIC 2021). Currently, four Tribes are actively engaging in consultation with SMUD regarding potential Tribal cultural resources in the area of the project alignments. Therefore, impacts related to the project could be ***potentially significant***. These issues will be analyzed further in the EIR.

### 3.6 Cultural Resources

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

#### 3.6.1 Environmental Setting

On August 2, 2021, a search of the project alignments and a one-half-mile radius was conducted at the North Central Information Center, at California State University, Sacramento (File no. SAC-21-150). This search expanded on an earlier record search conducted on May 20, 2021 (File no. SAC-21-102) for a smaller segment of the project alignment. The records search results identified that the entire project area is located within the boundaries of a large and complex historic-era archeological district, the Folsom Mining District (P-34-000335/CA-SAC-308H).

#### 3.6.2 Discussion

**a-c) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5? Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5? Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?**

**Potentially significant.** The records search identified known archaeological and historic resources on the project site or within one-half-mile of the project site (NCIC 2021). Therefore, impacts related to the project could be **potentially significant**. These issues will be analyzed further in the EIR.

### 3.7 Energy

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

#### 3.7.1 Environmental Setting

California relies on a regional power system composed of a diverse mix of natural gas, petroleum, renewable, hydroelectric, and nuclear generation resources.

- Petroleum:** Petroleum products (gasoline, diesel, jet fuel) are consumed almost exclusively by the transportation sector, and account for almost 99 percent of the energy used in California by the transportation sector, with the rest provided by ethanol, natural gas, and electricity (Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2015). Between January 2007 and May 2016, an average of approximately 672 billion gallons of gasoline were purchased in California (California State Board of Equalization 2016). Gasoline and diesel fuel sold in California for motor vehicles is refined in California to meet specific formulations required by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) (EIA 2018).
- Natural Gas:** Almost two-thirds of California households use natural gas for home heating, and about half of California’s utility-scale net electricity generation is fueled by natural gas (EIA 2018).
- Electricity and Renewables:** The California Energy Commission estimates that 34 percent of California’s retail electricity sales in 2018 will be provided by RPS-eligible renewable resources (CEC 2018). California regulations require that electricity consist of 33 percent renewables by 2020 and 50 percent renewables by 2030 for all electricity retailers in the state.
- Alternative Fuels:** Conventional gasoline and diesel may be replaced (depending on the capability of the vehicle) with many alternative transportation fuels (e.g., biodiesel, hydrogen, electricity, and others). Use of alternative fuels is encouraged through various statewide regulations and plans (e.g., Low Carbon Fuel Standard, AB 32 Scoping Plan).

#### *Regional Energy Resources and Use*

SMUD provides natural gas and electricity services to the larger Sacramento area, including the project area. SMUD’s service area encompasses approximately 900 square miles, including most of Sacramento County, and small portions of Placer, Amador, El Dorado, San Joaquin, and Yolo



Counties. SMUD obtains its power from various sources, including hydropower, natural-gas-fired generators, renewable energy resources (i.e., solar, wind, hydroelectric, and biomass), and power purchased through other utility companies. SMUD's biggest single source of energy is its natural-gas-fired Cosumnes Power Plant, which generates up to approximately 600 megawatts (MW) of energy, or enough electricity to power approximately 450,000 single-family homes (SMUD 2022). SMUD also gives customers the option to purchase energy from renewable energy resources. SMUD's Greenergy program allows customers to purchase their energy from a mix of renewable sources such as biomass, wind, and solar resources. In 2020, renewable power sources made up 60 percent of SMUD's total power supply.

### Federal Regulations

The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 established nationwide fuel economy standards to conserve oil. Under this act, the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, is responsible for revising existing fuel economy standards and establishing new vehicle economy standards. The Corporate Average Fuel Economy program was established to determine vehicle manufacturer compliance with the government's fuel economy standards. Three Energy Policy Acts have been passed, in 1992, 2005, and 2007, to reduce dependence on foreign petroleum, provide tax incentives for alternative fuels, and support energy conservation.

### State Regulations

#### *Warren-Alquist Act*

The 1975 Warren-Alquist Act established the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, now known as the Energy Commission. The Act established state policy to reduce wasteful, uneconomical, and unnecessary uses of energy by employing a range of measures. The California Public Utilities Commission regulates privately-owned utilities in the energy, rail, telecommunications, and water fields.

#### *State of California Energy Action Plan*

The Energy Commission is responsible for preparing the State Energy Plan, which identifies emerging trends related to energy supply, demand, conservation, public health and safety, and the maintenance of a healthy economy. The current plan is the 2003 California Energy Action Plan (2008 update). The plan calls for the State to assist in the transformation of the transportation system to improve air quality, reduce congestion, and increase the efficient use of fuel supplies with the least environmental and energy costs. To further this policy, the plan identifies a number of strategies, including assistance to public agencies and fleet operators in implementing incentive programs for zero-emission vehicles and addressing their infrastructure needs, and encouragement of urban design that reduces vehicle miles traveled and accommodates pedestrian and bicycle access.

#### *Renewable Energy Regulations*

The state has passed legislation requiring the increasing use of renewables to produce electricity for consumers. California utilities are required to generate 33 percent of their electricity from renewables by 2020 (SB X1-2 of 2011), 52 percent by 2027 (SB 100 of 2018), 60 percent by 2030 (also SB 100 of 2018), and 100 percent by 2045 (also SB 100 of 2018).

## *Regional Regulations*

### SMUD 2030 Zero Carbon Plan

SMUD adopted its 2030 Zero Carbon Plan to eliminate carbon emissions from its power supply by 2030. With the 2030 Zero Carbon Plan, SMUD intends to reduce carbon emissions by 90 percent through the adoption of 3,000 MW of new renewable energy sources including utility-scale wind, solar, batteries, hydroelectric power, biomass, geothermal, as well as customer-owned solar and battery storage; the closer of two power plants; and the integration of new technology into the grid.

### City of Rancho Cordova

The City of Rancho Cordova General Plan includes policies related to energy use and resources under the Natural Resources element Goal NR. 7, Reduce per capita energy consumption, and Policy NR7.1, Increase energy conservation citywide.

## **3.7.2 Discussion**

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

**Less than significant.** Energy would be consumed during Phase 1 and Phase 2 construction to operate and maintain construction equipment, transport construction materials, and for worker commutes. Levels of construction-related energy consumption by the project were calculated using CalEEMod Version 2020.4.0 and from fuel consumption factors in the EMFAC and OFFROAD models (see Appendix C for detailed calculations). During Phase 1, an estimated 72,427 gallons of gasoline and 5,392 gallons of diesel would be consumed and during Phase 2, an estimated 1,254,910 gallons of gasoline and 89,721 gallons of diesel would be consumed, accounting for both onsite equipment use and offsite vehicle travel. This one-time energy expenditure required to construct the alignments would be nonrecoverable. The energy needs for project construction would be temporary and would not require additional capacity or increase peak or base period demands for electricity or other forms of energy.

The project would require minor operational activities similar to existing conditions and therefore would generate minor vehicle trips or energy consumption during operation. Therefore, the project would not result in an inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. This impact would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No impact.** As discussed above, the project would not result in inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Furthermore, the project includes the replacement of aging underground cables, which would result in increased transmission efficiency. Increased efficiency in energy transmission allows for increased energy conservation, which would be consistent with the City's General Plan Policy NR.7.1. Furthermore, the underground cable replacement helps support electrification which is a technology use type recommended in the SMUD's Zero Carbon Plan for building and vehicle decarbonization. Thus,



the project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. The project would have ***no impact***, and no mitigation would be required.

### 3.8 Geology and Soils

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

#### 3.8.1 Environmental Setting

##### *Regional and Local Geology*

The project alignments are located in the city of Rancho Cordova, within the southern portion of the Sacramento Valley. The Sacramento Valley represents the northern portion of the Great Valley geomorphic province of California, which is bordered on the east by the foothills of the Sierra Nevada geomorphic province and on the west by the Coast Range geomorphic province. The Great Valley is an asymmetrical trough approximately 400 miles long and 40 miles wide forming the broad valley along the axis of California. Erosion of the Coast Range and the Sierra Nevada has generated alluvial, overbank, and localized lacustrine sediments as thick as 50,000 feet in areas of the Great Valley.

