

SECTION 4.2

LAND USE

This section describes the land use plans, policies, regulations and federal special designations that apply to the proposed Project. The solar farm complex is located in Imperial County on privately held lands. Applicable local land use regulations include the County's General Plan and Land Use Ordinance, and the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP). Approximately 2 miles of the proposed transmission line cross through lands managed by the BLM and approximately 0.24 acres of IID land would be affected by modifications to the proposed Anza Substation.

This section focuses on the proposed Project's consistency with existing land use plans, ordinances, regulations, policies, and the project's compatibility with existing or reasonably foreseeable land uses. The Project's compatibility with existing land use resources is also evaluated. The Project's impacts with respect to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, noise, hazards and hazardous materials, traffic and transportation, and visual resources are discussed in detail in separate sections of this EIR.

4.2.1 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

A. FEDERAL

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The following discussion describes the plans applicable to the portion of the proposed 92 kV transmission line which crosses public lands managed by the BLM.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act, 1976 as Amended

The United States Congress passed the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) in 1976. Title V, "Rights-of-Way" of the FLPMA establishes public land policy, guidelines for administration, provides for management, protection, development, and enhancement of public lands, and provides the BLM authorization to grant right-of-way. Authorization of systems for generation, transmission, and distribution of electric energy is addressed in Section 501(4) of Title V. In addition, Section 503 specifically addresses "Right of Way Corridors" and requires common right-of-ways "to the extent practical". FLPMA, Title V, Section 501(a)(6) states, "The Secretary, with respect to the public lands (including public lands, as defined in section 103(e) of this Act, which are reserved from entry pursuant to section 24 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 818)) [P.L. 102-486, 1992] and, the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to lands within the National Forest System (except in each case land designated as wilderness), are authorized to grant, issue, or renew rights-of-way over, upon, under, or through such lands for roads, trails, highways, railroads, canals, tunnels, tramways, airways, livestock driveways, or other means of transportation except where such facilities are constructed and maintained in connection with commercial recreation facilities on lands in the National Forest System" (BLM 2001, p. 35).

California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan, 1980 as Amended

Section 601 of the FLPMA required preparation of a long-range plan for the CDCA. The CDCA Plan was adopted in 1980 to provide for the use of public lands and resources of the CDCA in a manner which enhances wherever possible and, which does not diminish, on balance, the environmental, cultural, and aesthetic values of the Desert and its productivity. The CDCA Plan is a comprehensive, long-range plan covering 25 million-acres. Approximately 12 million acres of this total are public lands administered by the BLM on behalf of the CDCA. These public lands are dispersed throughout the California Desert which includes the Mojave Desert, the Sonoran Desert and a small portion of the Great Basin Desert. The 12 million acres of public lands administered by the BLM make-up approximately half of the CDCA.

The proposed transmission line component of the Project is included in the "Land Use Activities" category of Transmission Lines as identified in Table 1, Multiple-Use Class Guidelines, of the CDCA Plan. The

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transmission line is within Multiple-Use Class L (Limited Use) based on the Balanced Alternative Map of the CDCA Plan (BLM 1980). On November 15, 2002, BLM granted IID right-of-way (ROW) CACA 044554 to construct the overbuilt 92 kV transmission line above an existing IID distribution line as part of a larger IID project. The BLM has confirmed that the granted ROW remains valid (BLM 2012).

The CDCA Plan identifies 75 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). ACECs are defined in the CDCA Plan as follows:

“An area within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards” (BLM 1980, p. 101).

The CDCA Plan provides the following management goals for ACECs:

- (1) Identify and protect the significant natural and cultural resources requiring special management attention found on the BLM-administered lands in the CDCA.
- (2) Provide for other uses in the designated areas, compatible with the protection and enhancement of the significant natural and cultural resources.
- (3) Systematically monitor the preservation of the significant natural and cultural resources on BLM administered lands, and the compatibility of other allowed uses with these resources.

The proposed Project is not within an ACEC as mapped in the CDCA Plan (BLM, 1980). However, the solar farm complex is adjacent to the 6,337 acres San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek ACEC (i.e. ACEC 61). Additionally, the proposed 2.25 miles of new 92 kV transmission line would be “overbuilt” on top of the IID’s existing 12.5 kV distribution line located immediately south of SR 78. The new 92 kV transmission line would extend east from the Project area across approximately two miles of public land managed by the BLM (Sections 14 and 15) to the existing IID Anza Substation. This land is not within a designated utility corridor. However, Lots 4 and 5 are immediately west of the San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek ACEC. As noted in Table 15 of the CDCA Plan, this ACEC is designated as such for is pre-historic, historic, Native American Values, riparian area and wildlife (BLM 1980, p. 104).

Federal Aviation Regulations Part 77

The FAA regulates aviation at regional, public, private, and military airports. The FAA requires notification of structures to be constructed in excess of 200 feet in all areas (and, potentially, of structures less than 200 feet, depending on proximity of the proposed structure to public use airports). The U.S. Department of Transportation and California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) also require the applicant to submit FAA Form 7460-1, Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration. Notification allows the FAA to identify potential aeronautical hazards in advance, thus preventing or minimizing any adverse impacts on the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace (49 CFR Part 77.17). Any structure that would constitute a hazard to air navigation, as defined in FAA Part 77, requires issuance of a permit from the Caltrans’ Aeronautics Program. If the FAA aeronautical study determines that the structure has no impact on air navigation, a permit is not required.

Part 77, Subpart C, of the Federal Aviation Regulations limits the heights of structures, trees, and other objects in the vicinity of an airport within Compatibility Zones C and D to less than 35 feet above the level of the ground. Proponents of a project which may exceed a Part 77 limit must notify the FAA as required. Currently, there are no such locations near the existing airports in Imperial County. The Salton Sea Airport is approximately 9 miles northeast of the Project and the Ocotillo Airport is approximately 6.75 miles to

the northwest of the solar farm complex site. According to Figure 3F, “Compatibility Map-Salton Sea Airport,” the Project is not located within any of the compatibility zones as identified in the ALUCP. In addition, total height of the overbuilt transmission line poles would be 65 feet. Therefore, Part 77 would not apply to the proposed Project.

B. STATE

Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area (OWSVRA) General Plan

The OWSVRA General Plan provides broad policy and program guidance to direct the long-range management, development, and operation of the OWSVRA. The original General Plan was developed by California State Parks, Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division, Ocotillo Wells District in 1982 following the designation of Ocotillo Wells as an SVRA in 1976. The General Plan is currently undergoing a comprehensive update to the original General Plan that will incorporate management strategies that were added to OWSVRA after 1982 (OWSVRA Working Paper #2 2013, p. 8).

