County of Los Angeles
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1101
http://ceo.lacounty.gov

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

January 24, 2012

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS:
TOPANGA CANYON BOULEVARD UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT
CAPITAL PROJECT NO. 77441
(THIRD DISTRICT) (3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

These actions are to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District Project; adopt the associated Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; establish Capital Project No. 77441 and approve the total Project budget of $1,000,000 for the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District Project; adopt the Resolution establishing the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District; and adopt the Ordinance amending Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, Undergrounding of Utilities Ordinance, by adding Section 16.34.416.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Consider the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District Project together with any comments received during the public review period; find that the Mitigated Negative Declaration reflects the independent judgment and analysis of your Board; adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, finding that the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program is adequately designed to ensure compliance with the mitigation measures during project implementation; find, on the basis of the whole record before your Board, that there is no substantial evidence the Project will have a significant effect on the environment; and adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

2. Approve the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District Project, Capital Project No. 77441 with a total Project budget of $1,000,000.

3. If no protests exist, adopt the Resolution establishing the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District and adopt the Ordinance amending Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, Undergrounding of Utilities Ordinance, by adding Section 16.34.416.

4. If protests exist and your Board determines the protests to be less than sufficient to require revision of the Resolution and Ordinance, overrule all protests and adopt the Resolution establishing the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District and adopt the Ordinance amending Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, Undergrounding of Utilities Ordinance, by adding Section 16.34.416.

5. If protests exist and your Board determines the protests to be sufficient to require modifications to the Resolution and Ordinance, adopt the Resolution with modifications establishing the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District and the Ordinance, with modifications amending Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, Undergrounding of Utilities Ordinance, by adding Section 16.34.416.

6. If protests exist and your Board finds in favor of the protestants, adopt an order abandoning the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District proceedings.

7. If your Board establishes the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District, delegate authority to the Director of Public Works, or her designee, to execute an agreement with Southern California Edison regarding the use of California Public Utilities Commission Tariff Rule 20A funds for this Project.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Approval of the recommended actions will adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), establish the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District (District) and approve the scope of work and budget of the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District Project, Capital Project No. 77441.

The proposed District would provide for the undergrounding of existing overhead electrical and communication facilities and would require future facilities of this type to be placed underground.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Undergrounding of Utilities Ordinance, Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, the Department of Public Works (Public Works) consulted with the affected utility companies and determined that the existing conditions at the subject area support the establishment of the proposed District. The establishment of the proposed District is recommended because the undergrounding of existing overhead electrical and communication facilities will eliminate the present concentration and avoid future concentration of overhead electric and communication facilities; and because Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road, in the areas described below, are extensively used by the general public and convey a heavy volume of vehicular traffic and adjoin or pass through a civic area. In addition, the proposed Project will eliminate potential risks to safety of the general public caused by downed power poles/lines and interruptions of service caused by vehicular or storm damage to utility poles/lines.

Antennae and support structures used by utilities for wireless communication services in the proposed District may remain above-ground subject to the utility's compliance with applicable regulatory and access requirements as determined by the Director of Public Works (Director). Above-ground wireless communication facilities shall be set as close to the existing right of way as practical as determined by the Director. Appurtenant equipment for wireless facilities shall be installed underground unless established to the satisfaction of the Director that the undergrounding is physically infeasible.

The District extends for a distance of 1,600 feet and is described as follows:

> That portion of the unincorporated area of the County of Los Angeles (County) within a strip of land comprising the full width of the right of way of Topanga Canyon Boulevard (State Route 27) as it existed on March 11, 2010, beginning at the centerline intersection of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road (Point A), thence southeasterly and easterly along the centerline of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a distance of 520 feet; beginning at the above-designated Point A, northerly and northeasterly along the centerline of Topanga Canyon Boulevard a distance of 800 feet; and a strip of land 100 feet wide lying 50 feet on each side of and parallel to the centerline of Old Topanga Canyon Road, beginning at the above-designated Point A, thence northwest along the centerline of Old Topanga Canyon Road a distance of 280 feet.

A presentation to the Topanga Town Council was held on January 13, 2011, where an overview of this Project was provided followed by a question and answer period. The same presentation was provided to property/business owners and residents at a community meeting held on March 17, 2011.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The Countywide Strategic Plan directs the provisions of Community and Municipal Services (Goal 3) and Public Safety (Goal 5) which will improve the appearance and enhance safety in the area.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The Project cost estimate of $1,000,000 includes environmental documentation and needed environmental mitigation during construction, which is funded with Enhanced Unincorporated Area Services (Proposition 62) allocated to the Third Supervisorial District. Sufficient appropriation is available in Fiscal Year 2011-12 Capital Projects/Refurbishments Budget, under Capital Project No. 77441.

Pursuant to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Tariff Rule 20A, the estimated cost of $2,400,000 to underground the electrical lines and convert electrical services to adjacent residences and businesses from an overhead to underground feed will be funded by the CPUC Tariff Rule 20A funds available to Southern California Edison.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Your Board's establishment of the Capital Project is required to authorize the expenditure of funds for the environmental coordination and monitoring for this Project.

Government Code Section 26230 contemplates that counties have the power and authority to implement underground utility ordinances such as the proposed ordinance.

In addition, on the basis of the CPUC's decision in Case No. 8209 on September 19, 1967, each electrical utility company under the jurisdiction of the CPUC now sets aside a percentage of its revenues each year to be used for the purpose of placing underground its existing overhead wires and other facilities. In its ruling, the CPUC prescribes that the governing body of the County in which funds are set aside by the utility for undergrounding overhead wires and other facilities must determine that, after holding public hearings on the subject, such undergrounding is in the general public interest for one or more of the following reasons:

- Such undergrounding will avoid or eliminate an unusually heavy concentration of overhead distribution facilities; and

- Said street, road, or right of way is extensively used by the general public and carries a heavy volume of pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic; and

- Said street, road, or right of way is an arterial or main collector road in the County's general plan; and

- Said street, road, or right of way adjoins or passes through a civic area, public recreation area, or an area of unusual scenic interest to the general public.

In addition, the Ordinance creating an underground district in the area in which both the existing and new facilities are and will be located must require:

- That all existing overhead connection and electrical distribution facilities shall be removed, and

- That each property owner served from such overhead distribution facilities shall provide all changes on his/her premises necessary to receive service from the underground facilities as soon as it is available, and

- The length of undergrounding exceeds the CPUC's minimum distance of one block or 600 feet, whichever is the lesser.

Pursuant to Section 16.32.060 of Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, a public hearing shall be held for the proposed underground utility district. Notice of the public hearing will be publicized in a newspaper of general circulation.

If, after the public hearing, your Board finds that based on one or more of the reasons specified in Section 16.32.060, it is in the general public's interest to declare the area along Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road within the above-described limits to be an underground utility district, you may adopt the attached Resolution, approved as to form by County Counsel, declaring and establishing the District and amending Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, Undergrounding of Utilities Ordinance, by adding Section 16.34.416 to said Ordinance.

The proposed amendment to said Ordinance, approved as to form by County Counsel, with an analysis thereof, is attached.

Upon establishment of the District by your Board, the Director, or her designee, will execute an agreement with Southern California Edison, approved as to form by County Counsel, agreeing to the use of Capital Project No. 77441 funds for environmental review and mitigation costs that are not covered by CPUC Tariff Rule 20A funds and that a minimum undergrounding of 600 feet will occur so that the Project will qualify for Tariff Rule 20A funds.

Pursuant to Sections 16.32.070 and 16.32.080 of Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, a written notice will be sent to the affected utility companies, property owners, and business owners within the proposed District advising them of their responsibility in regard to the undergrounding of the overhead facilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

An Initial Study was prepared for this Project in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act. The Initial Study identified eight potential significant effects of the Project: Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Public Services, and Transportation and Traffic. Prior to the release of the proposed MND and Initial Study for public review, revisions in the Project were made or agreed to which would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur.

The Initial Study and Project revisions showed that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the County, that the proposed Project, as revised, may have a significant effect on the environment. Based on the Initial Study, a MND was prepared for this Project.

Public notice was published in *Topanga Messenger* on April 18, 2011, pursuant to Public Resources Code, Section 21092, and posted at the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk pursuant to Section 21092.3. Public notice was mailed to all property owners and occupants contiguous to the Project on April 18, 2011, pursuant to Public Resources Code, Section 21092. Comments were received from Native American Heritage Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, Dr. Chester King, AT&T Mobility, T-Mobile West Corporation, and the State Clearinghouse. Responses to those comments are included in the final MND and sent to these agencies pursuant to Section 21092.5.

The location of the documents and other materials constituting the record of the proceedings upon which your Board's decision is based in this matter is the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Programs Development Division, 900 South Fremont Avenue, 11th Floor, Alhambra, California 91803. The custodian of such documents and materials is Mr. Ed Dingman.

The Project is not exempt from payment of a fee to the California Department of Fish and Game pursuant to Section 711.4 of the Fish and Game Code to defray the costs of fish and wildlife protection and management incurred by the California Department of Fish and Game. Upon your Board's adoption of the MND, Public Works will file a Notice of Determination in accordance with Section 21152(a) of the California Public Resources Code and pay the required filing and processing fees with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk in the amount of $2,119.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Improved appearance of the area and more reliable utility services will be provided to adjacent property owners due to the undergrounding.

CONCLUSION

Please return one adopted copy of this Board letter to the Chief Executive Office, Capital Projects Division, and the Department of Public Works, Construction Division, along with two copies of the adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration, Resolution and Ordinance.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

WTF:RLR:DJT
SW:RB:zu

Attachments

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Public Works

A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE TOPANGA CANYON BOULEVARD UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT PURSUANT TO DIVISION 2, TITLE 16, LOS ANGELES COUNTY CODE

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provision of Section 16.32.060, Division 2 of Title 16, Los Angeles County Code, consultations have been held with utilities affected by the proposed establishment of an underground utility district along Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road within the unincorporated territory of the County of Los Angeles, including Southern California Edison Company, Charter Communications, Verizon, Verizon Wireless, AT&T, T-Mobile, NextG Networks, Sprint PCS, and AT&T Mobility and,

WHEREAS, a Public Hearing upon the matter of the formation of said underground utility district has been duly noticed and held on _____; and,

WHEREAS, this was the time and place for said Hearing, and the Board having heard and received all evidence presented, and being fully advised in the premises;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, FOUND, DETERMINED, AND ORDERED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road, within the boundaries of said district, are extensively used by the general public and carry a heavy volume of vehicular traffic and adjoin or pass through a civic area.

2. Within said district, existing overhead electrical and communication facilities shall be removed and replaced with underground electrical and communication facilities and any future or new electrical and communication facilities located within said district shall be underground facilities.

3. Undergrounding of existing overhead electrical and communication facilities within the said district will eliminate present and future concentrations of overhead electrical and communication facilities.

4. That it is in the general public interest that said underground utility district to be known as the "Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District" be established within the hereinafter described area.

5. The boundaries of the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District are depicted in the attached Exhibit A and described as follows:

That portion of the unincorporated area of the County of Los Angeles within a strip of land comprising the full width of the right of way of Topanga Canyon Boulevard (State Route 27) as it existed on March 11, 2010, beginning at the centerline intersection of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road (Point A), thence southeasterly and easterly along the centerline of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a distance of 520 feet; beginning at the above-designated Point A, northerly and northeasterly along the centerline of Topanga Canyon Boulevard a distance of 800 feet; and a strip of land 100 feet wide lying 50 feet on each side of and parallel to the centerline of Old Topanga Canyon Road, beginning at the above-designated Point A, thence northwest along the centerline of Old Topanga Canyon Road a distance of 280 feet.

6. Antennae and support structures used by utilities for wireless communication services in the said district may remain above-ground subject to the utility's compliance with applicable regulatory and access requirements as determined by the Director of Public Works (Director). Above-ground wireless communication facilities shall be set as close to the existing right of way as practical as determined by the Director. Appurtenant equipment for wireless facilities shall be installed underground unless established to the satisfaction of the Director that the undergrounding is physically infeasible.

The foregoing resolution was on the ____ day of _____, 2012, adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles and ex-officio the governing body of all other special assessment and taxing districts, agencies, and authorities for which said Board so acts.

SACHI A. HAMAI
Executive Officer of the
Board of Supervisors of the
County of Los Angeles

By _____
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

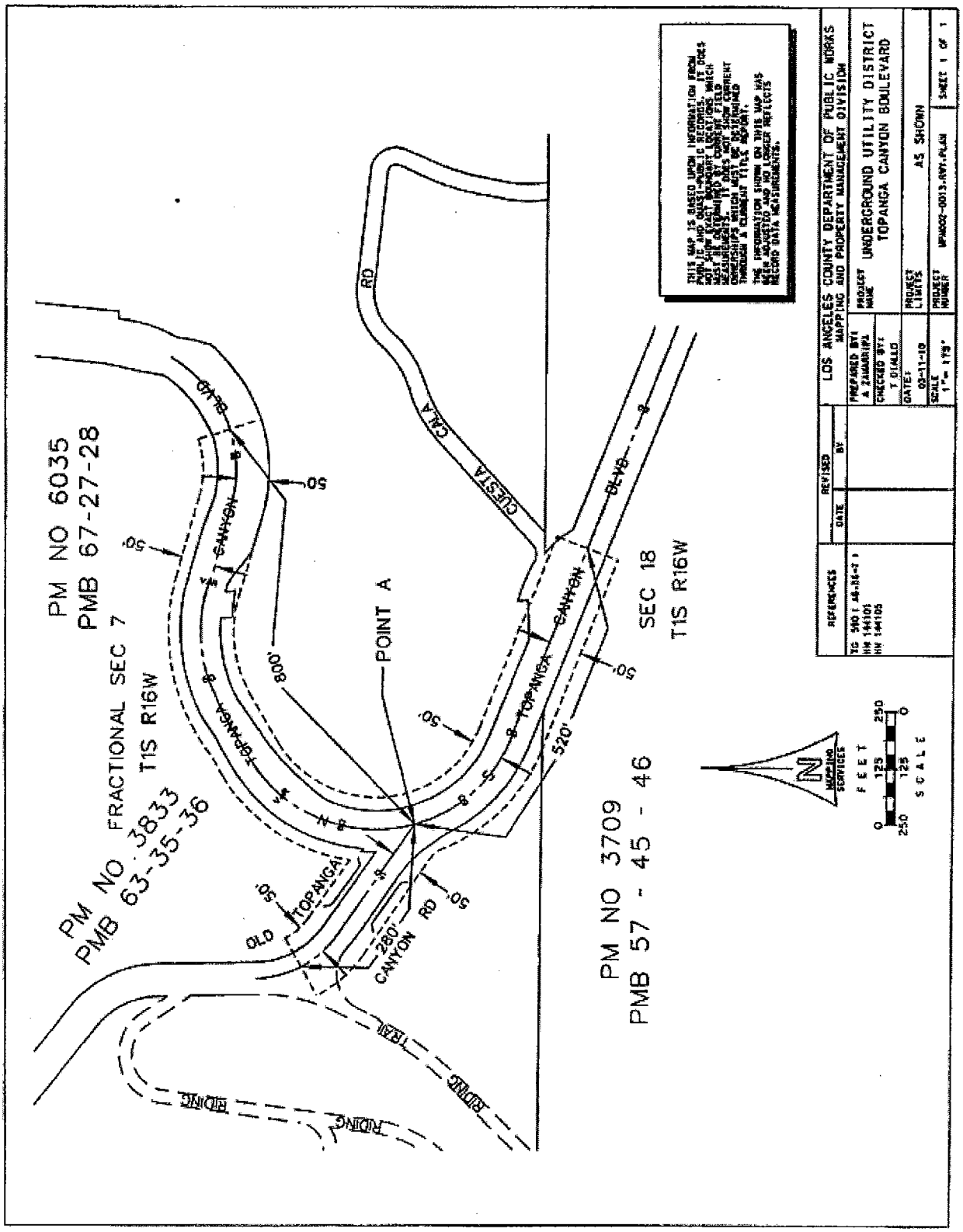
ANDREA SHERIDAN ORDIN
County Counsel

By Carole Suzuki
Deputy

SMD:er
C:\Documents and Settings\csuzuki\Local Settings\Temporary Internet Files\OLK3\Resolution 2011 with map.doc

Enc.

Exhibit A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PMB 67-27-28
FRACTIONAL SEC 7
T1S R16W
PM NO 3833
PMB 63-35-36
PM NO 3709
PMB 57 - 45 - 46
SEC 18
T1S R16W
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RD
BLVD
CANYON
TOPANGA
OLD
TOPANGA
CANYON RD
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RIDGE
THIS MAP IS BASED UPON INFORMATION FROM PWA/LA AND QUASI-PUBLIC RECORDS. IT DOES NOT FOR A DEFINITE BOUNDARY LOCATIONS, WHICH MUST BE DETERMINED BY CURRENT FIELD MEASUREMENTS. IT DOES NOT SHOW CURRENT OWNERSHIP OR EXISTING RIGHTS OBTAINED THROUGH PRESCRIPTION OR ADVERSE POSSESSION.
THE INFORMATION SHOWN ON THIS MAP WAS REPRODUCED AND MAY NOT REFLECT RECENT DATA MEASUREMENTS.
LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
MAPPING AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT DIVISION
UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT
TOPANGA CANYON BOULEVARD
PROJECT NAME
PROJECT LIMITS
PROJECT NUMBER
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ANALYSIS

This Ordinance amends Title 16 – Highways, of the Los Angeles County Code, "Undergrounding of Utilities," to create the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District, as an additional area to those previously designated as underground utility districts.

The creation of the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District will require that overhead electrical and communication facilities within the district be removed and replaced with underground electrical and communication facilities, and future electrical and communication facilities within the district will be underground facilities. Antennae and support structures used by utilities for furnishing wireless communication services may remain above-ground subject to compliance with applicable regulatory and access requirements as determined by the Director of Public Works.

ANDREA SHERIDAN ORDIN
County Counsel

By Carole B. Suzuki

CAROLE B. SUZUKI
Deputy County Counsel
Public Works Division

CBS:gjv

Requested: 09/08/11
Revised: 10/28/11

ORDINANCE NO. _____

An Ordinance amending Title 16 – Highways of the Los Angeles County Code, relating to the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District.

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 16.34.416 is hereby added to Chapter 16.34 to read as follows:

16.34.416 Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District.

The following area shall constitute and be known as the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District:

A. That portion of the unincorporated area of the County of Los Angeles within a strip of land comprising the full width of the right of way of Topanga Canyon Boulevard (State Route 27) as it existed on March 11, 2010, beginning at the centerline intersection of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road ("Point A"), thence southeasterly and easterly along the centerline of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a distance of five hundred twenty (520) feet; beginning at the above-designated Point A, northerly and northeasterly along the centerline of Topanga Canyon Boulevard a distance of eight hundred (800) feet; and a strip of land one hundred (100) feet wide lying fifty (50) feet on each side of and parallel to the centerline of Old Topanga Canyon Road, beginning at the above-designated Point A, thence northwest along the centerline of Old Topanga Canyon Road a distance of two hundred eighty (280) feet.

B. Notwithstanding the exemption provided in Section 16.32.100, antennae and support structures used by utilities for furnishing wireless communication services may remain above-ground subject to compliance with applicable regulatory and access requirements as determined by the Director of Public Works. Above-ground wireless communication facilities shall be set as close to the existing right of way boundary line as practical as determined by the Director of Public Works. Appurtenant equipment for wireless facilities shall be installed underground unless it is established to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works that the undergrounding is physically infeasible.

[1634416CZCC]

TOPANGA CANYON BOULEVARD UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT
INSTRUCTION SHEET FOR PUBLISHING LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT

FROM: Department of Public Works
Construction Division

PUBLISHING

Pursuant to Section 16.32.060 of Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, a public hearing shall be held prior to the formation of an underground utility district. As a courtesy to the residents and the surrounding community, we request the Executive Officer of the Board publish a notice of hearing in the manner prescribed by Section 6062a of the Government Code.

Forward three reprints of the attached advertisement to the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Construction Division, P.O. Box 1460, Alhambra, California 91802-1460.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
TOPANGA CANYON BOULEVARD UNDERGROUND UTILITY DISTRICT

Notice is hereby given that a project analysis by the Director of Public Works has been filed with the Board of Supervisors (Board) of the County of Los Angeles recommending the adoption of a resolution establishing the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Underground Utility District. The proposed district would provide for the undergrounding of existing overhead electrical and communication facilities along Topanga Canyon Boulevard from 800 feet northerly and northeasterly of Old Topanga Canyon Road south a distance 520 feet southeasterly and easterly of Old Topanga Canyon Road and along Old Topanga Canyon Road from Topanga Canyon Boulevard to 280 feet northwesterly of the centerline of Topanga Canyon Boulevard. It would also require future facilities of this type to be placed underground and permit wireless communication facilities to remain aboveground subject to regulatory and access requirements.

Tuesday, January 24, 2012, at 9:30 a.m., in the Board's Hearing Room of the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012, is the time and place that has been fixed by the Board to consider this matter. Any person wishing to be heard on this matter may appear before the Board and show cause why the establishment of this undergrounding district should not be adopted.

For further information regarding this matter, please telephone Steve M. Dunn of the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, Construction Division, Utility Coordination and Underground Utility Districts Section, at (626) 458-3168, Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Upon 72 hours' notice, the County can provide program information and publications in alternate formats or make other accommodations for people with disabilities. In addition, documents are available at the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration in Los Angeles (500 West Temple Street), which is accessible to individuals with disabilities. To request accommodations ONLY or for more Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) information, please contact our ADA Coordinator at (626) 458-4081 or TDD (626) 282-7829, Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Si, no entiende este anuncio o necesita mas informacion, por favor llame a Steve M. Dunn del Departamento de Obras Publicas al (626) 458-3168, de lunes a jueves, 7 a.m. a 5:30 p.m.

SMD:er
O:\Section\Utilities\UUD\TOPANGA CANYON BLVD\Board\NOTICE OF HEARING.doc

FINAL

Topanga Underground Utility District Project

INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Prepared For:
Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
Programs Development Division
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803-1331

August 16, 2011

Topanga Underground Utility District Project

Final Initial Study/
Mitigated Negative Declaration

Prepared For:

Los Angeles County, Department of Public Works
Programs Development Division
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803

Prepared By:

AECOM
515 S. Flower Street, 9th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071

August 16, 2011

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Los Angeles County has prepared this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) to address the environmental effects of the Topanga Underground Utility District (UUD) Project (hereafter "proposed project"). Pursuant to Division 2 of Title 16, Chapter 16.32 of the Los Angeles County Code, Los Angeles County is proposing a resolution to establish the Topanga UUD along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The primary goal of the project is to satisfy the requirements of Rule 20A. The proposed project is located in an unincorporated community of Topanga in western Los Angeles County. More specifically, the site is depicted on the Topanga, California 7.5 minute United States Geological Survey (USGS) map (1952 - photorevised 1981), in Township 1 South, Range 16 West, within the SE ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 7. The Topanga Library (122 North Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is currently under construction; a Verizon Wireless Telecommunication facility; and various retail/commercial developments are located on the eastern portion of the project site. The Topanga Creek traverses the western portion of the project site. A Southern California Edison (SCE) substation, an equestrian center, various retail/commercial establishments, and a restaurant are located along Old Topanga Canyon Road, also on the western portion of the project site. Additional retail/commercial developments, restaurants, a post office (101 South Topanga Canyon Boulevard), and office complexes are located on the southern portion of the project site. Office complexes, along with several oak and ornamental trees are located north of the project site.

The proposed project would relocate overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Those utility lines that currently cross aerially over the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be placed alongside the bridge via a utility conduit. All other utility lines, which represent seven various companies (including SCE), would be placed underground primarily within the existing right-of-way (ROW). The proposed project would remove 28 existing utility poles, which is comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). The proposed project extends approximately 1,600 feet along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres.

The proposed project is required to undergo an environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

1.1 CEQA PROCESS

This document has been prepared in accordance with CEQA, Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq*. and the State CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15000 *et seq*. One of the main objectives of CEQA is to disclose to the public and decision-makers the potential environmental effects of proposed activities. CEQA requires that the potential environmental effects of a project be evaluated prior to implementation. This IS/MND includes a discussion on the proposed project's effects on the existing environment, including the identification of avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures.

Under CEQA, the Lead Agency is the public agency with primary responsibility over approval of a proposed project. Pursuant to Section 15367, the CEQA Lead Agency for the proposed project is Los Angeles County. Specifically, oversight of the project will be conducted by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (DPW). SCE will be overseeing construction work for the proposed Topanga UUD. Topanga Canyon Road is also State Route (SR) 27, which is subject to the requirements of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). As such, and in consultation with Caltrans District 7, this report has been prepared to comply with Caltrans' requirements.

Los Angeles County has directed the preparation of an environmental document that complies with CEQA. The purpose of this document is to present to decision makers and the public the potential environmental consequences of implementing the project.

The preparation of initial studies is guided by Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines; whereas Sections 15070–15075 guide the process for the preparation of an MND. Where appropriate and supportive to an understanding of the issues, reference will be made to the statute, the State CEQA Guidelines, or appropriate case law.

This IS/MND meets CEQA content requirements by including a project description; a description of the environmental setting, potential environmental impacts, and mitigation measures for any significant effects; discussion of consistency with plans and policies; and names of the document preparers.

A community meeting for the proposed project was held on Thursday, March 17, 2011 at the Topanga Elementary Charter School Auditorium (22075 Topanga School Road). The purpose of the meeting was to present the scope of work for the proposed project. Both Los Angeles County and SCE representatives were available to discuss the project. Approximately 3,100 notices were sent to community residents.

In accordance with the CEQA statutes and Guidelines, the Draft IS/MND was circulated for a period of 30 days for public review and comment. The public review period for this Draft IS/MND was scheduled for April 21, 2011, and concluded on May 20, 2011. The Draft IS/MND was specifically distributed to interested or involved public agencies, organizations, and private individuals for review. Approximately 3,000 notices were sent to community residents. Due to construction of the Topanga Library, the Draft IS/MND was made available for general public review at Woodland Hills Library (22200 Ventura Boulevard, Woodland Hills) and Santa Monica Public Library (601 Santa Monica Boulevard, Santa Monica). In addition, the Draft IS/MND was available online at: http://dpw.lacounty.gov/cons/topanga/.

During the 30-day public review period, the public had an opportunity to provide written comments on the information contained within the Draft IS/MND. The public comments on the Draft IS/MND and responses to public comments were considered in preparation of this Final IS/MND. DPW will use the Final IS/MND for all environmental decisions related to this proposed project. Prior to approving the proposed project, DPW considered the project in conjunction with comments received during the public review period. A project will only be approved when DPW "finds that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment and that the IS/MND reflects the Lead

Agency's independent judgment and analysis." When adopting an IS/MND, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program must also be adopted to ensure implementation of mitigation required as a condition of approval.

Comments on the Draft IS/MND were submitted in writing to:

Ms. Stephanie Hsiao, Project Manager
Programs Development Division, 11th Floor
Los Angeles County, Department of Public Works
900 South Fremont Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803-1331
(626) 458-3945
SHSIAO@dpw.lacounty.gov

1.2 DOCUMENT FORMAT

This IS/MND contains seven sections.

Section 1. **Introduction.** This section provides an overview of the proposed project and the CEQA environmental documentation process.

Section 2. Project Description. This section provides a detailed description of the proposed project objectives and components.

Section 3. Initial Study Checklist. This section presents the CEQA checklist for all impact areas and mandatory findings of significance.

Section 4. Impacts and Mitigation Measures. This section presents the environmental analysis for each issue area identified on the environmental checklist form. If the proposed project does not have the potential to significantly impact a given issue area, the relevant section provides a brief discussion of the reasons why no impacts are expected. If the proposed project could have a potentially significant impact on a resource, the issue area discussion provides a description of potential impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures and/or permit requirements that would reduce those impacts to a less than significant level.

Section 5. Responses to Comments. Provides a discussion on the comment letters received during the 30-day review period for the Draft IS/MND. The comments and the Response to Comment Matrix are provided in Appendix C.

Section 6. Clarifications and Modifications. Displays clarifications and revisions that have been incorporated throughout the document.

Section 7. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. This section includes a checklist to be used during the mitigation monitoring period. The checklist will verify the name of the monitor, the date of the monitoring activity, and any related remarks for each mitigation measure.

Section 8. Proposed Finding. This section provides the proposed finding for the project.

Section 9. References. This section provides the references used throughout the IS/MND.

Section 10. Preparers and Contributors. This section provides a list of key personnel involved in the preparation of the IS/MND.

Section 11. Acronyms and Abbreviations. This section provides a list of acronyms and abbreviations used throughout the IS/MND.

The environmental analysis included in Sections 3 and 4 are consistent with the CEQA Initial Study format presented in Section 2. Impacts are separated into the following categories:

Potentially Significant Impact. This category is only applicable if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant, and no feasible mitigation measures can be identified to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. Given that this is an IS/MND, no impacts were identified that fall into this category.

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. This category applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce an effect from a "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The Lead Agency must describe the mitigation measure(s), and briefly explain how they would reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from earlier analyses may be cross-referenced).

Less than Significant Impact. This category is identified when the proposed project would result in impacts below the threshold of significance, and no mitigation measures are required.

No Impact. This category applies when a proposed project would not create an impact in the specific environmental issue area. "No Impact" answers do not require a detailed explanation if they are adequately supported by the information sources cited by the Lead Agency, which show that the impact does not apply to the specific project (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 proposed project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This IS/MND is being prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts that may result from the Topanga UUD Project (proposed project). The proposed project would relocate overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard within the proposed UUD. Those utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be placed alongside the bridge via a utility conduit. The other utility lines, which represent seven various companies (including SCE), would be placed underground primarily within the existing ROW. This chapter discusses the location, description, background, and objectives of the proposed project. This document has been prepared in accordance with CEQA, Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq*. and the State CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15000 *et seq*.

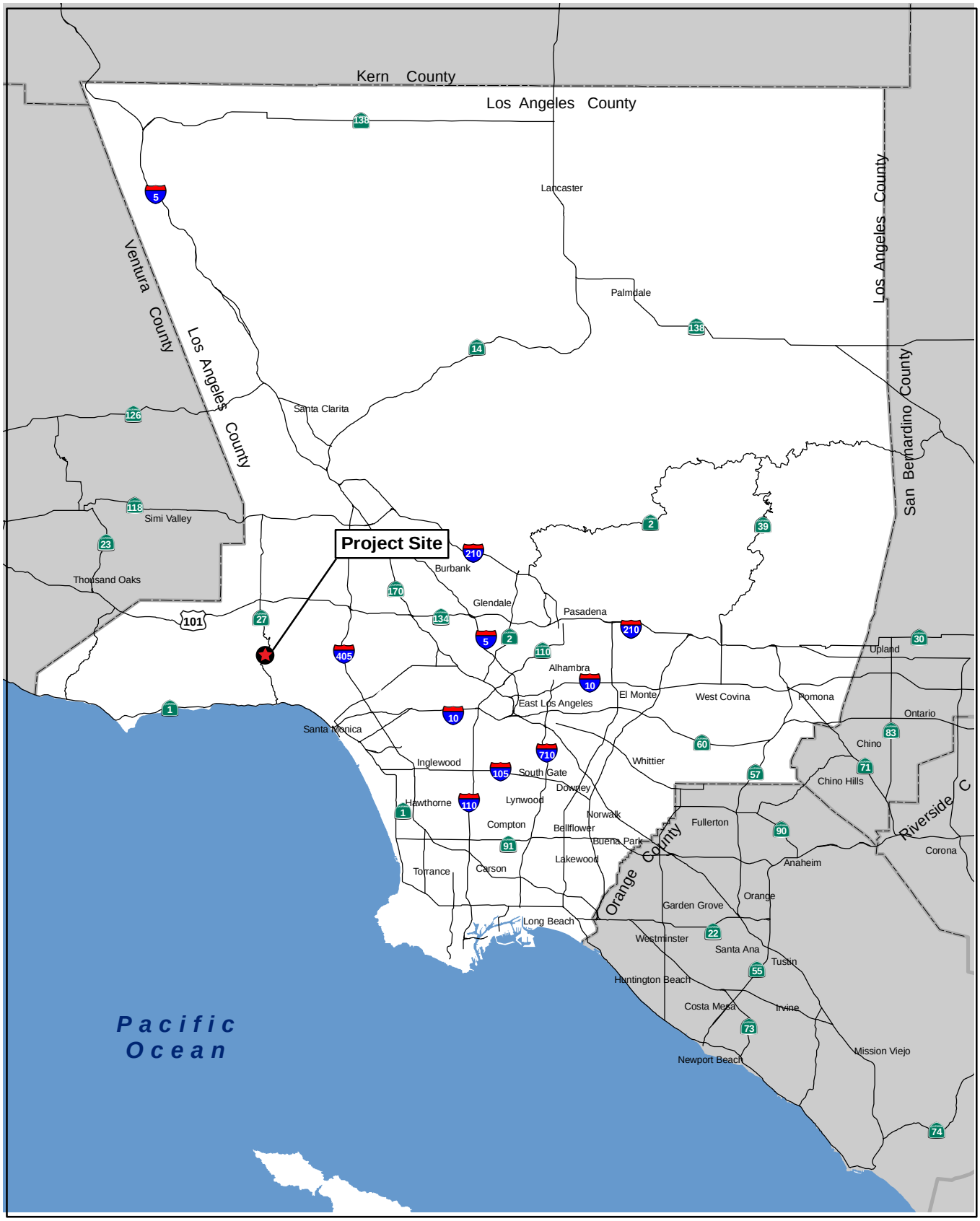
2.1 PROJECT LOCATION

2.1.1 REGIONAL SETTING

The project site is located in the unincorporated community of Topanga in western Los Angeles County and is contained within the existing roadways of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard (Figure 2-1). The overall character of the surrounding area is a range of local and regional business uses, including retail stores, office buildings, and service businesses; institutional uses (i.e., post office, Topanga Library, etc.); and single-family residences interspersed east of the project site.