The project alignments, which vary in distance between 200 and 3,500 feet from the American River, are underlain by the following: Holocene Alluvium (Qa), described as levee and channel deposits; Holocene Alluvium, described as the Modesto-Riverbank Formation (Qmr); and mine and dredge tailings (t) (Wagner et al. 1981).

### *Seismicity*

The Great Valley is bounded on the west by the Great Valley fault zone and the Coast Ranges and on the east by the Foothills fault zone and the Sierra Nevada. Relatively few faults in the Great Valley have been active during the last 11,700 years. The closest faults to the project site with evidence of displacement during Holocene time are the Dunnigan Hills Fault (approximately 30 miles to the northwest) and the Cleveland Hills Fault (approximately 60 miles to the north). In general, active faults are located along the western margin of the Central Valley (e.g., the Great Valley Fault) and within the Coast Ranges (Jennings 1994). There are no Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones within Sacramento County (CGS 2010).

According to the California Geological Survey Earthquake Shaking Potential for California, the Sacramento region is distant from known, active faults and would experience lower levels of shaking less frequently than areas closer to major, active faults. However, very infrequent earthquakes could still cause strong shaking here (CGS 2016). Landslides triggered by seismic events are not expected near the project alignments due to the flat terrain of the alignments and their surroundings.

Factors determining liquefaction potential are the soil type, the level and duration of seismic ground motions, the type and consistency of soils, and the depth to groundwater. Loose sands, peat deposits, and unconsolidated Holocene-age sediments are the most susceptible to liquefaction, while clayey silts, silty clays, and clays deposited in freshwater environments are generally stable under the influence of seismic ground shaking. The occurrence of liquefaction during an earthquake can potentially cause reduction in or loss of shear strength, seismically induced settlements, formation of boils, or lateral spreading of the liquefied soil. In order for liquefaction of soils due to ground shaking to occur, it is generally understood that subsurface soils must be in a relatively loose state, soils must be saturated, soils must be sand like (e.g. non-plastic or of very low plasticity), and the ground motion is of sufficient intensity to act as a triggering mechanism. The project alignments are not located in any currently established State of California Seismic Hazard Zone for liquefaction.

### *Soils*

A review of U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey data indicates that the project alignments are composed of the following soil types: Americanos-Urban land complex, Rossmoor fine sandy loam, Rossmoor-Urban land complex, Xerofluvents, and Xerorthents (NRCS 2022). These soils and some of their characteristics are presented in Table 3.8-1 below. While alignment-specific geotechnical studies have not yet been conducted for the project alignments, SMUD will be confirming the geotechnical properties of the alignments as design details are finalized.

**Table 3.8-1 Project Alignment Soil Characteristics**

Soil Map Unit	Water Holding Capacity	Erosion Potential	Drainage Class
Americanos-Urban land complex	High	Slight	Well drained
Rossmoor fine sandy loam	High	Slight	Well drained
Rossmoor-Urban land complex	High	Slight	Well drained
Xerofluvents	Very low to low	Slight to moderate	Somewhat excessively drained
Xerorthents, dredge tailings	Very low to low	Slight to none	Somewhat excessively drained

Source: NRCS 2022, City of Rancho Cordova 2006:Table 4.8-1.

### *Paleontological Resources*

Rancho Cordova's General Plan EIR noted that a records search for the Rancho Cordova area did not identify any evidence of significant paleontological resources and concluded that the area does not appear sensitive for the presence of paleontological resources (City of Rancho Cordova 2006:4.11-4).

### **3.8.2 Discussion**

- a) **Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:**
  - i. **Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)**

**No impact.** Surface ground rupture along faults is generally limited to a linear zone a few yards wide. There are no Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones within Sacramento County (CGS 2010). Consequently, the project would not expose people or structures to adverse effects caused by the rupture of a known fault. There would be **no impact** associated with fault rupture, and no mitigation would be required.

- ii. **Strong seismic ground shaking?**

**Less than significant.** The project alignments are located in the center of the Sacramento Valley, which has historically experienced a low level of seismic ground shaking. The California Geological Survey has identified the region as an area of low to moderately low earthquake shaking potential (CGS 2016). The project involves the installation of underground electrical infrastructure, which would conform to the standards contained within California Building Code (CBC) Title 24, which identifies specific design requirements to reduce damage from strong

seismic ground shaking, ground failure, landslides, soil erosion, and expansive soils. This impact would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation would be required.

### iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

**Less than significant.** Soil liquefaction most commonly occurs when ground shaking from an earthquake causes a sediment layer saturated with groundwater to lose strength and take on the characteristics of a fluid, thus becoming similar to quicksand. Liquefaction may also occur in the absence of a seismic event, when unconsolidated soil above a hardpan becomes saturated with water. Factors determining liquefaction potential are the soil type, the level and duration of seismic ground motions, the type and consistency of soils, and the depth to groundwater. Loose sands, peat deposits, and unconsolidated Holocene-age sediments are the most susceptible to liquefaction, while clayey silts, silty clays, and clays deposited in freshwater environments are generally stable under the influence of seismic ground shaking.

Older deposits, including the Pleistocene Riverbank formation which underlies the project alignment, are not generally susceptible to liquefaction; however, younger loose fluvial deposits overlying the Riverbank formation present a risk of liquefaction.

Active seismic sources (i.e., known, active faults) are a relatively long distance away. The project alignments are located on flat land with 0 to 2 percent slopes, are underlain by stable Pleistocene-age Riverbank formation sediments and have low shaking hazard potential. However, in the highly unlikely event of a significant earthquake affecting the project alignments, widespread liquefaction could occur resulting in significant damage. The project would comply with CBC Title 24, which includes specific design requirements to reduce damage from ground failure. The project may require dewatering activities during construction, which would further reduce the potential for ground failure. In addition, emergency shutoffs would be installed with the electrical equipment, and would be remotely activated as needed during a seismic event to reduce risks involving seismic-related ground failure. Therefore, the potential of adverse effects involving ground failure, including liquefaction is low; this impact would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation would be required.

### iv. Landslides?

**No impact.** The project alignments are located on flat land with 0 to 2 percent slopes; there is no risk of landslides in such terrain. Consequently, the project would not expose people or structures to landslides. There would be **no impact** associated with landslide risk, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** As shown in Table 3.8-1, NRCS soil survey data indicate that the project alignment includes soils are slightly to moderately susceptible to erosion. Construction activities would involve grading, excavating, trenching, moving, filling, and temporary stockpiling of soil within the project alignments. Construction activities would remove vegetative cover and existing paving and would expose site soils to erosion via wind in the summer months, and to surface water runoff during storm events. Sediment from construction activities could be transported within stormwater runoff and could drain to off-site areas and degrade local water quality.

However, the project would be subject to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Statewide construction general NPDES permit for stormwater runoff (Order No. 99 - 08 – DWQ and NPDES No. CAS000002 [Construction General Permit]). In compliance with the Construction General Permit, a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) would be developed for the project by a qualified SWPPP professional. The objectives of the SWPPP are to identify pollutant sources that may affect the quality of stormwater associated with construction activity and identify, construct, and implement stormwater pollution prevention measures to reduce pollutants in stormwater discharges during and after construction. Therefore, the SWPPP would include a description of potential pollutants, the management of dredged sediments, and hazardous materials present on the site during construction (including vehicle and equipment fuels). The SWPPP would also include details of how the best management practices (BMPs) for sediment and erosion control would be implemented. Implementation of the SWPPP would comply with state and federal water quality regulations.