The OWSVRA General Plan, required by state law, establishes a framework for OWSVRA that managers, staff, and the public use as a benchmark for making decisions. The General Plan guides future and day-to-day decision-making, and serves as the basis for developing focused feasibility and management plans, planning and implementing specific projects, and performing other management actions. The General Plan update will provide a long-term, forward-looking vision for the OWSVRA through goals and guidelines that will support decision-makers well into the future (OWSVRA Working Paper #2 2013, pp. 8-9).

The OWSVRA is located immediately north of SR 78, opposite of the Project area.

C. LOCAL

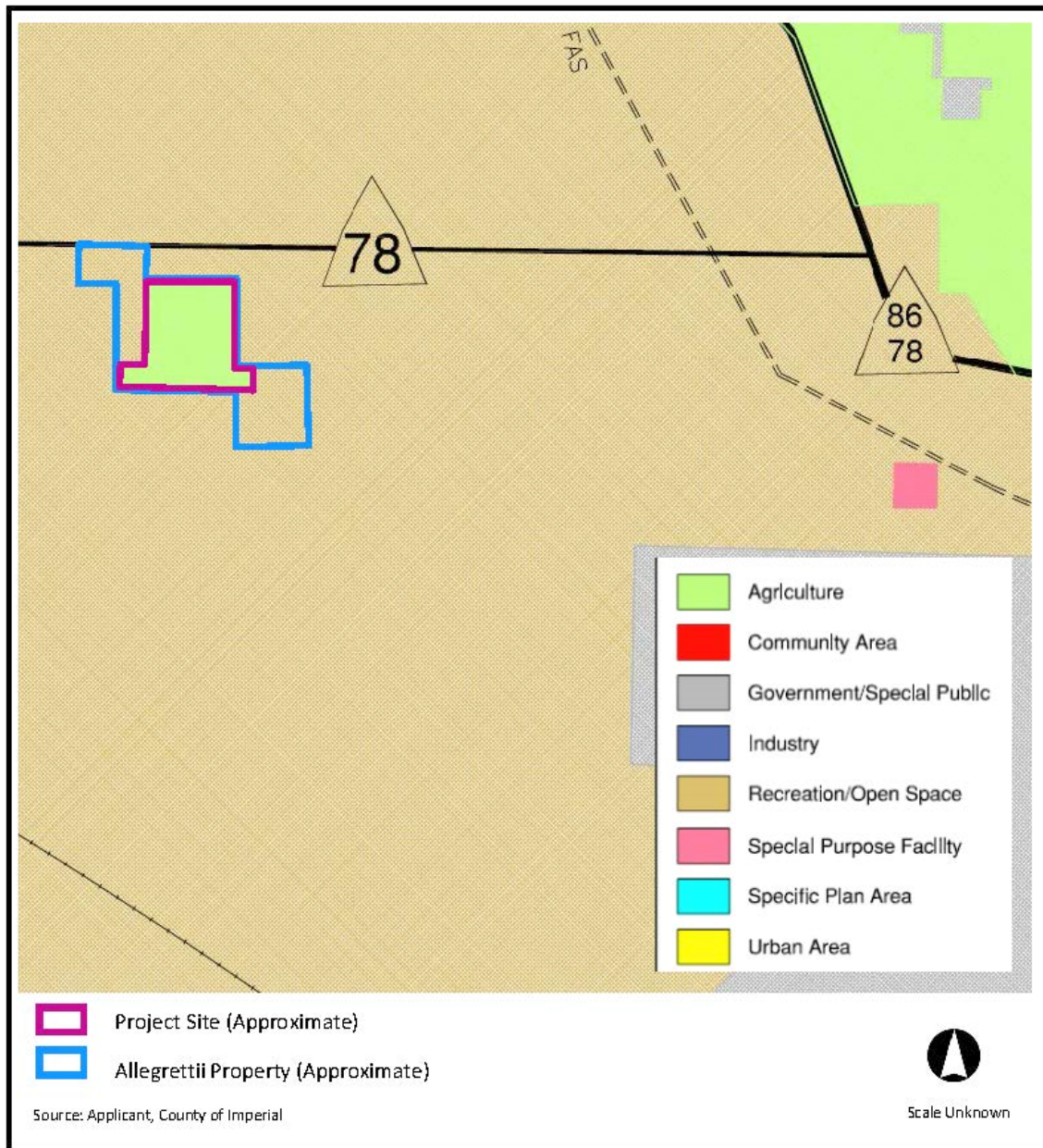
Imperial County General Plan

The purpose of the Imperial County General Plan is to guide growth throughout the County. Urban development is directed to areas where public infrastructure can be readily extended and areas with limited health and safety hazards. Likewise development should avoid natural, cultural, and economic resources. The General Plan includes ten elements: Land Use; Housing; Circulation and Scenic Highways; Noise; Seismic and Public Safety; Conservation and Open Space; Agricultural; Geothermal/Alternative Energy and Transmission; Water; and Parks and Recreation. These elements satisfy the California Government Code requirements for general plan elements. Each element includes goals, objectives, and implementing policies and action programs.

As shown on **Figure 4.2-1**, the solar farm complex is currently designated as Agriculture on the General Plan Land Use Map and is surrounded by lands designated as Recreation/Open Space. The General Plan land use designation Agriculture applies to the solar farm complex site only. The Land Use Element of the Imperial County General Plan defines the “Agriculture” designation as follows:

This category is intended to preserve lands for agricultural production and related industries including aquaculture (fish farms), ranging from light to heavy agriculture. Packing and processing of agricultural products may also be allowed in certain areas, and other uses necessary or supportive of agriculture. The Agriculture category includes most of the central irrigated area known as the Imperial Valley, the Bard/Winterhaven Valley and the south end of the Palo Verde Valley.

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Source: Regenerate 2013a; County of Imperial 2007.

FIGURE 4.2-1
IMPERIAL COUNTY LAND USE PLAN MAP WITH PROJECT SITE

Where this designation is applied, agriculture shall be promoted as the principal and dominant use to which all other uses shall be subordinate. Where questions of land use compatibility arise, the burden of proof shall be on the non-agricultural use to clearly demonstrate that an existing or proposed use does not conflict with agricultural operations and will not result in the premature elimination of such agricultural operations. No use should be permitted that would have a significant adverse effect on agricultural production, including food and fiber production, horticulture, floriculture, or animal husbandry. All non-agricultural uses in any land use category shall be analyzed during the subdivision, zoning, and environmental impact review process for their potential impact on the movement of agricultural equipment and products on roads located in the Agriculture category.

No land shall be removed from the Agriculture category except for annexation to a city, where needed for use by a public agency, for geothermal purposes, where a mapping error may have occurred, or where a clear long term economic benefit to the County can be demonstrated through the planning and environmental review process (Imperial County 2008, p. 48).