The community of Topanga is located in the Santa Monica Mountains and is bounded on three sides by Topanga State Park, a 36-mile stretch of trails through open grassland, live oaks, and ridgelines with views of the Pacific Ocean. Numerous geologic formations can be found in the park, including earthquake faults, marine fossils, volcanic intrusions, and a wide variety of sedimentary formations. Topanga State Park, which is approximately two miles east of the project site, can be accessed by traveling north on Topanga Canyon Boulevard, passing the post office, then turning right on Entrada Road. The project site is also bordered by a number of State Park or conservancy lands, including Santa Ynez Canyon Park to the east, Red Rock Canyon State Park to the west, Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north, and Tuna Canyon Park to the south (California State Parks 2010).

The main city south of Topanga is Malibu, which is approximately 20 miles from the project site. To the east is Pacific Palisades, approximately 8 miles from the project site. To the north is the city of Calabasas and Woodland Hills, approximately 10 miles from the project site. Topanga has a total population of 5,441 as of 2000. The median household income in 2000 was $88,661, with 7.8% of residents living below the poverty level (U.S. Census 2000).



Source: California Geospatial Information Library (2003-5)

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Figure 2-1
Regional Location Map

Topanga Underground Utility District Project

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2.1.2 PROJECT SETTING

The project site is depicted on the Topanga, California 7.5 minute USGS map (1952 - photorevised 1981), in Township 1 South, Range 16 West, within the SE ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 7. The project site curves northeast along State Route (SR) 27, also known as Topanga Canyon Boulevard, while a portion splits off along Old Topanga Canyon Road to the west. Topanga Canyon Boulevard route is eligible for the State Scenic Highway System (Caltrans 2007). Figure 2-2 displays the project vicinity.

The project site is also located within the Malibu Coastal Zone and is subject to the permitting requirements of the California Coastal Commission. The Malibu Coastal Zone in Los Angeles County extends approximately 27 miles from the Ventura County line on the west to the Los Angeles city limits on the east. Inland, the Malibu Coastal Zone boundary extends approximately 5 miles to include the coastal slopes of the Santa Monica Mountains. The shoreline along the Malibu Coastal Zone contains sand and rocky coastal beaches. The inland portion of the Malibu Coastal Zone generally contains the major canyon system (i.e., watersheds) that intersects the mountain range. The canyons constitute the natural drainage areas that run down from the mountain peaks and interior valleys toward the Pacific (Malibu Local Coastal Program 1986).

In addition, the project site is situated within the Topanga Creek Watershed. The Topanga Creek Watershed is the second largest watershed in the Santa Monica Mountains. The watershed is a north-south trending, Y-shaped canyon that covers approximately 18 square miles with elevations reaching from over 1,700 feet to sea level. The 9-mile axis of the main drainage drops and creates narrow, steep sided canyons with exposed walls of sedimentary rocks dating from 14-17 million years ago (Topanga Creek Watershed Committee 1996). Topanga Creek, which traverses west of the project site, west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, is a geologically young, intermittent stream with perennial pools that is fed by numerous tributaries along its two main branches. The mouth of the creek emerges into Santa Monica Bay through a small estuary, which has created a major surfing beach at Topanga Beach. Topanga Creek is an important and relatively natural creek in the Santa Monica Mountains, which supports a large diversity of plants and animals, many of which are increasingly rare. Topanga Creek, which drains Topanga Canyon, is the third largest watershed entering the Santa Monica Bay. The creek is one of the few remaining undammed waterways in the area, and is a spawning ground for steelhead trout. The area typically receives about 22 inches of rain annually (Topanga Creek Watershed Committee 1996).

2.2 REGULATORY SETTING

2.2.1 LOS ANGELES COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The proposed project is located within an unincorporated part of Los Angeles County and is subject to the requirements of the Los Angeles County General Plan. The Los Angeles County General Plan is the guide for growth and development in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The Los Angeles County General Plan was last comprehensively updated in 1980 and is currently in the process of being updated for 2025. The General Plan is designed to guide the long-term physical development and conservation of

Source: California Geospatial Information Library (2003-5)

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0 0.75 1.5 2.25 Miles

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Figure 2-2
Project Vicinity Map

the County's land and environment through a framework of goals, policies, and implementation programs (DRP 1980).

2.2.2 MALIBU COASTAL ZONE

In October 1972, the United States Congress passed Title 16 U.S.C. 1451-1464, which established a federal coastal zone management policy and created a federal coastal zone. By that legislation, Congress declared a national interest in the effective management, beneficial use, protection, and development of the coastal zone in order to balance the nation's natural, environmental, and aesthetic resource needs with commercial-economic growth. Congress found and declared that it was a national policy "to encourage and assist the states to exercise effectively their responsibilities in the coastal zone through the development and implementation of management programs to achieve wise use of the land and water resources of the coastal zone giving full consideration to ecological, cultural, historic, and aesthetic values as well as to the need for economic development" (16 U.S.C. 1452b). As a result of that federal enactment, coastal states were provided a policy and source of funding for the implementation of federal goals.

The California Coastal Zone Conservation Act of 1972 (Proposition 20) was a temporary measure passed by the voters of the state as a ballot initiative. It set up temporary regional Coastal Commissions with permit authority and a directive to prepare a comprehensive coastal plan. The Coastal Commissions under Proposition 20 lacked the authority to implement the Coastal Plan but were required to submit the plan to the legislature for "adoption and implementation." The California Coastal Act of 1976 is the permanent enacting law approved by the State legislature. The Coastal Act established a different set of policies, a different boundary line, and different permitting procedures than Proposition 20.

Any project in the Coastal Zone, which requires discretionary approval, will require a Coastal Development Permit. A Coastal Development Permit is a document required by state law to permit construction of certain uses in a designated "Coastal Zone." A Coastal Development Permit ensures that areas designated as protected coastal land are protected and that the safety, health, and welfare of surrounding neighborhoods and communities are upheld.

The Malibu Coastal Zone in Los Angeles County extends approximately 27 miles from the Ventura County line on the west to the Los Angeles city limits on the east. Inland, the Malibu Coastal Zone boundary extends approximately 5 miles to include the coastal slopes of the Santa Monica Mountains. Land Use patterns vary considerably throughout the region. Both commercial and residential development flanks the Pacific Coast Highway from Topanga to Point Dume (Malibu Local Coastal Program 1986). The proposed project is situated within the Malibu Coastal Zone and is subject to the requirements of the California Coastal Act. Per the *Repair, Maintenance and Utility Hook-up Exclusions from Permit Requirements* of the California Coastal Act, a "coastal permit is not required to install, test, place in service, maintain, replace, modify or relocate underground facilities or to convert existing overhead facilities to underground facilities provided that work is limited to public road or railroad rights-of-way or public utility easements (P.U.E.)." As such, a Coastal Development Permit would not be required in order

to approve and implement the proposed project. However, per recommendation from the California Coastal Commission, DPW, in coordination with SCE, will obtain a written exemption determination from the South Central Coast District Office prior to project approval (Ainsworth 2011).

2.2.3 TOPANGA CANYON COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT

Los Angeles County established community standards districts as supplemental districts to provide a means of implementing special development standards contained in adopted neighborhood, community, area, specific and local coastal plans within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, or to provide a means of addressing special problems which are unique to certain geographic areas within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

In May 1990, the Topanga Canyon Community Standards District was adopted by Los Angeles County to implement certain policies related to antiquated subdivision development contained in the Malibu Local Coastal Program (LCP) (Malibu Local Coastal Program 1986). The district established development standards in hillside and other areas that lack adequate infrastructure or that are subject to the potential hazards of fire, flood, or geologic instability. Preservation of important ecological resources and scenic features would also be accomplished using this district. The district also established development standards, including safety features for fences, walls, and landscaping located along roads within the district boundary (DRP 1990).

The project site is located within the boundaries of the Topanga Canyon Community Standards District, as outlined in Section 22.44.119 of the Los Angeles County Code (DRP 1990).

2.2.4 LOS ANGELES COUNTY CODE, DIVISION 2 OF TITLE 16 PROVISIONS

The ordinance codified as Division 2 of Title 16 in the Los Angeles County Code is cited as the "undergrounding of utilities ordinance (Los Angeles County Code 2010)." This allows existing overhead electric or communication facilities presently located within certain designated areas to be removed and replaced with underground electric or communication facilities, which can be designated by the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors as an underground utility district. The Board of Supervisors findings may be based on one or more of the following reasons (Section 16.32.060):

- Such undergrounding will avoid or eliminate an unusually heavy concentration of overhead electric or communication facilities;
- Such designated areas, or sections thereof, are extensively used by the general public and carry a heavy volume of pedestrian or vehicular traffic;
- Such designated areas, or sections thereof, adjoin or pass through civic areas or public recreation areas or areas of unusual scenic interest to the general public;
- Overhead electric or communication facilities within such designated area have been or will be converted to underground locations; therefore, additional or new electric or communication

facilities thereafter installed in said area after such conversion has been completed should be underground to conform to the undergrounding pattern.

The following types of facilities are exempted from Division 2 of Title 16, Chapter 16.32.100:

a. Any county facilities or equipment installed under the supervision and to the satisfaction of the commissioner;
b. Poles or electroliers used exclusively for street lighting;
c. Overhead wires (exclusive of supporting structures) crossing any portion of such district within which overhead wires have been prohibited, or connecting to buildings on the perimeter of such district, when such wires originate in an area from which poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures are not prohibited;
d. Overhead wires attached to the exterior surface of a building by means of a bracket or other fixture and from one location on the building to another location on the same building or to an adjacent building without crossing any public street;
e. Antennae, associated equipment and supporting structures used by a utility for furnishing communication services;
f. Equipment appurtenant to underground facilities, such as surface-mounted transformers, pedestal-mounted terminal boxes and meter cabinets, and concealed ducts;
g. Temporary poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures used or to be used in conjunction with construction projects.

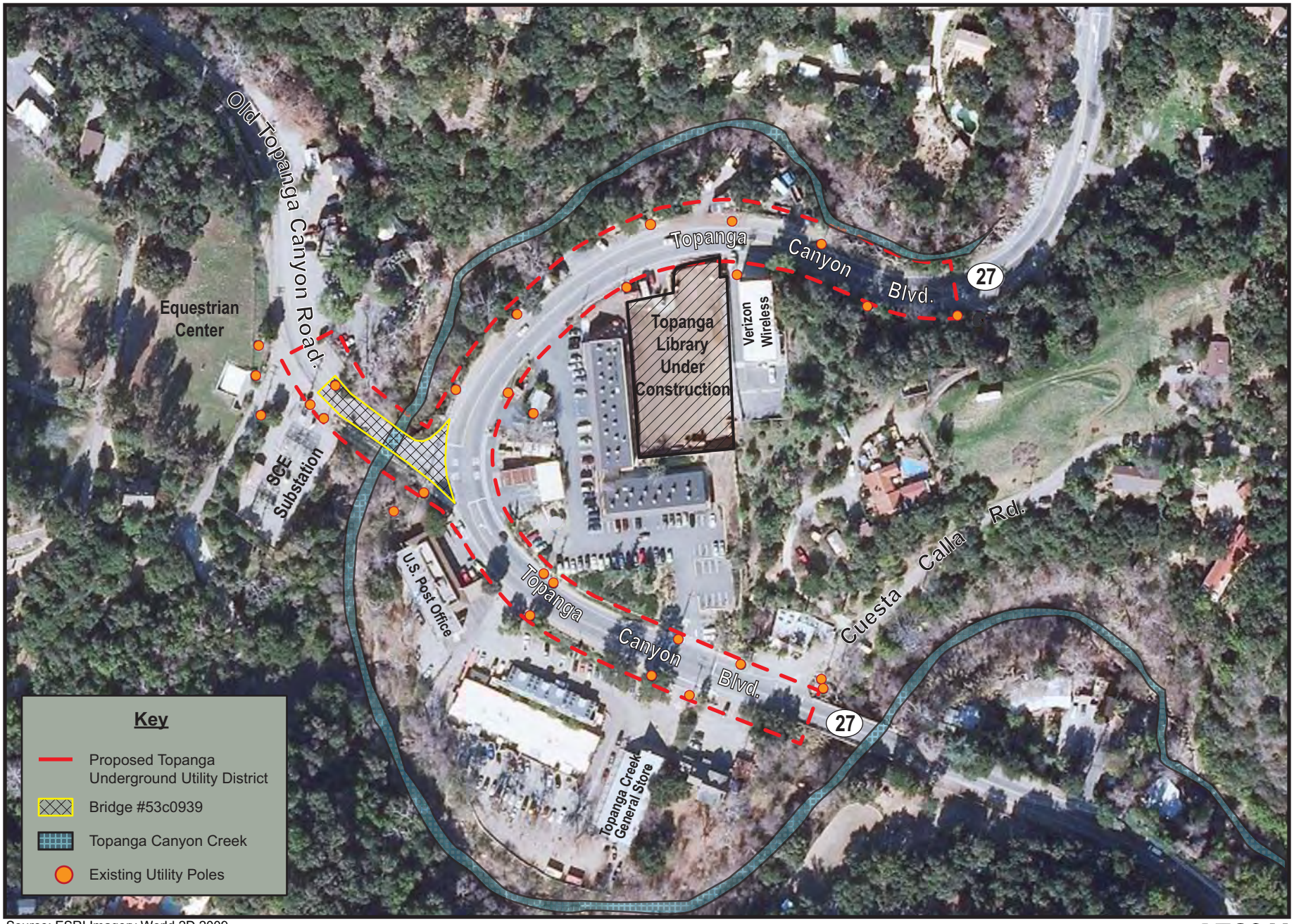
The proposed project would be designed in compliance with Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code (Los Angeles County Code 2010).

2.3 LAND USE AND ZONING

2.3.1 EXISTING LAND USE

The Topanga Library (122 North Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is currently under construction; a Verizon Wireless Telecommunication facility; and various retail/commercial developments are located on the eastern portion of the project site. The Topanga Creek traverses the western portion of the project site. An SCE substation, an equestrian center, various retail/commercial establishments, and a restaurant were identified along Old Topanga Canyon Road, also on the western portion of the project site. Additional retail/commercial developments, restaurants, a post office (101 South Topanga Canyon Boulevard), and office complexes are located on the southern portion of the project site. Office complexes, along with several oak and ornamental trees are located north of the project site (Figure 2-3).

The project site also contains a bridge that was identified to be historic in age (P-19-187551). Caltrans also identifies the bridge as the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge #53C0939 (hereafter “Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge”). Per initial research on the Caltrans historic bridge inventory website, the Topanga Creek



Source: ESRI Imagery World 2D 2009

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Figure 2-3
Land Use

Topanga Underground Utility District Project

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Bridge located north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon was built in 1926. A water line conduit is currently attached to the side of Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge. The bridge is designated as a "Category 5" in the bridge index. Per Caltrans, a Category 5 bridge designation is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (Caltrans 2010).

Per previous work efforts for the approximately 12,000-square-foot Topanga Library Project, which is currently under construction, the project site was identified to be within a recorded archaeological site known as CA-LAN-8. The project site is of considerable archaeological sensitivity as CA-LAN-8 was formerly one of the most prominent archaeological sites in the Topanga area. Although commercial development in the area has destroyed most of the site, early descriptions suggest it to have been highly significant. Moreover, portions of the site appear to remain intact under paved areas and so the archaeological sensitivity of this area is extremely high.

Utility providers in the project site include the following: 1) SCE; 2) NextG Networks, Inc.; 3) Cable Engineering Services (utility owner is Verizon Wireless); 4) Verizon California; 5) BMS Engineering (utility owner is AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile); 6) Ericson Contractor (utility owner is Sprint); and 7) Charter Communications (Dunn 2010). No other utilities providers are known to exist within the project site.

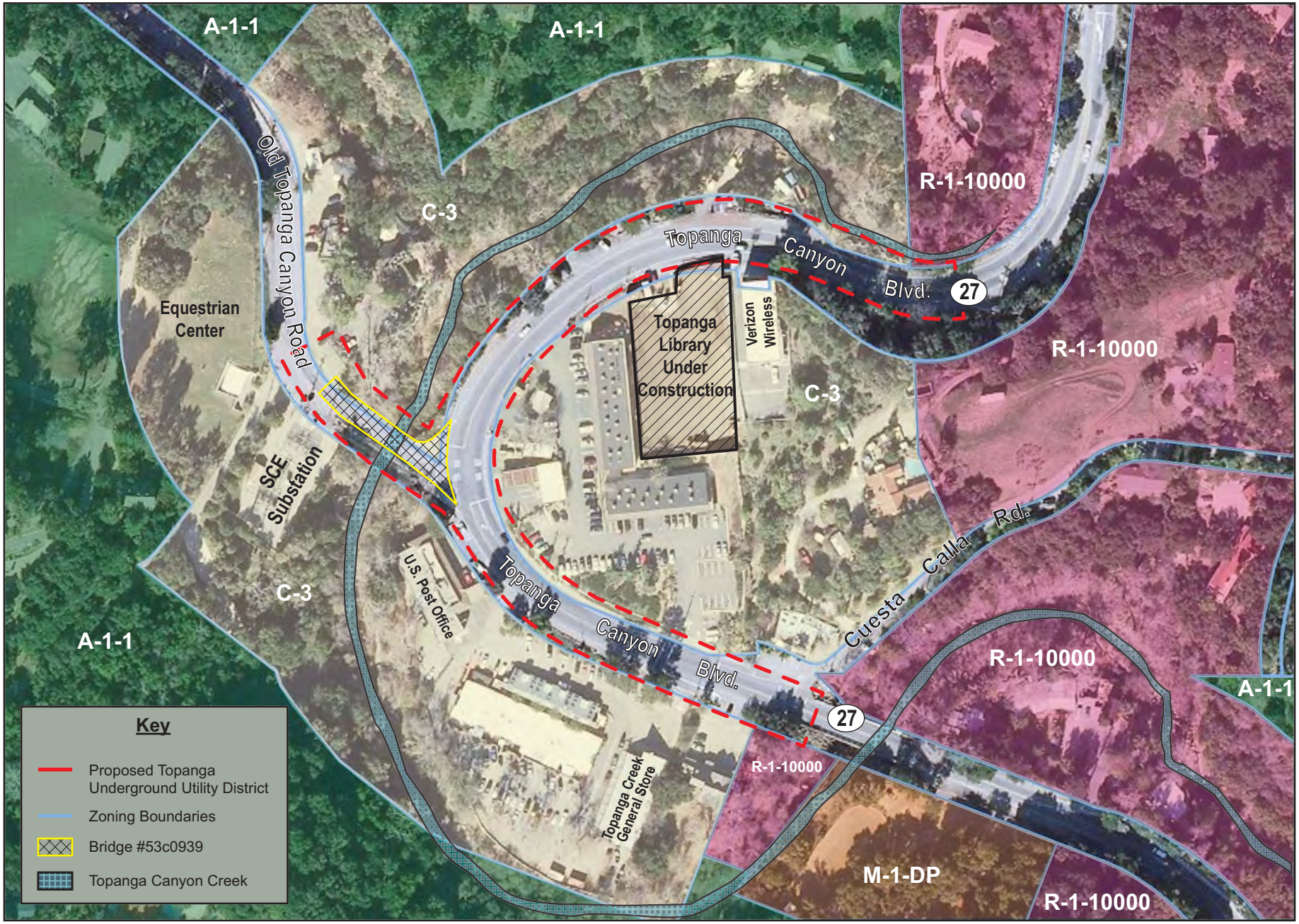
There are approximately 28 utility distribution poles, which is comprised of 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines within the proposed UUD (SCE 2010). There are four types of aboveground public utility lines that are found along the project site: 1) electrical; 2) telephone; 3) wireless, and 4) cable. The average kilovolt (kV) along the project site is 16kV, 4kV, and 120/240V, which are typically found in retail/commercial developments.

In addition to the utility poles, there are existing overhead equipment (i.e. transformers, capacitors, and switches), which may be placed at grade or underground. There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that provide wireless transmission.

General Plan and Zoning Designations

The overall character of the surrounding area is a range of local and regional business uses, including retail stores, office buildings, and service businesses; institutional uses; and single-family residences interspersed east of the project site. As displayed on Figure 2-4, the properties adjacent to the project site is primarily zoned Unlimited Commercial Zone (C-3) according to the Los Angeles County Zoning Ordinance (DRP 2010). Permitted uses include the following:

1. Sales (e.g. antique shops, art galleries, bookstores, bicycle shops, gift shops, grocery stores, hobby supply stores, pet stores, and etc.)
2. Services (e.g. automobile service stations, beauty shops, libraries, offices [business or professional], restaurants, gas metering and control stations, public utility, and etc.)
3. Recreation and Amusement (e.g. golf courses, parks, riding and hiking trails; and etc.)



Source: ESRI Imagery World 2D 2009

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0 200 400 600 Feet

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Figure 2-4
Zoning

Topanga Underground Utility District Project

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Adjacent properties north and west of the project site are zoned Light Agricultural (A-1-1). Agricultural zones were established to permit a comprehensive range of agricultural use in areas particularly suited for agricultural activities. Permitted uses are intended to encourage agricultural pursuits and such other uses required for, or desired by, the inhabitants of the community. An area zoned for agricultural use may provide the land necessary to permit low-density single-family residential development, and outdoor recreational and needed public and institutional facilities (Los Angeles County Code 2010). Permitted uses include the following:

- Adult residential facilities, limited to six or fewer persons
- Crops--field, tree, bush, berry and row, including nursery stock
- Family child care homes (large and small)
- Farmworker dwelling units
- Farmworker housing complexes
- Foster family homes
- Group homes, children, limited to six or fewer children
- Residences, single-family
- Second units
- Small family homes, children

Single-family residences (R-1) are found east of the project site are along Cuesta Cala Road and South Topanga Canyon Boulevard (DRP 2010). Properties designated as R-1 may be used for the following:

- Adult residential facilities, limited to six or fewer persons
- Family child care homes (large and small)
- Farmworker dwelling units
- Foster family homes
- Group homes, children, limited to six or fewer children
- Residences, single-family
- Second units
- Small family homes, children

Light Manufacturing Zones under a Development Program (M-1-DP) are found along South Topanga Canyon Boulevard (DRP 2010). Permitted uses include the following:

- Adult day care facilities
- Adult residential facilities
- Dwelling units, except one dwelling unit within a building on the same lot or parcel of land which is legally being used so as to require the continuous supervision of a caretaker and his immediate family, and except dwelling units within a building on premises used for agricultural purposes, which dwelling units are occupied only by persons employed on the same premises and their immediate families.

- Family day care homes
- Foster family homes
- Group homes, children
- Hospitals
- Hotels
- Mobile homes or recreational vehicles for sleeping or residential purposes

2.4 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

2.4.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Proposed Topanga Underground Utility District

Pursuant to Division 2 of Title 16, Chapter 16.32 of the Los Angeles County Code, Los Angeles County is proposing a resolution to establish the Topanga UUD along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. This proposed UUD is situated in the unincorporated community of Topanga in western Los Angeles County. Per the Los Angeles County Code, "underground utility district" means an area within the county of Los Angeles within which overhead electric or communication facilities are prohibited. The proposed Topanga UUD would provide for the undergrounding of existing overhead electrical and communication facilities.

The proposed project extends approximately 1,600 feet along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD, is approximately 3.6 acres and is described as follows:

Part A:

That portion of Fractional Section 7, T. 1 S., R. 16 W., S.B.M., within a strip of land 100 feet wide, lying 50 feet on each side of the following described centerline:

Beginning at the intersection of the southeasterly prolongation of that certain course having a bearing and distance of N 54°28'23" W 162.40 feet in the centerline of Old Topanga Canyon Road, and that certain 220-foot radius curve concave easterly and having an arc length of 492.69 feet in the centerline of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, as both centerlines are shown on map of Parcel Map No. 3833, filed in Book 63, pages 35 and 36, of Parcel Maps, in the office of Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk of the County of Los Angeles, said intersection also being designated as Point A; thence northwesterly along said southeasterly prolongation and said centerline of Old Topanga Canyon Road, a distance of 280 feet.

Part B:

That portion of the above-mentioned Fractional Section 7, within a strip of land 100 feet wide, lying 50 feet on each side of the following described centerline:

Beginning at the above-designated Point A; thence northerly and northeasterly along the above-mentioned centerline of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and its northeasterly continuation, as said continuation is shown on map of Parcel Map No. 6035, filed in Book 67, pages 27 and 28, of the above-mentioned Parcel Maps, a total distance of 800 feet.

Part C:

That portion of Fractional Section 7 and Section 18, T. 1 S., R. 16W, S.B.M., within a strip of land 100 feet wide, lying 50 feet on each side of the following described centerline:

Beginning at the above-designated Point A; thence southeasterly and easterly along the centerline of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, as said centerline is shown on map of Parcel Map No. 3709, filed in Book 57, pages 45 and 46, of the above-mentioned Parcel Maps, a distance of 520 feet.

Pursuant to Division 2 of Title 16, Chapter 16.32 of the Los Angeles County Code, a public hearing will be held for the proposed UUD. Notice of the public hearing will be publicized in a newspaper of general circulation.

If after the public hearing, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors finds that, based on one or more of the reasons specified in Section 16.32.060, it is in the general public interest to establish an underground utility district along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the resolution would be adopted, establishing the Topanga UUD. The proposed Topanga UUD is anticipated to go to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors for adoption in June 2011.

Rule 20A

In 1967, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) required new electric service connections to be placed underground by funding a gradual program to convert existing overhead lines, including concomitant communication lines, to underground service. The program consisted of two parts. The first part, under Tariff Rules 15 and 16, required new subdivisions (and those that were already undergrounded) to provide underground service for all new connections. The second part of the program governed both when and where a utility may remove overhead lines and replace them with new underground service, and who would bear the cost of the conversion. Tariff Rule 20 is the vehicle for the implementation of the underground conversion programs. Rule 20 dictates three levels, A, B, and C, of ratepayer funding for the projects (CPUC 2002). The proposed project is subject to the requirements of Rule 20A.

On January 6, 2000, the CPUC Commission (Commission) issued an Order Instituting Rulemaking 00-01-005 to investigate the ways to amend, revise, and improve the rules for the conversion of existing overhead electric and communications lines to underground service. Currently, under Rule 20A, electric utility ratepayers bear most of the costs of the underground conversion (CPUC 2002).

On December 11, 2001, the Commission adopted D.01-12-009 to revise the rules governing the State's program to convert overhead electric and communications distribution and transmission lines to underground. As a result, Decision 01-12-009, expanded the Rule 20A criteria, extended the use of Rule 20A allocations, allowed cities to mortgage Rule 20A funds for five years, required standardized reporting from the utilities, improved communication between utilities, cities, and residents, and ordered the creation of an updated Undergrounding Planning Guide (CPUC 2002).
All SCE ratepayers, not just those who live in locations where facilities will be undergrounded, would pay for Rule 20A projects. City and county governments choose these projects, using a process that includes public participation (CPUC 2002).

Using CPUC formulas, SCE allocates rate funds to communities for undergrounding based on previous allocations, the ratio of customers served by overhead facilities to all the customers in the community, and the fraction that customers in the community represent of all SCE customers. Local governments use these formulas to project allocations, which allow them to prioritize projects and develop project schedules. Because funds are limited, local governments sometimes must wait and accumulate their allocations before starting an undergrounding project.

After two years of study and development, in June 2002, the CPUC approved the first phase of changes designed to improve the scheduling, designing, and construction of undergrounding projects under Rule 20. The new Rule 20 included the following (CPUC 2002):

Increase in Local Government Flexibility

- It adds "arterial" and "collector" to the types of location that qualify for Rule 20A.
- It allows up to five years of mortgaging, or "saving up," allocations levels by local governments, provided adequate utility capital and personnel are available.
- It allows a local government to use allocation levels as "seed money," a value that the local government can borrow against to perform initial engineering & design studies for Rule 20B projects. In the event the project is not approved within 2-1/2 years after planning stages are complete, the city or county has 90 days to reimburse the seed money.
- It provides that the cost of removing overhead facilities will be paid by the utility.

Improvement in Coordination and Communications between Utilities, Local Governments, and Residents

- At a local government's request, SCE will meet with government officials and residents to provide status on any Rule 20 project that has been approved.
- SCE will meet with local officials every 30 days, if the local government requests it, to discuss Rule 20 project construction.
- The Underground Planning Guide will be updated to include the how to, when, where and why's of undergrounding.
- The utility will have a single point of contact to answer questions on Rule 20 for the general public.

The second phase of Rule 20 changes is currently under study.

2.4.2 PROJECT GOALS

A primary goal of the project is to satisfy the requirements of Rule 20A. The proposed project would underground all lines within the proposed UUD, which is approximately 3.6 acres. In order to qualify for full funding through utility rate proceeds, the proposed project must produce a benefit to the general public, not just customers in the affected area, by satisfying one or more of these criteria (CPUC 2002):

- The location has an unusually heavy concentration of overhead facilities.
- The location is heavily traveled.
- The location qualifies as an arterial or major collector road in a local government's general plan.
- The overhead equipment must be located within or pass through a civic, recreational, or scenic area.

The determination of "general public interest" under these criteria is made by DPW, after holding public hearings, in consultation with SCE. The following provides the reasons the proposed project satisfies the Rule 20A criteria above.

Heavy Concentration of Overhead Facilities. There are approximately 28 utility distribution poles identified within the proposed Topanga UUD, which is comprised of 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). There are four types of aboveground public utility lines that are found along the project site: 1) electrical; 2) telephone; 3) wireless, and 4) cable. Utility providers in the project site include the following: 1) SCE; 2) NextG Networks, Inc.; 3) Cable Engineering Services (utility owner is Verizon Wireless); 4) Verizon California; 5) BMS Engineering (utility owner is AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile); 6) Ericson Contractor (utility owner is Sprint); and 7) Charter Communications (Dunn 2010). No other utilities providers are known to exist within the project site. The proposed project would underground, where applicable up to three each, 16kV circuits (SCE) multiple 4kV distribution lines (SCE), as well as associated 120/240V services (SCE). Per the requirements of the proposed UUD, no overhead utility lines would be allowed within the proposed boundary. As displayed on Figures 2-5 and 2-6, there were a number of lines that dropped from the overhead lines in order to provide services to the affected business owners fronting Topanga Canyon Boulevard, specifically, at the intersection of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Figure 2-6 displays existing overhead utility lines fronting the retail/commercial developments at the intersection of Cuesta Cala Road along South Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

Figure 2-5 Existing Overhead Utility Lines Facing West at the Intersection of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard

Figure 2-6 Existing Overhead Utility Lines Looking North From S. Topanga Canyon Boulevard

Figure 2-7 Existing Overhead Utility Lines and Trees Fronting Retail Store at the Intersection of South Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Cuesta Cala Road

Figure 2-8 Existing Overhead Utility Lines and Trees Fronting the Businesses along North Topanga Canyon Road

In addition to SCE lines, there are six various utility companies that also own or maintain electric, cable, or phone utilities within the project site. These overhead utility lines contribute to the heavy concentration of utility lines found along Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road.