Furthermore, and as noted above, the project would be constructed in accordance with CBC standards. These standards require that appropriate soil and geotechnical reports be prepared and that site-specific engineering design measures, including those related to general site grading, clearing and grubbing, soil stabilization, and general erosion control, be implemented to appropriately minimize potential adverse impacts related to erosion at the infill site. This, coupled with preparation of a site-specific SWPPP, would minimize potential adverse impacts related to erosion and loss of topsoil in the project alignments. Impacts would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** As described previously, there are no steep slopes within the project alignments; therefore, there would be no potential for on- or off-site landslide. Near-surface soils encountered in the project alignments have a significant portion of clay and silt and are, therefore, anticipated to be moisture sensitive. Soil moisture content, shallow groundwater levels, and silty and clayey soils could become unstable and potentially result in lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. SMUD is conducting geotechnical evaluations of the project alignments to inform the selection of specific project design and methods that are appropriate or the location; these methods include conventional open trench, shoring, dewatering, and reinforced concrete subsurface structure construction methods. In addition, the project would comply with and implement all appropriate recommendations provided in the alignment-specific geotechnical investigation report, as well as all applicable CBC provisions. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** Expansive soils shrink and swell as a result of moisture change. These volume changes can result in damage over time to building foundations, underground utilities, and other subsurface facilities and infrastructure if they are not designed and constructed appropriately to resist the damage associated with changing soil conditions. However, underground cable would be placed in a series of conduits encased in concrete. The trenches would then be backfilled with a cementitious slurry mixture or compacted aggregate base to the



roadway subgrade elevation to reduce any risk associated with expansive soils. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No impact.** The project would not require the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Thus, the project would have ***no impact*** related to soil suitability for use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** Rancho Cordova's General Plan EIR noted that a records search for the Rancho Cordova area did not identify any evidence of significant paleontological resources and concluded that the area does not appear sensitive for the presence of paleontological resources (City of Rancho Cordova 2006:4.11-4). If paleontological resources are discovered during excavation or construction, SMUD would comply with Rancho Cordova General Plan Action CHR.3.3.4, which requires adherence to certain procedures. Specifically, these procedures include protocols and criteria for qualifications of personnel, and for survey, research, testing, training, monitoring, cessation and resumption of construction, identification, evaluation, and reporting, as well as compliance with recommendations to address any significant adverse effects where determined by the City to be feasible. Therefore, implementation of the policies and implementation programs contained within the General Plan would ensure that impacts to paleontological resources would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation is required.

### 3.9 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

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

#### 3.9.1 Environmental Setting

Certain gases in the earth’s atmosphere, classified as greenhouse gases (GHGs), play a critical role in determining the earth’s surface temperature. Solar radiation enters the earth’s atmosphere from space. Most solar radiation passes through GHGs; however, infrared radiation is absorbed by these gases. As a result, radiation that otherwise would have escaped back into space is instead “trapped,” resulting in a warming of the atmosphere. This phenomenon, known as the greenhouse effect, is responsible for maintaining a habitable climate on earth.

Prominent GHGs contributing to the greenhouse effect are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFC), perfluorocarbons (PFC), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>). GHG emissions contributing to global climate change are attributable, in large part, to human activities associated with on-road and off-road transportation, industrial/manufacturing, electricity generation by utilities and consumption by end users, residential and commercial onsite fuel usage, and agriculture and forestry. It is “extremely likely” that more than half of the observed increase in global average surface temperature from 1951 to 2010 was caused by the anthropogenic increase in GHG concentrations and other anthropogenic forcing together (IPCC 2014: 5).

Climate change is a global crisis. GHGs are global pollutants because even local GHG emissions contribute to global impacts. GHGs have long atmospheric lifetimes (one to several thousand years) and persist in the atmosphere long enough to be dispersed around the globe. Although the lifetime of any particular GHG molecule is dependent on multiple variables and cannot be determined with any certainty, it is understood that more CO<sub>2</sub> is emitted into the atmosphere than is sequestered by ocean uptake, vegetation, and other forms of sequestration (IPCC 2013:467).

#### *Federal Plans, Policies, Laws, and Regulations*

On December 7, 2009, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued findings regarding GHGs under the Clean Air Act (CAA). The *Final Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases* state that current and projected concentrations of the six key well-mixed GHGs in the atmosphere— CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, HFC, PFC, and SF<sub>6</sub>—threaten the public health and welfare and that combined emissions of GHGs from new motor vehicles contribute to this issue. This allowed EPA to regulate GHGs under the CAA. For example, EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued two rules (81 Fed. Reg. 73478 and 77 Fed. Reg. 62623) that require substantial improvements in fuel economy for all vehicles sold

in the U.S. for model years 2017 through 2025 of passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty passenger vehicles. In 2012, EPA issued CARB a waiver that allows California to more strictly regulate pollution from cars than the federal government.

### *State Plans, Policies, Laws, and Regulations*

#### *Statewide GHG Emission Targets and the Climate Change Scoping Plan*

Reducing GHG emissions in California has been the focus of the State government for approximately two decades (State of California 2018). GHG emission targets established by the state legislature include reducing statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (Assembly Bill [AB] 32 of 2006) and reducing them to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 (Senate Bill [SB] 32 of 2016). Executive Order (EO) S-3-05 calls for statewide GHG emissions to be reduced to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. EO B-55-18 calls for California to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 and achieve and maintain net negative GHG emissions thereafter. These targets are in line with the scientifically established levels needed in the United States to limit the rise in global temperature to no more than 2 degrees Celsius, the warming threshold at which major climate disruptions, such as super droughts and rising sea levels, are projected; these targets also pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius (UN 2015:3).

California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, prepared by CARB, outlines the main strategies California will implement to achieve the legislated GHG emission target for 2030 and "substantially advance toward our 2050 climate goals" (CARB 2017:1, 3, 5, 20, 25–26). It identifies the reductions needed by each GHG emission sector (e.g., transportation, industry, electricity generation, agriculture, commercial and residential, pollutants with high global warming potential, and recycling and waste). The State has also passed more detailed legislation addressing GHG emissions associated with industrial sources, transportation, electricity generation, and energy consumption, as summarized below.

### *Local*

#### *Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District*

SMAQMD is the primary agency responsible for addressing air quality concerns in all of Sacramento County and recommends measures for analyzing project-generated GHGs in CEQA analysis. SMAQMD developed thresholds of significance to provide a uniform scale to measure the significance of GHG emissions from land use and stationary source projects in compliance with CEQA, AB 32, and SB 32.

#### *City of Rancho Cordova*

The City's General Plan does not include goals or policies directly related to climate change or GHGs. However, several goals and policies included in the General Plan related to vehicle trip reductions or smart growth development could indirectly reduce the impacts from climate change and GHGs.

### 3.9.2 Discussion

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

**Less than significant.** The issue of global climate change is inherently a cumulative issue, because the GHG emissions of an individual project cannot be shown to have any material effect on global climate. Thus, the level of GHG emissions associated with implementation of the project is addressed as a cumulative impact.

GHG emissions associated with implementation of the project would be generated during project construction. It is anticipated that operational activities associated with the project would include only occasional maintenance and repair; therefore, operational emissions from the project would be negligible. Construction-related emissions of GHGs were estimated using CalEEMod Version 2020.4.0. Model outputs are included in Appendix A.

Project-related construction activities would result in the generation of GHG emissions from the use of heavy-duty off-road construction equipment and vehicle use during worker commute. Phase 1 and Phase 2 construction activities would both include site preparation, trenching, conduit duct bank installation, utility vault installation, and paving. Based on emissions modeling conducted for the project using CalEEMod, total construction activity would result in finite emissions of 895 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2e</sub>).

SMAQMD has established quantitative significance thresholds for evaluating GHG emissions. For construction of all types, the established significance threshold is 1,100 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> annually (SMAQMD 2021). Phase 1 and a portion of Phase 2 construction activities were assumed to occur in 2022, while the remainder of Phase 2's emissions were also assumed to occur in 2023. In 2022, Phase 1 and Phase 2 construction-related GHG emissions would generate a total of 425 MTCO<sub>2e</sub>. In 2023, Phase 2 construction-related GHG emissions would generate a total of 470 MTCO<sub>2e</sub>. Individually, 2022 and 2023 annual emissions would be under the 1,100 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> annual threshold. Furthermore, the sum of GHG emissions for both 2022 and 2023 construction activities, 895 MTCO<sub>2e</sub>, would not exceed the annual 1,100 MTCO<sub>2e</sub> threshold. Therefore, construction-related GHG emissions would not exceed SMAQMD's threshold of significance. This impact would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation would be required.

b) **Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?**

**No impact.** Plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions were developed with the purpose of reducing cumulative emissions related, primarily, to long-term operational emissions. As described previously, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable increase in GHG emissions as a result of construction activities and would not generate any GHG emissions during operations. Thus, the project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing emissions of GHGs. There would be **no impact**, and no mitigation would be required.