The Recreation/Open Space designation recognizes the unique recreational character of Imperial County and includes desert, mountain, and waterfront areas with the potential for development as public or private parks and recreation facilities in appropriate areas. Primarily, however, areas designated Open Space/Recreation/Preservation are characterized by a low intensity of human utilization and include mountain areas, sand dunes, desert lands and other open lands that are essentially unimproved and not predominantly used for agriculture. The majority of the land in this category is public land administered by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and owned by either BLM or the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

Table 4.2-1 analyzes the consistency of the proposed Project with the applicable goals and objectives relating to land use from the Imperial County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element, Land use Element, and Geothermal/Alternative Energy and Transmission Element. While this EIR analyzes the Project's consistency with the General Plan pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(d), the Imperial County Board of Supervisors ultimately determines whether the Project is overall consistent with the County's General Plan.

**TABLE 4.2-1
IMPERIAL COUNTY GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

General Plan Goals and Objectives	Consistent with General Plan?	Analysis
CONSERVATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT		
Conservation of Environmental Resources for Future Generations		
Goal 1: Environmental resources shall be conserved for future generations by minimizing environmental impacts in all land use decisions.	Yes	The solar farm complex is located on a site that has previously been used for agricultural activities and has been idled for several years. In addition, the proposed 92 kV transmission line would be overbuilt on top of an existing IID line on BLM land. Modifications to the Anza Substation on IID land are also proposed. In each case, the affected lands have been previously disturbed. Placing the proposed

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**TABLE 4.2-1
IMPERIAL COUNTY GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

General Plan Goals and Objectives	Consistent with General Plan?	Analysis
		Project within the Project area would preserve other areas that could be used for solar development. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this goal.
Objective 1.2 Encourage only those uses and activities that are compatible with the fragile desert, aquatic, and marshland environment.	Yes	The proposed Project includes: a solar farm complex on lands formerly used for agricultural activities surrounded by open desert; an overbuilt transmission line extending through open desert; and modifications to the Anza Substation also within open desert. The proposed Project is an allowed use with a CUP and would incorporate design features and measures to reduce impacts to surrounding areas. In addition, mitigation measures are identified as necessary to minimize impacts to cultural and biological resources (refer to Sections 4.7, Cultural Resources and 4.12, Biological Resources). Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this objective.
Objective 1.5 Provide for the most beneficial use of land based upon recognition of natural constraints.	Yes	The proposed Project represents a beneficial use that recognizes the solar farm complex site's potential for renewable energy in the form of electricity generated from solar power. The proposed Project would also significantly reduce the water demand that was historically used for irrigation on the solar farm complex site. Other benefits of the Project include creating local jobs during construction and generating more renewable energy to assist with stabilizing energy costs. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this objective.
Objective 1.6 Ensure the conservation, development and utilization of the County's natural resources.	Yes	The proposed Project would result in a temporary conversion of idle farmland in order to construct a solar farm complex. The proposed Project would forfeit one resource (Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance and Farmland of Local Importance) for another (use of the County's solar resource for generation of electricity

**TABLE 4.2-1
IMPERIAL COUNTY GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

General Plan Goals and Objectives	Consistent with General Plan?	Analysis
		energy). However, the conversion would be temporary as the Applicant has submitted a Reclamation Plan to the ICPDSD detailing procedures for returning the solar farm complex site to idle farmland, consistent with existing conditions, at the end of the Project's useful life. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this objective.
LAND USE ELEMENT		
Regional Vision		
Goal 3: Achieve balanced economic and residential growth while preserving the unique natural, scenic, and agricultural resources of Imperial County.	Yes	The proposed Project is located on a site that was previously used for agricultural activities and has been idled for several years. Open desert lands surrounding the solar farm complex site would be preserved as would agricultural lands in active production in other portions of the County. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this goal.
Objective 3.6 Recognize and coordinate planning activities as applicable with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the California Desert Conservation Plan.	Yes	The transmission line component of the proposed Project would align through lands under the jurisdiction of the BLM. ROW CACA 044554 was granted to the IID by BLM to construct the overbuilt 92 kV transmission line as part of a larger IID project. The proposed Project is consistent with this objective as the Applicant has confirmation from the BLM that the granted ROW remains valid (BLM 2012).
Public Facilities		
Goal 8: Coordinate local land use planning activities among all local jurisdictions and state and federal agencies.	Yes	The proposed Project includes a solar farm complex on County land as well as construction of an overbuilt 92 kV transmission line on lands under the jurisdiction of the BLM and modifications to the Anza Substation on IID land. The Project is being coordinated with the ICPDSD and IID. In addition ROW CACA 044554 was granted to the IID and remains valid. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this goal.
Objective 8.8 Ensure that the siting of future facilities for the transmission of electricity, gas, and telecommunications	Yes	The siting of the proposed Project is compatible with the environment and County regulation. The proposed solar farm complex

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**TABLE 4.2-1
IMPERIAL COUNTY GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

General Plan Goals and Objectives	Consistent with General Plan?	Analysis
is compatible with the environment and County regulation.		site is in close proximity to the Anza Substation and an existing utility corridor through BLM land. The proposed Project would be consistent with the County's Land Use Ordinance which allows "major facilities relating to the generation and transmission of electrical energy" with a CUP (Imperial County 2009). The Applicant has requested five CUPs (CUP 13-0011, 13-0012, 13-0013, 13-0014 and 13-0015) from Imperial County to allow construction and operation of each of the solar energy projects in the proposed solar farm complex. In addition, nine CUPs (13-0016, 13-0017, 13-0018, 13-0019, 13-0020, 13-0021, 13-0022, 13-0023, and 13-0024) are required for the water wells within the Project area. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this objective. In addition, the BLM granted IID ROW CACA 044554 to construct the overbuilt 92 kV transmission line as part of a larger IID project. The BLM has confirmed that the granted ROW remains valid (BLM 2012).
Objective 8.9 Require necessary public utility rights-of-way when appropriate.	Yes	The BLM granted ROW CACA 044554 to the IID to construct the overbuilt 92 kV transmission line as part of a larger IID project. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this objective.
Protection of Environmental Resources		
Goal 9: Identify and preserve significant natural, cultural, and community character resources and the County's air and water quality.	Yes	The Project area is not identified as an area with significant natural, cultural or community character in the General Plan. Project area is in a remote portion of the County and was formerly used as active farmland. The proposed Project would result in improved GHG emissions through the development of a solar farm complex and would reduce historic water usage on the Project area while still allowing recharge. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this Goal.