Portions of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road are densely covered with mature trees, including oak trees. A number of the overhead utility lines share common and often competing space (Figures 2-7 and 2-8). Routine pruning and utility maintenance may lead to environmental degradation of the trees if they are not properly maintained.

Location is Heavily Traveled. The project site runs along SR 27, also known as Topanga Canyon Boulevard (hereafter "Topanga Canyon Boulevard"); while a portion splits off along Old Topanga Canyon Road to the west. Topanga Canyon Boulevard begins at Pacific Coast Highway (SR 1) adjacent to the Pacific Ocean and Topanga County Beach, in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County between Malibu and Castellammare. It travels north, cutting through Topanga State Park. Upon exiting the park, Topanga Canyon Boulevard provides access to Fernwood, Topanga, Sylvia Park, and Glenview, all unincorporated. Topanga Canyon Boulevard continues winding into the San Fernando Valley, nearly entering Calabasas before entering the Los Angeles community of Woodland Hills. The route becomes a major city arterial through the valley, intersecting Ventura Freeway (U.S. 101) before entering Warner Center and Canoga Park. After traversing Chatsworth, Topanga Canyon Boulevard ends just north of the interchange with the SR 118 freeway, thus providing access to the unincorporated area north of Chatsworth. Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a two-lane winding, rural, mountain road, is the principal thoroughfare connecting U.S. 101 with SR 1. Further, Topanga Canyon Boulevard is designated by the County as a Primary Disaster Route (DPW 2010a).

Qualifies as an Arterial or Major Collector Road in a Local Government's General Plan. Per the City of Malibu General Plan, Topanga Canyon Boulevard is a two-lane roadway that starts at SR 1 and extends north to the San Fernando Valley, thus providing regional access to a predominantly residential neighborhood just outside the City of Malibu. It interchanges with the U.S. 101, and further north with Highway 118. In the project vicinity, Topanga Canyon is striped with a double yellow centerline with a 35 mph speed limit adjusted downward for various curves along the alignment. Old Topanga Canyon Road is another two-lane, winding, rural, mountain highway which connects Topanga Canyon Boulevard with Mulholland Highway about six miles to the north (Cotton/Bridges Associates 2003).

Topanga Canyon Boulevard carries approximately 15,375 vehicles daily (total of both directions) north of Old Topanga Canyon Road and about 18,090 vehicles daily south of Old Topanga Canyon Road. Old Topanga Canyon Road north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard carries about 4,940 vehicles daily (Cotton/Bridges Associates 2003).Topanga Canyon Road is a designated route within the Congestion Management Plan for the Los Angeles County roadway system (City of Malibu 1995).

Located Within or Pass Through a Civic, Recreational, or Scenic Area. Topanga Canyon Boulevard has been designated by the Caltrans as being eligible for the State Scenic Highway System (Caltrans 2009). In addition, the County of Los Angeles General Plan Scenic Highway Element designates Topanga

Canyon Boulevard, from Mulholland Drive to Pacific Coast Highway, as one of the First Priority Routes proposed for further study (DRP 1974).

The proposed project satisfies all of the Rule 20A criteria. As such, the proposed project demonstrates that it is within the public interest and would produce a benefit to the general public, not just customers in the affected area.

2.4.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the proposed project include the following:

Providing Comparable Service. The proposed project seeks to provide comparable services from the proposed underground facilities for each property served by the existing overhead facilities. As previously discussed, portions of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road are densely covered with mature trees. Tall-growing trees near overhead lines can cause service interruptions when trees contact wires. The proposed project would eliminate potential risks and disruptions of service caused by vehicular or storm damage to utility poles.

There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that provide wireless transmission. In order to maintain service of existing wireless (i.e. RF or antenna) systems, the wireless systems would be maintained aboveground. However, it is anticipated that the design, equipment, and location of the existing above ground wireless systems would be agreed upon by each utility provider and DPW, in coordination with SCE, on a case by case basis during the final design phase. It is also anticipated that wireless telephone service providers will continue to provide a comparable level of service through their existing or relocated locations with appropriate permissions obtained from property owners and regulators in compliance with applicable regulatory permitting requirements. Further, the proposed project would be designed in compliance with Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code (Los Angeles County Code 2010). Thus, the proposed project would meet this project objective.

Aesthetics. One objective of the proposed project includes enhancing the visual character and aesthetics of the roadway. The County of Los Angeles General Plan Scenic Highway Element states that land uses within a scenic corridor should underground or locate utility lines so that the visual integrity of the landscape is maintained (DRP 1974). The State of California Undergrounding Public Utilities Program provides that no electric or communication utility shall install overhead distribution facilities in proximity to any designated scenic highway and which would be visible from such scenic highway if erected overhead (DRP 1974).

As discussed above, Topanga Canyon Boulevard has been designated by Caltrans as being eligible for the State Scenic Highway System (Caltrans 2009) and a portion of the road has been designated by the County as one of the First Priority Routes proposed for further study (Los Angeles County 1974). Removing all existing utility distribution poles and aerial cables along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard by establishing a new underground utility system would eliminate visual

blight and provide a visual improvement to the public, as it would maintain the vista without the interruption of utility lines. Implementation of the proposed project would be consistent with, support, and meet the goals and objectives of the above-mentioned policies.

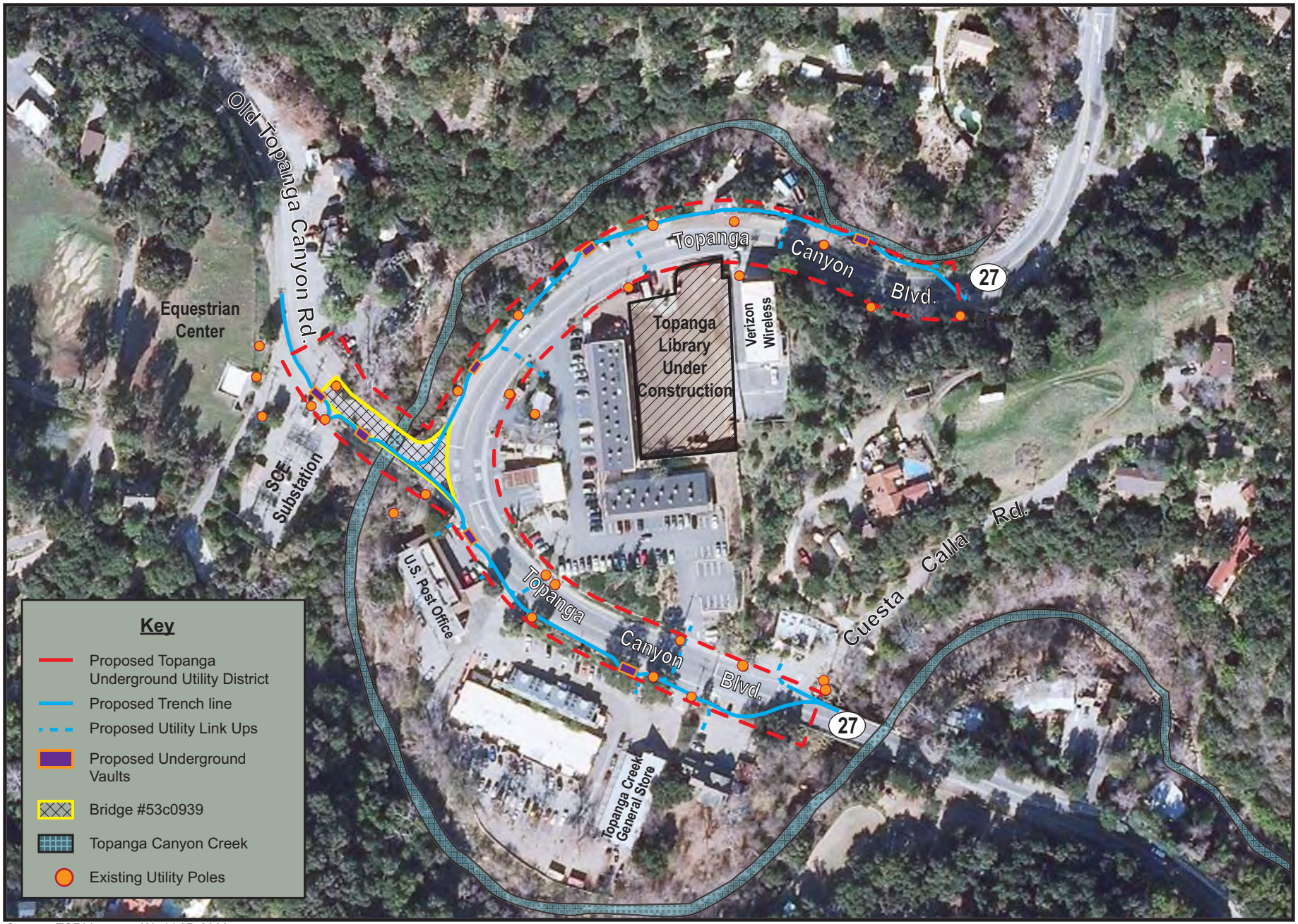
2.5 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project would relocate overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The proposed project extends approximately 1,600 feet along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. As displayed on Figure 2-9, the proposed project starts at the intersection of Cuesta Cala Road and South Topanga Canyon Boulevard, loops north and branches off along Old Topanga Canyon Road, then terminates north along Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

Per SCE, the term "underground electric system" means an electric system with all wires installed underground, except those wires in surface mounted equipment enclosures (SCE 2002). The proposed project would remove approximately 28 utility distribution poles and relocate approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard (SCE 2010). The utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Canyon Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be placed alongside the bridge via a utility conduit.

All the other overhead utility lines, which represent a total of seven various companies, would be placed underground primarily within the existing ROW. The utility companies include: 1) SCE; 2) NextG Networks, Inc.; 3) Cable Engineering Services (utility owner is Verizon Wireless); 4) Verizon California; 5) BMS Engineering (utility owner is AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile); 6) Ericson Contractor (utility owner is Sprint); and 7) Charter Communications (Dunn 2010). No other utility providers are known to exist within the project site. In addition to the utility poles, there are existing overhead equipment (i.e. transformers, capacitors, and switches), which may be placed at grade or underground.

There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that provide wireless transmission. It is assumed that existing aboveground wireless (i.e. RF or antenna) systems would be maintained, relocated, and/or restored. However, it is understood that these wireless systems would need to remain aboveground in order to provide wireless data. At the time of this study, only a conceptual-level design was available. During the final design phase, it is anticipated that the affected utilities would be identified and the final design of the proposed project, equipment, and location would be agreed upon by each utility provider and DPW, in coordination with SCE, on a case by case basis. It is also anticipated that wireless telephone service providers will continue to provide a comparable level of service through their existing or relocated locations with appropriate permissions obtained from property owners and regulators in compliance with applicable regulatory permitting requirements. Lastly, the proposed project would be designed in compliance with Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code (Los Angeles County Code 2010).



Source: ESRI Imagery World 2D 2009

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AECOM

Figure 2-9
Proposed Project Design

Topanga Underground Utility District Project

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The proposed project would underground, where applicable up to three each, 16kV circuits, (SCE) multiple 4kV distribution lines (SCE), as well as associated 120/240V services (SCE). The proposed project is anticipated to permanently impact approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). The total project footprint is 1,600 feet along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

There are four types of aboveground public utility lines that are found along the project site: 1) electrical; 2) telephone; 3) wireless, and 4) cable. In addition, there are several streetlights. Most of the utility distribution poles are shared by the electric, telephone, wireless, and cable companies along with streetlights. Each distribution pole, having shared utilities, has higher voltage electric transmission lines at the top, followed in descending order by electricity distribution wires, telephone wires, followed by cable lines and finally the streetlight attachment itself. The highest voltage of transmission line found at the project site is 16 kV. The average kV along the project site is 16 kV, 4kV, and 120/240V, which are typically found in retail/commercial developments.

Underground utilities require protective chambers or vaults that allow service personnel to access a variety of underground services. The underground vaults typically house switches, transformers, power cables, etc. The purpose of the vault is to protect vital underground connections and controls for utility distribution. Underground vaults are commonly constructed out of reinforced concrete boxes, poured cement, or brick. The vaults would typically be 7 feet (height) by 14 feet (width) by 8 feet (depth). Typical vault spans are every 500 to 700 feet. Due to the concentration of commercial loads, between three to seven underground vaults are anticipated to be constructed for the proposed project. The vaults would be placed within the existing setbacks.

The proposed project would install a joint-use trench to house the other utility lines (electrical, telephone, wireless, and cable) represented by the seven companies, including SCE. It is anticipated that the join-use trench would include, at minimum, six 5-inch conduits for SCE's utility lines. It is assumed that the various other companies with utility lines in the project site would install their own conduits, which could vary in size and quantity.

It is anticipated that the existing aboveground enclosures (e.g. pad-mounted transformer installations, load break fuse cabinets, capacitor cabinets, equipment boxes, etc.) are not anticipated to be removed. The proposed project may include construction of new aboveground enclosures. Any new aboveground enclosures would be similar to the existing aboveground enclosures.

2.6 CONSTRUCTION SCENARIO

Notification

Prior to construction, all property owners and affected business owners would receive notices. In general, all electrical service to both commercial and residential customers would remain largely uninterrupted. It

is anticipated that any utility disruptions and relocations due to the project would occur only during the construction phase.

Scheduled outages would take place utilizing the accepted notification protocol currently in place between DPW and SCE. It is anticipated that during construction, the interruption of services (electrical or otherwise) would be kept to a minimum, avoided wherever possible, and, in most cases (baring incident or accident), only occur on a 'planned outage' basis. In most cases, it is anticipated that existing utility systems would absorb temporary outages (if any). However, in the event of temporary outages, DPW, in coordination with SCE, would arrange substitute services, specific to the affected utility in question. Further, DPW and SCE would work closely with property owners and utility providers to coordinate the cut-over (transition from overhead existing utility lines to underground utility lines) in an effort to minimize any service disruptions.

Construction

Construction is anticipated to occur within the existing ROW. The trench lines are anticipated to be located within the street, as there is minimal shoulder width on the street (Figure 2-9). However, easement acquisition outside the Topanga UUD boundary may be required for construction and maintenance purposes. The easement ensures SCE the right to use and access a specific area of property in order to conduct routine maintenance, equipment repair, or restoration of any service disruption. As such, it is anticipated that the proposed project would require permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. Typically, temporary construction easements would be acquired from adjacent properties. Permanent easement acquisitions would be negotiated with individual property owners. It is assumed that SCE would take the lead in coordination efforts with property owners for any permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition.

Construction is also anticipated to start in fall 2012 and take approximately 18-24 months (360-480 working days) to complete, ending in summer/fall 2013. It is estimated that the project site would be returned to full operation by the end of spring 2014.

The proposed project would relocate approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard (SCE 2010). This would entail trenching into the public ROW to lay the conduits, pull boxes, handholes, vaults, vault vents, and appurtenances necessary for the undergrounding of utilities. In general, the construction process for the proposed project would include the following components: (1) site preparation, including fencing, staking, and signage; (2) vegetation clearing and pavement removal; (3) grading; (4) building; and (5) repaving. During construction, it is anticipated that the perimeter of the site would be surrounded with safety fencing and posted with signs indicating an active construction zone. Typical construction equipment would include skip loaders, backhoes, hydraulic hammers, roll off bins, excavators, bottom dumps, cranes, pick-up trucks, concrete ready-mix trucks, delivery vehicles, paving machines, and assorted power-operated hand tools.

Those utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be attached alongside the bridge via a utility conduit. Attaching the utility lines alongside the bridge is anticipated to result in tree trimming and vegetation clearing activities. It is anticipated that bucket-lift trucks would be utilized to attach the utility lines to the side of the bridge. To the extent practical, all reach devices for use in construction facilities along the existing bridge would be staged and maintained above the creek floor, on the roadway and suspended over it.

All the other overhead utility lines, which represent a total of seven various companies, would be placed underground primarily within the existing ROW. As discussed, utility providers in the project site include the following: 1) SCE; 2) NextG Networks, Inc.; 3) Cable Engineering Services (utility owner is Verizon Wireless); 4) Verizon California; 5) BMS Engineering (utility owner is AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile); 6) Ericson Contractor (utility owner is Sprint); and 7) Charter Communications (Dunn 2010). No other utility providers are known to exist within the project site. In addition to the utility poles, there are existing overhead equipment (i.e. transformers, capacitors, and switches), which may be placed at grade or underground. There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that provide wireless transmission. It is assumed that existing aboveground wireless (i.e. RF or antenna) systems would be maintained, relocated, and/or restored. However, it is understood that these wireless systems would need to remain aboveground in order to provide wireless data. At the time of this study, only a conceptual-level design was available. During the final design phase, it is anticipated that the affected utilities would be identified and the final design of the proposed project, equipment, and location would be agreed upon by each utility provider and DPW, in coordination with SCE, on a case by case basis. It is also anticipated that wireless telephone service providers will continue to provide a comparable level of service through their existing or relocated locations with appropriate permissions obtained from property owners and regulators in compliance with applicable regulatory permitting requirements. Lastly, the proposed project would be designed in compliance with Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code (Los Angeles County Code 2010).

Approximately 10 to 30 construction workers are anticipated to be working on-site per day. The entire roadway would be designated as a full construction site. Due to the nature of the roadway (shoulder and easements are sloped); construction activities are anticipated to occur primarily within the existing ROW.

The construction staging areas are not yet designated and would be identified during the design phase. It is also anticipated that construction workers would park at an off-site lot and not use street parking on the nearby residential streets. However, if construction staging requires temporary utilization of private driveways, it is anticipated that SCE would obtain the necessary approvals, authorizations, and/or temporary use/occupancy permits as required by federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances.

As previously discussed, portions of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, along Old Topanga Canyon Road, and the area surrounding the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge are densely covered with mature trees. Oak trees were identified within the project site. A number of the overhead utility lines share common and often competing space. As such, the proposed project may require tree trimming, pruning, and/or vegetation clearing along

the street edge. The proposed project does not anticipate removal of any trees. To the extent possible, trimmed vegetation would not be allowed to drop into the creek bed during vegetation trimming activities. Any vegetation or other materials that do fall into the creek bed would be immediately removed by hand. Further, DPW would be required to obtain a permit for trimming of oak trees.

It is anticipated that the proposed project would result in either relocation or removal of existing streetlights. Existing streetlights temporarily removed would be replaced with comparable streetlights. New concrete streetlights would be installed in accordance with current streetlight standards per the Los Angeles County Code. Since new streetlights cannot be placed until old poles are removed, there may be a short period without any streetlights. Under this circumstance, property owners and affected business owners would be notified utilizing the accepted notification protocol currently in place between DPW and SCE.

The proposed project would require trenching and excavating through the existing ROW to install the underground utility lines. Figure 2-9 displays the anticipated trench locations. As previously discussed, the proposed project would install a joint-use trench to house the utility lines from all seven companies providing utility services within the project site. It is anticipated that the joint-use trench would include, at minimum, six 5-inch conduits for SCE's utility lines. The trench width for underground utility projects is typically 18- 36 inches. However, the excavator may need to increase the trench width to accommodate other conduits and/or lines installed in a joint use trench. The minimum trench depth for commercial primary electrical lines is 36 inches, while the maximum is typically 60 inches.

Soils classified as non-hazardous would be transported to a designated landfill. At this stage of the project development process, no hazardous soils requiring transport to a Class 1 facility are anticipated. However, as further discussed in Section 4.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, it is possible that previously unidentified pockets of soil contamination may be discovered during construction activities. Any contamination would be remediated in accordance with DTSC standards prior to the installation of the underground utility lines. Further, all construction activities would conform to the Los Angeles County Code, DPW specifications, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines in a manner consistent with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations regarding the handling and disposal of potentially discovered hazardous materials. Non-hazardous construction waste from the project site would be disposed of at the Calabasas Sanitary Landfill, which is owned and operated by the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (Los Angeles Sanitation Districts 2010). The Calabasas Sanitary Landfill is approximately 13 miles northwest of the project site.

The proposed project is not anticipated to result in full roadway closures and operation of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard would be preserved throughout construction. It is anticipated that vehicle access to intersecting streets would be limited during some of the construction period. Transmission trenches would be in the middle of the street such that traffic lanes may periodically be closed during the construction process. Recessed steel plates are anticipated to be used during the week in order to cover any open trenches. Additionally, it is anticipated that access to individual driveways may be temporarily restricted during working hours, but open at the end of each day. If construction occurs

near private property and access roads are required, it is anticipated that SCE would obtain an encroachment permit from Caltrans and private property owners.

To minimize construction impacts, Los Angeles County would be required to prepare a construction traffic control plan with input from SCE, Caltrans, and other applicable regulatory agencies. This plan provides a framework for the implementation of traffic control strategies and timely distribution of traffic-related information to emergency services, local citizens, and affected businesses. This would address such issues as access for local businesses and residents, truck routing, dust control, construction worker parking, hours of operation, potential temporary street closures, detouring, and materials storage. Construction activities would be subject to DPW inspection. Construction crews would also be required to implement the standard Best Management Practices (BMPs), as discussed below, during construction and to adhere to all applicable construction safety guidelines.

Per the Los Angeles County Code (Section 12.08.440), daily construction activities associated with the proposed project would not occur between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., or at any time on Sundays or holidays (Los Angeles County Code 2010). Section 12.08.440 limits construction noise at commercial properties to a daytime maximum of 85 dBA for short-term mobile equipment and 70 dBA for long-term stationary equipment (Los Angeles County Code 2010).

As the total construction area would be approximately 3.6 acres in size, the proposed project would be required to comply with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Phase II Final Rule - Small Construction Program for stormwater discharges for projects disturbing equal to or greater than 1 and less than 5 acres of soil (EPA 2000). This requires obtaining a General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). The General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ requires the development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). The SWPPP specifies BMPs aimed at controlling construction-related pollutants that originate from the site as a result of construction-related activities. Further, per DPW guidelines, construction projects one acre and greater that include grading activities during the rainy season must also develop a Wet Weather Erosion Control Plan (WWECP), which would be implemented in conjunction with the SWPPP (DPW 2008). Erosion-control plans would be submitted and approved by DPW prior to performing any operation that would disturb and expose soil. The SWPPP must be incorporated into the project design and would require review and approval by DPW.

The County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors adopted the Construction and Demolition (C&D) Debris Recycling and Reuse Ordinance on January 4, 2005. The Ordinance added Chapter 20.87 to the Los Angeles County Code which requires projects in unincorporated areas to recycle or reuse 50 percent of the debris generated. Its purpose was to increase the diversion of construction and demolition debris from disposal facilities in order assist the County in meeting the State of California's 50 percent waste reduction mandate. Projects, which fall under this Ordinance, include (Section 20.87.030.I): 1) any project requiring a construction permit which is valued at over $100,000. This does not apply to work that consists of one single-family or two-family residential structure and associated accessory structures unless

they are part of a development or a tract; 2) any project requiring a demolition permit, regardless of the value; 3) any project requiring a grading permit, regardless of the value; and 4) any project which requires one or more of the above permits (DPW 2005a). It is anticipated that the proposed project would require a grading permit. As such, a Demolition and Construction Debris Recycling Plan may be required for the proposed project.

Construction occurring near private property and requiring access roads would necessitate an encroachment permit from private property owners. It is anticipated that SCE would obtain any encroachment permits from Caltrans and private property owners.

As discussed, the proposed project is situated within the Malibu Coastal Zone and is subject to the requirements of the California Coastal Act. Per the *Repair, Maintenance and Utility Hook-up Exclusions from Permit Requirements* of the California Coastal Act, a "coastal permit is not required to install, test, place in service, maintain, replace, modify or relocate underground facilities or to convert existing overhead facilities to underground facilities provided that work is limited to public road or railroad rights-of-way or public utility easements (P.U.E.)." As such, a Coastal Development Permit would not be required in order to approve and implement the proposed project. However, per recommendation from the California Coastal Commission, DPW, in coordination with SCE, will obtain a written exemption determination from the South Central Coast District Office prior to project approval (Ainsworth 2011).

2.6.1 BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

In addition to the construction scenario described above, the proposed project would also incorporate the most effective and appropriate combination of resource avoidance and monitoring to be employed during construction and operation, including implementation of the following BMPs, as applicable (DPW 2005b):

Temporary Soil Stabilization

- Scheduling
- Preservation of existing vegetation
- Hydraulic mulch
- Hydroseeding
- Soil binders
- Straw mulch
- Geotextiles, plastic covers, and erosion-control blankets/mats
- Wood mulching
- Earth dikes/drainage swales and ditches
- Slope drains

Temporary Sediment Control

- Silt fence
- Sediment/desilting basin
- Sediment trap
- Fiber rolls
- Street sweeping and vacuuming
- Gravel bag berm
- Sandbag barrier
- Straw bale barrier
- Storm drain protection
- Wind erosion control

Tracking Control

- Stabilized construction entrance/exit
- Stabilized construction roadway
- Entrance/outlet tire wash

Non-Storm-Water Management

- Water conservation practices
- Paving and grinding operations
- Illicit connection/illegal discharge detection and reporting
- Potable water/irrigation
- Vehicle equipment cleaning
- Vehicle equipment fueling
- Vehicle equipment maintenance
- Concrete curing
- Concrete finishing

Waste Management and Material Pollution Control

- Stockpile management
- Spill prevention and control
- Solid waste management
- Hazardous waste management
- Contaminated soil management
- Concrete waste management
- Sanitary/septic waste management
- Liquid waste management

As previously discussed, the total construction area would be approximately 3.6 acres in size, which is required to comply with NPDES Stormwater Phase II Final Rule - Small Construction Program requirements for stormwater discharges for projects disturbing equal to or greater than 1 and less than 5 acres of soil (EPA 2000). Dischargers whose projects disturb one or more acres of soil are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). The General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ requires the development and implementation of a SWPPP. The SWPPP specifies BMPs aimed at controlling construction-related pollutants that originate from the site as a result of construction-related activities. During construction, the proposed project would be required to prevent the transport of sediments from the site by stormwater runoff and winds through the use of specified BMPs. As provided in the discussion above, these BMPs include measures for temporary soil stabilization (e.g. preservation of existing vegetation; hydroseeding; and slope drains); temporary sediment control (e.g. silt fence; storm drain protection; and wind erosion control); and tracking control (e.g. stabilized construction entrance/exit) (DPW 2005b). These BMPs would be detailed in the SWPPP in compliance with NPDES stormwater regulations.

Prior to the start of construction, no work having the potential to cause pollution, as determined by the DPW, would be performed until the SWPPP is reviewed and approved by the DPW. The proposed project lies within the boundaries of Los Angeles County and would conform to the following requirements, which are further discussed in Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality:

- Sediments shall not be discharged to the storm drain system or receiving waters.
- Sediments generated on the project site shall be contained within the project site using appropriate BMPs.
- No construction-related materials, waste, spills, or residue shall be discharged from the project site to streets, drainage facilities, receiving waters, or adjacent property by wind or runoff.
- Non-storm-water runoff from equipment, vehicle washing, or any other activity shall be contained within the project site using appropriate BMPs.
- Erosion from exposed topsoil slopes and channels shall be prevented.
- Grading during the wet season shall be minimized. All erosion-susceptible slopes shall be covered, planted, or protected in any way that prevents sediment discharge from the project site.
- If the proposed project may be active during the rainy season (October 1 to April 15), the contractor shall prepare an accumulated precipitation procedure (APP) for review and approval by the County engineering department before any discharge from the proposed project. The APP shall describe the location of proposed discharges, the BMPs to prevent pollution, and the actual equipment to be used. The APP shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with the DPW Construction Site BMPs Manual (BMP Manual) and the SWPPP Preparation Manual.

To control site erosion and sediments during rainy season, a WWECP must be prepared (DPW 2008). The WWECP must be revised every year to reflect site conditions at the start of the rainy season (DPW 2008). DPW defines the rainy season as occurring between October 1 and April 15. If construction activities are to occur during this time period, additional BMPs are required to be implemented to control runoff from

the project site. Grading permits will not be issued until the WWECP is approved or details for erosion control are included with the grading plan.

2.7 PROJECT APPROVALS REQUIRED

Under CEQA, the Lead Agency is the public agency with primary responsibility over approval of a proposed project. Pursuant to Section 15367, the CEQA Lead Agency for the proposed project is Los Angeles County. Specifically, oversight of the project will be conducted by DPW. SCE will be overseeing construction work for the proposed Topanga UUD. This IS/MND would be used by Los Angeles County as a decision-making tool for approval of the Topanga UUD Project and related permits and approvals. Additional County permits and approvals would also be required to implement the proposed project. Los Angeles County will consider and/or request the following actions and approvals:

- California Department of Fish and Game, South Coast Region (Region 5)
    - Lake and Streambed Alteration Program Notification Requirement

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
    - Construction Staging Permit
    - Demolition and Construction Debris Recycling Plan
    - Grading, drainage, traffic control, and building permits
    - Parking permits
    - Sewer Plan approval
    - SWPPP

- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4
    - General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ
    - Issuance of waste discharge requirements
    - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

- Southern California Edison and Other Public Utility Providers Within the Project Site
    - Easement Acquisition
    - Encroachment Permit

3.0 INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

1.	**Project Title:**	Topanga Underground Utility District Project
2.	**Lead Agency:**	Los Angeles County (Specifically, oversight to be conducted by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works) Programs Development Division, 11th Floor 900 South Freemont Avenue Alhambra, California 91803-1331
3.	**Contact Person:**	Stephanie Hsiao, County DPW, Project Manager
4.	**Construction Oversight:**	Southern California Edison (SCE) Metro East Region 1444 E. McFadden Avenue Building D, 2nd Floor Santa Ana, California 92705
5.	**Contact Person:**	Dave Seeley, SCE, Project Manager
6.	**Project Location:**	Bound by oak and ornamental trees to the north; the proposed Topanga Library (122 N. Topanga Canyon Boulevard) to the east; a post office (101 S. Topanga Canyon Boulevard), other various retail/office uses, and associated parking to the south; and Topanga Creek to the east. Topanga, CA 90290
7.	**General Plan Designation:**	Commercial uses and single-family residences.
8.	**Zoning:**	Unlimited Commercial Zone (C-3); Light Agricultural (A-1-1); Single-family residences (R-1); and Light Manufacturing Zones under a Development Program (M-1-DP)
9.	**Description of Project:**	The proposed project would relocate overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Those utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be attached to the bridge. The other utility lines, which represent seven various companies including SCE, would be placed underground.
10.	**Surrounding Land Uses/Setting:**	The project site is contained along the existing roadway that curves northeast along State Route (SR) 27, also known as Topanga Canyon Boulevard, while a portion splits off along Old Topanga Canyon Road to the west. The overall character of the surrounding area is a range of local and regional business uses, including retail stores, office buildings, and service businesses; institutional uses; and single-family residences interspersed throughout the vicinity of the project site

11.	**Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required:**	• California Department of Fish and Game, South Coast Region (Region 5)
		  ▪ Lake and Streambed Alteration Program Notification Requirement
		• Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
		  ▪ Construction Staging Permit
		  ▪ Demolition and Construction Debris Recycling Plan
		  ▪ Grading, drainage, traffic control, and building permits
		  ▪ Parking permits
		  ▪ Sewer Plan approval
		  ▪ SWPPP
		• Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4
		  ▪ General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ
		  ▪ Issuance of waste discharge requirements
		  ▪ National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)
		• Southern California Edison and Other Public Utilities Providers Within the Project Site
		  ▪ Easement Acquisition
		  ▪ Encroachment Permit

3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

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

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

3.2 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. ☐

Signature

Date

Stephanie Hsiao, Project Manager
Programs Development Division
Los Angeles County, Department of Public Works

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant Impact After Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
1. AESTHETICS. Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			X	
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	
e. Create a new source of substantial shade or shadow that would adversely affect daytime views in the area?				X
2. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, Lead Agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson act contract?				X
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned timberland production?				X
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment that, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?				X
3. AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant Impact After Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b. Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	
c. 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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
d. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			X	
4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?		X		
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?		X		
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?		X		
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant Impact After Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
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?		X		
5. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?			X	
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?		X		
c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		X		
d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?		X		
6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:				
a. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.				X
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?				X
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?				X
iv) Landslides?				X
b. Result in substantial soil erosion, loss of topsoil, or changes in topography or unstable soil conditions from excavation, grading, or fill?		X		
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?			X	
d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant Impact After Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
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?				X
7. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Would the project:				
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	
8. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			X	
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	
d. Be located on a site that 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?				X
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?		X		
h. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant Impact After Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
9. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?		X		
b. Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				X
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?		X		
d. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?		X		
e. 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?		X		
f. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?		X		
g. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X
h. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?				X
i. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j. Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X
10. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant Impact After Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
b. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, 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?		X		
c. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?		X		
11. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
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?				X
12. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a. Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b. Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c. A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
d. A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
13. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:				

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant Impact After Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a. Induce substantial 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)?				X
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
14. PUBLIC SERVICES.				
a. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
i) Fire protection?		X		
ii) Police protection?		X		
iii) Schools?				X
iv) Parks?				X
v) Other public facilities?			X	
15. RECREATION.				
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X
16. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC. Would the project:				

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant Impact After Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a. Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?		X		
b. Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?		X		
c. Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
e. Result in inadequate emergency access?		X		
f. Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?				X
17. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?			X	
b. Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
c. Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
d. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?				X

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant Impact After Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
e. 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?				X
f. Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?			X	
g. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	
18. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.				
a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		X		
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.		X		
c. Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

4.0 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

4.1 AESTHETICS

Would the Project:

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

No Impact. The proposed project would not have an adverse effect on a scenic vista. Scenic views or vistas are the panoramic public view access to natural features, including views of the ocean, striking or unusual natural terrain, or unique urban or historic features. The project site is located in the unincorporated community of Topanga in western Los Angeles County and is contained within the existing roadways of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The project site is relatively flat and is situated in a canyon surrounded by hillsides within the Santa Monica Mountains. Existing views from the project site include heavily vegetated hillsides and ridgelines, which are interrupted by numerous mature trees, one- to two-story commercial and institutional buildings, as well as single-family residences. The existing topography of the project area blocks panoramic public views of the ocean, the Los Angeles Basin, or other unique visual features. In addition, numerous existing overhead utility distribution lines are located along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, which disrupt the views of the hillsides and ridgelines.