### 3.10 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

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

#### 3.10.1 Environmental Setting

The State Water Resources Control Board’s GeoTracker website, which provides data relating to leaking underground storage tanks (USTs) and other types of soil and groundwater contamination, along with associated cleanup activities, did not identify any hazards related to USTs and other types of contamination within or adjacent to the project alignments (SWRCB 2022).

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control’s Envirostor Web site, which provides data related to hazardous materials spills and clean ups, also did not identify any hazards related to any cleanup sites within or adjacent to the project alignments (DTSC 2022).

The 69kV alignment crosses the property of two public schools, Mills Middle School, located along Coloma Road east of Chase Drive, and Cordova High School, located on Chase Drive, adjacent to Mills Middle School.

Within one-quarter mile of the project alignments, there are three public schools and two private schools. The public schools are Peter J. Shields Elementary at 10434 Georgetown Drive, Rancho Cordova Elementary at 2562 Chassella Way, and Riverview STEM Academy at 10700 Ambassador Drive. The private schools are St. John Vianny School at 10499 Coloma Road and Cordova Baptist Church Preschool and Kindergarten at 10527 Coloma Road.

Mather Airport is a public airport located approximately 2.5 miles south of the southernmost edge of the project alignments. The project alignments are not within the airport's land use area or noise or safety zones (SACOG 2020).

### 3.10.2 Discussion

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

**Less than significant.** Construction activities would involve the use of hazardous materials, such as fuels, solvents, gasoline, asphalt, and oil. The use and storage of these materials could potentially expose and adversely affect workers, the public, or the environment as a result of improper handling or use, accident, environmentally unsound disposal methods, fire, explosion, or other emergencies, resulting in adverse health or environmental effects. Project operation would involve the use of electrical lines and would not involve the use of hazardous materials beyond those typically associated with maintenance activities (e.g., fuels, solvents, and oils).

The California Highway Patrol and Caltrans are responsible for enforcing regulations related to the transportation of hazardous materials on local roadways, and the use of these materials is regulated by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), as outlined in CCR Title 22. SMUD and its construction contractors would be required to comply with the California Environmental Protection Agency's (Cal EPA's) Unified Program, which protects Californians from hazardous waste and hazardous materials by ensuring consistency throughout the state regarding the implementation of administrative requirements, permits, inspections, and enforcement at the local regulatory level. Regulated activities would be managed by the Sacramento County Environmental Management Department, which is the designated Certified Unified Program Agency, and in accordance with the regulations included in the Unified Program (e.g., hazardous materials release response plans and inventories, California Uniform Fire Code hazardous material management plans and inventories). Such compliance would reduce the potential for accidental release of hazardous materials during project construction.

The project would be required to comply with the existing laws and regulations regarding the transportation, use, and disposal of hazardous materials identified above. These regulations are specifically designed to protect public health and the environment and must be adhered to during project construction and operation. Compliance with applicable regulations would ensure that this impact would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** As discussed above, there are no existing hazardous conditions within the project alignments. Project operation would involve the use of electrical lines and would not involve the use of hazardous materials beyond those typically associated with maintenance activities

(e.g., fuels, solvents, and oils). Project construction, however, would involve the use of hazardous materials, which could be accidentally upset or released into the environment. Potential hazardous materials that could be used include asphalt and other construction materials. As discussed in item a) above, compliance with applicable laws and regulations regarding the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials would ensure that the project would result in a **less-than-significant** impact related to upset or accidental release of hazardous materials, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** As discussed above, there are two public schools adjacent to the project alignment and five schools within one-quarter mile of the project alignments. Small quantities of hazardous materials such as fuels, oils, and lubricants would be used during project construction. The project would be required to comply with existing regulations associated with the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials. Compliance with applicable regulations regarding hazardous materials would reduce the potential for hazardous emissions within one-quarter mile of existing schools. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No impact.** Government Code Section 65962.5 requires that DTSC compile and maintain a list of hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action, land designated as hazardous waste property, or hazardous waste disposals on public land. This list is known as the Cortese List, which can be accessed on Cal EPA's website. The project alignments are not located on a site included on a list of hazardous materials sites (DTSC 2022). There would be **no impact**, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** Mather Airport is located approximately 2.5 miles south of the southernmost terminus of the project alignments. The project alignments are not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, or within the vicinity of a private airstrip, and implementing the project would not result in an aviation-related safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. Therefore, **no impact** would occur, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** Project construction would require temporary lane closures and other roadway effects on Rossmoor Drive and Ambassador Drive that could interfere with or slow down emergency vehicles, temporarily increasing response times and impeding existing services on these roadways. However, any project construction activities that may involve public rights-of-way

would be required to obtain an encroachment permit from either the City of Rancho Cordova or Sacramento County. As part of this encroachment permit application, SMUD would be required to prepare and implement a traffic control plan, which would require the provision of temporary traffic controls and maintenance of emergency access during construction. Once project construction is complete, all roads would return to their pre-construction state and project operations would not interfere with emergency response or evacuation plans. As a result, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than Significant Impact.** While the project alignments cross through the open space of the American River Parkway, the project is located in an urbanized area of Rancho Cordova and is not adjacent to wildlands. However, fires regularly start in the American River Parkway. As required by the California Public Utilities Code (PUC), SMUD has prepared a wildfire mitigation plan (WMP). SMUD's current WMP was adopted in 2021 and describes the range of activities that SMUD is taking to mitigate the threat of power-line ignited wildfires, including its various programs, policies and procedures. (SMUD 2021). During project construction activities, SMUD would implement programs, policies, and procedures from its WMP that would reduce the risk of ignition from construction activities. By placing equipment underground, project operation would have no risk of fire during operation. Therefore, implementation of the project expose people and structures to a ***less-than-significant*** risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas. No mitigation would be required.



### 3.11 Hydrology and Water Quality

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

#### 3.11.1 Environmental Setting

##### *Surface Water*

The project alignments are located near the American River, which is a tributary to the Sacramento River and within the Sacramento River Basin. The Sacramento River Basin encompasses about 27,000 square miles and is bounded by the Sierra Nevada to the east, the Coast Ranges to the west, the Cascade Range and Trinity Mountains to the north, and the Delta to the southeast. The Sacramento River Basin is the largest river basin in California, capturing, on average, approximately 22 million acre-feet of annual precipitation (City of Sacramento 2014:6-43). The northernmost extent of the project alignments is approximately 200 feet south of the American River.

### *Water Quality*

The City of Rancho Cordova, along with other jurisdictions in Sacramento County, operates under a Phase I NPDES permit for stormwater municipal discharges to surface waters (NPDES No. CAS082597). The permit requires that the City impose water quality and watershed protection measures for all development projects. The intent of the waste discharge requirements in the permit is to attain water quality standards and protection of beneficial uses consistent with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board's Basin Plan. The NPDES permit prohibits discharges from causing violations of applicable water quality standards or result in conditions that create a nuisance or water quality impairment in receiving waters. A key component of the NPDES permit is the implementation of the Stormwater Quality Improvement Plan (SQIP), which consists of six Minimum Control elements 1) public education and outreach, 2) commercial/industrial control, 3) detection and elimination of illicit discharges, 4) construction stormwater control, 5) postconstruction stormwater control for new development and redevelopment 6) pollution prevention/good housekeeping for municipal operations). In addition, the City's Land Grading and Erosion Control requirements provide additional regulation and guidance to prevent degradation of water quality.

### *Groundwater*

The project alignment is within the South American Groundwater Subbasin, which is part of the larger Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin (City of Rancho Cordova 2006:4.9-8). The depth of groundwater beneath the project alignments is not yet known, particularly as SMUD has not yet finalized designs for the alignments.

### *Flooding*

A portion of the project alignments are within the 100-year floodplain (City of Rancho Cordova 2006:4.9-9).