**TABLE 4.2-1
IMPERIAL COUNTY GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

General Plan Goals and Objectives	Consistent with General Plan?	Analysis
Objective 9.6 Incorporate the strategies of the Imperial County Air Quality Attainment Plan (AQAP) in land use planning.	Yes	The Applicant would control fugitive dust during construction and operations as required by ICAPCD Regulation VIII. A Dust Control Plan would be prepared in conformance with ICAPCD requirements to address construction and earthmoving activities, track-out, open areas and unpaved roads. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this objective.
GEOTHERMAL/ALTERNATIVE ENERGY AND TRANSMISSION ELEMENT		
Locating Transmission Line Corridors		
Goal 5: When planning and designing transmission lines, the County will consider impacts to agricultural lands, wildlife, and the natural desert landscape.	Yes	The Project includes the construction for, and operation by, the IID of approximately 0.75 miles of new 92 kV transmission line on the Property and 2.25 miles of new 92 kV transmission “off-property” for interconnection to the existing IID Anza Substation. Of the 2.25 miles, a 2.0 mile segment is on BLM land and includes a crossing of Tarantula Wash. The 0.75 mile portion of the transmission line on the Property extends through approximately 0.5 miles of idle farmland and 0.25 miles of undeveloped, flat-lying land. The consideration of agricultural lands, wildlife and natural desert landscape have been considered as part of this EIR [refer to Sections 4.1 Aesthetics, 4.9 Agricultural Resources and 4.12 Biological Resources]. The Project proposes to use an existing BLM transmission corridor (ROW CACA 044554). Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this goal.
Objective 5.1 Require all major transmission lines to be located in designated federal and IID corridors or other energy facility corridors such as those owned by investor owned utilities and merchant power companies.	Yes	Of the 2.25 miles, a 2.0 mile segment of the transmission line would be located within existing ROW CACA 044554. The BLM granted the IID ROW CACA 044554 to construct the overbuilt 92 kV transmission line as part of a larger IID project. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this objective.

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**TABLE 4.2-1
IMPERIAL COUNTY GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

General Plan Goals and Objectives	Consistent with General Plan?	Analysis
Objective 5.3 Construct transmission lines in accordance with this Element.	Yes	The proposed transmission line is consistent with the Geothermal/Alternative Energy and Transmission Element's goals and objectives related to transmission line construction. Refer to analysis under Goal 5 and Objective 5.1
Objective 5.4 Design transmission lines to be joint use with transportation and other infrastructure corridors within or external to the County	Yes	As described in the analysis for Objective 2.6 and Objective 5.1, above, the majority of the length of the transmission line is within existing ROW CACA 044554. Therefore, the proposed Project would be consistent with this objective.

County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance, Title (9)

The County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance (Title 9) provides the physical land use planning criteria, development standards, and zoning regulations for development in the unincorporated areas of the County.

The purpose of the Land Use Ordinance is to protect the public health, safety and welfare, to provide for orderly development, classify, regulate and where applicable segregate land uses and building uses; to regulate the height and size of buildings; to regulate the area of yards and other open spaces and buildings; to regulate the density of population; and, to provide the economic and social advantages resulting from orderly planned land uses and resources.

As depicted in **Figure 4.2-2**, the solar farm complex site is zoned A-2, General Agriculture. The portion of the transmission line on BLM land is identified as Recreation/Open Space (R/OS). **Table 4.2-2** summarizes the zones within the Project area.

**TABLE 4.2-2
SUMMARY OF PROJECT SITE ZONING**

Zoning	Purpose	Uses Allowed with a CUP
General Agriculture (A-2) [40 Acre minimum]	To designate areas that are suitable and intended primarily for agricultural uses (limited) and agricultural related compatible uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electrical generation plants (less than 50-MW) • Electrical Power Generating Plant excluding nuclear or coal fired, • Electrical substations in an electrical transmission system (500-kV/230-kV/161-kV). • Major facilities relating to the generation and transmission of

**TABLE 4.2-2
SUMMARY OF PROJECT SITE ZONING**

Zoning	Purpose	Uses Allowed with a CUP
		<p>electrical energy, provided such facilities are not, under State or Federal law, to be approved exclusively by an agency or agencies of the State and/or Federal governments and provided that such facilities shall be approved subsequent to coordination and review with the Imperial Irrigation District for electrical matters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar Energy Electrical Generator

Source: Imperial County 1998.

Uses in the A-2 zoning designations are limited primarily to agricultural related uses and agricultural activities that are compatible with agricultural uses. Sections 90508.02 and 90509.02 of the Land Use Ordinance lists many uses that are permitted in the A-2 zone, but that require a CUP. **Table 4.2-2** identifies the uses that are allowed with a CUP that are relevant to the proposed Project.

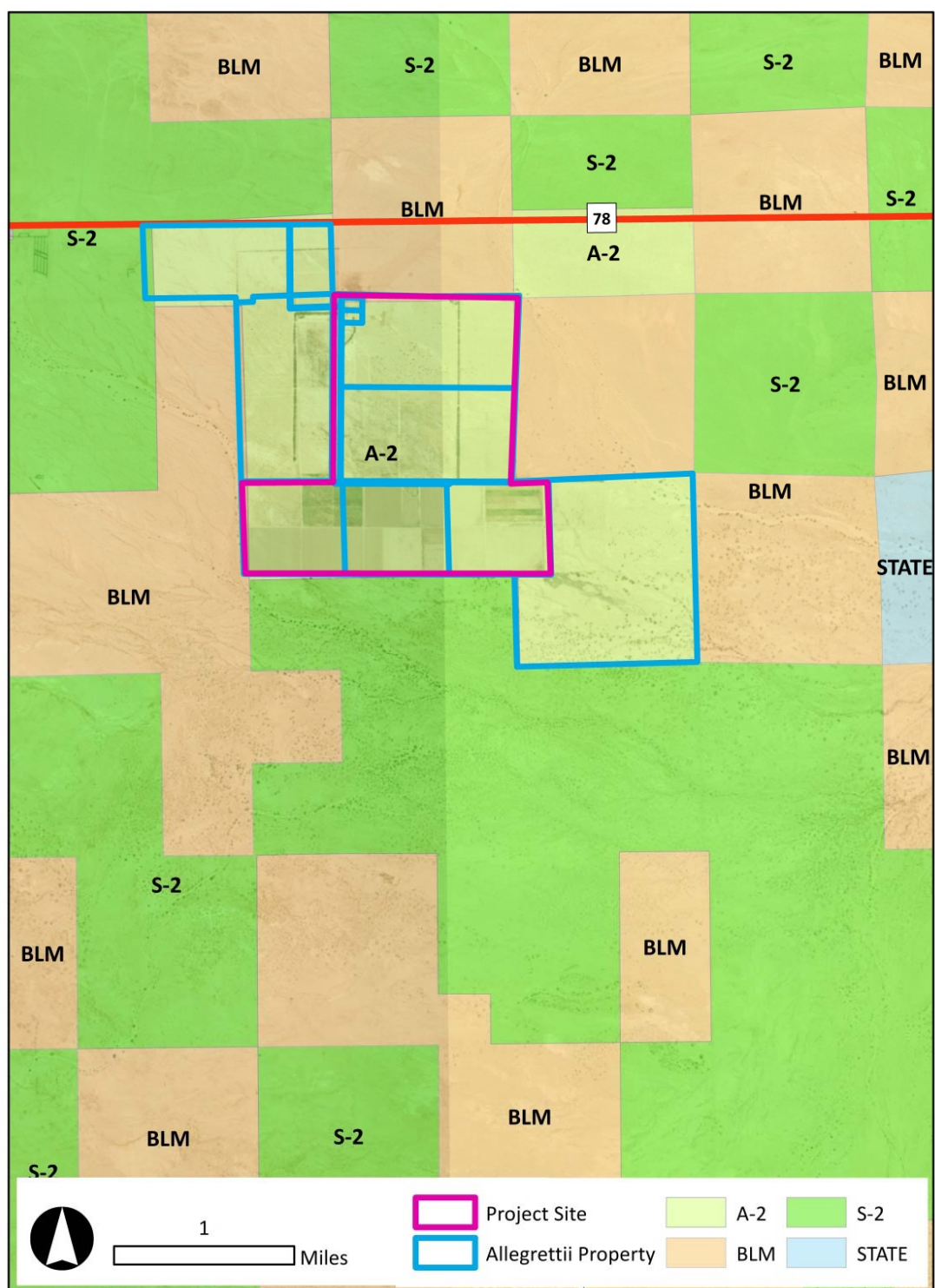
Section 90508.07 and 90509.07 of the Land Use Ordinance limit non-residential structure height to 120-feet within the A-2 zone. Specifically, Sections 90508.07(C) and 90509.07(C) state, "Non-Residential structures and commercial communication towers shall not exceed one hundred twenty (120) feet in height, and shall meet ALUC Plan requirements." The height of the overbuilt 92 kV transmission line would be approximately 65 feet (refer to Figure 2.0-10 in Chapter 2.0, Project Description).