The project site is not identified in the County of Los Angeles General Plan as possessing a scenic vista (DRP 1974). As such, no protected scenic vistas are available from the project site. The proposed project would place a majority of the existing overhead utility distribution lines underground; thus, generally improving the scenic quality of the project area. Therefore, no impacts related to scenic vistas would occur as a result of the proposed project.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would not damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway. Topanga Canyon Boulevard has been designated by Caltrans as being eligible for the State Scenic Highway System (Caltrans 2009). In addition, the County of Los Angeles General Plan Scenic Highway Element designates Topanga Canyon Boulevard from Mulholland Drive to Pacific Coast Highway, which includes the project site, as one of the First Priority Routes proposed for further study (DRP 1974). First Priority Routes are routes that are not officially “adopted” scenic highways as designated by Caltrans. However, First Priority routes are subject to future scenic corridor studies that would receive primary attention. No official designation has been adopted for Topanga Canyon Boulevard, from Mulholland Drive to Pacific Coast Highway. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not substantially damage scenic resources located within a state scenic highway.

The County of Los Angeles General Plan Scenic Highway Element states that land uses within a scenic corridor should underground or locate utility lines so that the visual integrity of the landscape is maintained (DRP 1974). The State of California Undergrounding Public Utilities Program provides that no electric or communication utility shall install overhead distribution facilities in proximity to any designated scenic highway and which would be visible from such scenic highway if erected overhead (DRP 1974). Although Topanga Canyon Boulevard from Mulholland Drive to Pacific Coast Highway, which includes the project site, is not officially designated as a state scenic highway, it is considered a First Priority routes, which are subject to future scenic corridor studies. As such, potential scenic resources currently exist in the project area. The proposed project would relocate all lines within the proposed UUD and would remove approximately 28 utility poles, comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines; thus, generally improving the scenic quality of the project area (SCE 2010). As such, implementation of the proposed project would be consistent with, support, and meet the goals and objectives of the above-mentioned policies.

The project site also contains the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge, which is identified to be historic in age. A water line conduit is currently attached to the side of the bridge. Per the Caltrans historic bridge inventory website, the bridge located north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon was built in 1926 (Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge). However, the bridge is categorized as a “Category 5” in the bridge index. Per Caltrans, a Category 5 bridge designation is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Further, the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge did not demonstrate sufficient importance under Criteria A (NRHP) or Criteria 1 (CRHP). The A-frame truss bridge was determined as neither an innovative design of a significant method of construction nor a bold engineering achievement and not eligible under Criterion C (NRHP) or Criteria 3 (CRHP). As further discussed in Section 4.5, Cultural Resources, Question (a), the impact to historical resources as defined in §15064.5 would be less than significant.

Portions of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road are densely covered with mature trees, including Coast Live Oak. A number of the overhead utility lines share common and often competing space. As such, the proposed project may require tree trimming, pruning, and/or vegetation clearing. The proposed project does not anticipate removal of any trees. DPW would be required to obtain a permit for trimming of oak trees. Compliance with the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance per the Los Angeles County Code would result in less-than-significant impacts.

c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

Less than Significant Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. The overall character of the surrounding area is a range of local and regional business uses, including retail stores, office buildings, and service businesses; institutional uses (i.e., post office, Topanga Library, etc.); and

single-family residences interspersed throughout the vicinity of the project site. The Topanga Library (122 North Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is currently under construction; a Verizon Wireless Telecommunication facility; and various retail/commercial developments are located on the eastern portion of the project site. The Topanga Creek traverses the western portion of the project site. An SCE substation, an equestrian center, various retail/commercial establishments, and a restaurant were identified along Old Topanga Canyon Road, also on the western portion of the project site. Additional retail/commercial developments, restaurants, a post office (101 South Topanga Canyon Boulevard), and office complexes are located on the southern portion of the project site. Office complexes, along with several oak and ornamental trees are located north of the project site (Figure 2-3).

The project site also contains a bridge (Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge) located north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon. As discussed, the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge is categorized as a "Category 5" in the Caltrans bridge index, which is not eligible for designation in the NRHP. Further, the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge did not demonstrate sufficient importance under Criteria A (NRHP) or Criteria 1 (CRHP). The A-frame truss bridge was determined as neither an innovative design of a significant method of construction nor a bold engineering achievement and not eligible under Criterion C (NRHP) or Criteria 3 (CRHP). As further discussed in Section 4.5, Cultural Resources, Question (a), the impact to historical resources as defined in §15064.5 would be less than significant.

The project site is relatively flat and is situated in a canyon surrounded by hillsides within the Santa Monica Mountains. Views of the project site are limited to residents, motorists, and pedestrians traveling along Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road. As previously described, the project site does not contain a scenic vista and is not within an officially designated state scenic highway. However, there are several scenic resources in the project area, including mature oak trees. Decorative street and pedestrian lighting are located along a small portion of Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

The construction of the proposed project would occur within the existing public ROW. The construction process would include site preparation, vegetation clearing and pavement removal, grading, trenching and building, and repaving. The proposed project would require tree trimming, pruning, and/or vegetation clearing.

At the time of this study, only a conceptual-level design was available. However, it is assumed that existing aboveground enclosures (e.g. pad-mounted transformer installations, load break fuse cabinets, capacitor cabinets, equipment boxes, etc.) would be maintained. In addition, there are existing overhead equipment (i.e. transformers, capacitors, and switches) that may be placed at grade or underground. There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that may be relocated, but would be maintained aboveground. During the final design phase, it is anticipated that the affected utilities would be identified and the final design of the proposed project, equipment, and location would be agreed upon by each utility provider and DPW, in

coordination with SCE, on a case by case basis. Relocation or modification of these aboveground enclosures, overhead equipment, aboveground antennas, and other aboveground facilities would not result in impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the site during the construction phase.

Numerous existing overhead utility distribution lines are located along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, which disrupt the views of the hillsides and diminish the visual character of the project area. There are currently 28 existing utility poles, which is comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). The placement of the existing overhead utility lines underground would substantially reduce the visual clutter that is currently present and would enhance the appearance of the existing mature trees that line Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Accordingly, the visual character and quality of the proposed project site and surroundings would be improved, and would not be significantly degraded as a result of the proposed project. Although, the construction process, particularly the trenching activities, would alter the visual character of the project area, this visual change would be temporary. As such, impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the site during the construction phase would be less than significant.

Operation of the proposed project would result in a visual character improvement to the project site and area. The proposed project would relocate all lines within the proposed UUD and would remove approximately 28 utility poles, comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines; thus, generally improving the scenic quality of the project area (SCE 2010). Impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the site during the operation phase would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The source of nighttime lighting is generally from 20-foot tall fixtures located within the project area. In addition, the existing commercial, institutional, and residential uses have security lighting and general nighttime lighting.

Per the Los Angeles County Code (Section 12.08.440), daily construction activities associated with the proposed project would not occur between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., or at any time on Sundays or holidays (Los Angeles County Code 2010). It is anticipated that construction of the proposed project would be limited to daytime hours and, therefore, not require additional lighting. However, in the event that construction occurs during nighttime, any use of construction lighting would be in compliance with all applicable lighting standards and regulations, and would be directed downwards, as feasible, to prevent spillover light from reaching sensitive receptors. In addition, the construction lighting would be properly installed in order to prevent glare effects on nighttime drivers and residents traveling in the project area. Although, the construction lighting would introduce a new source of light and potential glare, the

effects would be temporary and would be regulated by applicable standards and regulations. As such, impacts related to light and glare during the construction phase would be less than significant.

It is anticipated that the proposed project would result in either relocation or removal of existing streetlights. Existing streetlights temporarily removed would be replaced with comparable streetlights. Any new concrete streetlights would be installed in accordance with current streetlight standards per the Los Angeles County Code. Since new streetlights cannot be placed until old poles are removed, there may be a short period without any streetlights. Under this circumstance, property owners and affected business owners would be notified utilizing the accepted notification protocol currently in place between DPW and SCE. As such, impacts related to light and glare during the operational phase would be less than significant.

e) Create a new source of substantial shade or shadow that would adversely affect daytime views in the area?

No Impact. The proposed project would not create a new source of substantial shade or shadow that would adversely affect daytime views in the area. The proposed project would involve placing existing overhead utility lines underground. No shadow coverage would result from the proposed project. In addition, the proposed project would slightly reduce the amount of shadow coverage as a result of the reduced amount of utility poles within the public ROW. No impacts related to the creation of shade and shadow would occur with the proposed project.

4.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Would the Project:

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

No Impact. The project site is contained within the existing roadways of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The area adjacent to the project site is currently zoned for single-family residences and commercial uses, and is developed with single-family residences, commercial and office uses, and institutional uses. The project site is not developed for agricultural use, nor is it designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as mapped by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency; the project site is designated as "Other Land" (California Department of Conservation 2006a). Therefore, the proposed project would not convert farmland to a non-agricultural use. No impacts would occur, and no further analysis is required.

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

No Impact. The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, commonly referred to as the Williamson Act, enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments, which are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value.

The project site does not contain any state-designated agricultural lands. As shown in Figure 2-4, the properties adjacent to the project site are primarily zoned C-3 for unlimited commercial uses. The remaining properties in the vicinity of the project site are zoned A-1-1 for light agricultural uses, R-1 for single-family residential uses, and M-1-DP for light manufacturing uses under a development program. Although there are three properties zoned for Light Agriculture uses in the project area, located approximately 185 feet north, 300 feet west, and 345 feet south of the project site, respectively, (refer to Figure 2-4, Zoning), none of these properties are enrolled under the Williamson Act (California Department of Conservation 2006b). Thus, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract. No impacts would occur, and no further analysis is required.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production?

No Impact. As discussed, the project site is contained within the existing roadways of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, and the surrounding area is currently developed with single-family residences, commercial and office uses, and institutional uses. As

shown in Figure 2-4, the properties adjacent to the project site are primarily zoned C-3 for unlimited commercial uses. The remaining properties in the vicinity of the project site are zoned A-1-1 for light agricultural uses, R-1 for single-family residential uses, and M-1-DP for light manufacturing uses under a development program. The project site does not contain any property designated as forest or timberland. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning or cause rezoning of forest or timberland. No impacts would occur, and no further analysis is required.

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

No Impact. The project site is contained within the existing roadways of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, and the surrounding area is currently developed with single-family residences, commercial and office uses, and institutional uses. As discussed in the response to Section 4.2, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Question (c), the project site does not contain any property designated as forest land. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land, nor would it convert forest land to a non-forest use. No impacts would occur and no further analysis is required.

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

No Impact. As noted, the project site is contained within an existing roadway and does not contain any agricultural uses. Although there are three Light Agriculture-zoned properties located in the project vicinity, located approximately 185 feet north, 300 feet west, and 345 feet south of the project site, respectively, (refer to Figure 2-4, Zoning), development of the proposed project would not change or affect the existing uses on these properties. Thus, development of the proposed project would not convert any farmland to non-agricultural uses. No impacts would occur, and no further analysis is required.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

Would the Project:

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) monitors air quality within the project area and the South Coast Air Basin, which includes Orange County and portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties. The South Coast Air Basin is bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west; the San Gabriel, San Bernardino and San Jacinto mountains to the north and east; and the San Diego County line to the south. The SCAQMD also has jurisdiction over the Salton Sea Air Basin and a portion of the Mojave Desert in Riverside County.

Air quality plans describe air pollution control strategies to be implemented by a city, county, or region. The primary purpose of an air quality plan is to bring an area that does not attain federal and state air quality standards into compliance with the requirements of the Clean Air Act and California Clean Air Act requirements. The Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) is prepared by SCAQMD and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The AQMP provides policies and control measures that reduce emissions to attain both state and federal ambient air quality standards.

The most recent AQMP was adopted by the SCAQMD on June 1, 2007. The 2007 AQMP proposes attainment demonstration of the federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards through a more focused control of sulfur oxides (SO_X), directly-emitted particulate matter less than 2.5 microns ($PM_{2.5}$), and nitrogen oxides (NO_X) supplemented with volatile organic compound (VOC) control by 2015. The eight-hour ozone control strategy builds upon the $PM_{2.5}$ strategy, augmented with additional NO_X and VOC reductions to meet the standard by 2024. The 2007 AQMP also addresses several federal planning requirements and incorporates significant new scientific data, primarily in the form of updated emissions inventories, ambient measurements, new meteorological episodes, and new air quality modeling tools. The 2007 AQMP is consistent with and builds upon the approaches taken in the 2003 AQMP.

The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. The proposed project would remove approximately 28 utility poles comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). Those utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be placed alongside the bridge via a utility conduit. The other utility lines, which represent seven various companies, including SCE, would be placed underground primarily within the existing ROW.

The proposed project would be consistent with the assumptions regarding equipment activity and emissions in the 2007 AQMP. Also, as discussed later in this section, the project-related emissions would not exceed the significance thresholds developed by the SCAQMD. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.

The SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* provides guidance on analysis of the air quality impacts of proposed projects (SCAQMD 1993). Table 4.3-1 shows the SCAQMD thresholds of significance for potential air quality impacts.

Construction

Construction emissions are described as "short-term" or temporary in duration and have the potential to represent a significant impact with respect to air quality, especially fugitive dust emissions. Fugitive dust emissions are primarily associated with site preparation and vary as a function of such parameters as soil silt content, soil moisture, wind speed, acreage of disturbance area, and miles traveled by construction vehicles on- and off-site. Reactive Organic Gases (ROG), which are assumed to be equivalent to VOC (for the purposes of this analysis), and nitrogen oxide (NO_X) emissions are primarily associated with mobile equipment exhaust.

Construction of the proposed project would result in the temporary generation of ROG, NO_X, particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM_{10}), and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions from site preparation (e.g., excavation, grading, clearing), material transport, trenching for utility infrastructure installation, and paving. The proposed project would relocate overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. In general, the construction process would include the following components: (1) site preparation, including fencing, staking, and signage; (2) vegetation clearing and pavement removal; (3) grading; (4) building protective chambers or vaults; and (5) repaving. Off-site vehicle trips related to construction would be associated with material delivery, equipment delivery, and worker commute trips. Construction emissions can substantially vary from day to day, depending on the level of activity, the specific type of operation, and the prevailing weather conditions.

It is mandatory for all construction projects in this air basin to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403 for fugitive dust (SCAQMD 2005). Specific Rule 403 control requirements include, but are not limited to, applying water in sufficient quantities to prevent the generation of visible dust plumes, applying soil binders to uncovered areas, re-establishing ground cover as quickly as possible, utilizing a wheel washing system to remove bulk material from tires and vehicle undercarriages before vehicles exit the project site, and maintaining effective cover over exposed areas.

Table 4.3-1
SCAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds

Pollutant	Construction	Operation
NO_X	100 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
VOC	75 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
$PM_{2.5}$	55 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
PM_{10}	150 lbs/day	150 lbs/day
SO_X	150 lbs/day	150 lbs/day
CO	550 lbs/day	550 lbs/day
Lead	3 lbs/day	3 lbs/day
Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) and Odor Thresholds		
TACs (including carcinogens and non-carcinogens)	Maximum Incremental Cancer Risk ≥ 10 in 1 million Hazard Index ≥ 1.0 (project increment) Hazard Index ≥ 3.0 (facility-wide)	
Odor	Project creates an odor nuisance pursuant to SCAQMD Rule 402	
Ambient Air Quality for Criteria Pollutants[a]		
NO_2 1-hour average annual average	SCAQMD is in attainment; project is significant if it causes or contributes to an exceedance of the following attainment standards: 0.18 ppm (state) 0.053 ppm (federal)	
$PM_{2.5}$ 24-hour average annual arithmetic mean	10.4 $\mu g/m^3$ (recommended for construction)[b] 2.5 $\mu g/m^3$ (operation) 12 $\mu g/m^3$	
PM_{10} 24-hour average annual arithmetic mean	10.4 $\mu g/m^3$ (recommended for construction)[3] 2.5 $\mu g/m^3$ (operation) 20 $\mu g/m^3$	
Sulfate 24-hour average	25 $\mu g/m^3$	
CO 1-hour average 8-hour average	SCAQMD is in attainment; project is significant if it causes or contributes to an exceedance of the following attainment standards: 20 ppm (state) 9.0 ppm (state/federal)	

Notes: lbs/day = pounds per day
ppm = parts per million
µg/m3 = micrograms per cubic meter
≥ = greater than or equal to

[a] Ambient air quality thresholds for criteria pollutants based on SCAQMD Rule 1303, Table A-2 unless otherwise stated.

[b] Ambient air quality thresholds based SCAQMD Rule 403.

Source: SCAQMD 1993

Construction assumptions were developed using the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) Road Construction Emissions Model, Version 6.3.2 (SMAQMD 2009). The SCAQMD does not have a comparable model, and the equipment assumptions used in the SMAQMD Road Construction Emissions Model are applicable to projects in other air basins. The model was developed to provide timelines and equipment necessary to estimate the emissions from linear projects, such as a roadway or pipeline. The design characteristics of the proposed project are consistent with the construction activity that would be anticipated by the SMAQMD Road Construction Emissions Model.

The construction period for the proposed project would last up to 24 months beginning in 2012. Emission factors from OFFROAD 2007 were used to estimate construction equipment exhaust emissions (SCAQMD 2010a). Fugitive dust emissions were calculated using the methodology recommended by the SCAQMD (SCAQMD 2010b). The analysis was based on a worst-case scenario representing an intensive day of construction for site clearing, grading/excavation, drainage/utilities/subgrade, and paving activities. The analysis assumed that the construction site would be approximately 3.6 acres, and equipment would operate simultaneously for 8 hours per day. Additional details are provided in Appendix A.

As shown in Table 4.3-2, construction emissions for the proposed project would result in maximum daily emissions of 6.1 pounds of ROG, 29.4 pounds of NO_X, 46.3 pounds of carbon monoxide (CO), 9.0 pounds of PM_{10} (combined exhaust and fugitive dust) and 3.4 pounds of $PM_{2.5}$. This represents the worst-case scenario for PM emissions; approximately 90% of construction operations would occur on paved roads, resulting in substantially lower fugitive dust emissions than estimated in Table 4.3-2. However, as the exact operations and location of the equipment are not known at this time, standard methodology was used to estimate fugitive dust emissions for PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$. Construction-generated emissions of ROG, NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ would not exceed applicable mass emission thresholds established by SCAQMD.

Table 4.3-2
Estimated Maximum Daily Regional Construction Emissions

Construction Phase	Estimated Emissions (lbs/day)				
	ROG	**NO_X**	**CO**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
Grubbing/Land Clearing	6.1	29.4	46.3	9.0	3.4
Grading/Excavation	4.4	23.0	29.0	4.1	2.0
Drainage/Utilities/Subgrade	4.7	23.8	33.9	8.6	2.9
Paving	5.2	25.1	33.5	2.1	2.0
Maximum Daily Emissions	6.1	29.4	46.3	9.0	3.4
Significance Threshold	75	100.0	550.0	150.0	55.0
Exceed Significance?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Localized Significance Threshold[a]	N/A[b]	1202	186	9.7	4.6
Exceed Significance?	N/A	NO	NO	NO	NO

[a] Assumes a 3.6-acre project site and a 25-meter receptor distance. Significance thresholds estimated using the linear regression methodology from Appendix K (SCAQMD 2005)
[b] The SCAQMD has not developed a localized significance threshold for ROG.
Source: AECOM 2010

Localized construction emissions were calculated based on a similar methodology as regional construction emissions. Unmitigated daily construction-related localized emissions for the proposed project are also presented in Table 4.3-2. Maximum localized emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD localized significance thresholds. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

Operation

The proposed project would relocate overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The proposed project would not generate new vehicle trips and would not generate any additional activities related to maintenance or operations that would increase from existing levels. Currently, trees and other vegetation in the area require routine pruning to avoid service interruptions with overhead lines. Relocation of the utility lines would reduce the need for regular pruning and vehicle trips. Since the project would not require increased vehicle trips for maintenance or increase emissions over existing levels, the impact would be less than significant.

c) 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 (including releasing emissions, which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment.

National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) have been established for the following criteria pollutants: CO, ozone (O_3), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and lead (Pb). Areas are classified under the federal Clean Air Act areas as attainment, non-attainment, or maintenance (previously non-attainment and currently attainment) for each criteria pollutant based on whether the NAAQS have been achieved. Attainment relative to the California Clean Air Act and state standards is determined by Air Resources Board.

The proposed project site is located in the Los Angeles County portion of the South Coast Air Basin. Table 4.3-3 shows the pollutants and associated attainment status for the South Coast Air Basin. Los Angeles County is designated as a federal and state non-attainment area for O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$, maintenance for CO, and an attainment area for SO_2, NO_2, and Pb (see Table 4.3-3).

The SCAQMD cumulative analysis focuses on whether a specific project would result in cumulatively considerable emissions. Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(4), the existence of significant cumulative impacts caused by other projects alone shall not constitute substantial evidence that the proposed project's incremental effects are cumulatively considerable.

Table 4.3-3
Attainment Status for the Los Angeles County Portion of the South Coast Air Basin

Pollutant	Attainment Status	
	Federal	State
O_3 – 1-Hour	--	Non-attainment
O_3 – 8-hour	Nonattainment (Extreme)	Non-attainment
PM_{10}	Nonattainment (Serious)	Non-attainment
$PM_{2.5}$	Nonattainment	Non-attainment
CO	Attainment/Maintenance	Attainment
NO_2	Attainment	Attainment
SO_2	Attainment	Attainment
Pb	Attainment	Attainment

Sources: EPA 2010a; ARB 2010

As discussed earlier, construction emissions are shown in Table 4.3-2. Regional emissions would be less than the applicable SCAQMD thresholds, which are designed to assist the region in attaining the applicable state and national ambient air quality standards. Therefore, according to the SCAQMD, the proposed project would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable air quality impact. The impact would be less than significant.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations in excess of applicable air quality standards.

Sensitive Receptors

Some members of the population are especially sensitive to air pollutant emissions and should be given special consideration when evaluating air quality impacts from projects. These people include children, older adults, persons with preexisting respiratory or cardiovascular illness, and athletes and others who engage in frequent exercise. Structures that house these persons or places where they gather are defined as sensitive receptors by SCAQMD. According to SCAQMD, sensitive receptors include residences, schools, playgrounds, child care centers, athletic facilities, long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes.

Residential areas are considered sensitive to air pollution because residents (including children and older adults) tend to be at home for extended periods of time, resulting in sustained exposure to any pollutants present. Recreational land uses are considered moderately sensitive to air pollution. Exercise places a high demand on respiratory functions, which can be impaired by air pollution even though exposure periods during exercise are generally short. In addition, noticeable air pollution can detract from the enjoyment of recreation. Industrial and commercial areas are considered the least sensitive to air pollution. Exposure periods are relatively short and

intermittent, as the majority of the workers tend to stay indoors most of the time. In addition, the working population is generally the healthiest segment of the public.

The overall character of the surrounding area is a range of local and regional business uses, including retail stores, office buildings, and service businesses; institutional uses; and single-family residences interspersed east of the project site. Noise-sensitive receptors in proximity of the project site (within a ¼-mile) are located within 300 feet of the nearest extent of the project construction. The closest noise-sensitive receptors include a single-family residence east of the Topanga Library and additional single-family residences (R-1) east of the project site along Cuesta Cala Road and South Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Commercial developments are located within 100 feet of the project site along Topanga Canyon Road. The residential and commercial sensitive receptors represent the nearest land uses with the potential to be impacted as a result of the proposed project.

Construction of the proposed project would not exceed the localized significance thresholds and, therefore, would not expose any nearby sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Operation of the proposed project would not generate new vehicle trips and associated emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial construction or operational pollutant concentrations. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

Less than Significant Impact. The occurrence and severity of odor impacts depend on numerous factors, including the nature, frequency, and intensity of the source; wind speed and direction; and the presence of sensitive receptors. While offensive odors rarely cause any physical harm, they still can be very unpleasant, leading to considerable distress and often generating citizen complaints to local governments and regulatory agencies.

Construction activities associated with the proposed project could result in odorous emissions from diesel exhaust associated with construction equipment. However, because of the temporary nature of these emissions and the highly diffusive properties of diesel exhaust, nearby receptors (located within 300 feet of the nearest extent of the project construction) would not be affected by diesel exhaust odors associated with project construction. Odors from these sources would be localized and generally confined to the immediate area surrounding the project site. The proposed project would utilize typical construction techniques, and the odors would be typical of most construction sites and temporary in nature. The proposed project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

AECOM conducted a field survey on October 10, 2010 to assess the biological conditions of the project site. Prior to the survey, a literature review was conducted to determine sensitive plant and animal species with the potential to occur in the project site. The California Natural Diversity DataBase (CNDDB) RareFind 3 program (2009) and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants* (v7-09d 10-07-09) were reviewed for any information on known occurrences of sensitive species within the Topanga, Calabasas, Malibu Beach, Beverly Hills, Van Nuys, and Canoga Park USGS topographic quadrangles. Based on the CNDDB search, twenty-four sensitive plant and nineteen sensitive wildlife species are known from occurrences in these quads. None of these species are expected to occur within the project site or surrounding biological survey area due to lack of suitable habitat (Table 4.4-1).

The project site is primarily developed, disturbed, or bare and contained within the existing roadways of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard (Figure 4.4-1). One cottonwood (*Populus freemontii*) tree is planted within the parking lot east of Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Landscaped vegetation throughout the project site includes pine trees (*Pinus* sp.), pepper trees (*Schinus* sp.), and ornamental flowers. Paved parking lots and businesses encompass the central area of the project site, bounding the project site to the east and south. Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) woodland, south of Topanga Canyon Road, bounds the project site's northeastern edge. Riparian forest dominated by sycamore (*Platanus* sp.) and willow (*Salix* sp.) bounds Topanga Canyon Road to the north; several coast live oak trees occur throughout the riparian vegetation. Understory is primarily dominated by young willows, interspersed with giant cane (*Arundo donax*), and edged by Douglas' sagewort *(Artemisia douglasiana*). Riparian scrub, dominated by coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), is present at the southeast edge of the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge on Old Topanga Canyon Road. Disturbed chaparral habitat, comprised of coyote brush, mule fat (*Baccharis salicifolia*), and seacliff buckwheat (*Eriogonum parvifolium*), occurs immediately south of the Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard intersection.

The project site is situated within the Topanga Creek Watershed. The Topanga Creek Watershed is the second largest watershed in the Santa Monica Mountains. Two major watercourses flow through Topanga. The Garapatos Creek, which flows south along SR 27, joins the Topanga Creek at the location of the project site. The Topanga Creek, which traverses west of the project site, west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, is a geologically young, intermittent stream with perennial pools that is fed by numerous tributaries along its two main branches. Within the vicinity of the project, and beneath the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge on Old Topanga Canyon Road, the water flow was minimal and existed mostly as small, shallow ponded areas.

Table 4.4-1
Sensitive Species Known to Occur within Topanga and Surrounding Quadrants

Common Name *(Scientific Name)*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description	Potential to Occur in the Biological Study Area
PLANTS			
Braunton's milkvetch *Astragalus brauntonii*	USFWS: FE CNPS: List 1B.1	Closed-cone coniferous forest, chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland. Blooms February-July.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Ventura Marsh milk-vetch *Astragalus pycnostachyus var. lanosissimus*	USFWS: FE CDFG: SE CNPS: List 1B.1	Found within coastal salt marshes within reach of high tide or protected by barrier beaches, more rarely near seeps on sandy bluffs.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Coastal dunes milk-vetch *Astragalus tener var. titi*	USFWS: FE CDFG: SE CNPS: List 1B.1	Moist, sandy depressions of coastal, bluff scrubs or dunes along and near the pacific ocean.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Coulter's saltbrush *Atriplex coulteri*	CNPS: 1B.2	Found on ocean bluffs, ridgetops, as well as alkaline low places within coastal bluff scrub, coastal dunes, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Parish's brittlescale *Atriplex parishii*	CNPS: List 1B.1	Usually found on drying alkali flats with fine soils within alkali meadows, vernal pools, chenopod scrub, playas	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Malibu baccharis *Baccharis malibuensis*	CNPS: List 1B.1	Known from coastal scrub, chaparral and cismontane woodland in Conejo volcanic substrates, often on exposed roadcuts. This species sometimes occupies oak woodland habitat.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Round-leaved filaree *California macrophylia*	CNPS: List 1B.1	Clay soils within cismontane woodland, valley and foothill grasslands.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
slender mariposa lily *Calochortus clavatus* var. *gracilis*	USFS: Sensitive CNPS: List 1B.2	Chaparral, coastal scrub. Shaded foothill canyons, often on grassy slopes within other habitat. Blooms March-June.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Plummer's mariposa-lily *Calochortus plummerae*	CNPS: List 1B.2	Occurs on rocky and sandy sites, usually of granitic or alluvial material within coastal scrub, chaparral, valley and foothill grassland, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest. Can be very common after fire.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.