## **3.11.2 Discussion**

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

**Less than significant.** Drainage from the area encompassing the project alignments flows into the City of Rancho Cordova's existing stormdrain system and is discharged to the American and Sacramento Rivers, which are located within the Sacramento River Basin. As such, the applicable water quality standards are listed in the Fifth Edition of the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River and San Joaquin River Basins (CRWQCB 2018). Construction of the project would occur within the City of Rancho Cordova and would disturb more than one acre of land surface. Therefore, the applicable waste discharge requirements (WDR) are the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer (MS4) stormwater NPDES permit (Order No. R5-2016-0040-008 and NPDES No. CAS082597 Municipal Stormwater NPDES Permit) and the Statewide NPDES General Construction Permit for stormwater runoff (Order No. 99-08-DWQ and NPDES No. CAS000002 [Construction General NPDES Permit]), and the dewatering and low threat discharges general NPDES permit (Order No. R5-2008-0081 and NPDES No. CAG995001 [Dewatering General NPDES Permit]).

The City of Rancho Cordova's Land Grading and Erosion Control requirements would require public or private contractors, including SMUD and its contractors, to comply with the requirements of the City's SQIP. In addition, before the onset of any construction activities, where the disturbed area is one acre or more in size, as is the case for the proposed project, the City would require SMUD to obtain coverage under the NPDES General Construction Permit, which includes the preparation and submittal of erosion and sediment control plans. The City's SQIP and the Stormwater Quality Design Manual for the Sacramento Region include BMPs that would be implemented by SMUD to reduce pollutants in stormwater and other non-point source runoff from new development and redevelopment projects.

By complying with the requirements of the City's SQIP and NPDES General Construction Permit, violation of WDRs or water quality standards would not occur. This impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** The project alignment is underlain by the South American Groundwater Subbasin, which is part of the larger Sacramento Valley Groundwater Basin. The South American River Subbasin is estimated to have a groundwater storage capacity of 4,816,000 acre-feet (DWR 2004:2). While it is not likely that groundwater would be encountered during construction activities, dewatering activities may be required if groundwater is encountered. If dewatering is necessary, SMUD would use Baker tanks and/or filtration bags, if needed, to treat water prior to discharge into the City's stormdrain system. Dewatering activities would be temporary and the volume of groundwater withdrawn during these dewatering activities would be very small relative to the subbasin's capacity. No groundwater would be withdrawn during project operation.

Because the project would involve construction activities within previously-disturbed areas, which are primarily paved areas, the project would not involve construction practices or develop facilities that would prevent recharge or otherwise redirect groundwater resources in the project alignments. Implementation of the project would result in a negligible increase in impervious surfaces from the access points covering the underground utility vaults, and there would be no change in surface infiltration characteristics affecting groundwater recharge. For all these reasons, there would be a ***less-than-significant*** impact on groundwater supplies and groundwater recharge, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**i) Result in substantial on- or offsite erosion or siltation;**

**Less than significant.** Project construction activities would involve excavation and movement of soil, which could result in erosion and siltation. These activities have the potential to cause or increase soil erosion and could accidentally discharge wastes into waterways in runoff if not managed appropriately. SMUD's compliance with the requirements of the City's Stormwater Management and Control Code, the City's Land Grading and Erosion Control requirements, as well as the NPDES Regional MS4 Permit which require preparation and submittal of erosion and sediment control plans. Such requirements would be sufficient to ensure that the project does not

result in substantial long-term effects on water quality. As a result, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

- ii) **Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;**

**Less than significant.** Project construction activities would occur within areas of existing rights-of-way or public use, which are predominantly paved areas. While the project would generally return the project alignment to its pre-construction condition, it is possible that a small amount of impervious surface could be added if utility vault covers are installed in areas that are currently not paved. However, any addition of impervious surface would be minimal and would not be expected to substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in or near the project alignments. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

- iii) **Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or**

**Less than significant.** Project construction could require dewatering activities if groundwater is encountered. SMUD would use Baker tanks and/or filtration bags, if needed, to treat water prior to discharge into the City's existing stormdrain system. SMUD and its construction contractor would coordinate with the City to determine the maximum amount that could be discharged to the stormdrain system so that the project, in conjunction with other sources of stormwater, would not exceed the capacity of the existing system. If the construction dewatering rate would exceed the maximum discharge rate, the water would be stored in Baker tanks prior to discharge and could be retained in the tanks as needed until there is adequate capacity for discharge. If needed, water would be treated with filtration bags prior to discharge to ensure that the discharge meets all applicable water quality requirements. The project alignments would be substantially returned to their pre-construction condition and would not generate new or polluted runoff. Therefore, the project would not exceed existing or planned stormwater capacity or generate polluted runoff. This impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

- iv) **Impede or redirect flood flows?**

**Less than significant.** A portion of the project alignments are within the 100-year floodplain (City of Rancho Cordova 2006:4.9-9). Thus, flooding could occur in the area. Project construction could temporarily impede or redirect flood flows if construction equipment would be located near gutters and areas near stormdrain inlets. However, if notified of an impending chance of flood conditions, SMUD would vacate and shore up the project area to prevent damage to its construction equipment and infrastructure. Construction activities would be temporary and project operation would not require above-ground features that could impede or redirect flood flows. Therefore, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** A portion of the project alignments are within the 100-year floodplain (City of Rancho Cordova 2006:4.9-9). While the project alignments could be subject to flooding, the project is in an area of mostly flat terrain with no large open bodies of water that would subject

the project to tsunami or seiche. If notified of an impending chance of flood conditions, SMUD would vacate and shore up the project area to prevent damage to its construction equipment and infrastructure as well as release of any pollutants. If a flood occurred during operation, the project would be fully contained underground and would not contain any pollutants that could be released. This impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** Project construction would be subject to the City's water quality and watershed protection measures as required by the Phase I NPDES Permit and implemented through the SQIP. During operation, the project would not generate wastewater or stormwater runoff, so there would be no conflict with or obstruction of a water quality control plan during project operation. While project construction could require dewatering, the groundwater removed would be minimal compared with the groundwater supply. Project operation would not require the use of any potable water, including groundwater. Because the project's potential impacts would be limited to construction activities that would not conflict with or obstruct a water quality control plan, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

### 3.12 Land Use and Planning

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

#### 3.12.1 Environmental Setting

The project alignments are located within the City of Rancho Cordova in Sacramento County. The project alignments include school property, roadways, rights-of-way, and areas of utility easements that run through open space and residential neighborhoods.

#### 3.12.2 Discussion

**a) Physically divide an established community?**

**No impact.** The project would replace existing underground cable and install new underground utility vaults in the city of Rancho Cordova. Because the duct banks and conduit that would house the new cable would be underground, there would be no division or impediment to the surrounding community as such underground facilities do not interfere with community life. The project would not lead to a physical division of an established community. There would be **no impact**, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** Project construction would occur within existing roadways, rights-of-way, utility easements, school property, and open space. The project would not result in any land use changes, and would not conflict with any adopted plans, policies, or regulations adopted for avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation would be required.

### 3.13 Mineral Resources

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

#### 3.13.1 Environmental Setting

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act directs the State Geologist to classify (identify and map) the non-fuel mineral resources of the State to show where economically significant mineral deposits occur and where they are likely to occur based upon the best available scientific data. Areas known as Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs) are classified on the basis of geologic factors, without regard to existing land use and land ownership. The areas are categorized into four general classifications (MRZ-1 through MRZ-4). Of the four, the MRZ-2 classification is recognized in land use planning because the likelihood for occurrence of significant mineral deposits is high, and the classification may be a factor in the discovery and development of mineral deposits that would tend to be economically beneficial to society.

A majority of the project alignments are classified as MRZ-3; however, portions of the 69kV alignment along Rossmoor Drive, near Rossmoor Bar River access, have been classified as MRZ-2. The MRZ-3 classification indicates that these areas contain mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data. The MRZ-2 classification indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or there exists a high likelihood that significant mineral deposits are present (Dupras 1999a). The project alignments are not designated as a locally important mineral resource recovery site in the *Rancho Cordova General Plan*, and no existing mining sites have been identified along the alignments (City of Rancho Cordova 2006: 4.8-13; Dupras 1999b). The project alignments are within the boundaries of the Folsom Mining District, a large and complex historic-era archaeological district. Potential impacts related to the Folsom Mining District will be evaluated in the EIR as this is no longer an active mining area.