Other zoning designations adjacent to the solar farm complex site include BLM and S-2 (Open Space/Preservation). The BLM designation is used to identify public land administered by the BLM and owned by either the BLM or the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The S-2 Zone is considered to be the Open Space Preservation Zone. The primary intent of the S-2 zone is to preserve the cultural, biological, and open space areas that are rich and natural as well as cultural resources.

Adjacent Areas Land Use Designations

Lands surrounding the solar farm complex are limited to open desert within the Recreation Open/Space land use designation (refer to Figure 4.2-1). The transmission line would cross privately owned land within the solar farm complex and Property, open desert on BLM-managed land, and land owned by the IID to connect to the Anza Substation.

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Source: ESRI, Imperial County Planning Department.

FIGURE 4.2-2
IMPERIAL COUNTY ZONING MAP WITH PROJECT SITE

Regional Comprehensive Plan and Regional Transportation Plan

The Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) reviews projects in the Southern California region of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties. CEQA requires that regional agencies like SCAG review projects and plans throughout its jurisdiction in order to monitor development. Projects and plans that are of sufficient size or magnitude as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15206 are considered "regionally significant" and must demonstrate to SCAG their consistency with a range of adopted regional plans and policies such as the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide, the Regional Transportation Plan, and the 2004 Compass Blueprint Growth Vision Report.

SCAG has identified 22 Minimum Criteria for Classification of projects as Regionally Significant. Criteria 1 thru 12 are recommended for use by CEQA Guidelines, Section 15206. Criteria 1 thru 22 reflect SCAG's mandates and regionally significant projects that directly relate to policies and strategies contained in the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide. Criterion 14 identifies "New or expanded electrical generating facilities and transmission lines" as regionally significant projects. **Table 4.2-3** provides a summary of the proposed Project's consistency with the SCAG intergovernmental review policies.

**TABLE 4.2-3
PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF
GOVERNMENTS INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW POLICIES**

SCAG IGR Policies	Consistent with IGR Policies?	Analysis
Regional Transportation Plan Policies		
RTP G5 Protect the environment, improve air quality and promote energy efficiency.	Yes	The proposed Project would improve air quality by providing approximately 135 MW of renewable energy through solar power rather than fossil-fuel. The Project would also contribute to greater energy efficiency by helping meet the State's RPS goals. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with RTP Goal 5.
RTP G6 Encourage land use and growth patterns that complement our transportation investments and improves the cost-effectiveness of expenditures.	Yes	The proposed Project is a solar farm complex that would create renewable energy. The Project is located in a rural area of Imperial County not proposed for urban growth. Sufficient public roadway infrastructure is available to accommodate construction and operation, and additional transportation investments off-site would not be required. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with RTP Goal 6.
Principle 4: Promote Sustainability For Future Generations		

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**TABLE 4.2-3
PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF
GOVERNMENTS INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW POLICIES**

SCAG IGR Policies	Consistent with IGR Policies?	Analysis
GV P4.1 Preserve rural, agricultural, recreational and environmentally sensitive areas.	Yes	The proposed Project would be located on private lands formerly in agricultural production, lands managed by the BLM, and lands owned by the IID in association with modifications to the Anza Substation. The Project includes design features and Best Management Practices to avoid and preserve sensitive areas whenever possible (refer to Table 2.0-19 in Chapter 2.0). A Reclamation Plan has been prepared demonstrating how the solar farm complex site will be reclaimed to approximate the existing idle farmland at the end of the Project's operational life. In addition, the Applicant would be required to comply with standards enforced by the BLM and other state (such as CDFW) and federal agencies (such as USFWS). The proposed Project would be consistent with this principle.
GV P4.3: Develop strategies to accommodate growth that uses resources efficiently, eliminate pollution and significantly reduce waste.	Yes	The proposed Project would involve production of renewable energy using solar PV and/or CPV technology, harnessing the sun's power to create carbon-free renewable energy. The Project would eliminate fossil fuel emissions associated with production of 135 MW of electricity. Therefore, the proposed Project would be consistent with this principle.
GV P4.4: Utilize "green" development techniques.	Yes	The proposed Project is an example of clean development as it involves solar PV and/or CPV technology to generate electricity rather than fossil-fuel. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with this principle.

Source: SCAG 2008.

Imperial County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP)

The Imperial County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) provides the criteria and policies used by the Imperial County Airport Land Use Commission (Commission or ALUC) to assess compatibility between the principal airports in Imperial County and proposed land use development in the areas surrounding the airports. The ALUCP emphasizes review of local general and specific plans, zoning ordinances, and other land use documents covering broad geographic areas.

The California Public Utilities Code (Section 21676.5) empowers the Commission to review additional types of land use “actions, regulations, and permits” involving a question of airport/land use compatibility if either: (1) the Commission and the local agency agree that these types of individual projects shall be reviewed by the Commission (Section 21676.5 (b)); or, (2) the Commission finds that a local agency has not revised its general plan or specific plan or overruled the Commission and the Commission requires that the individual projects be submitted for review (Section 21676.5 (a)). The Commission is also required to review “any request for variance from a local agency’s height limitation ordinance” (Imperial County 1996a, p. 2-3).