Common Name *(Scientific Name)*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description	Potential to Occur in the Biological Study Area
Salt marsh bird's-beak *Cordylanthus maritimus ssp. maritimus*	USFWS: FE CNDG: SE CNPS: List 1B.2	Found within coastal salt marsh, coastal dunes and limited to the higher zones of the salt marsh habitat.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Southern tarplant *Centromadia parryi ssp. Australis*	CNPS: List 1B.1	Valley and foothill grassland. Often in disturbed sites near the coast at marsh edges, also in alkaline soils sometimes with saltgrass.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
San Fernando Valley spineflower *Chorizantha parryi* var. *Fernandina*	USFWS: Candidate CDFG: SE CNPS: List 1B.2	Found within sandy soils within coastal scrub.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Santa Susana tarplant *Deinandra minthornii*	CDFG: SR CNPS: List 1B.2	On sandstone outcrops and crevices in chaparral and coastal scrub.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Beach spectaclepod *Dithyrea maritime*	CDFG: ST CNPS: List 1B.1	Coastal dunes, coastal scrub along sea shores on sand dunes and sandy place near the shore.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Blochman's dudleya *Dudleya blochmaniae ssp. Blochmaniae*	CNPS: List 1B.2	Found on open, rocky slopes, often in shallow clays over serpentine or in rocky areas with little soil within coastal scrub, coastal bluff scrub, valley and foothill grassland.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Marcescent dudleya *Ddudleya cymosa ssp. Marcescens*	USFWS: FT CDFG: SR CNPS: 1B.2	On sheer rock surfaces and rocky volcanic cliffs in chaparral habitat.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Santa Monica dudleya *Dudleya cymosa ssp. Ovatifolia*	USFWS: FT CNPS: List 1B.2	Grows in canyons on sedimentary conglomerates, primarily on north-facing slopes within chaparral and coastal scrub. .	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Many-stemmed dudleya *Dudleya multicaulis*	CNPS: List 1B.2	In heavy, often clayey soils or grassy slopes in chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Mesa horkelia *Horkelia cuneata ssp. puberula*	CNPS: 1B.1	Found in sandy or gravelly sites within chaparral, cismontane woodland, and coastal scrub habitat.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Davidson's bush-mallow *Malacothamnus davidsonii*	CNPS: List 1B.2	Grows in sandy washes within coastal scrub, riparian woodland, chaparral.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Mud nama *Nama stenocarpum*	CNPS: List 2.2	Known from lake shores, river banks, intermittently wet areas, marshes and swamps.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.

Common Name *(Scientific Name)*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description	Potential to Occur in the Biological Study Area
Peninsular nolina *Nolinacismontana*	CNPS: List 1B.2	Found primarily on sandstone and shale substrates in chaparral and coastal scrub habitats.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Lyon's pentachaeta *Pentachaeta lyonii*	USFWS: FE CDFG: SE CNPS: List 1B.1	Occurs along edges of clearings in chaparral, usually at the ecotone between grassland and chaparral, or edges of firebreaks.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Salt Spring checkerbloom *Sidalcea neomexicana*	CNPS: List 2.2	Known from alkalai playas, brackish marshes, chaparral, coastal scrub. Lower montane coniferous forest, Mojavean desert scrub.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
FISH			
Tidewater goby *Eucyclogoblus newberryi*	USFWS: FE	Found in shallow lagoons and lower stream reaches containing brackish water habitats along the California coast from Agua Hedionda Lagoon, San Diego County to the mouth of the Smith River. Require fairly still but not stagnant water with low oxygen levels.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Arroyo chub *Gila orcutti*	CDFG: CSC	Known from slow water stream sections with mud or sand bottoms within Los Angeles Basin's south coastal streams. Feeds heavily on aquatic vegetation and associated invertebrates.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Southern steelhead – southern California DPS *Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*	USFWS: FE	Federal listing refers to populations from Santa Maria River south to San Mateo Creek in San Diego County.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
AMPHIBIANS			
arroyo toad *Bufo californicus*	USFWS: FE CDFG: CSC	Gravelly or sandy washes, stream and river banks, and arroyos. Also upland habitat near washes and streams such as sage scrub, mixed chaparral, Joshua tree woodland, and sagebrush habitats.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
California red-legged frog *Rana aurora draytoni*	USFWS: FT CDFG: CSC	Lowlands and foothills in or near permanent sources of deep water with dense, shrubby or emergent riparian vegetation. Requires 11-20 weeks of permanent water for larval development and must have access to aestivation habitat.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.

Common Name *(Scientific Name)*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description	Potential to Occur in the Biological Study Area
REPTILES			
Western pond turtle *Emys marmoratal*	CDFG: CSC	A thoroughly aquatic turtle of ponds, marshes, rivers, streams and irrigation ditches with aquatic vegetation below 8000 feet. Needs basking sites and suitable (sandy banks or grassy open fields) upland habitat within 0.5 kilometers from water for reproduction.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Coast horned lizard *Phrynosoma blainvillii*	USFS: Sensitive CDFG: CSC	A variety of habitats including sage scrub, chaparral, and coniferous and broad-leafed woodlands. Found on sandy or friable soils with open scrub. Requires open areas, bushes, and fine loose soil.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
BIRDS			
Tricolored blackbird *Agelalus tricolor*	CDFG: CSC	This species requires open water, protected nesting substrate and foraging area with insect prey within a few kilometers of the colony. Largely endemic to California and highly colonial species, most numerous in central valley and vicinity.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Burrowing owl *Athene cunicularia*	CDFG: CSC	Subterranean nester within open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts, and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation. This species is dependent upon burrowing mammals, most notably the California ground squirrel.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
coastal California gnatcatcher *Polioptila californica californica*	USFWS: FT CDFG: CSC	A permanent resident of coastal sage scrub in arid washes, mesas, and slopes.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
least Bell's vireo *Vireo bellii pusillus*	USFWS: FE CDFG: SE (nesting)	Summer resident of low riparian growth in the vicinity of water or in dry river bottoms. Nests are placed along the margins of bushes, usually *Salix*, *Baccharis*, or *Prosopis*.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.

Common Name *(Scientific Name)*	Sensitivity Status[1]	General Habitat Description	Potential to Occur in the Biological Study Area
MAMMALS			
Pallid bat *Antrozous pallidus*	CDFG: CSC	Most common in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting within deserts, grasslands, shrublands, woodlands and forests. Roosts must protect bats from high temperatures. Very sensitive to disturbance of roosting site	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Spotted bat *Euderma maculatum*	CDFG: CSC	Occupies a wide variety of habitats from arid deserts and grasslands through mixed conifer forests. Feeds almost entirely on moths over water and along washes. Requires rock crevices in cliffs or caves for roosting.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Western mastiff bat *Eumops perotis californicus*	CDFG: CSC	Known from many open, semi-arid to arid habitats, including conifer and deciduous woodlands, coastal scrub, grasslands, chaparral. Roosts in crevices in cliff faces, high buildings, trees and tunnels.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
Western red bat *Lasiurus blossevillii*	CDFG: CSC	Roosts primarily in trees, 2-40 feet aboveground, from sea level up through mixed conifer forests. This species prefers habitat edges and mosaics with trees that are protected from above and open below with open areas for foraging.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
California leaf-nosed bat *Macrotus californicus*	CDFG: CSC	Known from desert riparian, desert wash, desert scrub, desert succulent scrub, alkali scrub and palm oasis habitats. Needs rocky, rugged terrain with mines or caves for roosting.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
South coast marsh vole *Microtus californicus stephensi*	CDFG: CSC	Known from tidal marshes in Los Angeles, Orange and southern Ventura Counties.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.
San Diego desert woodrat *Neotoma lepida intermedia*	CDFG: CSC	Occupies coastal scrub with moderate to dense canopies in southern California from San Diego County to San Luis Obispo County. Abundant in rocky outcrops and rocky cliffs.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.

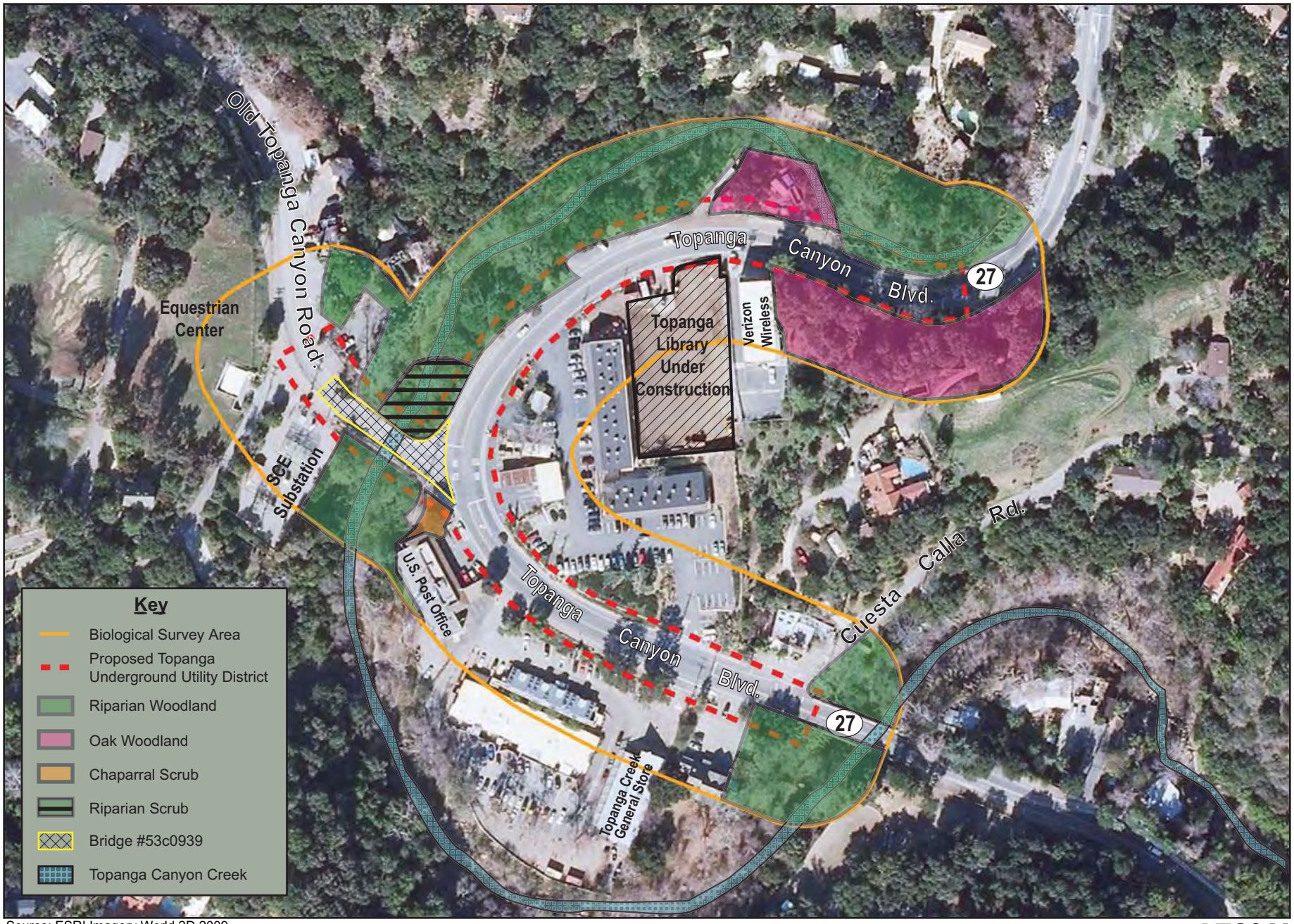
Common Name ***(Scientific Name)***	**Sensitivity Status[1]**	**General Habitat Description**	**Potential to Occur in the Biological Study Area**
Los Angeles pocket mouse *Perognathus longimembris brevinasus*	CDFG: CSC	Known from lower elevation grasslands and coastal sage communities in and around the Los Angeles Basin. Occupies open ground with fine sandy soils. May not dig extensive burrows, known to hide under weeds and dead leaves instead.	Not expected. Suitable habitat for this species does not occur within the immediate project area or surrounding vegetation buffer.

[1]Federal U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS):
Federally Threatened (FT), Federally Endangered (FE)
U.S. Forest Service (USFS): Sensitive

State California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG):
State Threatened (ST), State Endangered (SE), State Species of Special Concern (CSC), State Rare (SR), State Fully-Protected (SFP), California Natural Diversity DataBase list only (CNDDB): this species may be locally sensitive or occurrences are monitored to see if protection is needed.

CNPS California Native Plant Society:
List 1A: Plants presumed extinct in California
List 1B: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere
List 2: Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere
List 3: Plants about which we need more information
List 4: Plants of limited distribution – a watch list
Threat Ranks:
0.1- Seriously threatened in California (high degree/immediacy of threat)
0.2- Fairly threatened in California (moderate degree/immediacy of threat)
0.3- Not very threatened in California (low degree/immediacy of threats or no current threats known)

Sources:- The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California, edited by Hickman. 1993.
- California Native Plant Society, Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants, 7th Edition. Available at: http://cnps.web.aplus.net/cgi-bin/inv/inventory.cgi/Home
- Center for Plant Conservation National Collection Plant Profile
- Rarefind. California Department of Fish and Game Natural Diversity Database. 2009.
- CDFG Habitat Conservation Planning Branch. Available at: http://www.dfg.ca.gov/hcpb/cgi-bin/
- http://www.dfg.ca.gov/whdab/html/cawildlife.html



Source: ESRI Imagery World 2D 2009

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AECOM

Figure 4.4-1
Vegetation Map

Topanga Underground Utility District Project

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Would the Project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact. Of the twenty-four sensitive plant and nineteen sensitive wildlife species that are known from the Topanga and adjacent quadrants, none are expected to occur within the project site or surrounding biological survey boundary based on the highly developed nature of the project site. The most suitable habitat within or near the project site is the oak woodland south of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and riparian habitat along Topanga Creek. Both of these areas are likely utilized by nesting birds, but neither provides habitat for candidate, sensitive, or special status species. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in impacts to candidate, sensitive, or special status species. No mitigation measures are required.

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

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. A stretch of riparian habitat, dominated by sycamore and willow, borders the northern extent of the project site. For Topanga and the surrounding quadrants, the CNDDB consists of similar vegetation series, which includes the southern coast live oak riparian forest and southern sycamore alder riparian woodland. Oak and riparian woodlands within the vicinity of the project site do not match either of these series; however, oak and riparian habitats are, in general, considered sensitive and declining habitats. California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) California Riparian Habitat Conservation Program (Section 1385-1391 of CDFG Game Code) considers riparian habitat worth protecting, preserving, and restoring (CDFG 2009).

The creek is subject to the requirements of the CDFG Lake and Streambed Alteration Program (Sections 1600-1607). Protected waters include permanent or ephemeral streams and rivers within a bed or channel with potential to support aquatic life and riparian vegetation. The Lake and Streambed Alteration Program focuses on projects that have potential to "substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake or use materials from a streambed to notify the Department before beginning the project." The CDFG Lake and Streambed Alteration Program requires any person, state or local governmental agency, or public utility to notify the CDFG for any project that may 1) substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream or lake; 2) substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of, any river, stream, or lake; 3) use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of a river, stream, or lake; or 4) deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may

pass into any river, stream, or lake. The notification requirement applies to any work undertaken in or near a river, stream, or lake that flows at least intermittently through a bed or channel.

Project construction activities have the potential to degrade water quality through the exposure of surface runoff (primarily rainfall) to exposed soils, dust, and other debris, as well as from runoff from construction equipment. As such, Los Angeles County would be required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Upon completion of construction design, it is recommended that DPW, in coordination with SCE, consult CDFG regarding the applicability of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement for this project. After consultation with CDFG, DPW may be required to submit a complete notification package and fee to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office. After CDFG receives a complete notification package, it will determine whether a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement is required for the proposed project. CDFG will make this determination within 30 calendar days of receiving the notification package if applying for a regular agreement (i.e., an agreement for a term of five years or less). The 30-day time period does not apply to notifications for long-term agreements (i.e., agreements for a term greater than five years). A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be required if the activity is determined to substantially adversely affect an existing fish and wildlife resource. If a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement is required, CDFG would conduct an onsite inspection and prepare a draft agreement that would include measures to protect fish and wildlife resources (CDFG 2009). As such, mitigation measure BIO-1 is provided. BIO-1 requires initial consultation with CDFG in order to determine the applicability of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement for the proposed project.

Two utility poles are located on the southeast bank of Topanga Creek, immediately northwest of the U.S. Post Office and approximately 90 feet south of Old Topanga Canyon Road. The bank is completely bare and void of vegetation, exceedingly steep, and prone to erosion issues. Pole removal activities, to allow for removal of the pole base, include moderate excavation activities which may result in bank erosion. Implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, would result in a less-than-significant impact.

The utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Canyon Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be placed alongside the bridge via a utility conduit. Attaching the utility lines alongside the bridge is anticipated to result in tree trimming and vegetation clearing activities. It is anticipated that bucket-lift trucks would be utilized to attach the utility lines to the side of the bridge. To the extent practical, all reach devices for use in construction facilities along the existing bridge would be staged and maintained above the creek floor, on the roadway and suspended over it. Should work need to occur within Topanga Creek, then a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (if deemed applicable after consultation with CDFG) would be required prior to work.

As the total construction area would be approximately 3.6 acres in size, the proposed project is required to comply with the NPDES Stormwater Phase II Final Rule - Small Construction

Program requirements for stormwater discharges for development projects disturbing equal to or greater than 1 and less than 5 acres of soil (EPA 2000). NPDES Stormwater Phase II Final Rule requires obtaining a General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). This also requires preparation and implementation of a SWPPP (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). The SWPPP specifies BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, aimed at controlling construction-related pollutants that originate from the site as a result of construction-related activities (DPW 2005b). These BMPs are designed to meet or exceed federal, state, and local mandated guidelines for stormwater treatment to control erosion and to protect the quality of surface water runoff during construction activities, in compliance with NPDES requirements and Los Angeles County Code. Further, per DPW guidelines, construction projects one acre and greater that include grading activities during the rainy season must also develop a WWECP, which would be implemented in conjunction with the SWPPP (DPW 2008).

Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1; implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices; preparation of a WWECP; and compliance with the Los Angeles County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including, if applicable, preparation of a complete notification package to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office per the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, prior to project approval would result in a less-than-significant impact.

BIO-1 DPW, in coordination with SCE, shall consult with CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office in order to determine applicability of a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement for the proposed project.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. Topanga Creek traverses the project site west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and beneath the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge located on Old Topanga Canyon Road. As designated by the California State Water Resources Control Board, Topanga Creek is listed as an impaired water body in Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (California Coastal Commission 2006). Under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, states, territories, and authorized tribes, are required to develop lists of impaired waters (EPA 2009a). The term "303(d) list" is short for the list of impaired and threatened waters (e.g., stream/river segments, lakes) that all states are required to submit for EPA approval during even-numbered years. A state's 303(d) impaired waters list is comprised of all waters where the state has identified that required pollution controls are not sufficient to attain or maintain applicable water quality standards. The law requires that states establish a prioritized schedule for waters on the lists, and develop Total Maximum Daily Loads for the identified waters based on the severity of

the pollution and the sensitivity of the uses to be made of the waters, among other factors (40C.F.R. §130.7(b)(4)). A Total Maximum Daily Load is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive and still safely meet water quality standards, and an allocation of that load among the various sources of the pollutant (EPA 2009a). Coliform, metals, and historic pesticides were found to impair the water quality in some streams within the Topanga Creek watershed, largely related to nonpoint source pollution (California Coastal Commission 2006).

In addition, the Topanga Creek is federally protected under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Section 404 regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into the waters of the United States. "Waters of the United States" defined as "relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water forming geographic features (EPA 2009b)."

The proposed project is not anticipated to substantially adversely impact Topanga Creek. All attempts would be made to avoid construction activities within Topanga Creek. However, should work need to occur within Topanga Creek, Los Angeles County would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. As the total construction area would be approximately 3.6 acres in size, the proposed project would be required to comply with the NPDES Stormwater Phase II Final Rule - Small Construction Program requirements for stormwater discharges for development projects disturbing equal to or greater than 1 and less than 5 acres of soil (EPA 2000). NPDES Stormwater Phase II Final Rule requires obtaining a General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). This also requires the development and implementation of a SWPPP (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). The SWPPP specifies BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, aimed at controlling construction-related pollutants that originate from the site as a result of construction-related activities (DPW 2005b). These BMPs are designed to meet or exceed federal, state, and local mandated guidelines for stormwater treatment to control erosion and to protect the quality of surface water runoff during construction activities, in compliance with NPDES requirements and Los Angeles County Code. Further, per DPW guidelines, construction projects one acre and greater that include grading activities during the rainy season must also develop a WWECP, which would be implemented in conjunction with the SWPPP (DPW 2008).

Implementation of BIO-1; implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices; preparation of a WWECP; and compliance with the Los Angeles County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including, if applicable, preparation of a complete notification package to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office per the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, prior to project approval would result in a less-than-significant impact. No additional mitigation measures are required.

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

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project would not 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. As such, no impacts related to migratory fish would occur.

Construction is anticipated to start in fall 2012 and take approximately 18-24 months (360-480 working days) to complete, ending in summer/fall 2013. It is estimated that the project site would be returned to full operation by the end of spring 2014. The proposed project would result in tree trimming activities along portions of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, Old Topanga Canyon Road, and the area surrounding the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge. Policies and ordinances applicable to biological resources (i.e., trees) are outlined further in Section 4.4, Biological Resources, Question (e).

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 prohibits the kill or transport of native migratory birds, or any part, nest, or egg of any such bird unless allowed by another regulation adopted in accordance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The prohibition applies to birds included in the respective international conventions between the United States and Great Britain, the United States and Mexico, the United States and Japan, and the United States and Russia. Although no permit is issued under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, if vegetation removal within the project site occurs during the breeding season for raptors and migratory birds (generally defined by the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as February 1 through September 15), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service requires that surveys be conducted to locate active nests within the construction area. If active raptor or migratory bird nests are detected, project activities may be temporarily curtailed or halted. If clearing, grading, tree trimming, and tree removal activities for the proposed project occur during breeding bird season (generally February 1 through September 15, as described above), the proposed project would have the potential to impact nesting birds. To avoid potential impacts to native nesting birds that may be present on the site, mitigation measures BIO-2 and BIO-3 are provided. With incorporation of these mitigation measures, potentially significant effects on native nesting birds would result in a less-than-significant impact.

BIO-2 Should construction, clearing, grading, tree trimming, or tree removal activities occur during the breeding season (February 1-September 15) for migratory non-game native bird species, a qualified biologist with experience in conducting nesting bird surveys shall conduct nesting birds surveys three days prior to construction. High quality nesting habitat occurs adjacent to and along the entire length of the utility line. Therefore, a nesting bird survey is recommended immediately preceding the start of trimming/construction activities to allow

thorough coverage in order and detection of any protected native birds in the trees to be removed and other suitable nesting habitat within 300 feet of the construction work area (500 feet for raptors). If an active nest is found, all clearance/construction disturbance activities shall be halted in suitable nesting habitat or within 300 feet of nesting habitat (within 500 feet for raptor nesting habitat) until September 15 or additional surveys shall be conducted in order to determine that a buffer less than 300 feet is acceptable for a particular nest, based on the type of construction/clearing activities scheduled to take place. Construction limits shall be established in the field with flagging and stakes or construction fencing to avoid a nest and construction personnel shall be instructed on the sensitivity of the area. The results of this measure shall be recorded to document compliance with applicable State and Federal laws pertaining to the protection of native birds.

BIO-3 A biologist shall be on-site to flag trimming limits for riparian vegetation and to monitor trimming activities in preparation for placement of new utilities.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance (Section 17.02 of the Los Angeles County Code) recognizes oak trees as significant historical, aesthetic, and ecological resources. The goal of the ordinance is to create favorable conditions for the preservation and propagation of this unique and threatened plant heritage. By making this part of the development process, healthy oak trees would be preserved and maintained. Many kinds of oak trees are native to Los Angeles County. All oak species are covered by the oak tree ordinance. Common oaks include California Black Oak (*Quercus Kelloggii*), Canyon Live Oak (*Quercus Chrysolepis*), California Scrub Oak (*Quercus Dumosa*), Coast Live Oak, Mesa Oak (*Quercus Engelmannii),* and the Valley Oak (*Quercus Lobata*). The Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance applies to all unincorporated areas of the County. Under the ordinance, a person shall not cut, destroy, remove, relocate, inflict damage, or encroach into the protected zone of any tree of the oak tree genus, which is 8 inches or more diameter at breast height, 4.5 feet above mean natural grade, or, in the case of oaks with multiple trunks, a combined diameter at breast height of 12 inches or more of the two largest trunks, without first obtaining a permit (Los Angeles County Code 2010).

Portions of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road are densely covered with mature trees, including Coast Live Oak. A number of the overhead utility lines share common and often competing space. As such, the proposed project may require tree trimming, pruning, and/or vegetation clearing. The proposed project does not anticipate removal of any trees. DPW would be required to obtain a permit for trimming of oak trees. Compliance with the Los Angeles

County Oak Tree Ordinance per the Los Angeles County Code would result in less-than-significant impacts.

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?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. Using GIS-Net software developed by the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning (DRP), the project site was determined to be located within an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA), which is a designation that affords the highest protection from future land development (DRP 2010, DRP 2011). GIS-NET was developed to provide the public with geographic information regarding land use planning and zoning for the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County (DRP 2010).

Topanga Creek traverses west of the project site, west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be placed alongside the bridge via a utility conduit. Attaching the utility lines alongside the bridge is anticipated to result in minimal tree trimming and vegetation clearing activities. It is anticipated that bucket-lift trucks would be utilized to attach the utility lines to the side of the bridge. However, the hydrology of the area is such that drainage from the entire area, including the project site, flows toward the creek, making the creek and its habitat vulnerable to polluted runoff. To the extent practical, all reach devices for use in construction facilities along the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge would be staged and maintained above the creek floor, on the roadway and suspended over it. Should work need to occur within Topanga Creek, then a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (if deemed applicable after consultation with CDFG) would be required prior to work.

To protect the creek from such potential indirect effects, the project construction and operation would include the use of BMPs in compliance with the existing NPDES regulations, which would include preparation of a SWPPP. The SWPPP specifies BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, aimed at controlling construction-related pollutants that originate from the site as a result of construction-related activities (DPW 2005b). The proposed project would also require preparation of a WWECP to mitigate impacts to stormwater quality from erosion and sediments for any construction activities occurring during the rainy season.

Implementation of BIO-1, which requires consultation with CDFG in order to determine the applicability of the Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement; implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices; preparation of a WWECP; and compliance with the Los Angeles County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including, if applicable, preparation of a complete notification package to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office per the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, prior to project approval would result in a less-than-significant impact. No additional mitigation measures are required.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

A Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment was prepared in support of the IS/MND. The complete Ph I Cultural Resources Assessment is provided in Appendix B. The Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment included a records search for archaeological, paleontological, and historic resources within the study area. For the purposes of the Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment, the "study area" was created based on information provided by SCE relating to potential areas of ground disturbance that are anticipated as a result of the proposed project.

The archival research was conducted on October 28 and November 1-2, 2010 at the South Central Coastal Information Center housed at the California State University, Fullerton. The records search revealed that a total of 37 cultural resource investigations have previously been conducted within a 1-mile radius of the study area. Approximately 75 percent of the study area has been previously surveyed (LA-7428, LA-4823, LA-2559, LA-3064, LA-754, LA-5591, LA-1854, LA-4892, LA-4893, LA-3127 and LA-6922). Two resources, P-19-1875 and CA-LAN-8, occur within the project site.

As part of this investigation, AECOM also conducted a Native American Contact Program on behalf of DPW, to inform interested parties of the proposed project and to address any concerns regarding Traditional Cultural Properties or other resources that might be affected by the project. The program involved contacting Native American representatives provided by the Native American Heritage Commission to solicit comments and concerns regarding the proposed project. The Native American Contact Program included a Sacred Lands File check, an interested party contact program, and collection and review of other relevant background data. A letter was prepared and mailed to the Native American Heritage Commission on November 1, 2010. The letter requested that a Sacred Lands File check be conducted for the proposed project and that contact information be provided for Native American groups or individuals that may have concerns about cultural resources in the study area. The Native American Heritage Commission responded to the request in a letter dated November 2, 2010. The letter indicated that the Sacred Lands File check "did not indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources within one-half mile" of the proposed study area. The letter also included an attached list of Native American contacts. Letters were mailed on November 11, 2010, to each group or individual provided on the contact list. Maps depicting the study area and response forms were attached to each letter. Follow-up phone calls were made to each party on November 1 and 17, 2010 and December 10, 13, and 14, 2010. To date, four responses have been received. This is included in Appendix B.

A cultural resources field survey of the study area was conducted on Wednesday, November 10, 2010. The survey focused on areas that would be potentially impacted by the proposed project. The field survey included an archaeological investigation, survey and documentation of the built environment, primarily focusing on areas with exposed ground surface for any visible evidence of cultural resources associated with the study area.

Public Resources Code §5024

Topanga Canyon Road is also SR 27, which is subject to the requirements of Caltrans. As such, and in consultation with Caltrans District 7, the IS/MND and the Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment has been prepared to comply with Caltrans' requirements of evaluation of cultural resources.

PRC 5024 requires that all state agencies preserve and maintain all state-owned historical resources. Section 5024.5 outlines the process of meeting this mandate. The process gives the State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) the authority to review the efforts made by state agencies toward compliance with this law. State agencies must work with the Office of Historic Preservation to show they are protecting and maintaining their historic resources (the term includes prehistoric, historic, ethnographic, and traditional cultural resources), and that no development or maintenance projects will adversely impact those resources. Section 5024(f) requires that the State agency shall submit to the SHPO officer for comment documentation on any project with potential to affect historical resources, including California Register eligible archaeological sites. According to SHPO, PRC §5024(f) also applies to archeological sites that are listed in or have been determined eligible for inclusion in the NRHP or are registered or determined eligible for registration as a California Historic Landmark. Therefore, under PRC §5024(f) Caltrans also requests SHPO's comments and provides documentation of effects (No Historic Properties Affected, No Adverse Effect, Adverse Effect) to NRHP listed/eligible or California Historic Landmark registered/eligible archeological sites.

Caltrans determines the impact of the project on each historical resource by applying the criteria of significant effect set forth in state law and regulation. PRC §5020.1(q) defines "substantial adverse change" to mean:

- Demolition
- Destruction
- Relocation
- Alteration such that the significance of the resource would be impaired

<u>Would the Project</u>:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?

Less than Significant Impact. Archival research for the project site was conducted on October 28 and November 1-2, 2010 at the South Central Coastal Information Center housed at the California State University, Fullerton. The research focused on the identification of previously recorded cultural resources within a 1-mile radius of the project site. The archival research involved review of archaeological site records, historic maps, and historic site and building inventories. A discussed previously, the records search revealed that a total of 37 cultural resource investigations were previously conducted within a 1-mile radius of the project site.

Approximately 75 percent of the project site has been previously surveyed (LA-7428, LA-4823, LA-2559, LA-3064, LA-754, LA-5591, LA-1854, LA-4892, LA-4893, LA-3127 and LA-6922). The records search also indicated that a total of 41 cultural resources have been previously recorded within 1-mile of the study area. These include 23 prehistoric sites, nine historic sites, seven historic structures and two historic isolates. Two of these resources (P-19-187551 and CA-LAN-0008), occur within the study area. The records search also revealed nine historic resources were identified within the study area (CA-LAN-4083, P-19-004084, CA-LAN-4092, CA-LAN-4095, CA-LAN-4100, P-19-004101, CA-LAN-4105, CA-LAN-4106 and CA-LAN-4109). However, none of these were found to occur within the project site.

Seven historic structures within 1-mile of the study area were identified during the records search. These consisted of six buildings (P-19-150079, P-19-186863, P-19-186864, P-19-186865, P-19-186866, and P-19-186867) and one bridge (P-19-187551). Of the seven historic structures, one is located within the project site (P-19-187551). Caltrans also identifies the historic bridge as Bridge #53C0939, also known as the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge. Constructed in 1926, the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge is a two-lane timber A-frame truss bridge carrying Old Topanga Canyon Road over the Topanga Creek and Garapatos Creek. The Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge is a typical truss bridge from the 1920s. Timber truss bridges were largely designed at the local level and built in rural areas. Los Angeles County routinely built these simple bridges through the 1920s using a set of standard plans for timber truss bridges to meet the increasing demands of traffic in more remote areas.