#### 3.13.2 Discussion

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

**Less than Significant.** The project alignments are classified as MRZ-2 and MRZ-3, indicating that there is a potential for mineral resources to be present along the alignment; however, the alignment is primarily located within developed areas and land designated for parks and open space uses. Therefore, future mineral extraction is not anticipated or planned along the project alignments. Additionally, the project alignments are primarily located along existing property boundaries and within or along existing roadways and are not anticipated to prohibit the future

use of the area for mineral resource extraction. Therefore, the project would have a ***less than significant*** impact, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No Impact.** The project alignment is not designated as a locally important mineral resource recovery site in the City's General Plan (City of Rancho Cordova 2006: 4.8-13;). Thus, project implementation would not result in a loss of availability of locally important mineral resources, and the project would have ***no impact*** related to the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource discovery site, and no mitigation would be required.



### 3.14 Noise

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

#### 3.14.1 Environmental Setting

##### *Acoustic Fundamentals*

In the science of acoustics, the fundamental model consists of a sound (or noise) source, a receiver, and the propagation path between the two. Sound is the mechanical energy of a vibrating object transmitted by pressure waves through a liquid or gaseous medium (e.g., air) to a human ear. Noise is defined as loud, unexpected, annoying, or unwanted sound. As sound travels through the atmosphere from the source to the receiver, noise levels attenuate (i.e., decrease) depending on a variety of factors, including geometric spreading (i.e., spherical or cylindrical spreading), ground absorption (i.e., hard versus soft sites), atmospheric conditions (e.g., wind direction and speed, air temperature, humidity, turbulence), and shielding by natural or human-made features.

The amplitude of pressure waves generated by a sound source determines the loudness of that source, also called the sound pressure level (SPL). SPL is most commonly described by using decibels (dB) because this logarithmic unit best corresponds to the way the human ear interprets sound pressures. However, the decibel scale does not adequately characterize how humans perceive noise, because the human ear is not equally sensitive to loudness at all frequencies (i.e., pitch) in the audible spectrum. To approximate the response of the human ear, sound levels of individual frequency bands are weighted, depending on the human sensitivity to those frequencies. Then, an “A-weighted” sound level (expressed in units of A-weighted decibels) can be computed based on this information. All sound levels discussed in this section are expressed in A-weighted decibels.

Because decibels are logarithmic units, SPLs expressed in dB cannot be added or subtracted through ordinary arithmetic. Under the decibel scale, a doubling of sound energy corresponds to a 3 dB increase. In typical noisy environments, changes in noise of 1–2 dB are generally not perceptible. However, it is widely accepted that people can begin to detect sound level increases of 3 dB in typical noisy environments. Further, a 5 dB increase is generally perceived as a

distinctly noticeable increase, and a 10 dB increase is generally perceived as a doubling of loudness (Caltrans 2013:2-10).

Various noise descriptors have been developed to describe time-varying noise levels. The following noise descriptors are used in this section:

- Equivalent Continuous Sound Level ( $L_{eq}$ ):  $L_{eq}$  represents an average of the sound energy occurring over a specified period. In effect,  $L_{eq}$  is the steady-state sound level containing the same acoustical energy as the time-varying sound level that occurs during the same period (Caltrans 2013:2-48). For instance, the 1-hour equivalent sound level, also referred to as the hourly  $L_{eq}$ , is the energy average of sound levels occurring during a 1-hour period.
- Maximum Noise Level ( $L_{max}$ ): The highest instantaneous noise level during a specified time period (Caltrans 2013:2-48).
- Day-Night Level ( $L_{dn}$ ):  $L_{dn}$  is the energy average of A-weighted sound levels occurring over a 24-hour period, with a 10-dB “penalty” applied to sound levels occurring during nighttime hours between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. (Caltrans 2013:2-48; FTA 2018:214).

**Noise Generation and Attenuation**

Noise can be generated by many sources, including mobile sources such as automobiles, trucks, and airplanes and stationary sources such as activity at construction sites, machinery, and commercial and industrial operations. As sound travels through the atmosphere from the source to the receiver, noise levels attenuate (i.e., decrease) depending on a variety of factors. Atmospheric conditions such as wind speed, wind direction, turbulence, temperature gradients, and humidity alter the propagation of noise and affect levels at a receiver. The presence of a barrier (e.g., topographic feature, intervening building, and dense vegetation) between the source and the receptor can provide substantial attenuation of noise levels at the receiver. Natural (e.g., berms, hills, and dense vegetation) and human-made features (e.g., buildings and walls) may function as noise barriers. To provide some context to noise levels described throughout this section, common sources of environmental noise and associated noise levels are presented in Table 3.14-1.

**Table 3.14-1 Typical Noise Levels**

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dB)	Common Indoor Activities
	110	Rock band
Jet flyover at 1,000 feet	100	
Gas lawnmower at 3 feet	90	
Diesel truck moving at 50 mph at 50 feet	80	Food blender at 3 feet, Garbage disposal at 3 feet
Noisy urban area, Gas lawnmower at 100 feet	70	Vacuum cleaner at 10 feet, Normal speech at 3 feet
Commercial area, Heavy traffic at 300 feet	60	
Quiet urban daytime	50	Large business office, Dishwasher in next room

**Table 3.14-1 Typical Noise Levels**

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dB)	Common Indoor Activities
Quiet urban nighttime	40	Theater, Large conference room (background)
Quiet suburban nighttime	30	Library, Bedroom at night, Concert hall (background)
Quiet rural nighttime	20	Broadcast/Recording Studio
	10	
Threshold of Human Hearing	0	Threshold of Human Hearing

Notes: dB = A-weighted decibels; mph = miles per hour  
 Source: Caltrans 2013

### *Ground Vibration*

Vibration is the periodic oscillation of a medium or object with respect to a given reference point. Groundborne vibration is vibration of and through the ground. Sources of groundborne vibration include natural phenomena (e.g., earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides) and those introduced by human activity (e.g., explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment). Vibration sources may be continuous (e.g., operating factory machinery) or transient (e.g., explosions).

Groundborne vibration amplitudes are commonly expressed in peak particle velocity (PPV) or root-mean-square (RMS) vibration velocity. PPV and RMS vibration velocity are normally described in inches per second (in/sec) but can also be expressed in decibel notation (VdB), which is used mainly in evaluating human response to vibration.

### *Noise- and Vibration-Sensitive Land Uses and Receptors*

Noise- and vibration-sensitive land uses generally include those uses where noise exposure could result in health-related risks to individuals, places where a quiet setting is an essential element of the intended purpose (e.g., schools and libraries), and historic buildings that could sustain structural damage due to vibration. The project is in a relatively developed and populated area and would occur adjacent to sensitive receptors through the duration of the project. Nearby sensitive receptors include primarily single-family residential units and a school.

### *Local Noise Regulations*

The City’s General Plan Noise Element contains noise goals, policies, and standards (e.g., exterior and interior noise-level performance standards for new projects affected by or including non-transportation noise sources, with the exception of residential units established in conjunction with industrial or commercial uses) and the City Noise Ordinance contains noise limits for sensitive receptors that are considered relevant to the evaluation of potential noise impacts as a result of the project.

### 3.14.2 Discussion

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

**Less than significant.** In the project area, the dominant noise source is roadway traffic, primarily from vehicles along Coloma Road and activities and events at Cordova High School and Mills Middle School. The project would result in temporary increase in noise levels during construction as a result of heavy equipment movement and pavement removal, but no permanent increases in ambient noise levels would occur during operation. Construction-related noise sources would include both mobile and stationary on-site equipment (e.g., dozers, loaders, generators). Construction noise would be short-term and temporary, and operation of heavy-duty construction equipment would be intermittent throughout the day during construction.