The Ocotillo Airport (Federal Aviation Administration ID: L90) is a local landmark managed by the County of San Diego Department of Public Works, Airport Administration. The airport is located on Benson Dry Lake, on the north side of SR 78 (approximately 7 miles northeast of the Project), and abuts the OWSVRA on three sides. SR 78 borders Ocotillo Airport on the south side. The airstrip is used for U.S. military training, and by small planes, sailplanes, and motorized hang gliders on two dirt runways. Runway extents are marked by white paving blocks. Aircraft tie-downs are in the airstrip’s transient area. The airport is also used for emergency medical helicopter flights (OWSVRA Working Paper #2, pp. 12-13). The ALUCP (Imperial County 1996a) does not contain a compatibility map for this airport.

The Salton Sea Airport is approximately 9.25 miles northwest of the Project site. According to Figure 3F (Compatibility Map-Salton Sea Airport) of the ALUCP (Imperial County 1996a), the solar farm complex is not located within any of the compatibility zones as identified in the ALUCP. The ALUCP does not apply to BLM lands. Thus, the transmission line component of the Project is not subject to the requirements of the ALUCP.

The proposed Project was presented as information item at the County’s ALUC Meeting held on November 20, 2013. The ALUC does not have authority over existing incompatible land uses or the operation of any airport.

4.2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

As discussed in subsection 2.1.2 of Chapter 2.0, the proposed solar farm complex includes approximately 1,235 acres of privately held agricultural land located approximately eight miles west of the junction of SR 78 and SR 86. The solar farm complex site and lands within the Project area are comprised of flat-lying, very low gradient former agricultural fields that are separated by dirt access roads or rows of mature tamarisk trees that serve as a windbreak. San Felipe Creek, in its natural state, previously flowed through the southern third of the Property in a southeasterly direction. In the 1970’s the Creek was diverted around the southwestern corner of the Property by an earthen berm constructed along the western boundary of the Property.

The Project area has an overall slope to the southeast at an estimated average low gradient of 0.4 percent. Elevations across the solar farm complex site range from a high of approximately 5 feet below mean sea level (msl) at the northwest corner to a low of approximately 40 feet below msl at the southeast corner. Vegetation within the solar farm complex site is generally limited to the several rows of tamarisk trees planted as a windbreak and sporadic weeds.

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All agricultural activities have been idled in the last few years with the only exception being a small area in the southeast corner of the solar farm complex site which contained grain crops in 2012. The remainder of the solar farm complex site is reverting to open desert. Of the Property's 2,440 acres, approximately 1,181 acres of idle farmland would be converted to accommodate the proposed Project (i.e. solar arrays, O&M buildings, parking and water wells). An additional 55 acres of the Property would be disturbed by the required access roads, gen-tie corridors and substations. The IID 92 kV transmission line is estimated to disturb 2.3 acres. Modifications to the IID Anza Substation would occur on approximately 0.24 acres.

A. SOLAR FARM COMPLEX

On-Site Land Uses

The lands on which the solar farm complex would be built are under the jurisdiction of Imperial County. The 1,238 acre solar farm complex site is generally flat and designated as Agriculture on the Imperial County Land Use Map (**Figure 4.2-1**) (Imperial County 1993). The acreage of lands cultivated steadily declined from the 1970's. Only 80 acres were planted in 2010 and 2011. No crops are currently being grown on the solar farm complex site and it slowly reverting to open desert. However, seven existing wells and unpaved access roads are disbursed throughout the Property

Two unlined basins are located in the southeastern portion of the Project site. A 3.1 acre reservoir (part of the well water based irrigation system) is also in the southeastern portion of the solar farm complex site (HELIX 2014b, p. 7). Multiple unlined drainage ditches ranging from 6 to 10 feet in width are disbursed throughout the solar farm complex site. The ditches were formerly used for conveying excess irrigation water when the solar farm complex site was farmed in previous years. Concrete-lined irrigation ditches occur in the east-central portion of the solar farm complex site. These ditches are approximately 6 feet wide at the top and 2 feet wide at the bottom (HELIX 2014b, p. 7).

Some existing structures are currently located on the site, though the majority would be demolished to accommodate development of the solar farm complex. An abandoned farm equipment area is located in the northwest corner of Lot 5 on less than 2 acres. This area was used to sort farm equipment and includes an above ground fuel storage tank with concrete containment (GS Lyon 2013, pp. 5 and 12). Two rural residences are located on the north side of Lot 5 and two farm houses (which are vacant and would be demolished) are located on west side of Lot 5. In addition, a mobile home is located to the west of the solar farm complex boundary of Lot 5 within the Property. Septic tanks and leach fields are likely located at the vacant farm houses, mobile home and office. Water is provided through a network of onsite water wells and piping (GS Lyon 2013, p. 9). The solar farm complex site also contains power poles aligned north-south along the western edge of Lots 4 and 5.

The proposed Project would convert idle farmland to a solar farm complex. This is discussed further in Section 4.9, Agricultural Resources.

Surrounding Land Uses

The solar farm complex site is located in a largely undeveloped and unincorporated portion of northwest Imperial County. Land surrounding the solar farm complex site consists of former agricultural fields and undeveloped open desert with a checkerboard of federal, state and private land. Areas surrounding the solar farm complex site are designated Recreation/Open Space on the Imperial County Land Use Map (Imperial County 1993). SR 78 and the existing IID distribution line ROW are approximately .40 mile north of the northern boundary of the solar farm complex site.

Earthen berms have been constructed along the western boundary of the solar farm complex site to divert San Felipe Creek to the south of the solar farm complex site. Fish Creek, a desert ephemeral stream,

bounds the south side of the solar farm complex site. San Felipe Creek joins Fish Creek Wash south of the solar farm complex site. The Tarantula Wash drainage is located north and east of the Project area.

The Anza Substation is approximately 1.7 miles east of the Project site on the south side of SR 78. Other uses in the vicinity include the Ocotillo Wells State Recreational Vehicle Area (OWSRVA) located north of SR 78 and the Blu-In Café approximately 1.5 miles west of the Project site on the south side of SR 78. Federal (government lands) lands managed by the BLM are located further to the west of the western boundary of the solar farm complex site and adjacent to a portion of the southern boundary (**Figure 4.2-2**).

B. TRANSMISSION LINE

Of the 2.25 miles of proposed transmission line, a 2.0 mile segment would align through lands under the jurisdiction of the BLM. The ROW through BLM land is 50 feet wide and 18,480 feet long and contains approximately 21.21 acres. This segment of the transmission line is not subject to the Imperial County General Plan. The BLM granted IID ROW CACA 044554 on November 15, 2002 to construct the overbuilt 92 kV transmission line as part of a larger IID project. The BLM has confirmed that the granted ROW remains valid (BLM 2012).

To accommodate the interconnection of the 92 kV transmission line, modifications to the IID Anza Substation will be required. The modifications include expanding the existing fenced area around the facility; relocating the existing 92kV switch and breaker bank into the expanded substation area; reorienting the 92kV switch and breaker bank in a north/south alignment; constructing a new 92 kV switch and breaker bank; and installing up to five new steel and/or concrete poles. All of the proposed modifications would occur on land owned by the IID within a 0.24 acre area.