Construction of the proposed project would relocate those utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Canyon Creek. The utility lines would be attached alongside the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge via a utility conduit. It is anticipated that bucket-lift trucks would be utilized to attach the utility lines to the side of the bridge.

The Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge was evaluated for eligibility for listing on the NRHP and California Register of Historic Resources (CRHP). Caltrans conducted the original statewide historic bridge inventory in 1986, but most recently performed an update in 2010 for bridges built between 1960 and 1964. Per the Caltrans historic bridge inventory website, the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge, which was built in 1926, was designated as a “Category 5” in the bridge index (Caltrans 2010). Per Caltrans, a Category 5 bridge designation is not eligible for the NRHP (Caltrans 2010). Further, the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge did not demonstrate sufficient importance under Criteria A (NRHP) or Criteria 1 (CRHP). The A-frame truss bridge was determined as neither an innovative design of a significant method of construction nor a bold engineering achievement and not eligible under Criterion C (NRHP) or Criteria 3 (CRHP). No further evaluation of this resource is required. The impact to historical resources as defined in §15064.5 would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. The project may result in impacts to one archaeological resource (CA-LAN-8), as defined in §15064.5. The records search conducted on October 28 and November 1-2, 2010 at the South Central Coastal Information Center indicated that a total of 41 cultural resources have been previously recorded within 1-mile of the study area. One of these resources (CA-LAN-8) is a prehistoric resource located within the project site. Previous investigations have revealed that intact archaeological deposits associated with site CA-LAN-8 are present at this location.

CA-LAN-8, first recorded in 1948, appears to have represented a substantial prehistoric settlement in Topanga (Bierman and Mohr 1948). The site was noted to be located "under and south of the post office at Topanga (Bierman and Mohr 1948)." At that time, the post office stood on the east side of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and just south of the project site (York 1992). In 1977, the site was further reevaluated. At that time, CA-LAN-8 was considered to have been largely destroyed. However, some intact deposits were noted as potentially remaining on the east side of the road. A few other artifacts were also noted in this area, including three manos and some basalt core tools. The basalt tools are heavily patinated and the location of the site suggests that the Topanga Creek has changed its course to the west.

According to the 1948 site record (Bierman and Mohr 1948), CA-LAN-8 reportedly contained burials which were deposited at the Los Angeles County Museum but no further information is given in the site record. However, Clay Singer's (1994: 27-29) report contains a plausible explanation for this. He cites a local article and personal communications with local residents that the burials were apparently discovered in the road near the original post office location in 1931 during road construction (Singer et al. 1994: 27). Further investigation by Singer did not locate any information on final disposition of these burials. The Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History does hold a small collection from the Post Office Tract; however the collection does not include any human remains (Singer et al. 1994:28).

Deposits in this area (just south of the present Topanga Library site) were later tested by Clay A. Singer and Associates (Singer et al. 1994), who noted extensive disturbance, but also recovered a variety of prehistoric archaeological materials, including projectile point fragments, bifaces, cores, core and flake tools, hammerstones, faunal bone, and marine shell. A radiocarbon date of 3560±60 years Before Present was also obtained.

In November 2007, a pre-grading exploratory archaeological investigation was conducted at the proposed Topanga Library site (Wlodarski 2007). During this investigation, six backhoe trenches were excavated and examined to assess the potential for intact archaeological deposits within this parcel of CA-LAN-8. It was concluded that although the parcel has been heavily disturbed by cutting and filling since the 1920s, there remains some potential for intact cultural deposits under the fill. In compliance with Special Condition 7.B of the Coastal Development Permit, an archaeological monitoring plan was prepared (Moratto 2007). The monitoring plan was implemented in January 2009 with the beginning of construction grading on the parcel and in

June of 2009, several artifacts were discovered in the southwest corner of the library parcel, and a testing program was undertaken.

In September 2009, this testing program was implemented and included four shovel test pits and a single test excavation unit measuring 0.5 by 1 m. The testing yielded three pieces of debitage, a small fragment of marine shell, and a piece of historic earthenware ceramic. Stratigraphic analysis indicated that most of these, as well as the artifacts found at this location during the monitoring, were from a layer of fill that was probably deposited during previous development in the vicinity. Two pieces of debitage, however, were recovered from what appear to be intact sediments under the fill, and may represent a peripheral remnant of CA-LAN-8. Based on the results of the testing, it was recommended that the deposits did not meet the criteria for listing in the CRHP (York and Dietler 2009).

Monitoring of the utilities installation continued along Topanga Canyon Boulevard until a discovery was made on October 27, 2009. At the time of this discovery, excavation of a roughly 3-foot wide and 6-foot deep trench was proceeding west-southwest from the eastern edge of the road. As the excavation neared the center of the road, a layer of dark soil containing artifacts, fire-affected rock, faunal bone, and marine shell was observed in the trench wall immediately underneath the pavement. Ranging between about 20 and 70 cm thick, the layer represented an apparently intact prehistoric midden deposit presumably associated with site CA-LAN-8.

The excavations at CA-LAN-8 revealed that, although the archaeological deposit at this location has been disturbed by the previous installation of a 6-inch diameter pipe, intact portions still exist. These intact portions included a relatively complex stratigraphy consisting of three strata composed of artificial fill, intact and reworked cultural deposits, and sterile terrace deposits (York and Dietler 2010). The cultural deposits yielded a considerable assemblage of artifacts that includes flaked stone tools and debitage, milling implements, and a bead. Faunal remains consist of moderate amounts of mammal bone and marine shell. Groundstone implements include a variety of forms used for grinding and pounding food. Initial examination suggests that the groundstone assemblage is dominated by handstones and millingslabs. The single bead recovered from the excavation is classified as a cupped bead fashioned from the callus portion of an olive shell (*Olivella biplicata*). This type is temporally sensitive and is assigned to King's (1990) L1 and L2 periods, between about A.D. 1150 and 1782. The shell from the site is highly fragmentary, but appears to represent California mussel (*Mytilus californianus*), as well as a variety of clams. The faunal bone appears to represent primarily mammal remains. No human bone has been identified in the collection.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code 5024(f), the deposits have been considered for their potential to qualify as a California Historical Landmark. As specified in Public Resources Code Section 5031, a qualifying property is (1) the first, last, only, or most significant historical property of its type in the region; (2) is associated with an individual or group having a profound influence on the history of California; (3) is a prototype of, or an outstanding example of, a period, style,

architectural movement, or construction, or is one of the more notable works, or the best surviving work in a region of a pioneer architect, designer, or master builder. Of these, only qualification (1) is applicable to the deposits identified at CA-LAN-8. Based on the data at hand, the deposits considered here do not appear to represent either the oldest or most recent prehistoric deposits in the region, nor are they the only example of such deposits. Due to their compromised integrity they do not appear to be the most significant in the region. The portion of CA-LAN-8 investigated during previous studies was not found to appear to qualify as a California Historical Landmark. As such, under Public Resources Code §5024(f), the proposed project would not adversely affect an archaeological resource that is listed/eligible under the California Historic Landmark.

As previously discussed, based on the preliminary testing results, intact midden associated with CA-LAN-8 has been preserved underneath Topanga Canyon Road. Trenching activities may encounter and disturb intact midden. Previously conducted studies (York and Dietler 2010) determined that the integrity of the resource has been compromised by disturbance associated with road construction and maintenance, as well, as utility installation. However, enough intact midden deposits associated with site CA-LAN-8 are preserved underneath the roadway that the site appears to be eligible for the NRHP under Criterion d and the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) under Criterion 4 in that they contain information that can be applied to the research questions discussed in previous studies (York and Dietler 2010).

Trenching activities have the potential to encounter and disturb intact midden, as demonstrated during the work on the Topanga Library Project. Therefore, if any portion of CA-LAN-8 exists within the proposed project site, the proposed project has the potential to result in the physical destruction of CA-LAN-8. Under Public Resources Code §5024(f), the proposed project would adversely affect an archaeological resource that is listed/eligible under the NRHP and CRHR, which would result in a significant adverse impact under CEQA. However, it is anticipated that the remainder of the project site, outside of any trenching associated with the proposed project, will remain undisturbed.

The proposed project would adversely affect CA-LAN-8. To mitigate potential impacts to CA-LAN-8, mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-3 are provided. With incorporation of these mitigation measures, potentially significant effects on archaeological resources pursuant to §15064.5 would result in a less-than-significant impact.

CUL-1 As the excavation along the alignment will result in an adverse effect and impacts to significant archaeological resources, it is recommended that during the final design phase, DPW, in coordination with SCE, shall design the trench to be placed along the south/western side of the ROW in order to avoid areas with high potential to contain intact cultural deposits**.**

CUL-2 It is anticipated that all staging areas would take place within the Study Area boundaries, However, **s**hould staging areas, or other project related areas of impact be designed to be located outside of the Study Area, these areas will require additional survey prior to the start of construction to determine that the location is free of cultural resources.

CUL-3 The following *Monitoring Protocol and Data Recovery Treatment Plan* is required to be implemented for all ground disturbing activities associated with the project. The *Monitoring Protocol and Data Recovery Treatment Plan* includes a plan for the recovery of significant information during construction monitoring of all ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed project:

Monitoring Protocol and Data Recovery Treatment Plan

As part of the *Monitoring Protocol and Data Recovery Treatment Plan*, a qualified archaeological monitor and a Native American representative shall be present to monitor any and all ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed project. This includes construction activities. All hand excavation conducted by archaeologists will also have a Native American monitor in attendance. The implementation of the *Monitoring Protocol and Data Recovery Treatment Plan*_will be overseen by a qualified Principal Investigator in Prehistoric Archaeology meeting the Caltrans Professionally Qualified Staff standards as identified in Section 106 PA Attachment 1.

Mechanical Excavation. Because the intact deposits are beneath the road and likely under a layer of fill, all excavation for the proposed project will be monitored by a qualified archaeological monitor and Native American Monitor. After project design, portions of the project located within the mapped location of CA-LAN-8 (see Figure 4, Appendix B) will be excavated under the direction of the archaeological monitor and the archaeological Principal Investigator. During this process the existing pavement will be removed and any recent fill associated with road construction or previous installation of utilities will be mechanically removed. This excavation will be carefully monitored by an archaeologist and a Native American.

Controlled Excavation. When apparently intact archaeological deposits are encountered (manifested by organically-rich soil with artifacts and shell), the entire archaeological deposit exposed by the mechanical trenching will be excavated by hand using standard archaeological techniques. These will include the following:

- *Excavation Units:* Excavation units will measure 1 by 1 m and will be hand-excavated in 10-cm levels to sterile sediments. Depending on the compactness of the soil, tools used during the excavation may include picks, dig bars, shovels, and trowels. The soil from the units will be transported to a water-screening facility where they will be processed through 1/8-inch mesh hardware cloth and all cultural materials will be collected. The units will be excavated through at least one sterile level or to bedrock. Each unit will be documented in a standard unit notebook. If subsurface hearths, house floors, artifact concentrations, or other features are encountered, they will be carefully exposed and partially pedestaled to assess their structure and extent. Typically, the features will then be bisected to expose a cross section prior to their removal.

- *Field Documentations and Data Management:* The locations of the excavation units will be controlled with reference to the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) grid using a submeter Global Positioning System (GPS). Collections from each unit will be bagged and labeled with the site number, unit designation, level, date, and excavator. Each bag will be assigned a unique number that will be entered in a daily bag log. The field director will check in each bag at the end of each field day. The completed bags will be placed in labeled cardboard banker's boxes until the completion of each unit, when the boxes will be transported to the laboratory. The field director will maintain sets of field notes that will document daily activities.

Special Samples. The field investigations are likely to include the collection of a variety of specialized samples. Although the full range of such samples will depend on specific findings in the field, it is anticipated that samples for radiocarbon dating, protein residue, and soil flotation will be collected. Procedures to collect and process these samples in the field are described below.

- *Radiocarbon:* Radiocarbon samples collected in the field will be wrapped in foil and placed in separate containers. Fragile samples, such as charcoal, will be protected by placing them in film canisters or small cardboard boxes.

- *Soil and Column Samples:* Two column samples will be taken from selected units for flotation and fine-mesh screening. The column samples will measure 10 by 10 cm and will be removed in 10-cm levels. If natural strata are visible, soil from those strata will be segregated within the column samples. The soil from each 10-cm level will be placed in labeled plastic bags for transport to the laboratory. Additional soil

samples from hearths or other features will also be placed in labeled plastic bags.

- *Protein Residue:* Up to 10 flaked lithic specimens (projectile points or apparent scraping tools) will be placed in plastic zip-closure bags for protein residue analysis. To avoid contamination these will receive minimal handling.

Laboratory Procedures and Cataloging

At the completion of fieldwork, materials collected in the field will be transported to the AECOM laboratory. The materials will arrive at the laboratory in labeled plastic or paper bags placed in labeled cardboard banker's boxes (exceptions may include extremely large artifacts such as complete metates; these will be tied with string and labeled tags attached). The boxes will be placed in a check-in area of the lab, where the arriving materials will be checked against the field logs. Once check-in is complete, the materials will be washed, with the exception of soil and column samples and pieces that may be selected for special studies or that may be useful for such studies in the future. Groundstone, for example, will not typically be washed unless necessary for typological identification. Projectile points and other flaked stone tools, which may contain protein residues, will also not be washed unless necessary for adequate description and analysis. Washed materials will be air-dried in labeled drying racks and rebagged for cataloging.

Upon completion of the washing and drying, the materials will be separated into major classes (flaked stone debitage and tools; groundstone; bone tools; modified and unmodified shell; faunal bone; column samples; and the like) and entered into a master catalog. The catalog will be in Microsoft Access or Excel and will include catalog number, provenience, material type, counts, and weights.

As indicated above, a series of column samples will be taken from selected units, and additional soil samples will be taken as appropriate from hearths or other features. Soil from these samples will be subjected to flotation by gently agitating it in water to separate the light from heavy fraction. The heavy fraction will be screened through 1/16-inch mesh hardware cloth, dried, and sorted. Identified cultural materials will be analyzed according to the procedures discussed below. The light fraction will also be sorted and materials that may relate to prehistoric cultural activities (such as charcoal or carbonized seeds) will be collected and analyzed by the paleobotanical specialist. Initial processing of the column and soil samples will be undertaken at the AECOM laboratory.

Analysis. The analyses of collected materials will commence after the completion of the master catalog. Although specific procedures for the analyses will depend to some extent on the findings at individual sites, the data currently at hand do indicate several classes of materials likely to be recovered. These include flaked stone artifacts, ground and battered artifacts, fire-affected rock, and faunal remains. The analyses of these materials will be directed at providing data useful in addressing the research issues discussed previously.

Debitage Analysis. The analyzed lithic debitage will be sorted into gross categories according to size, material type, and amount of cortex. Following that, samples of debitage from selected proveniences will be analyzed in detail. Analytical variables will include the following:

- *Material Type:* As discussed above, material type may be useful in assessing mobility and exchange patterns. For the present analysis, *volcanic* refers to material derived from extruded igneous rocks that have crystallized on the surface at atmospheric pressures. Common examples are basalt, dacite, and rhyolite. The term *metavolcanic* refers to the same volcanic minerals that have been metamorphosed by heat and pressure. The term *cryptocrystalline* (CCS) refers to rocks or minerals that are high in silicates such as chert and chalcedony.

- *Completeness:* Debitage assemblages from Southern California often contain high frequencies of incomplete flakes, which are usually uninformative with respect to other variables relating to technology. For this reason, flakes that are missing substantial portions of the proximal, distal, or lateral edges will be considered incomplete and will not be further analyzed.

- *Flake Size:* In a general sense, the relative size of individual flakes can provide basic information on tool production; for example, evenly distributed size categories might suggest that the full range of production took place on-site; while higher frequencies of small flakes could suggest that only late-stage tool finishing and retouch took place there. This, in turn, has implications with respect to mobility and site function. To assess size, the debitage will be sorted into five size categories (<1 cm, 1.1–2 cm, 2.1-3 cm, 3.1–4 cm, and >4 cm) based on maximum flake length.

- *Cortex:* Similar to flake size, the amount of cortex represented in debitage assemblages can provide information on stage of production. Higher frequencies of cortical flakes suggest early-stage production, for

example, and could suggest procurement in the local area. Noncortical flakes are later stage. Categories for cortex amount include primary flakes (cortex completely covering the dorsal side), secondary (cortex partially covering the dorsal side), and interior (no cortex).

- *Technological Stage:* Technological analysis can provide important information on the types of and variability of tools that are manufactured on-site. Major categories to be used in the debitage analysis include core reduction, biface reduction, pressure reduction, and angular waste. Core reduction flakes are identified as having platforms that are thick and wide in relation to the flake, usually with a single facet, although multiple facets may occasionally be present. Dorsal flake scars are variable but generally few in number and originate from a single direction. The flakes are flat in long section and usually have contracting terminations. Biface reduction flakes typically expand and are curved or twisted in longitudinal cross section. They have multiple flake scars, particularly on late-stage flakes that originate in different directions. Platforms are small in relation to the flake and may have either single or multiple facets. Terminations are feathered, thin, and have small edge angles. Pressure flakes are defined as the flakes removed from along the margins of tools in order to thin and sharpen the edges. Angular waste is defined as chunks of materials that lack the attributes of flakes.

Flaked Stone Tools. Flaked stone tools will be separated into several categories. These include flake tools, which include flakes that have been modified along the edge by minimal, intentional flaking (modified flakes); flakes that are unifacially retouched along one or more margins, with the retouch extending across one face (unifaces); and flakes that exhibit use wear but are otherwise unmodified (utilized flakes). The assemblage may also include tools that are retouched along one or more margins, with the retouch extending across both faces (bifaces), and projectile points.

- *Flake Tools:* Standard measures of size, weight, and material will be recorded for each flake tool, as well as completeness, flake type, and type of modification. Flake type refers to whether the flake was struck from a core or biface, an important consideration in assessing how lithic materials were transported across the landscape. Type of modification will refer to how the edge was modified, i.e., obverse, inverse, alternating, and bifacial. Additionally, the number of modified edges will be recorded as a potential measure of the intensity of use of these artifacts.

- *Bifaces:* Attributes recorded for bifaces will include material, size, weight, completeness, and production stage. Material categories will be similar to those described above. Size will be measured by length, width, and thickness; for broken pieces, incomplete dimensions will not be included in the analyses. Production stage of each biface will be identified with reference to the five-stage sequence.

- *Projectile Points:* Although projectile points are typically (but not always) bifaces, they will be analyzed with reference to a number of additional attributes, including distal and proximal shoulder angles, neck widths, notch opening index, and basal width. These and the standard measures of length, width, and thickness will be applied to standard projectile point keys to assign points to types.

Groundstone Artifacts. For this analysis, each groundstone artifact will be assigned to a specific subcategory based on attributes suggestive of the item's function. For the present effort, it is anticipated that these subtypes will include milling implements, vessels, ritual paraphernalia, other groundstone tools, and undifferentiated groundstone artifacts. Milling implements are those used to reduce intermediate substances to a finer texture through the process of grinding, crushing, pounding, or pulverizing. Substances reduced by this process are typically vegetal resources but may also include animal products or pigments and clays. Groundstone artifacts falling within this class include netherstones and handstones. Netherstones and handstones are counterparts to one another in the milling process, with netherstones being the stationary surface on which the movable handstone is used. Subtypes of handstones identified during the present analysis will most likely consist of manos and pestles, while netherstones will likely include metates and mortars.

Recorded attributes of handstones will include shouldering, shaping, pecking, and battering, and evidence for heat alteration. Manos will also be recorded as bifacial or unifacial. Metates will be categorized as "slab" or "basin" metates based on whether they exhibit any discernible depression on their grinding surfaces. Artifacts classified as mortars have basins exhibiting use-wear resulting from crushing, pounding, or abrading. Bowls, however, do not evidence use-wear, except in those instances when striations associated with stirring are present. The presence of broad basins and flat bottoms also distinguishes bowls from mortars, which usually possess round bottoms and conical-shaped basins. In cases where examination of these attributes does not reveal any clear indication as to whether an artifact was a mortar or bowl, a subtype of "mortar/bowl" may be applied.

The length, width, and thickness of all complete and fragmentary groundstone specimens will be measured and cataloged. Length is measured at the longest axis and width is measured at the axis perpendicular to length. Thickness measurements are taken at the thickest cross section. Each complete artifact and fragment will be examined macroscopically in an effort to identify indicators of patterned wear resulting from grinding activities on the operating surface of the tool. Such indicators include striations, crushed grains, leveled areas, and sheen or polish. Macroscopic examination will include observation of the specimens under high and low intensity light, and under both direct and cross lighting.

Evidence of pre-use manufacture or shaping will also be documented. Shaping is typically indicated by the presence of battering scars and/or pecking of the tool's ends or edges, and/or by grinding and polishing. Unshaped groundstone items will be categorized as "expedient" tools, while those exhibiting one or more of the characteristics associated with shaping will be categorized as "designed" tools. The number of surfaces evidencing use-wear will be noted for each specimen. Unifacial items are those with a single operating surface, bifacial indicates two operating surfaces, and multi-facial indicates the presence of three or more operating surfaces. Evidence of resurfacing or retexturing of each tool's operating surface/s will also be noted.

Faunal Remains. Each identified piece of animal bone will be sorted into identifiable and unidentifiable categories by both element and taxon. They then will be identified to genus or species where possible. When such identification is not possible, elements will be identified to the family, order, or class level. Specimens identified only to the class level (particularly mammals) will be separated into size categories of small, medium, and large animals. Those that cannot be identified at least to the class level will be simply identified as vertebrate bone. When possible each specimen will be identified to element (skull, humerus, femur, etc.). Identified portions of the elements, such as distal, proximal, or shaft, will also be recorded. Degree of burning will also be recorded, as well as any cultural or noncultural modifications such as cutmarks, polishing, weathering, gnawing, or digestive pitting.

Because some of the bone (particularly bone of burrowing animals) may be intrusive, attempts will be made to distinguish culturally occurring from naturally occurring specimens. Various published methods will be applied to this effort, with primary factors including degree of weathering, color, presence of digestive pitting, staining, percentage of juvenile individuals, and distinctive feathering of long bone ends.

Marine shell recovered during the testing will be sorted according to species. Because the shell is likely to be highly fragmentary, the represented species will be quantified by weight rather than counts. Hinges, however, will be counted and applied to estimates of minimum numbers of individuals.

Plant Remains. Analyzed plant remains are likely to include macrofossils (charred seeds), charcoal, pollen, and phytoliths. Plant macrofossils will be targeted through flotation of soil from column samples or features. Pollen and phytoliths will be recovered from both soil samples and washes of selected groundstone artifacts.

Curation. Recovered cultural materials will be curated at the San Diego Archaeological Center, which meets the requirements set forth in federal regulation 36 CFR Part 79 (Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections) and State of California Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Collections.

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. A paleontological records check was conducted by Dr. Samuel McLeod, Vertebrate Paleontology Division of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County on December 6, 2010. The records check indicated that there are no known vertebrate fossil localities that lie directly within the project boundaries. However, amongst the same sedimentary deposits, vertebrate fossil localities have been documented in the general project vicinity, although not within the project site itself. This is further discussed below.

Miocene Conejo Volcanic. Just beyond the northwestern boundary of the project site are some exposures of the Miocene Conejo Volcanics which, is composed of intrusive and extrusive igneous rocks. However, no recognizable vertebrate fossils will occur in this rock unit.

Quaternary Alluvium. The project site contains within its boundaries, a layer of younger Quaternary Alluvium that is deposited at the surface level. These deposits are derived primarily as fluvial deposits from the drainage along the lower elevation side of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. These surface Quaternary deposits do not generally yield significant vertebrate fossil specimens but, they are underlain at shallow depth by older rocks that may contain significant vertebrate fossils. The closest vertebrate fossil locality from older Quaternary deposits is LACM 1213, north of the project site between Mulholland Highway and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, which produced fossil specimens of horse, *Equus*, and ground sloth, *Paramylodon*. Another vertebrate fossil locality (LACM5878) is located off of Long Valley Road in Hidden Hills, just west-northwest of the project site and produced a fossil mastodon skeleton, *Mammut*.

Late Miocene Upper Topanga Formation. Located just outside the southeastern portion of the project site are some exposures of the marine late Miocene Upper Topanga Formation. The closest vertebrate fossil localities from this formation are LACM 5087, 5651, 6257, 6381 and 7367-7368. These localities all occur west-northwest of the project site along Old Topanga Road on the south side of Calabasas Highlands, except for LACM 7368 which, is near the top of the ridge on the south side of the Calabasas Highlands. The aforementioned localities produced fossil specimens of eagle ray, *Myliobatis*, bonito shark, *Isurus*, snaggletooth shark, *Hemipristis*, basking shark, *Cetorhinus*, giant sea bass, *Stereolepis*, grouper, *Lompoquia*, herring, *Ganolytes cameo*, sea cows, *Dugongidae*, and a primitive baleen whale, *Nannocetus*.

Middle Miocene Lower Topanga Formation. In areas of more elevated terrain, specifically along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, there are exposures of the middle Miocene Lower Topanga Formation. Although many of the older Topanga Formation localities in the project vicinity do not distinguish between the older Lower Topanga Formation and the younger Upper Topanga Formation, the closest fossil vertebrate localities are from the Lower Topanga Formation (LACM 4512 and 7511). Locality LACM 4512 is situated west of the project site along Stunt Road and locality LACM 7511 is situated further west-southwest of the project site southwest of Saddle Peak. These localities produced fossil specimens of undetermined carnivore, *Carnivora*, horse, *Equidae*, camel, *Camelidae*, deer, *Cervidae*, and pocket mouse, *Proheteromys*, from the Fernwood Member of the Lower Topanga Formation.

Excavations in the igneous rocks of the Conejo Volcanics exposed in the project site are not anticipated to encounter any vertebrate fossils. Shallow excavations in the younger Quaternary Alluvium deposits exposed in the drainage of the project site are not anticipated to encounter significant vertebrate fossils. Deeper excavations in the latter areas that extend down into older deposits, or any excavations in the exposures of the Lower Topanga Formation or the Upper Topanga Formation, however, may encounter significant fossil vertebrate remains. With the implementation of mitigation measure CUL-4, potential impacts to paleontological resources would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

CUL-4 In the event any paleontological resources are encountered during earthmoving activities, the construction contractor shall cease activity in the affected area until the discovery can be evaluated by a qualified paleontological resources specialist in accordance with the provisions of CEQA §15064.5.

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. The records search indicated that no previously-recorded formal cemeteries are located within a ½-mile radius of the project area. Although Native American burials were reportedly found associated with CA-LAN-8 in the 1930s, the described location of these burial locations is outside of the anticipated project area. The location of where these burials were reportedly found has been extensively developed in the

modern era. No formal cemeteries or other places of human internment are known to exist in the project site itself and no surface evidence of human remains were observed during the cultural resource survey or during excavation and monitoring completed in 2009 through 2010 as part of the Topanga Library Project

A lack of surface evidence and the fact that human remains have not been encountered in the area since the 1930s, however, does not preclude the possibility that unknown and unanticipated human remains may be encountered within the project site. With the implementation of mitigation measure CUL-5, potential impacts to human remains would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

CUL-5 Native American burials are often unmarked and can be disturbed during earth moving activities. As the activities proposed within the ROW are in a restricted location, avoidance of burials is difficult if not impossible. In the event human remains are encountered during construction activities, all excavation or disturbance in the area within the vicinity of the remains shall halt in accordance with Health and Safety Code §7050.5, Public Resources Code §5097.98 and 5097.94, and §15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines and the Los Angeles County Coroner shall be contacted. Within 24 hours of notification, the coroner will call the NAHC if the remains are thought to be Native American. If the remains are deemed Native American in origin, the Native American Heritage Commission immediately designates a person or persons it believes to be the most likely descended from the deceased (MLD) under Public Resources Code §5097.98. The MLD will then recommend means for treating and disposing with appropriate dignity the human remains and associated items, within 48 hours. will be contacted to request consultation with a Native American Heritage Commission -appointed Most-Likely Descendant pursuant to Public Resources Code §5097.98 and CCR §15064.5.

4.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the Project:

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the state geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

No Impact. The project site is located within the seismically active Southern California region and has the potential to be subjected to ground shaking hazards associated with earthquake events on active faults. The closest known faults are the Malibu Coast Fault, located approximately 2.3 miles south of the project site; and the Santa Monica Fault, located approximately five miles northeast of the project site (Southern California Earthquake Data Center 2010). The project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone (California Geological Survey 1999). Additionally, the proposed project involves the relocation of utility lines; no new habitable structures would be built. Further, following the installation of the underground utility lines, the project site would be returned to its existing condition. Therefore, no impacts would occur related to the risk of surface rupture due to faulting.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

No Impact. The project site is located within the seismically active Southern California region. As such, the proposed project could experience effects of ground shaking resulting from activity on Southern California fault systems. However, as discussed in the response to Section 4.6, Geology and Soils, Question (a)(i) above, the proposed project would not involve building new habitable structures. Therefore, no impacts would occur related to ground shaking.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

No Impact. Liquefaction is the process in which saturated silty to cohesionless soils below the groundwater table temporarily lose strength during strong ground shaking as a consequence of increased pore pressure during conditions such as those caused by an earthquake. Earthquake waves cause water pressures to increase in the sediment and the sand grains to lose contact with each other, leading the sediment to lose strength and behave like a liquid.

The project site is located in an area identified as being susceptible to liquefaction (California Geological Survey 1997). However, the proposed project does not include building any new habitable structures. Furthermore, following the installation of the underground utility lines, the

project site would be returned to its existing condition. Therefore, no impact with respect to liquefaction would occur.

iv) Landslides?

No Impact. According to the State of California Seismic Hazards Map, the project site is located within an area identified as having potential for earthquake-induced landslides (California Geological Survey 1997). The area surrounding the project site contains slopes that have the potential for landslides. However, the proposed project would not build any new habitable structures. Furthermore, following the installation of the underground utility lines, the project site would be returned to its existing condition. Therefore, no impact with respect to landslides would occur.

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

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. A significant impact may occur if the proposed project were to result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil.

Construction

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would expose soils for a limited time, allowing for possible erosion. However, construction activities are temporary in nature and substantial erosion would not occur. Additionally, excavation of the project site would be limited to that necessary for the installation of the underground utility lines.

Two utility poles are located on the southeast bank of Topanga Creek, immediately northwest of the U.S. Post Office and approximately 90 feet south of Old Topanga Canyon Road. The bank is completely bare and void of vegetation, exceedingly steep, and prone to erosion issues. Pole removal activities, to allow for removal of the pole base, include moderate excavation activities which may result in bank erosion. Implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, would result in a less-than-significant impact.

Pursuant to the NPDES construction stormwater program (Stormwater Phase II Final Rule - Small Construction Program), development projects disturbing between one to five acres of soils are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ (EPA 2000, California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). As the total construction area would be approximately 3.6 acres in size, the proposed project is subject to NPDES Stormwater Phase II Final Rule - Small Construction Program, which requires obtaining a General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ. This also requires the development and implementation of a SWPPP (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). The SWPPP specifies BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, aimed at controlling construction-related pollutants that originate from the site as a result of construction-related activities. As discussed in Section

2.6.1, Best Management Practices, these BMPs include measures for temporary soil stabilization (e.g. preservation of existing vegetation; hydroseeding; and slope drains); temporary sediment control (e.g. silt fence; storm drain protection; and wind erosion control); and tracking control (e.g. stabilized construction entrance/exit) (DPW 2005b). Further, construction projects that include grading activities during the rainy season must also develop a WWECP, which would be implemented in conjunction with the SWPPP.

Implementation of BIO-1; implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices; preparation of a WWECP; and compliance with the Los Angeles County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including, if applicable, preparation of a complete notification package to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office per the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, prior to project approval would result in a less-than-significant impact. No additional mitigation measures are required.