The City of Rancho Cordova Municipal Code Chapter 6.68 exempts certain activities, including construction, from the City's noise standards as long as the activities do not take place between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. on weekdays and Friday commencing at 8:00 p.m. through and including 7:00 a.m. on Saturday; Saturdays commencing at 8:00 p.m. through and including 7:00 a.m. on the next following Sunday and on each Sunday after the hour of 8:00 p.m. This exemption provides that construction equipment must include appropriately maintained exhaust and intake silencers. However, the City does not specify limits in terms of maximum noise levels that may occur during the allowable construction hours.

Construction activities would generate noise near individual sensitive receptors throughout the duration of Phase 1 and Phase 2 construction periods, but only for a short period of time due to the linear and incremental nature of the project's construction activities. As noted in Section 3.3, "Air Quality," Phase 1 construction activities would progress at a rate of approximately 198 feet per day and Phase 2 would progress at a rate of approximately 43 linear feet per day. Phase 1 and Phase 2 construction activities may occur within 500 feet of any one sensitive receptor (residence) for approximately 175 out of the total 276 days of construction. Considering that construction activities would move along the proposed alignments, no individual receptor would be exposed to substantial noise from construction equipment for more than a few days at a time. Further, project construction activities would comply with the City's noise ordinance and restrict construction activities to occur within the ordinance's identified timeframes.

Site preparation and trenching phases typically generate the most substantial noise levels because the on-site equipment associated with excavation are typically the noisiest. Site preparation and trenching equipment includes backhoes, dozers, loaders, graders, excavation equipment, and generators. Installation of prefabricated utility vaults may require the use of a crane for placement and assembly tasks, which may also generate noise levels. Noise levels from these types of construction equipment are shown in Table 3.14-2 below.

Based on project-specific characteristics and accounting for typical usage factors of individual pieces of equipment and activity types along with typical attenuation rates, on-site construction related activities could result in hourly average noise levels of approximately 87  $L_{eq}$  and 92  $L_{max}$  at 50 feet. Construction activities would occur between 15 and 80 feet or more from sensitive receptors along Sierra Madre Court, Trails Court, and Ambassador Drive, for no more than a few days at a time during construction periods. At a distance of 16 feet, construction related activities

could result in noise levels of approximately 97  $L_{eq}$  and 102  $L_{max}$ . At a distance of 80 feet, construction related activities could result in noise levels of approximately 83  $L_{eq}$  and 88  $L_{max}$ .

**Table 3.14-2 Noise Emission Levels from Construction Equipment**

Equipment Type	Typical Noise Level (dB) @ 50 feet
Backhoe	80
Concrete Mixer	85
Crane, Mobile	83
Dozer	85
Generator	81
Grader	85
Loader	85
Paver	89
Roller	74
Trucks	74–88

Notes: Assumes all equipment is fitted with a properly maintained and operational noise control device, per manufacturer specifications. Noise levels listed are manufacture-specified noise levels for each piece of heavy construction equipment.

Source: FTA 2018

Due to the linear nature of the construction activities, no individual receptor would be exposed to substantial noise from construction equipment for more than a few days at a time. Furthermore, construction activities would occur within the timeframe identified by the City’s noise ordinance for exemption when sensitive receptors are less disturbed by noise increases. Thus, the project would not generate a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in excess of allowable standards in the vicinity of the project. The impact would be **less than significant**, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** Construction activities would result in ground vibration from the use of heavy-duty construction equipment. Construction may result in varying degrees of temporary ground vibration and noise levels due to the intermittent operation of various types of construction equipment and activities. Dozers would be associated with the maximum ground vibration levels during construction activities.

According to the Federal Transit Authority (FTA), large dozers produce groundborne vibration levels that could result in 0.089 in/sec PPV and 87 VdB within 25 feet of operational construction equipment (FTA 2006). Caltrans recommends a level of 0.2 in/sec PPV with respect to structural damage and FTA recommends a maximum acceptable level of 80 VdB with respect to human response for places where people sleep, such as residential uses (i.e., annoyance). The project would occur at a minimum of 16 feet from residential structures and would not result in a threshold exceedance for 0.2 in/sec PPV structural damage at an attenuation distance of 15 feet. Furthermore, FTA guidance for maximum acceptable VdB levels are primarily concerned with sleep disturbance in residential areas and can be avoided by keeping exposures at or below 80 VdB during typical sleeping hours, or if the vibration events are infrequent (i.e., 30 per day). Project

construction activities would not occur during typical sleep hours (i.e., construction would only occur between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.) and vibration-inducing activities (i.e., dozer use) would not be considered a frequent vibration sources; thus, construction would not result in a sleep disturbance.

No existing structure would be exposed to vibration levels that exceed 0.2 in/sec PPV and no sensitive receptor would be exposed to levels that exceed 80 VdB during sleep hours as a result of project construction activities. Thus, the project would not result in the exposure of the existing off-site receptors to excessive ground vibration levels. The impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No Impact.** The project alignments are located approximately 2.6 miles north of the Mather Airport and 5 miles southeast of the Sacramento McClellan Airport. No other airports or airstrips, public or private, exist in the area. The project would not result in expansion of aviation operations at any airport, nor would it result in the addition of sensitive receptors to the project alignments. Further, the project would not build any structure that would be above the existing ground or nearby building levels and would not affect air traffic patterns. Thus, the project would have ***no impact*** on existing aviation operations or expose new receptors to aviation related noise, and no mitigation would be required.

### 3.15 Population and Housing

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

#### 3.15.1 Environmental Setting

The project is located in the City of Rancho Cordova, adjacent to and within an existing residential community. The project involves the replacement of underground cables and installation of new utility vaults within roadways, public school property, and open space. The project would not generate any new residents in the area or provide any new jobs.

#### 3.15.2 Discussion

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

**No Impact.** The project involves the replacement of an underground cable that does not include new homes, businesses, or infrastructure that would induce or generate population growth. Therefore, the project would not result in substantial unplanned population growth. The project would have **no impact**, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No Impact.** No persons or homes would be displaced as a result of project construction or operation. Therefore, the project would have **no impact**, and no mitigation would be required.

### 3.16 Public Services

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

#### 3.16.1 Environmental Setting

The project alignments are located within an existing residential neighborhood in the City of Rancho Cordova in Sacramento County. The project alignments extend approximately 2.72 miles (2.12 miles for the 69kV alignment and 0.6 miles for the 12 kV alignment). The project would replace existing underground utility lines and install up to 13 new utility vaults within the roadways, rights-of-way, open space, and utility easements. The project does not include new homes, businesses, or infrastructure that would induce or generate population growth.

##### *Fire Protection Services*

The Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (SMFD) provides fire protection services to the area encompassed by the project alignments, as well as the entire city of Rancho Cordova. The closest SMFD station to the project alignments is Station 61 located at 10595 Folsom Boulevard.

##### *Police Protection Services*

The Rancho Cordova Police Department (RCPD) responsible for providing police protection services in the city of Rancho Cordova, including the area encompassed by the project alignments. RCPD is located at 2897 Kilgore Road.

##### *Schools*

There are two public schools adjacent to the project alignments, Mills Middle School, located along Coloma Road east of Chase Drive, and Cordova High School, located on Chase Drive, adjacent to Mills Middle School. Within one-quarter mile of the project alignments, there are three public schools and two private schools. The public schools are Peter J. Shields Elementary at



10434 Georgetown Drive, Rancho Cordova Elementary at 2562 Chassella Way, and Riverview STEM Academy at 10700 Ambassador Drive. The private schools are St. John Vianny School at 10499 Coloma Road and Cordova Baptist Church Preschool and Kindergarten at 10527 Coloma Road.

### *Parks and Other Public Facilities*

The project alignments are located adjacent to the Hagen Community Park and run through the American River Parkway recreation area.

## **3.16.2 Discussion**

- a) **Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:**

### *Fire Protection*

**No Impact.** Implementation of the project would not increase demand for SMFD fire protection services because the project would not generate new residents, which is the driving factor for fire protection services, nor would it result in the operation of additional structures within the project area that could generate calls for service. Because the project would not increase demand for fire protection services, no construction of new or expansion of existing fire service facilities would be required. Therefore, the project would have **no impact** on fire protection services, and no mitigation would be required.