4.2.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

A. STANDARDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The impact analysis provided below is based on the following State CEQA Guidelines, as listed in Appendix G. The project would result in a significant impact to land use if it would result in any of the following:

- a. Physically divide an established community.
- b. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (include, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.
- c. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

B. ISSUES SCOPED OUT AS PART OF THE INITIAL STUDY

Two checklist criteria were eliminated from further evaluation as part of the Initial Study. Criterion “a” was eliminated from further evaluation as part of the Initial Study because the proposed Project is located in a rural portion of Imperial County and would not physically divide any established community. Thus, no impact is identified for this issue area and it is not discussed further in the analysis.

Criterion “c” was eliminated because Imperial County is not within the jurisdiction of any adopted habitat conservation plan (HCP) or natural community conservation plan (NCCP), or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, no impact to an HCP or NCCP would occur and this issue will not be discussed further.

4.2 LAND USE

C. METHODOLOGY

Potential land use impacts of the proposed Project were evaluated based on review of relevant planning documents including the Imperial County General Plan and the Imperial County Land Use Ordinance. The focus of the land use analysis is on land use impacts that would result from implementation of the solar farm complex portion of the proposed Project as this component would convert the land from its existing state reverting to open desert and its former use as active farmland. The transmission line and substation modification components reflect expansions of existing uses.

Land use conflicts are identified and evaluated based on existing land uses; land use designations; uses proposed as part of the Project; and standards and policies related to land use. Land use compatibility is based on the intensity and patterns of land use to determine whether the Project would result in incompatible uses or nuisance impacts. Potential land use conflicts or incompatibility (specifically during construction activities) are usually the result of other environmental effects, such as generation of noise or air quality issues resulting from grading activities. Operational land use impacts of the Project are evaluated in this section. The reader is referred to Sections 4.1 and 4.3 thru 4.13 for detailed analysis of other environmental impacts (e.g. traffic, air quality, noise, biological resources, etc.), that would result from the Project's construction, operation and reclamation.

D. PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Conflict With Any Applicable Land Use Plan, Policy, or Regulation

Impact 4.2.1 The proposed Project is consistent with the existing General Plan land use designation of Agriculture with a CUP and would not conflict with any County policies or regulations or the OWSRVA north of the Project area. Therefore, conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies and regulations are considered a **less than significant impact**.

Construction and Operation

Solar Farm Complex

The proposed solar farm complex site is currently designated as "Agriculture" on the Imperial County Land Use Plan Map. Per section 90508.1 of the Imperial County Land Use Code, an electrical power generating plant (excluding nuclear or coal fired) and electrical substations in an electrical transmission system (500-kV/230-kV/161-kV) are allowed uses within the existing zones agricultural zones (A-2) with a CUP (refer to **Table 4.2-2**). No land use amendment would be required for the portion of the Project located within the County's jurisdiction because a solar facility is an allowed use subject to a CUP. Therefore, the proposed Project is consistent with the existing land use and zoning designations.

The Project is also not anticipated to conflict with the OWSRVA to the north. Short-term construction impacts associated with traffic, noise and dust are addressed in the appropriate sections of this EIR. On an operational basis, the Project would not interfere with existing uses occurring at the OWSRVA nor would it result in substantial changes to views when looking south from the OWSRVA (refer to **Figure 4.1-5a** and **4.1-5b** in Section 4.1, Aesthetics for a visual simulation representative of a view from the OWSRVA). Thus, potential for conflicts with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation is considered **less than significant**.

With regard to physical land use conflicts, construction-related nuisances such as dust and exhaust plumes would not be considered a land use conflict or incompatibility based on the remote location of the site away from populated areas and the short-term duration of these activities. During operation, issues such as dust could affect how often the PV or CPV panels need to be washed, but would not result in a land use conflict or incompatibility. Likewise, the construction and operation of the solar farm complex would not

adversely impact adjacent lands formerly used for agriculture on the Allegretti Property as they are not being farmed. A Weed and Pest Management Plan must be prepared by the Applicant to address control of invasive weeds and manage pests from proliferating on the solar farm complex site or spreading off site. Thus, land use conflicts and incompatibilities with surrounding lands are considered **less than significant**.

Transmission Line

Similar to the solar farm complex, construction and operation of the transmission line would not result conflicts with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation. The proposed 92 kV transmission line would be constructed as an overbuild of the existing 12.5 kV distribution line within IID ROW CACA 044554 granted by the BLM. The interconnection of the transmission line would occur at the IID Anza Substation which will be modified to accommodate the proposed Project. As both the transmission line corridor and substation are existing uses, the proposed overbuild and modifications would be consistent with existing plans for these facilities. Thus, no conflict and **no impact** with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation would occur in association with the transmission line.

Reclamation

Reclamation would involve decommissioning the solar farm complex site at the end of the Project's useful life. Activities would include dismantling and removal of all structures and infrastructure on the solar farm complex site. These activities would occur for a limited duration. Upon completion, the solar farm complex site would be reclaimed to approximate the existing idle farmland. **No impact** with regard to an applicable land use plan, policy or regulation would occur in association with reclamation of the solar farm complex site to approximate the existing idle farmland. The IID-owned facilities (IID switchyard and 92 kV transmission line on the Property; 92 kV transmission line with underbuilt 12.5 kV distribution line; 12.5 kV distribution line system constructed on the Property; and the IID Anza Substation modifications) would not be decommissioned until IID determined that these improvements were no longer needed and could be retired and removed. The roads constructed on Lot B to access each of the parcels created under the major subdivision and all of the water wells would not be decommissioned or reclaimed.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance After Mitigation

Not applicable.

4.2.4 CUMULATIVE SETTING, IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

A. CUMULATIVE SETTING

The geographic scope for the analysis of cumulative impacts related to land use localized to the Project area. This distance was determined based on the remote nature of the site removed from urban development. The cumulative setting for land use includes buildout of the large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects as identified in Table 3.0-1 in Chapter 3.0, Introduction to the Environmental Analysis and Assumptions Used. The cumulative projects are described in Table 3.0-1 and depicted geographically in Figures 3.0-1a, 3.0-1b and 3.0-2.

4.2 LAND USE

B. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Cumulative Conflicts with Applicable Land Use Plans, Policies, or Regulations

Impact 4.2.2 Development of the proposed Project in combination with large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects in the region would not incrementally add to conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies and regulations. Each project would be required to be consistent with the applicable plans that apply to the area in which it is located. Thus, this impact is considered **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Construction

Imperial County General Plan

The solar farm complex, as well as all other large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects within Imperial County, would be subject to the goals and policies of the Imperial County General Plan. Conflicts with the General Plan are not anticipated during construction of the proposed Project, nor any other large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects within the County as each one is required to comply with applicable construction regulations. Therefore, conflicts with the Imperial County General Plan are considered **less than cumulatively considerable** during Project construction.