Operation

Long-term operation of the proposed project would not result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil. Following relocation of the utility lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, the project site would be paved returned to its existing condition; thus, no exposed areas subject to erosion would be created or affected by the proposed project. Therefore, no long-term impacts related to erosion or the loss of topsoil would occur.

c) Be located on a geological 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 Impact. One of the major types of liquefaction induced ground failure is lateral spreading of mildly sloping ground. Lateral spreading involves primarily side-to-side movement of earth materials due to ground shaking and is evidenced by near-vertical cracks with predominantly horizontal movement of the soil mass involved. As discussed in the responses to Section 4.6, Geology and Soils, Questions (a)(iii) and (a)(iv) above, the project site is located in an area identified as being at risk for liquefaction and landslides. However, all construction activities are anticipated to occur along the existing ROW. Further, the proposed project would not build any new habitable structures. The project site would be returned to its existing condition following completion of construction activities. Therefore, no impacts related to landslides and liquefaction would occur.

Subsidence is the lowering of surface elevation due to changes occurring underground and is associated with earth fissures, which are cracks in the ground surface that can be more than 100 feet deep. Collapsible soils consist of loose dry materials that collapse and compact under the addition of water or excessive loading. Collapsible soils are prevalent throughout the southwestern United States, specifically in areas of young alluvial fans. Soil collapse occurs when the land surface is saturated at depths greater than those reached by typical rain events. Because

of the unknown nature of the sediment, the project site could potentially be susceptible to subsidence and collapse. However, the proposed project would only involve utility improvements and would be constructed in accordance with the most current versions of all applicable federal, state, and local codes. Compliance with the existing regulations would ensure that impacts are less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. Expansive soils are clay-based soils that tend to expand (increase in volume) as they absorb water and shrink (lessen in volume) as water is drawn away. Expansive soils can occur in any climate; however, arid and semi-arid regions are subject to more extreme cycles of expansion and contraction than more consistently moist areas. The hazard associated with expansive soils lie in the structural damage that may occur when buildings are placed on these soils. Expansive soils are often present in liquefaction zones due to the high level of groundwater typically associated with liquefiable soils.

As discussed in the response to Section 4.6, Geology and Soils, Question (a)(iii), the project site is located in an area identified as being at risk for liquefaction. However, the proposed project would be constructed in accordance with the most current versions of all applicable federal, state, and local codes. Furthermore, the proposed project would not build any new habitable structures. Compliance with the existing regulations would minimize risk relating to liquefaction and ensure that impacts are less than significant.

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

No Impact. The proposed project involves the relocation of existing utility lines. No septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed as part of the project. Therefore, no impacts associated with use of a septic system would occur.

4.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the Project:

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.

Certain gases in the earth's atmosphere, classified as greenhouse gases (GHG), play a critical role in determining the earth's surface temperature. A portion of the solar radiation that enters earth's atmosphere is absorbed by the earth's surface, and a smaller portion of this radiation is reflected back toward space. Infrared radiation is absorbed by GHGs; as a result, infrared radiation released from the earth 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. Without the naturally occurring greenhouse effect, Earth would not be able to support life as we know it.

GHGs are present in the atmosphere naturally, are released by natural sources, or are formed from secondary reactions taking place in the atmosphere. The following are the gases that are widely seen as the principal contributors to human-induced global climate change:

- Carbon dioxide (CO_2)
- Methane (CH_4)
- Nitrous oxide (N_2O)
- Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)
- Perfluorocarbons (PFCs)
- Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF_6)

GHG emissions related to human activities are responsible for intensifying the greenhouse effect and have led to a trend of unnatural warming of the earth's atmosphere and oceans, with corresponding effects on global circulation patterns and climate (IPCC 2007).

Global warming potential (GWP) is a concept developed to compare the ability of each GHG to trap heat in the atmosphere relative to another gas; the global warming potential is based on several factors, including the relative effectiveness of a gas to absorb infrared radiation and length of time that the gas remains in the atmosphere ("atmospheric lifetime"). The GWP of each gas is measured relative to CO_2, the most abundant GHG. GHGs with lower emissions rates than CO_2 may still contribute to climate change because they are more effective at absorbing outgoing infrared radiation than CO_2. The concept of CO_2-equivalents (CO_2e) is used to account for the different GWP potentials of GHGs to absorb infrared radiation.

Heavy-duty off-road equipment, materials transport, and worker commutes during construction of the proposed project would result in exhaust emissions of GHGs. GHG emissions generated by construction would be primarily in the form of CO_2. Although emissions of other GHGs, such as CH_4 and N_2O, are important with respect to global climate change, the emission levels of these other GHGs from on- and off-road vehicles used during construction are relatively small compared with CO_2 emissions, even when factoring in the relatively larger global warming potential of CH_4 and N_2O.

Total project construction GHG emissions were estimated using the methodology discussed earlier under Section 4.3, Air Quality. As shown in Table 4.7-1, total project emissions would be approximately 1,258 metric tons of CO_2e. This assumes the maximum daily emissions would continue for 24 months of the project construction and is a conservative estimate of GHG emissions.

Table 4.7-1
Estimated Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	CO_2e (Metric Tons per Year)
Construction GHG Emissions	1,259
30-year Amortization	42
SCAMQD Proposed Threshold	3,000
Exceed Significance Threshold?	No

Source: AECOM 2010

At the time of this analysis, the SCAQMD has only adopted a significance threshold for GHG emissions of 10,000 metric tons per year, where SCAQMD is the Lead Agency for an industrial project. SCAQMD has not adopted thresholds of significance for other industrial projects or for residential, commercial, or mixed use projects. The GHG CEQA Significance Threshold Stakeholder Working Group has been meeting to discuss proposed thresholds for GHG emissions; these thresholds are anticipated to be adopted in early 2011.

Based on conversations with SCAQMD, the recommended threshold for all projects will be proposed at 3,000 metric tons per year. Construction emissions should be amortized over 30 years and added to the operational emissions of the project. The proposed project does not have any operational emissions, so the construction emissions were amortized and compared to the proposed threshold.

As shown in Table 4.7-1, the proposed threshold of significance is not exceeded by either the amortized emissions or the total project construction-related GHG emissions. Therefore, the proposed project would not generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. The impact would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policies or regulations for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.

In September 2006, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 establishes regulatory, reporting, and market mechanisms to achieve quantifiable reductions in GHG emissions and establishes a cap on statewide GHG emissions. It requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. In October 2008, ARB published its *Climate Change AB 32 Scoping Plan*, which is the state's plan to achieve the GHG reductions in California required by AB 32. The Scoping Plan was approved by ARB on December 11, 2008.

In addition to reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, AB 32 directed ARB to develop a Scoping Plan and identify a list of early action GHG reduction measures. In June 2007, ARB approved a list of 37 early action measures, including three discrete early action measures (Low Carbon Fuel Standard, Restrictions on High Global Warming Potential Refrigerants, and Landfill Methane Capture). Discrete early action measures are measures that are required to be adopted as regulations and made effective no later than January 1, 2010, the date established by Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 38560.5. The early action items focus on industrial production processes, agriculture, and transportation sectors. Early action items are either not specifically applicable to the proposed project or would result in a reduction of GHG emissions associated with the project.

None of the measures listed in ARB's Scoping Plan directly relate to construction activity. While the Scoping Plan does include some measures that would indirectly address GHG emissions levels associated with construction activity, including the phasing in of cleaner technology for diesel engine fleets (including construction equipment) and the development of a Low Carbon Fuel Standard, successful implementation of these measures will predominantly depend on the development of future laws and policies at the state level, rather than separate actions by individual agencies or local governments. Thus, it is assumed that those polices formulated under the mandate of AB 32 that are applicable to construction-related activity, either directly or indirectly, would be implemented during construction of the proposed project if those policies and laws are developed before the commencement of project construction. Therefore, it is assumed that project construction would not conflict with the Scoping Plan.

The proposed project would not conflict with the General Plan, the AB 32 Scoping Plan, or any other plans, policies or regulations for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Neither the County nor any other agency with jurisdiction over this project has adopted climate change or GHG reduction measures with which the Specific Plan would conflict. The impact would be less than significant.

4.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the Project:

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

Less than Significant Impact. A significant impact may occur if the proposed project would involve the use or disposal of hazardous materials as part of it routine operations, or would have the potential to generate toxic or otherwise hazardous emissions that could adversely affect sensitive receptors.

Construction

The proposed project extends approximately 1,600 feet along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. The proposed project would remove approximately 28 utility poles comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). Construction is anticipated to start in fall 2012 and take approximately 18–24 months to complete, ending in summer/fall 2013. It is estimated that the project site would be returned to full operation by the end of spring 2014.

Construction activities are temporary in nature, and would involve the limited transport, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials. Such hazardous materials could include on-site fueling/servicing of construction equipment, and the transport of fuels, lubricating fluids, and solvents. These types of materials are not acutely hazardous, and all storage, handling, and disposal of these materials are regulated by the California Department of Toxic Substances (DTSC), United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD), and the Los Angeles County Health Department. The transport, use, and disposal of construction-related hazardous materials would occur in conformance with all applicable local, federal, state, and local regulations governing such activities. Therefore, short-term construction impacts would be less than significant.

Operation

Long-term operation of the proposed project would not involve the transport, storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Thus, project operation would not pose a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Thus, the proposed project is not anticipated to generate industrial wastes or toxic substances during operation, and impacts would be less than significant.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous material into the environment. As discussed in the response to Section 4.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Question (a), construction activities would involve limited transport, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials, which could include on-site fueling/servicing of construction equipment, and the transport of fuels, lubricating fluids, and solvents. However, these activities are temporary in nature, and would be subject to applicable federal, state, and local health and safety requirements. However, it is possible that previously unidentified pockets of soil contamination may be discovered during construction activities. Any contamination would be remediated in accordance with DTSC standards prior to the installation of the underground utility lines. Therefore, impacts related to the release of hazardous materials into the environment would be less than significant.

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 Impact. The project site is located within the 0.25-mile radius of Topanga Elementary School, located at 22098 Topanga School Road (Topanga Elementary Charter School 2010). Construction activities associated with the proposed project would involve the handling of hazardous materials (fuels, lubricants, and oils). However, the handling of minor amounts of hazardous materials, as previously discussed, would be in compliance with applicable regulations. Additionally, construction activities are temporary in nature, and would involve the limited transport, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials. Furthermore, operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to generate industrial wastes or toxic substances. Therefore, impacts of the proposed project related to the emission and handling of hazardous materials within 0.25 miles of a school would be less than significant, and no further analysis is required.

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

No Impact. California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires various state agencies to compile lists of hazardous waste disposal facilities, unauthorized release from underground storage tanks, contaminated drinking water wells, and solid waste facilities from which there is known migration of hazardous waste and submit such information to the Secretary for Environmental Protection on at least an annual basis. This question would apply only if the project site is included on any of the above referred to lists and, therefore, would pose an environmental hazard to surrounding sensitive uses.

The project site is not included on any hazardous waste site lists including the DTSC EnviroStor database, the State Water Resources Control Board GeoTracker site, the Cortese list, Superfund Site list, or other lists compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code (DTSC 2010a, California State Water Resources Control Board 2010, DTSC 2010b, and EPA 2010b). As such, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. No impacts would occur, and no further analysis is required.

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

No Impact. The project site is not located within two miles of a public airport, nor is it located within an airport land use plan. The nearest public airport/public use airport is the Santa Monica Municipal Airport, located approximately 10 miles southeast of the project site (Airnav.com 2010). Given this distance, the proposed project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. No impact related to public airport uses would occur, and no further analysis is required.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. This question would apply only if the project site were in the vicinity of a private airstrip and would subject area residents and workers to a safety hazard. The proposed project is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. Therefore, no impact related to private airstrip uses would occur, and no further analysis is required.

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

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. A significant impact may occur if the project were to interfere with roadway operations used in conjunction with an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan, or would generate sufficient traffic congestion that would interfere with the execution of such a plan. Topanga Canyon Boulevard is designated by the County as a Primary Disaster Route (DPW 2010a). Disaster routes are roadways that have been pre-identified for use during times of crisis to bring in emergency personnel, equipment, and supplies to impacted areas in order to save lives, protect property, and minimize impacts to the environment. During a disaster, these routes have priority for clearing, repairing, and restoration over all other roads (DPW 2010a). Additional disaster routes within the project vicinity include Pacific Coast Highway, located approximately 3.6 miles south of the project site; the Ventura Freeway (US 101), approximately 5.5 miles north of the project site; and Malibu Canyon Road, approximately 5.8 miles west of the project site.

Construction of the proposed project would involve temporary lane closures, which may result in significant impacts to the County-designated disaster route. However, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in full roadway closures and that operation of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard would be preserved throughout construction. It is anticipated that vehicle access to intersecting streets would be limited during some of the construction period. Transmission trenches would be in the middle of the street such that traffic lanes may periodically be closed during the construction process. Recessed steel plates are anticipated to be used during the week in order to cover any open trenches. Additionally, it is anticipated that access to individual driveways may be temporarily restricted during working hours, but open at the end of each day. In the event individual driveways are impacted, the accepted notification protocol currently in place between DPW and SCE will be utilized. In addition, DPW and SCE would coordinate with both the Los Angeles County Fire Department and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department prior to commencement of construction activities to ensure that emergency response vehicles are able to access and/or traverse the project site.

All construction activities would conform to the Los Angeles County Code, DPW specifications, and ADA guidelines, and would be undertaken in a manner consistent with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations regarding the handling and disposal of potentially discovered hazardous materials. Per the Los Angeles County Code (Section 12.08.440), daily construction activities associated with the proposed project would not occur between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., or at any time on Sundays or holidays, since such activities would generate loud noises and disturb persons occupying sleeping quarters in any adjacent dwelling, hotel, apartment, or other place of residence (Los Angeles County Code 2010). No person, other than an individual home owner engaged in the repair or construction of his/her single-family dwelling, would perform any construction or repair work of any kind or perform such work within 500 feet of land so occupied before 8:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m. on any Saturday or on a federal holiday, or at any time on any Sunday. Under certain conditions, the Los Angeles County may grant a waiver to allow limited construction activities to occur outside of the limits described above.

To minimize construction impacts, Los Angeles County would be required to prepare a construction traffic control plan with input from SCE, Caltrans, and applicable regulatory agencies. This plan provides a framework for the implementation of traffic control strategies and timely distribution of traffic-related information to emergency services, local citizens, and affected businesses. This would address such issues as access for local businesses and residents, truck routing, dust control, construction worker parking, hours of operation, potential temporary street closures, detouring, and materials storage. Construction crews would also be required to implement the standard BMPs, as discussed in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, during construction and to adhere to all applicable construction safety guidelines (DPW 2005b). Further, implementation of mitigation measures TRANS-1 through TRANS-3, as discussed in Section 4.16, Transportation and Traffic, during construction activities would reduce impacts to emergency response vehicles to a less-than-significant level. No additional mitigation measures are necessary.

h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

No Impact. The project site is located in an area identified by the County as being susceptible to a Very High Fire Hazard (DRP 2008b). However, the proposed project does not include building any new habitable structures. Neither construction nor operation of the proposed project would create the potential for wildland fires to occur within the vicinity. Therefore, no impacts related to wildland fires would occur and no further analysis is required.

4.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the Project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. The project site is situated within the Topanga Creek Watershed. Two major watercourses flow through Topanga. The Garapatos Creek, which flows south along SR 27, joins the Topanga Creek at the location of the project site. The Topanga Creek traverses the western portion of the project site. The hydrology of the area is such that runoff from the project site flows to the creek (Cotton/Bridges Associates 2003).

As further discussed in Section 4.4, Biological Resources, Question (c), Topanga Creek is listed as a Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act impaired water body. Under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, states, territories, and authorized tribes, are required to develop lists of impaired waters (EPA 2009a). Topanga Creek is a 2002 303(d)-listed impaired water body that flows into a Marine Protected Area. Coliform, metals, and historic pesticides were identified to impair the water quality in some streams within the Topanga Creek watershed, largely related to nonpoint source pollution (California Coastal Commission 2006).

Topanga Creek is also federally protected under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Section 404 regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into the waters of the United States. “Waters of the United States” defined as “relatively permanent, standing or continuously flowing bodies of water forming geographic features (EPA 2009b).”

Lastly, Topanga Creek is subject to the requirements of the CDFG’s Lake and Streambed Alteration Program (Sections 1600-1607). Protected waters include permanent or ephemeral streams and rivers within a bed or channel with potential to support aquatic life and riparian vegetation. The CDFG Lake and Streambed Alteration Program focuses on projects that have potential to “substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake or use materials from a streambed to notify the Department before beginning the project.” The notification requirement applies to any work undertaken in or near a river, stream, or lake that flows at least intermittently through a bed or channel (CDFG 2009). After CDFG receives a complete notification package, it will determine whether the proposed project would need a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement. CDFG will make this determination within 30 calendar days of receiving the notification package if applying for a regular agreement (i.e., an agreement for a term of five years or less). The 30-day time period does not apply to notifications for long-term agreements (i.e., agreements for a term greater than five years). A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement is required if CDFG determines that the activity may substantially adversely affect an existing fish and wildlife resource. If an agreement is required, CDFG would conduct an onsite inspection and prepare a draft agreement that would include measures to protect fish and wildlife resources (CDFG 2009).

Construction

Project construction activities have the potential to degrade water quality through the exposure of surface runoff (primarily rainfall) to exposed soils, dust, and other debris, as well as from runoff from construction equipment. As further discussed in the response to Section 4.6, Question (b), the total construction area would be approximately 3.6 acres in size. The proposed project would be required to comply with the NPDES Stormwater Phase II Final Rule - Small Construction Program requirements for stormwater discharges for development projects disturbing equal to or greater than 1 and less than 5 acres of soil (EPA 2000). NPDES Stormwater Phase II Final Rule requires obtaining a General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). This also requires the development and implementation of a SWPPP, which would specify appropriate BMPs in order to satisfy or exceed federal, state, and local mandated guidelines for stormwater treatment to control erosion and to protect the quality of surface water runoff during construction activities, in compliance with NPDES requirements and Los Angeles County Code. As discussed in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, these BMPs, may include, but are not limited to, the following (DPW 2005b):

- Sediments shall not be discharged to the storm drain system or receiving waters.
- Sediments generated on the project site shall be contained within the project site using appropriate BMPs.
- No construction-related materials, waste, spills, or residue shall be discharged from the project site to streets, drainage facilities, receiving waters, or adjacent property by wind or runoff.
- Non-storm-water runoff from equipment, vehicle washing, or any other activity shall be contained within the project site using appropriate BMPs.
- Erosion from exposed topsoil slopes and channels shall be prevented.
- Grading during the wet season shall be minimized. All erosion-susceptible slopes shall be covered, planted, or protected in any way that prevents sediment discharge from the project site.
- If the proposed project may be active during the rainy season (October 1 to April 15), the contractor shall prepare an accumulated precipitation procedure (APP) for review and approval by the County engineering department before any discharge from the proposed project. The APP shall describe the location of proposed discharges, the BMPs to prevent pollution, and the actual equipment to be used. The APP shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with the DPW Construction Site BMPs Manual (BMP Manual) and the SWPPP Preparation Manual,

Further, per DPW guidelines, construction projects one acre and greater that include grading activities during the rainy season must also develop a WWECP, which would be implemented in conjunction with the SWPPP (DPW 2008).

Upon completion of construction design, it is recommended that DPW, in coordination with SCE, consult CDFG regarding the applicability of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement for this project. After consultation with CDFG, DPW may be required to submit a complete notification package and fee to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office. After CDFG receives a complete notification package, it will determine whether a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement is required for the proposed project. CDFG will make this determination within 30 calendar days of receiving the notification package if applying for a regular agreement (i.e., an agreement for a term of five years or less). The 30-day time period does not apply to notifications for long-term agreements (i.e., agreements for a term greater than five years). A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be required if the activity is determined to substantially adversely affect an existing fish and wildlife resource. If a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement is required, CDFG would conduct an onsite inspection and prepare a draft agreement that would include measures to protect fish and wildlife resources (CDFG 2009). As such, mitigation measure BIO-1 is provided in Section 4.4, Biological Resources. BIO-1 requires initial consultation with CDFG in order to determine the applicability of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement for the proposed project. No further mitigation measures are required.

Implementation of BIO-1; implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices; preparation of a WWECP; and compliance with the Los Angeles County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including, if applicable, preparation of a complete notification package to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office per the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, prior to project approval would result in a less-than-significant impact. No additional mitigation measures are required.

Operation

Following the installation of the underground utility lines, the project site would be returned to its current condition and use as the road rights-of-way of Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road. No treatment or filtering of stormwater runoff would be required as operation of the proposed project would not result in un-permitted discharges into the stormwater system. No operational water quality impacts would occur.

b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

No Impact. The project site is almost entirely covered with impermeable surfaces. Construction would occur within the existing ROW. Following installation of the underground utility lines, the project site would be returned to its existing condition. Thus, implementation of the proposed project would result in the same amount of permeable surfaces as under existing conditions.

Further, no groundwater wells are located on-site and the proposed project does not involve the withdrawal of groundwater (DPW 2010b). Therefore, the proposed project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. No impacts would occur.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. As previously discussed, Topanga Creek is located directly west of the project site. The project site is almost entirely covered with impermeable surfaces. Despite the project site's proximity to Topanga Creek, implementation of the proposed project would not alter the course of this natural waterway, nor would it substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the project site.

Following installation of the underground utility lines, the project site would be returned to its existing condition. Thus, implementation of the proposed project would result in equivalent amounts of permeable surfaces as under existing conditions. In addition, the proposed project would be required to meet NPDES requirements for stormwater discharges. As the total construction area would be approximately 3.6 acres in size, the proposed project would be required to comply with the NPDES Stormwater Phase II Final Rule - Small Construction Program requirements for stormwater discharges for development projects disturbing equal to or greater than 1 and less than 5 acres of soil (EPA 2000). NPDES Stormwater Phase II Final Rule requires obtaining a General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). This also requires the development and implementation of a SWPPP (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). The SWPPP specifies BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, aimed at controlling construction-related pollutants that originate from the site as a result of construction-related activities (DPW 2005b). These BMPs are designed to meet or exceed federal, state, and local mandated guidelines for stormwater treatment to control erosion and to protect the quality of surface water runoff during construction activities, in compliance with NPDES requirements and Los Angeles County Code. Further, per DPW guidelines, construction projects one acre and greater that include grading activities during the rainy season must also develop a WWECP, which would be implemented in conjunction with the SWPPP (DPW 2008).

Implementation of BIO-1; implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices; preparation of a WWECP; and compliance with the Los Angeles County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including, if applicable, preparation of a complete notification package to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office per the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, prior to project approval would result in a less-than-significant impact related to siltation and/or erosion due to altered drainage patterns. No additional mitigation measures are required.

d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. Following implementation of the proposed project, the project site would be returned to its existing condition. Thus, implementation of the proposed project would result in the same amount of permeable surfaces as under existing conditions. Topanga Creek is located directly west of the project site. Despite the project site's proximity to Topanga Creek, implementation of the proposed project would not alter the course of this waterway or the existing drainage pattern of the project site. Furthermore, no flooding is expected to occur on- or off-site with implementation of BIO-1, which would require consultation with CDFG regarding the applicability of the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program; implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices; preparation of a WWECP; and compliance with the Los Angeles County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including, if applicable, preparation of a notification package to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office per the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program prior to project approval. Impacts would be less than significant. No additional mitigation measures are required.

e) 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?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. Due to the small size of the project site, construction of the proposed project would not result in substantial additional runoff that would exceed the capacity of the existing drainage ditches along Topanga Canyon Boulevard or Old Topanga Canyon Road.

Following implementation of the proposed project, the proposed project would result in equivalent amounts of permeable surfaces as under existing conditions. Thus, no increase in the amount of runoff from the project site is anticipated. The proposed project is not anticipated to create or contribute runoff which would exceed drainage system capacity, nor would it provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. The proposed project would adhere to NPDES permitting requirements. Further, implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1, which requires consultation with CDFG regarding the applicability of the Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement Program; implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices; preparation of a WWECP; and compliance with the Los Angeles County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including, if applicable, preparation of a notification package to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office per the Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement Program prior to project approval would result in less than significant impacts. No additional mitigation measures are required.

f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. As previously discussed, Topanga Canyon Creek is a 2002 303(d)-listed impaired water body that flows into a Marine Protected Area. Topanga Creek is also federally protected under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Section 404 regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into the waters of the United States. Lastly, Topanga Creek is subject to the requirements of CDFG's Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement Program (Sections 1600-1607). Upon completion of construction design, it is recommended CDFG is briefly consulted regarding the applicability of a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement for this project. If CDFG believes the final project design could have a substantial or adverse effect on the stream, and Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement may be required, and a complete notification package would be submitted. CDFG will issue a final determination on whether the proposed project would need a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement. CDFG will make this determination within 30 calendar days of receiving the notification package if applying for a regular agreement (i.e., an agreement for a term of five years or less). The 30-day time period does not apply to notifications for long-term agreements (i.e., agreements for a term greater than five years). If an agreement is required, CDFG would conduct an onsite inspection and prepare a draft agreement that would include measures to protect fish and wildlife resources (CDFG 2009). As such, mitigation measure BIO-1 is provided, as discussed in Section 4.4, Biological Resources. BIO-1 requires initial consultation with CDFG in order to determine the applicability of a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement for the proposed project. No additional mitigation measures are required.

Construction of the proposed project would include grading and other construction activities that could degrade water quality. However, the proposed project would be required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ, pursuant to the NPDES permitting program (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). The General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ requires the development and implementation of a SWPPP and construction BMPs (refer to Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices) that would be implemented to minimize erosion and control the quality of runoff water from the project site (DPW 2005b). Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1; implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices; preparation of a WWECP; and compliance with the Los Angeles County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including, if applicable, preparation of a complete notification package to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office per the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, prior to project approval would result in a less-than-significant impact during construction activities. No additional mitigation measures are required.

The project site primarily consists of impermeable surfaces. Operation of the proposed project would neither result in a change in the amount of impervious surface area nor result in an increase in stormwater runoff from the project site. Thus, construction and operation of the proposed

project would not substantially degrade water quality. Impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal flood hazard boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Pap or other flood hazard delineation map?

No Impact. A 100-year flood is one that has a one percent chance of occurring in any given year. The project site is located within an area designated as Zone X (0.2%) on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance rate map (FIRM) for the area (FEMA 2008). The Zone X (0.2%) designation indicates areas of 0.2 percent annual chance flood; areas of one percent annual change flood with average depths of less than one foot or with drainage areas less than one square mile; and areas protected by levees from one percent annual change flood (FEMA 2008).

Additionally, the project site is located in a designated floodway area, which is defined as the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain areas that must be kept free of encroachment so that the one percent annual chance flood can be carried without substantial increases in flood heights (FEMA 2008). Notwithstanding these designations, the proposed project does not include a residential component and, therefore, would not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area. No impacts related to a 100-year flood hazard area would occur and no further analysis is required.

h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows?

No Impact. As discussed in the response to Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, Question (g), the project site is designated as a floodway area in Zone X (0.2%) on the FEMA FIRM for the project site. However, the proposed project does not include building any habitable structures. Thus, the proposed project would not place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area that would impede or redirect flood flows. No impacts would occur, and no further analysis is required.

i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

No Impact. A significant impact may occur if a project were located in an area where a dam or levee could fail. The closest water feature is Topanga Creek, located directly west of the project site. As discussed in the response to Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, Question (g), the project site is located within a FEMA flood hazard area. Notwithstanding, the proposed project does not include building any new habitable structures and, following installation of the underground utility lines, the project site would be returned to its current condition. Thus, development of the proposed project would not expose people or structures to risk of loss, injury,

or death from flooding resulting from the failure of a levee or dam. No impacts would occur, and no further analysis is required.

j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

No Impact. Seiches are oscillations generated in enclosed bodies of water usually as a result of earthquake related ground shaking. A seiche wave has the potential to overflow the sides of a containing basin to inundate adjacent or downstream areas. The closest body of water is Topanga Creek, located directly west of the project site. However, this water feature is not of the nature that would result in a seiche.

Tsunamis are large ocean waves caused by the sudden water displacement that results from an underwater earthquake, landslide, or volcanic eruption, and affect low-lying areas along the coastline. The project site is located approximately 3.5 miles north of the Pacific Ocean at an elevation of approximately 755 feet above sea level. Additionally, the project site is not located within a designated Tsunami Inundation Area (California Department of Conservation 2009).

As further discussed in the response to Section 4.6, Geology and Soils, Question (a)(iv), the area surrounding the project site contains slopes that have the potential for landslides. These slopes also have the potential for mudflows. However, the proposed project does not include building any new habitable structures. Additionally, following implementation of the proposed project, the project site would be returned to its existing condition. Therefore, development of the proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. No impacts related to this issue would occur.

4.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the Project:

a) Physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The proposed project is not of the scale or nature that could physically divide an established community. The project site located in the unincorporated community of Topanga in western Los Angeles County and is contained within the existing road ROW along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The area adjacent to the project site is currently developed with single-family residences, commercial and office uses, and institutional uses (i.e., post office, proposed library, etc.). No streets or sidewalks would be permanently closed as a result of the development of the proposed project and no separation of uses or disruption of access between uses would occur. Additionally, no separation of land uses or disruption of access between land use types would occur as a result of development of the proposed project. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not divide the established community. No impacts would occur.

b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, 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?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. Per the Los Angeles County General Plan, the properties adjacent to the project site is zoned primarily Unlimited Commercial Zone (C-3). Adjacent properties north and west of the project site are zoned Light Agricultural (A-1-1). Single-family residences (R-1), which have a 10,000 square foot minimum, are found east of the project site are along Cuesta Cala Road and South Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Light Manufacturing Zones under a Development Program (M-1-DP) are found along South Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Per the Los Angeles County Code, Zone DP was established to provide a zone in which development occurring after property has been rezoned will conform to plans and exhibits submitted by the applicant in instances where such plans and exhibits constitute a critical factor in the decision to rezone (DRP 2010, Los Angeles County Code 2010). Please refer to Figure 2-4, Zoning.

The proposed project is situated within the Malibu Coastal Zone and is subject to the requirements of the California Coastal Act. Per the *Repair, Maintenance and Utility Hook-up Exclusions from Permit Requirements* of the California Coastal Act, a "coastal permit is not required to install, test, place in service, maintain, replace, modify or relocate underground facilities or to convert existing overhead facilities to underground facilities provided that work is limited to public road or railroad rights-of-way or public utility easements (P.U.E.)." As such, a Coastal Development Permit would not be required in order to approve and implement the proposed project. However, per recommendation from the California Coastal Commission, DPW,

in coordination with SCE, will obtain a written exemption determination from the South Central Coast District Office prior to project approval (Ainsworth 2011).

Additionally, the project site is located within the boundaries of the Topanga Canyon Community Standards District, as outlined in Section 22.44.119 of the Los Angeles County Code (Los Angeles County Code 2010). The Topanga Canyon Community Standards District, which was adopted on May 1990, was established to implement policies related to small lot subdivision development (Malibu Local Coastal Program 1986). The proposed project does not include development of a subdivision. The proposed project would not alter the land use of the project site or surrounding area, and would not conflict with any applicable land use plans.

Construction is anticipated to occur within the existing ROW. The trench lines are anticipated to be located within the street, as there is minimal shoulder width on the street. However, easement acquisition outside the Topanga UUD boundary may be required for construction and maintenance purposes. The easement ensures SCE the right to use and access a specific area of property in order to conduct routine maintenance, equipment repair, or restoration of any service disruption. It is anticipated that the proposed project would require permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. Temporary construction easements would be acquired from adjacent properties. Permanent easement acquisitions would be negotiated with individual property owners. It is assumed that SCE would take the lead in coordination efforts with property owners for any permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. Implementation of mitigation measure LU-1 would ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained for any project components that are not owned by Los Angeles County or SCE. With incorporation of LU-1 potential land use impacts would be less than significant.

LU-1 Prior to the initiation of any construction activities on privately-owned property, SCE shall coordinate with that private or public landowner to obtain all appropriate approvals, easements, and/or use permits to allow project implementation on their property.

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. Using GIS-Net software developed by the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning (DRP), the project site was determined to be located within an ESHA, which is a designation that affords the highest protection from future land development (DRP 2010, DRP 2011). GIS-NET was developed to provide the public with geographic information regarding land use planning and zoning for the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County (DRP 2010).