### *Police Protection*

**No Impact.** Implementation of the project would not increase demand for RCPD police protection services because the project would not generate new residents, which is the driving factor for police protection services, nor would it result in the operation of additional structures within the project area that could generate calls for service. Because the project would not increase demand for police protection services, no construction of new or expansion of existing police service facilities would be required. Therefore, the project would have **no impact** on police facilities, and no mitigation would be required.

### *Schools*

**No Impact.** The project would not provide any new housing that would generate new students in the community nor result in an increase in employment opportunities that could indirectly contribute new students to the local school district. Therefore, the project would have **no impact** on school services and facilities, and no mitigation would be required.

### *Parks*

**No Impact.** The project would not induce or generate population growth, which could necessitate new or expanded park facilities. Therefore, the project would have **no impact** on parks, and no mitigation would be required.

*Other Public Facilities*

**No Impact.** No other public facilities exist in the project area that could be affected by implementation of the project. Therefore, the project would have ***no impact*** on other public facilities, and no mitigation would be required.

### 3.17 Recreation

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

#### 3.17.1 Environmental Setting

The project alignments are located adjacent to Hagen Community Park and within the American River Parkway recreation area. Hagen Community Park encompasses 80 acres and includes a dog park, barn, athletic fields, baseball fields, soccer fields, multi-use fields, tennis courts, and other amenities. The American River Parkway is an open space greenbelt which extends approximately 29 miles from Folsom Dam at the northeast to the American River’s confluence with the Sacramento River at the southwest. The County of Sacramento has the principal responsibility for administration and management of the American River Parkway as guided by the American River Parkway Plan (Sacramento County 2008). The American River Parkway Plan is defined to include the American River and adjacent floodplain, from the confluence with the Sacramento River to Folsom Dam. The County of Sacramento, however, has day-to-day management responsibility for the portion of the Parkway from the Sacramento River confluence to Hazel Avenue, exclusive of the fish hatchery facilities.

#### 3.17.2 Discussion

- 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?**

**No Impact.** The project does not include any new development that could increase the use of existing parks or recreational facilities. Therefore, the project would have **no impact**, and no mitigation would be required.

- b) **Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?**

**No Impact.** The project does not include any new development that could necessitate new or expanded recreational facilities. Therefore, the project would have **no impact**, and no mitigation would be required.

### 3.18 Transportation

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

#### 3.18.1 Environmental Setting

The project involves open trenching and other construction activities within existing rights-of-way and open space, including public roads and bike/pedestrian paths. Nearly the entire 0.6-mile 12kV alignment is within Ambassador Drive. Approximately 0.8 mile of the 69kV alignment is within Rossmoor Drive, with the balance of the work occurring on school, SMUD, or American River Parkway property. Within the Parkway property, the 69kV alignment follows an existing unpaved path frequently used by pedestrians and bicyclists. There are no transit stops along the project alignments.

#### 3.18.2 Discussion

- a) **Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?**
- b) **Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b), which pertains to vehicle miles travelled?**
- 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?**

**Potentially Significant.** Because parts of the 12kV and 69kV alignments would involve work within existing roadways, the project could affect vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle travel in the project area. Therefore, project impacts related to traffic and transportation could be **potentially significant**. These issues will be analyzed further in the EIR.

### 3.19 Utilities

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

#### 3.19.1 Environmental Setting

The project involves replacement of existing electrical utility lines and would not require water supply or generate wastewater requiring disposal. Removing water from the construction area (dewatering) may be necessary due to the high water-table of the area. SMUD would use Baker tanks and/or filtration bags, if needed, to treat water prior to discharge into the existing storm drain system in a manner consistent with regulatory requirements.

#### 3.19.2 Discussion

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

**Less than significant.** The project itself would install new conduit duct bank to replace the existing direct buried underground electrical lines, which entails the relocation of existing, but not expanded, electric facilities; the environmental effects are analyzed through this Initial Study. The project would not require the use or construction of water treatment, wastewater treatment, natural gas, or telecommunications infrastructure or facilities. As discussed above, project construction may include dewatering and the water would be temporarily stored in Baker tanks and/or

conveyed through filtration bags, if needed, prior to being discharged into the existing stormdrain system. Discharge to the stormdrain system would be temporary and would not exceed system capacity as water could be retained on the project site until there is adequate capacity. Project operation would not require any utility infrastructure or service. This impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No impact.** The project would not include any use that would require potable water. Because the project would not require water supplies, there would be ***no impact*** related to water supplies, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No impact.** The project would not require the use of wastewater systems. Therefore, the project would have ***no impact*** related to wastewater treatment capacity, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** The project would generate a small amount of solid waste during construction, but would not generate solid waste during project operation. Construction debris could include asphalt, concrete, scrap lumber, finishing materials, metals, and organic materials. Compliance with the current CALGreen Code and Rancho Cordova's Construction and Demolition Debris Reduction, Reuse and Recycling requirements would result in a reduction of construction waste and demolition debris and increase recycling.

The majority of landfilled waste would be delivered to the Sacramento Recycling and Transfer Station, the Sacramento County Kiefer Landfill, the Yolo County Landfill, L and D Landfill, Florin Perkins Landfill, and Elder Creek Transfer Station. Combined, these landfills have a large volume of landfill capacity available to serve the project during construction. The project involves the replacement of existing underground electrical lines and would not generate solid waste during operation. This impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**Less than significant.** The project would cause a temporary increase in the generation of solid waste as a result of construction activities. However, the operation of the project would not generate solid waste. Compliance with the City of Rancho Cordova policies regarding solid waste would prevent landfills from being overloaded due to the project construction activities. This impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

### 3.20 Wildfire

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

#### 3.20.1 Environmental Setting

The project alignments are located within a local responsibility area that is designated as a non-Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (non-VHFHSZ) (CAL FIRE 2008).

#### 3.20.2 Discussion

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

**Less than significant.** Construction of the project would require road lane closures that could temporarily impair emergency response plans or evacuation plans. As required by the City of Rancho Cordova, SMUD and its construction contractor would develop and implement a traffic control plan that would maintain access and connectivity during project construction activities. Because access and connectivity would be maintained during construction, the project would not substantially impair an emergency response plan or evacuation plan. Once construction is complete, the project alignments would be returned to their pre-construction condition and there would not be any above-ground features that would potentially impair emergency response or

evacuation. Because adequate access would be maintained throughout construction activities, this impact would be ***less than significant***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No impact.** The project would not exacerbate wildfire risks as the project site is not located within a wildfire hazard zone and is not near wildland areas. While a portion of the 69kV alignment is within the American River Parkway, an area of frequent fires, there are no slopes, prevailing winds, or other factors that would exacerbate wildfire risk. There would be ***no impact***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No impact.** The project does not require the installation of infrastructure that could exacerbate fire risk because the project would locate all electrical facilities below the ground surface. There would be ***no impact***, and no mitigation would be required.

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

**No impact.** The project is in an area of flat terrain and would not involve the changing to slopes that could expose people to risks of flooding from post-fire slope instability. Project facilities would be located under the ground surface and would not result in changes to existing drainage. There would be ***no impact***, and no mitigation would be required.



### 3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

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

Authority: Public Resources Code Sections 21083, 21083.5.

Reference: Government Code Sections 65088.4.  
Public Resources Code Sections 21080, 21083.5, 21095; *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.

#### 3.21.1 Discussion

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

**Potentially Significant.** Additional evaluation is necessary to determine whether the project would affect Tribal cultural resources, cultural resources, and biological resources. This **potentially significant** impact will be analyzed further in the EIR.

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

**Potentially Significant.** Generally, because of the limited scope of the project (i.e., limited construction activities to replace existing infrastructure and no expansion of use beyond existing

conditions), implementation would not result in cumulatively considerable contributions to the cumulative effects of development in the area. Evaluation of the project's contribution to cumulative impacts related to Tribal cultural resources, cultural resources, air quality, biological resources, and transportation will be evaluated after the project impacts are characterized in the EIR. This ***potentially significant*** impact will be analyzed further in the EIR.

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

**Potentially Significant.** The EIR will evaluate environmental effects that could cause substantial adverse effects on human beings associated with the construction of this project, either directly or indirectly. This ***potentially significant*** impact will be analyzed further in the EIR.

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## 4.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

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