County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance, Title 9

The proposed Project, as well as all other large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects within Imperial County, would be consistent with the land use ordinance and the underlying zoning of the parcels proposed for solar development. These determinations would be made prior to project approval. Therefore, conflicts with the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance are considered **less than cumulatively considerable** during Project construction.

Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP)

The parcels that comprise the solar farm complex site are not within any Airport Land Use Compatibility Zones and were reviewed by the ALUC. Moreover, each large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy project identified in Table 3.0-1 in Chapter 3.0, would also undergo ALUC review to determine land use compatibility prior to project approval. Therefore, conflicts with the ALUCP are considered **less than cumulatively considerable** during Project construction.

Operation

Imperial County General Plan

The solar farm complex is in Imperial County and is subject to the goals and policies of the Imperial County General Plan. The proposed Project is a conditionally permitted use under the A-2 zone. Because development of solar facility is allowed by the Zoning Ordinance with a CUP, it is considered consistent with the "Agriculture" land use designation of the General Plan. Therefore, no conflict with the Imperial County General Plan would occur. Moreover, the proposed Project, in combination with large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects as identified in Table 3.0-1 in Chapter 3.0, would not contribute to cumulative impacts with the Imperial County Land Use Plan or the Imperial County General Plan Policies. Therefore, conflicts with the Imperial County General Plan are considered **less than cumulatively considerable** during Project operation.

County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance, Title 9

As part of the proposed Project, five CUPs (CUP 13-0011, 13-0012, 13-0013, 13-0014, and 13-0015) were filed by the Applicant to allow construction and operation of each of the solar energy projects within the A-2 zone. In addition, nine CUPs (13-0016, 13-0017, 13-0018, 13-0019, 13-0020, 13-0021, 13-0022, 13-0023, and 13-0024) were filed for the water wells within the solar farm complex.

Thus, the proposed Project would be consistent with the land use ordinance and the underlying zoning of the proposed solar farm complex site. Therefore, no conflict with the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance would occur. Moreover, the proposed Project, in combination with large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects as identified in Table 3.0-1 in Chapter 3.0, would not cumulatively contribute to cumulative impacts with the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance because such projects would be permitted either as of right or with conditional use authorization. Conflicts with the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance are considered **less than cumulatively considerable** during Project operation.

Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP)

The parcels that comprise the solar farm complex site are not within any Airport Land Use Compatibility Zones. The ALUC determined that the proposed Project would be consistent with ALUCP. Therefore, the land use for the proposed Project is compatible with the ALUCP. Moreover, the proposed Project, in combination with large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects as identified in Table 3.0-1 in Chapter 3.0, would not cumulatively contribute to cumulative impacts regarding the ALUCP as each individual project must undergo review for compatibility with the appropriate land use compatibility map. Therefore, conflicts with the ALUCP are considered **less than cumulatively considerable** during Project operation.

Reclamation

Imperial County General Plan

The solar farm complex, as well as all other large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects within Imperial County, would be subject to the goals and policies of the Imperial County General Plan. Conflicts with the General Plan are not anticipated during reclamation of the proposed Project, nor any other large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects within the County as each one is required to comply with applicable regulations that govern reclamation activities. Therefore, conflicts with the Imperial County General Plan are considered **less than cumulatively considerable** during Project reclamation.

County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance, Title 9

The proposed Project, as well as all other large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects within Imperial County, would be consistent with the land use ordinance and the underlying zoning of the parcels proposed for solar development. All lands that are designated as Agriculture and zoned for agriculture (A-2, A-3, etc) must be reclaimed to agricultural lands. The proposed solar farm complex site would be reclaimed to approximate the existing idle farmland condition. Therefore, conflicts with the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance are considered **less than cumulatively considerable** during Project reclamation.

Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP)

The parcels that comprise the solar farm complex site are not within any Airport Land Use Compatibility Zones and were reviewed by the ALUC. Moreover, each large scale proposed, approved and reasonably

4.2 LAND USE

foreseeable renewable energy project identified in Table 3.0-1 in Chapter 3.0, would also undergo ALUC review to determine land use compatibility prior to project approval. Therefore, no conflicts with the ALUCP would occur during Project reclamation and this impact is considered **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance After Mitigation

Not applicable.

Cumulative Land Use Compatibility/Conflict Impacts

Impact 4.2.3 Development of the proposed Project in combination with large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable projects in the region would change the land use patterns, present potential land use conflicts, and result in conversion of agricultural. This impact is considered **less than cumulatively considerable**.

Construction, Operation and Reclamation

The solar farm complex site, in combination with other proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable projects, would be one of multiple solar facilities developed in Imperial County (refer to Figures 3.0-1a and 3.0-1b in Chapter 3.0). All of the projects would occur primarily in undeveloped desert lands or rural agricultural areas (refer to Section 4.9, Agricultural Resources) regarding cumulative impacts associated with agricultural resources). The temporary conversion of rural agricultural and desert lands to solar facilities would preclude existing land uses including agriculture and open space from continuing on these sites during Project construction, operation and reclamation.

Development of the large scale proposed, approved and reasonably foreseeable renewable energy projects identified in Table 3.0-1 have the potential to create direct but temporary land use conflicts with existing uses such as airports and natural areas. Generally, indirect land use conflicts would be related to noise, traffic, air quality, and hazards/human health and safety issues, which are discussed in the relevant sections of this Draft EIR. Land use compatibility/conflict impacts are site specific and localized and would therefore not cumulatively contribute to compatibility or conflicts throughout the geographic scope of the cumulative setting. Therefore, this impact would **be less than cumulatively considerable** during Project construction, operation and reclamation.

Development of the proposed Project would result in the temporary conversion of idle farmland to a solar farm complex during construction, operation and reclamation. The Project would change the character and land use patterns currently on the site to rows of PV and/or CPV solar panels and associated equipment. However, lands surrounding the Project area are no longer in agricultural use and consist of open desert. Solar projects developed adjacent to open desert areas are subject to dust carried by the wind depositing on PV or CPV panels. This represents a nuisance issue rather than insurmountable cumulative land use incompatibility or conflict.

The proposed Project is consistent with the Imperial County General Plan with a CUP. While the implementation of the Project would temporarily convert the solar farm complex site from former agricultural fields to a solar farm complex. The Project would be developed consistent with the land uses allowed and there would be no conflicts with the Imperial County General Plan or zoning. The proposed Project, in combination with other cumulative projects, would result in a less than cumulatively

considerable contribution to land use compatibility. Therefore, impacts associated with land use compatibility and conflict are considered **less than cumulatively considerable** during Project construction, operation and reclamation.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance After Mitigation

Not applicable.

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