To protect the creek from such potential indirect effects, the project construction and operation would include the use of BMPs in compliance with the existing NPDES regulations, which would

include preparation of a SWPPP. The SWPPP specifies BMPs aimed at controlling construction-related pollutants that originate from the site as a result of construction-related activities (DPW 2005b). The proposed project would also require preparation of a WWECP to mitigate impacts to stormwater quality from erosion and sediments for any construction activities occurring during the rainy season. As such, implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1, which would require consultation with CDFG in order to determine the applicability of the Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement; implementation of appropriate BMPs, as outlined in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices; preparation of a WWECP; and compliance with the Los Angeles County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations, including, if applicable, preparation of a complete notification package to CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office per the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, prior to project approval would result in a less-than-significant impact to habitat conservations plans. No additional mitigation measures are required.

4.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the Project:

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

No Impact. No classified or designated mineral deposits of regional or statewide significance are known to occur on the project site (California Geological Survey 2006). Further, no oil wells exist or are known to have previously existed on the project site (California Department of Conservation 2004). Therefore, the proposed project would not 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. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are required.

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

No Impact. Per the Los Angeles County General Plan, the project site is not delineated as a locally-important mineral resource recovery site (DRP 2008a). Further, as discussed in the response to Section 4.10, Land Use and Planning, Question (a) above, no mineral deposits and no oil wells exist or are known to have previously existed on the project site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site. No impact would occur and no mitigation measures are required.

4.12 NOISE

Would the Project Result In:

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not expose persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of applicable noise standards.

Existing Noise Environment

Noise is unwanted or objectionable sound, which can cause general annoyance, speech interference, sleep disturbance, or hearing impairment. Noise levels are measured as decibels (dB) on a logarithmic scale, and weighted to frequencies audible by humans ("A weighted") and expressed as dBA. Instantaneous noise levels are averaged for noise regulations as the equivalent 1-hour average noise level (dBA L_{eq}). Table 4.12-1 provides typical instantaneous noise levels of common activities in dBA.

Table 4.12-1
Typical Noise Levels

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dBA)	Common Indoor Activities
	110	Rock Band
Jet Fly-over at 1,000 feet	100	
Gas Lawn Mower at 3 feet	90	
Diesel Truck at 50 feet, at 50 mph	80	Food Blender at 3 feet Garbage Disposal at 3 feet
Noisy Urban Area, Daytime Gas Lawn Mower at 100 feet	70	Vacuum Cleaner at 10 feet
Commercial Area Heavy Traffic at 300 feet	60	Normal Speech at 3 feet
Quiet Urban Daytime	50	Large Business Office, Dishwasher in Next Room
Quiet Urban Nighttime	40	Theater, Large Conference Room (Background)
Quiet Suburban Nighttime	30	Library
Quiet Rural Nighttime	20	Bedroom at Night, Concert Hall (Background)
	10	Broadcast/Recording Studio
Lowest Threshold of Human Hearing	0	Lowest Threshold of Human Hearing

Source: Caltrans 1998

In addition to instantaneous noise levels, noise levels are measured over a period of time to establish noise limits and assess impacts. Noise levels are typically measured over a 1-hour period and expressed as dBA L_{eq}, the equivalent 1-hour noise level.

Time of day is also an important factor for noise assessment; noise levels acceptable during the day may interfere with sleep during evening or nighttime hours. As such, methods for

determining 24-hour noise levels and limits have been established. The community noise equivalent level (CNEL) is the cumulative noise exposure in a community during a 24-hour period. CNEL adds 5 dBA for noise levels during the evening (between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.), and 10 dBA for noise levels during the nighttime (between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.). Similar to CNEL is the day/night average sound level (L_{dn}), except the evening period is considered part of the daytime period (i.e., 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.).

Noise levels attenuate with distance at a drop-off rate of 6 dBA per doubling of distance, assuming no intervening topography or structures between source and receptor, as well as a hard surface in between.

Noise-sensitive land uses are locations where people reside or where the presence of unwanted sound could adversely affect the use of the land. Residences, as well as schools, churches, hospitals, convalescent (nursing) homes, hotels, and certain parks, are land uses considered noise-sensitive receptors, which may be adversely affected by excessive noise. Protected animal species, such as bird species, and their habitat may also be considered sensitive noise receptors if located near construction and operational noise sources, especially during the species' breeding seasons.

The overall character of the area surrounding project site is a range of local and regional business uses, including retail stores, office buildings, and service businesses; institutional uses; and single-family residences interspersed east of the project site. Noise-sensitive receptors in proximity of the proposed project site are located within 300 feet of the nearest extent of the project construction. The closest noise-sensitive receptors include a single-family residence east of the Topanga Library and additional single-family residences (R-1) east of the project site along Cuesta Cala Road and South Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Commercial developments are located within 100 feet of the proposed project area along Topanga Canyon Road. The residential and commercial sensitive receptors represent the nearest land uses with the potential to be impacted by noise as a result of the proposed project.

The predominant noise sources in the proposed project vicinity are from vehicle traffic on the surrounding roadway network and other community noise sources including incidental noise from nearby residences (e.g., landscaping activity and domestic animals), commercial activity, and industrial uses (e.g., mechanical equipment).

Applicable Noise Regulations

- Federal Transit Administration. In May 2006, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published the second guidance for assessing noise and vibration impacts during different stages of project development, from early planning before mode and alignment have been selected through preliminary engineering and final design. This updated guidance contains noise and vibration impact criteria that are used to assess the magnitude of predicted impacts and includes a range of

mitigation measures for dealing with adverse noise and vibration impacts (FTA 2006). Typical vibration levels for various pieces of construction equipment are shown in Table 4.12-2.

Table 4.12-2
Vibration Velocities for Construction Equipment

Equipment	Peak Particle Velocity at 25 feet (Inches /Second)[1]
Pile Driving (Impact)	0.644
Pile Driving (Sonic)	0.170
Caisson Drilling	0.089
Large Bulldozer	0.089
Loaded Trucks	0.076

[1] Fragile buildings can be exposed to ground-borne vibration levels of 0.5 inches per second without experiencing structural damage.
Source: FTA 2006

California Department of Transportation. Caltrans provides vibration-level thresholds for architectural and structural damage and for human perception, which are provided in Table 4.12-3. To assess the potential for structural damage associated with vibration from construction activities, the vibratory ground motion in the vicinity of an affected structure is measured in terms of peak particle velocity (ppv), typically in units of inches per second. Human and structural response to different vibration levels is influenced by a number of factors, including ground type, distance between source and receptor, duration, and the number of perceived vibration events. Caltrans uses a vibration criterion of 0.2 in/sec ppv for its construction projects, except for pile driving and blasting. As shown in Table 4.12-3, damage to structures occurs when vibration levels range from 2 to 6 in/sec ppv. One-half this minimum threshold, or 1 inch per second ppv, is considered a safe criterion that would protect against structural damage (Caltrans 2002).

Table 4.12-3
Effects on People and Structures at Various Vibration Levels

Vibration Level (in/sec ppv)	Effects on People	Effects on Structures
0.006–0.019	Threshold of perception; possibility of intrusion	Unlikely to cause damage of any type
0.08	Vibrations readily perceptible	Recommended upper level for ruins and ancient monuments
0.1	Threshold of annoyance	Virtually no risk of damage
0.2	Annoying to people in buildings	Threshold of risk of architectural damage to normal dwelling with plastered walls and ceilings
0.4–0.6	Considered unpleasant	Architectural damage and possibly minor structural damage

Source: Caltrans 2002
Caltrans considers most construction vibrations, with the exception of pile driving and blasting to be continuous.

Los Angeles County General Plan. Los Angeles County addresses noise impacts through its General Plan and Codified Ordinances. The Noise Element of the Los Angeles County General Plan provides a program for incorporating noise issues into the land use planning process, with a

goal of minimizing adverse noise impacts to noise-sensitive receptors. The Noise Element specifies construction hours and noise level limits, and the acceptable property line operational noise levels at various land uses for day, evening, and night periods, which are incorporated into the County Noise Ordinance (DRP 1975).

Los Angeles County Code. Los Angeles County Code Chapter 12.08, Noise Control provides the noise control ordinance for Los Angeles County, which includes regulations on construction and operational noise (Los Angeles County Code 2010). Only the regulations for construction are applicable for the proposed project, as the project results in the operation of underground utility lines.

Per Section 12.08.440 of the Los Angeles County Code, construction activities adjacent to residential or commercial properties between the weekday hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., or at any time on Sundays or holidays, are prohibited (Los Angeles County Code 2010). Section 12.08.440 includes noise level limits at residential properties for mobile (Table 4.12-4) and stationary (Table 4.12-5) construction equipment.

Table 4.12-4
Noise Levels Limits for Non-scheduled, Intermittent, Short-term Operation of Mobile Equipment

	Single-family Residential	Multi-family Residential	Semi-residential/ Commercial
Daily, except Sundays and legal holidays, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	75 dBA	80 dBA	85 dBA
Daily, 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. and all day Sunday and legal holidays	60 dBA	64 dBA	70 dBA

Source: Los Angeles County Code 2010

Table 4.12-5
Noise Level Limits for Repetitively Scheduled and Relatively Long-term Operation of Stationary Equipment

	Single-family Residential	Multi-family Residential	Semi-residential/ Commercial
Daily, except Sundays and legal holidays, 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.	60 dBA	65 dBA	70 dBA
Daily, 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. and all day Sunday and legal holidays	50 dBA	55 dBA	60 dBA

Source: Los Angeles County Code 2010

As shown in Table 4.12-4, short-term mobile equipment construction noise adjacent to commercial properties is limited to a daytime maximum of 85 dBA, while construction noise adjacent to single-family residences is limited to a daytime maximum of 75 dBA. As shown in Table 4.12-5, long-term operation of stationary equipment adjacent to commercial properties is limited to a daytime maximum of 70 dBA and 60 dBA for single-family residences.

Construction

During construction of the proposed project, noise levels in the project vicinity would increase due to the use of construction equipment and vehicles. Noise impacts from construction activities occurring within the project site would be a function of the noise generated by construction equipment, the equipment location, and the timing and duration of the noise-generating activities. Construction activities of the proposed project would include pavement breaking, trenching, utility line installation, backfilling, and paving. Each construction stage involves the operation of different pieces of construction equipment and, therefore, has its own distinct noise characteristics.

Typical construction vehicles and equipment can generate short-term maximum noise levels in the order of 89 dBA at a distance of 50 feet when the equipment is under maximum load. Due to the nature of the project's anticipated construction activity, with breaks and repositioning of equipment, hourly noise levels at 50 feet are assumed to average no more than 85 dBA L_{eq} from the centroid of the each work area. The project construction activities of utility trenching are anticipated to generate average noise levels less than 85 dBA L_{eq}.

As previously discussed, noise-sensitive receptors in proximity of the proposed project site are located within 300 feet of the nearest extent of the project construction, consisting of a single-family residence east of the Topanga Library and additional single-family residences (R-1) east of the project site along Cuesta Cala Road and South Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Maximum project construction noise levels of 89 dBA at 50 feet would attenuate to 74 dBA at the nearest residence; averaged noise levels of 85 dBA L_{eq} at 50 feet would attenuate to 70 dBA L_{eq} at the nearest residence. This assumes no intervening topography or structures, as this further reduces noise levels. Thus, noise levels at the nearest residences would not exceed the County's most stringent allowable daytime construction noise level limit of 75 dBA for single-family residential under the County's Noise Ordinance (see Table 4.12-4).

The commercial properties in proximity to the proposed construction area are located approximately 100 feet from the nearest point of construction activity. Maximum project construction noise levels of 89 dBA at 50 feet would attenuate to 83 dBA at the nearest commercial property; averaged noise levels of 85 dBA L_{eq} at 50 feet would attenuate to 79 dBA L_{eq} at the nearest commercial property. This assumes no intervening topography or structures, as this further reduces noise levels. Thus, noise levels at the nearest commercial property would not exceed the County's most stringent allowable daytime construction noise level limit of 85 dBA for semi-residential/commercial under the County's Noise Ordinance (see Table 4.12-4).

Daytime project construction activity for the proposed project would conform to the standards set forth in the Los Angeles County Code. Therefore, construction noise levels would not exceed these established levels for construction activities. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Operation

This alternative would not generate operational noise that would be subject to County operational noise limits. The proposed project would remove approximately 28 utility poles comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). The proposed project would not result in additional traffic volumes or capacity. Therefore, no operational noise would be generated. No mitigation is required.

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would not expose persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or noise levels.

Construction

Construction operations would result in varying degrees of temporary ground vibration, depending on the specific construction equipment used and operations involved. Ground vibration generated by construction equipment spreads through the ground and diminishes in magnitude with increases in distance. The effects of ground vibration may be imperceptible at the lowest levels, with low rumbling sounds; detectable at moderate levels; and damaging to nearby structures at the highest levels. While ground vibrations from typical construction activities very rarely reach levels high enough to cause damage to structures, special consideration must be made when sensitive or historic land uses are near the construction site. The construction activities that typically generate the highest levels of vibration are blasting and impact pile driving, which are not required for this project.

Vibration-sensitive land uses include fragile/historic buildings, commercial buildings where low ambient vibration is essential for operations within the buildings (e.g., computer chip manufacturers and hospitals), and buildings where people sleep. Vibration-sensitive receptors near the project site are identical to the noise-sensitive receptors.

The nearest structures with noise-sensitive receptors would be approximately 100 feet from occasional heavy equipment activity. Vibration levels at these receptors would not exceed the potential building damage threshold of 0.5 in/sec ppv. Therefore, the vibration impact during construction would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Operation

Operation of the proposed project does not include any sources of groundborne vibration sources (e.g., industrial equipment, heavy traffic areas). Operational of the proposed project would not result in a significant vibration impact. No mitigation is required.

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would create a temporary, periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project due to construction, which would not exceed the noise standards of the County Noise Ordinance of the Los Angeles County Code. The proposed project would not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project. Operation of the proposed project does not include any sources of noise or groundborne vibration sources. As such, the impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Less than Significant Impact. Construction of the proposed project would result in minor, temporary, short-term increases in daytime ambient noise levels. Noise impacts from construction activities occurring within the project site would be a function of the noise generated by construction equipment, the equipment location, and the timing and duration of the noise-generating activities, which include demolition, grading, construction, and finishing. Typical construction vehicles and equipment can generate short-term maximum noise levels in the order of 89 dBA at a distance of 50 feet when the equipment is under maximum load. Due to the nature of the project's anticipated construction activity, with breaks and repositioning of equipment, hourly noise levels at 50 feet are assumed to average no more than 85 dBA L_{eq} from the centroid of the each work area. The project construction activities of utility trenching are anticipated to generate average noise levels less than 85 dBA L_{eq}.

The commercial properties in proximity to the proposed construction area are located approximately 100 feet from the nearest point of construction activity. Maximum project construction noise levels of 89 dBA at 50 feet would attenuate to 83 dBA at the nearest commercial property; averaged noise levels of 85 dBA L_{eq} at 50 feet would attenuate to 79 dBA L_{eq} at the nearest commercial property. This assumes no intervening topography or structures, as this further reduces noise levels. Thus, noise levels at the nearest commercial property would not exceed the County's most stringent allowable daytime construction noise level limit of 85 dBA for semi-residential/commercial under the County's Noise Ordinance (see Table 4.12-4).

Additionally, the estimated maximum noise levels would not be continuous, nor would they be typical of noise levels throughout the construction period. Construction activity would conform to the noise level limits set forth in the Los Angeles County Code. As such, the impact would be less than significant. No mitigation is 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 pubic use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The proposed project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The nearest public airport/public use airport is the Santa Monica Municipal Airport, located approximately 10 miles southeast of the project site (Airnav.com 2010). Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any impacts related to excessive noise levels near an airport. No mitigation is required.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The project site is not located in the vicinity of any private airstrips. No noise impacts from proximity to private airstrips would occur. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any impacts related to excessive noise levels near a private airstrip. No mitigation is required.

4.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the Project:

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

No Impact. The proposed project does not include any residential land uses and, therefore, would not result in a direct population increase from construction of new homes or businesses. Further, the proposed project involves the relocation of existing utility lines and does not include extension of roads or other infrastructure. Thus, the proposed project would not result in indirect population growth. Therefore, no impacts on population growth would result from implementation of the proposed project.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. The project site located in the unincorporated community of Topanga in western Los Angeles County and is contained within the existing roadways of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The overall character of the surrounding area is a range of local and regional business uses, including retail stores, office buildings, and service businesses; institutional uses (i.e., post office, Topanga Library, etc.). Per the Los Angeles County General Plan, the properties adjacent to the project site is zoned primarily Unlimited Commercial Zone (C-3). Adjacent properties north and west of the project site are zoned Light Agricultural (A-1-1). Light Manufacturing Zones under a Development Program (M-1-DP) are found along South Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The closest single-family residence is located east of the Topanga Library. Additional single-family residences (R-1) are also found east of the project site along Cuesta Cala Road and South Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

The proposed project would relocate overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The proposed project would not displace existing housing or interfere with potential or planned future development of housing. Additionally, the proposed project does not require the removal of housing. As such, no housing would be displaced by development of the proposed project. No impacts would occur.

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. As discussed in the response to Section 4.12, Noise, Question (b) above, the proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. As such, no persons would be displaced as a result of implementation of the proposed project. No impacts would occur.

4.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the Project:

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

i) Fire Protection?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD), Battalion 5 provides fire protection services to the communities of Agoura, Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Malibu, Topanga, and Westlake Village. Specifically, LACFD Station 69, located approximately 0.4 miles southwest of the project site at 401 South Topanga Canyon Boulevard, would be the first responding fire station serving the project site (LACFD 2010).

The proposed project would not generate population growth or include building any new habitable structures. As such, construction and operation of the proposed project would not require additional fire facilities.

As further discussed in the response to Section 4.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Question (g), Topanga Canyon Boulevard is designated by the County as a Primary Disaster Route, which is a roadway pre-identified for use during times of crisis to bring in emergency personnel, equipment, and supplies (DPW 2010a). Construction of the proposed project would involve temporary lane closures, which may result in significant impacts to the County-designated disaster route. However, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in full roadway closures and operation of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard would be preserved throughout construction. It is anticipated that vehicle access to intersecting streets would be limited during some of the construction period. Transmission trenches would be in the middle of the street such that traffic lanes may periodically be closed during the construction process. Recessed steel plates are anticipated to be used during the week in order to cover any open trenches. Additionally, it is anticipated that access to individual driveways may be temporarily restricted during working hours, but open at the end of each day. In the event individual driveways are impacted, the accepted notification protocol currently in place between DPW and SCE will be utilized. In addition, DPW and SCE would coordinate with both the LACFD and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) prior to commencement of construction activities to ensure that emergency response vehicles are able to access the project site.

To minimize construction impacts, Los Angeles County would be required to prepare a construction traffic control plan with input from SCE, Caltrans, and applicable regulatory

agencies. This plan provides a framework for the implementation of traffic control strategies and timely distribution of traffic-related information to emergency services, local citizens, and affected businesses. This would address such issues as access for local businesses and residents, truck routing, dust control, construction worker parking, hours of operation, potential temporary street closures, detouring, and materials storage. Construction crews would also be required to implement the standard BMPs, as discussed in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, during construction and to adhere to all applicable construction safety guidelines. Further, implementation of mitigation measures TRANS-1 through TRANS-3, as discussed in Section 4.16, Transportation and Traffic, during construction activities would reduce impacts to emergency response plans to a less-than-significant level. No additional mitigation measures are recommended.

ii) Police protection?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The LASD is the local law enforcement agency responsible for providing police protection services to the project site and surrounding area. The project site is served by the Malibu/Lost Hills Station, located approximately seven miles northwest of the project site at 27050 Agoura Road. The Malibu/Lost Hills Station has jurisdiction over the western portion of Los Angeles County, including the cities of Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Malibu, and Westlake Village, as well as the unincorporated communities of Chatsworth Lake Manor, Malibu Lake, Topanga, and West Hills (LASD 2010).

The proposed project would not generate population growth or include building any new habitable structures. As such, the provision of new or altered police protection facilities would not be required.

As discussed above and in the response to Section 4.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Question (g), the proposed project is not anticipated to result in full roadway closures and operation of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard would be preserved throughout construction. It is anticipated that vehicle access to intersecting streets would be limited during some of the construction period. Construction crews would be required to implement the standard BMPs, as discussed in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, during construction and to adhere to all applicable construction safety guidelines. DPW and SCE would coordinate with the LASD prior to commencement of construction activities to ensure that emergency response vehicles are able to access the project site. Further, implementation of mitigation measures TRANS-1 through TRANS-3, as discussed in Section 4.16, Transportation and Traffic, during construction activities would reduce impacts to emergency response plans to a less-than-significant level. No additional mitigation measures are recommended.

iii) Schools?

No Impact. The proposed project involves the installation of underground utility lines and does not include development of any residential uses. As such, the proposed project would not result in any increase in residential population. Additionally, no housing or employment opportunities would be provided by the proposed project. Therefore, no new students would be generated and no increase in demand on local schools would result from implementation of the proposed project. No impacts to schools would occur and no further analysis is required.

iv) Parks?

No Impact. The community of Topanga is located in the Santa Monica Mountains and is bounded on three sides by Topanga State Park, a 36-mile stretch of trails through open grassland, live oaks, and ridgelines with views of the Pacific Ocean. Topanga State Park, which is approximately two miles east of the project site, can be accessed by traveling north on Topanga Canyon Boulevard, passing the post office, then turning right on Entrada Road. The project site is also bordered by a number of State Park or conservancy lands, including Santa Ynez Canyon Park to the east, Red Rock Canyon State Park to the west, Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north, and Tuna Canyon Park to the south (California State Parks 2010).

Residential developments typically have the greatest potential to result in impacts to parks since these types of developments generate a permanent increase in residential population. As discussed, the proposed project does not include development of any residential uses and would not generate any new permanent residents that would increase the demand on local parks. Therefore, no impacts related to parks would occur and no further analysis is required.

v) Other public facilities?

Less than Significant. The proposed project does not include development of residential uses and would not generate any new permanent residents that would increase the demand on other public facilities.

The proposed project would result in the relocation of utility facilities. Specifically, the proposed project would relocate approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard (SCE 2010). Those utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be attached alongside the bridge via a utility conduit. All the other overhead utility lines, which represent a total of seven various companies, would be placed underground primarily within the existing ROW._As discussed, utility providers in the project site include the following: 1) SCE; 2) NextG Networks, Inc.; 3) Cable Engineering Services (utility owner is Verizon Wireless); 4) Verizon California; 5) BMS Engineering (utility owner is AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile); 6) Ericson Contractor (utility

owner is Sprint); and 7) Charter Communications (Dunn 2010). No other utility providers are known to exist within the project site.

In addition to the utility poles, there are existing overhead equipment (i.e. transformers, capacitors, and switches), which may be placed at grade or underground. There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that provide wireless transmission. It is assumed that existing aboveground wireless (i.e. RF or antenna) systems would be maintained, relocated, and/or restored. However, it is understood that these wireless systems would need to remain aboveground in order to provide wireless data. At the time of this study, only a conceptual-level design was available. During the final design phase, it is anticipated that the affected utilities would be identified and the final design of the proposed project, equipment, and location would be agreed upon by each utility provider and DPW, in coordination with SCE, on a case by case basis.

The proposed project would not result in impacts to E911 services, the emergency telephone number used to link people experiencing an emergency with the applicable emergency provider. AT&T Mobility's facility is integrated into the E911 response system for this area. It is anticipated that wireless telephone service providers will continue to provide a comparable level of service through their existing or relocated locations with appropriate permissions obtained from property owners and regulators in compliance with applicable regulatory permitting requirements. It is also anticipated that any utility disruptions and relocations due to the proposed project would occur only during the construction phase. The interruption of services (electrical or otherwise) would be kept to a minimum, avoided wherever possible, and, in most cases (baring incident or accident), only occur on a 'planned outage' basis. In the event of any anticipated service disruptions, all property owners and affected business owners would receive notices prior to construction. Further, the proposed project would be designed in compliance with Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, which allows existing antennas to be maintained aboveground (Los Angeles County Code 2010). Lastly, DPW and SCE would work closely with property owners and utility providers to coordinate the cut-over (transition from overhead existing utility lines to underground utility lines) in an effort to minimize any service disruptions. As such, the proposed project is not anticipated to disrupt services to the E911 response system. The impacts to existing utility facilities would be less than significant.

4.15 RECREATION

Would the Project:

a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

No Impact. The community of Topanga is located in the Santa Monica Mountains and is bounded on three sides by Topanga State Park, a 36-mile stretch of trails through open grassland, live oaks, and ridgelines with views of the Pacific Ocean. Topanga State Park, which is approximately two miles east of the project site, can be accessed by traveling north on Topanga Canyon Boulevard, passing the post office, then turning right on Entrada Road. The project site is also bordered by a number of State Park or conservancy lands, including Santa Ynez Canyon Park to the east, Red Rock Canyon State Park to the west, Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north, and Tuna Canyon Park to the south (California State Parks 2010).

The proposed project does not include development of any residential uses and, thus, would not generate new permanent residents. Thus, the proposed project would not result in an increased demand on existing parks and recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration would occur or be accelerated. Therefore, no impact would occur, and no further analysis is required.

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

No Impact. The proposed project does not include development of any residential uses and, thus, would not generate new permanent residents that would increase the demand on local recreational facilities. Further, the proposed project would not promote or indirectly induce new development that would require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, no impact would occur, and no further analysis is required.

4.16 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

Would the Project:

a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project would result in traffic impacts during construction, but would not conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system with implementation of TRANS-1 through TRANS-3. No additional mitigation measures are required.

Regional Access

The project site is served by a limited roadway system. The site is located about four miles north of SR 1 and about seven miles south of U.S. 101. Regional access in the immediate project vicinity is provided entirely by SR 1 and U.S. 101. SR 1 along the Pacific Ocean frontage provides access to the project via Topanga Canyon Boulevard, from Santa Monica to the southeast and from Malibu on the west. U.S. 101 provides access to the project site via Topanga Canyon Boulevard from Encino, Calabasas, Woodland Hills, Agoura Hills, and Westlake Village.

The project site is accessed via Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road. Topanga Canyon Boulevard is eligible for the State Scenic Highway System (Caltrans 2007). Topanga Canyon Boulevard, a two-lane winding, rural, mountain road, is the principal thoroughfare connecting U.S. 101 with SR 1. In the project vicinity, Topanga Canyon Boulevard is striped with a double yellow centerline with a 35 mph speed limit adjusted downward for various curves along the alignment. Topanga Canyon Boulevard is designated by the County as a Primary Disaster Route (DPW 2010a). Old Topanga Canyon Road is a two-lane, winding, rural, mountain highway, connecting Topanga Canyon Boulevard with Mulholland Highway about six miles to the north (Cotton/Bridges Associates 2003).

Topanga Canyon Boulevard carries approximately 15,375 vehicles daily (total of both directions) north of Old Topanga Canyon Road and about 18,090 vehicles daily south of Old Topanga Canyon Road. Old Topanga Canyon Road north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard carries about 4,940 vehicles daily (Cotton/Bridges Associates 2003).Topanga Canyon Road is a designated route within the Congestion Management Plan for the Los Angeles County roadway system (City of Malibu 1995).

Construction

Construction is anticipated to occur within the existing ROW. The proposed project extends 1,600 feet along Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. The proposed project would remove approximately 28 utility poles, which is comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). Construction is anticipated to start in fall 2012 and take approximately 18-24 months (360-480 working days) to complete, ending in summer/fall 2013. It is estimated that the project site would be returned to full operation by the end of spring 2014.

During construction, the proposed project may cause minor delays to traffic along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Construction of the proposed project would involve temporary, single lane closures, which may result in significant impacts to the County-designated disaster route. However, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in full roadway closures and operation of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard would be preserved throughout construction. It is anticipated that vehicle access to intersecting streets would be limited during some of the construction period. Transmission trenches would be in the middle of the street such that traffic lanes may periodically be closed during the construction process. Recessed steel plates are anticipated to be used during the week in order to cover any open trenches. Additionally, it is anticipated that access to individual driveways may be temporarily restricted during working hours, but open at the end of each day. In the event individual driveways are impacted, the accepted notification protocol currently in place between DPW and SCE will be utilized. In addition, DPW and SCE would coordinate with both the LAFD and LASD prior to commencement of construction activities to ensure that emergency response vehicles are able to access the project site.

To minimize construction impacts, Los Angeles County would be required to prepare a construction traffic control plan with input from SCE, Caltrans, and applicable regulatory agencies. This plan provides a framework for the implementation of traffic control strategies and timely distribution of traffic-related information to emergency services, local citizens, and affected businesses. This would address such issues as access for local businesses and residents, truck routing, dust control, construction worker parking, hours of operation, potential temporary street closures, detouring, and materials storage. Construction crews would be required to implement the standard BMPs, as discussed in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, during construction and to adhere to all applicable construction safety guidelines. DPW and SCE would coordinate with both the LASD prior to commencement of construction activities to ensure that emergency response vehicles are able to access the project site. Further, implementation of mitigation measures TRANS-1 through TRANS-3 during construction activities would reduce impacts to emergency response plans to a less-than-significant level. No additional mitigation measures are recommended.

Operation

The proposed project would relocate overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The proposed project would not generate new vehicle trips and would not generate any additional activities related to maintenance or operations that would increase from existing levels. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause an increase in traffic that would be substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system. As such, the traffic impact would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project would not exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the Los Angeles County Congestion Management Agency for designated roads or highways.

Los Angeles Congestion Management Program

The Congestion Management Program (CMP) was created statewide because of Proposition 111 and has been implemented locally by Metro. The CMP for Los Angeles County requires that the traffic impact of individual development projects of potentially regional significance be analyzed. A specific system of arterial roadways and all freeways comprise the CMP system. A total of 164 intersections are identified for monitoring on the system in Los Angeles County. In addition, all freeway segments in Los Angeles County, including on- and off-ramps, are mainline freeway segment monitoring locations (Metro 2004).

The 2002 CMP for Los Angeles County identifies roadways and freeways that are included on the latest CMP Highway System. In the vicinity of the project area, the following roadways are included on the CMP network:

- SR 1 (Approximately four miles south of the project)
- U.S. 101 (Approximately seven miles north of the project)
- Topanga Canyon Boulevard (Direct access route to the project site)

Topanga Canyon Road is a designated route within the Congestion Management Plan for the Los Angeles County roadway system (City of Malibu 1995). The closest arterial monitoring intersection is located about four miles south of the project at PCH and Topanga Canyon Boulevard (P&D Consultants 2003).

Construction

During construction, the proposed project may cause minor delays to traffic along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. However, implementation of TRANS-1 through TRANS-3 would help minimize traffic delays to emergency and other vehicles traveling along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. As such, the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to traffic during construction.

Operation

Operation of the proposed project would not generate additional traffic or increase the number of vehicle trips per day. The proposed project would not increase the volume to capacity ratio for roads, and would not increase traffic congestion at intersections. Therefore, the proposed project would not cause an increase in traffic that would be substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system. Since this project does not add 50 or more trips to PCH at Topanga Canyon Boulevard or 150 or more trips to a freeway, no CMP traffic analysis is required.

c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

No Impact. The project site is not located within two miles of a public airport, nor is it located within an airport land use plan. The nearest public airport/public use airport is the Santa Monica Municipal Airport, located approximately 10 miles southeast of the project site (Airnav.com 2010). The proposed project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks. The project would not result in permanent aerial structures. No change to air traffic patterns would occur. As such, no impacts would occur.

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

No Impact. The proposed project would result in underground utility improvements and would not create any dangerous curves or intersections or incompatible uses; therefore, no design-related impacts would occur. As such, no impacts would occur.

e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access with implementation of TRANS-1 through TRANS-3.

Construction

As previously discussed, Topanga Canyon Boulevard is designated by the County as a Primary Disaster Route. Construction of the proposed project would involve temporary lane closures, which may result in significant impacts to the County-designated disaster route (DPW 2010a). During construction, the proposed project may cause minor delays to traffic along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. However, implementation of TRANS-1 through TRANS-3 would help minimize traffic delays to emergency and other vehicles traveling along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. As such, the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts related to emergency access during construction with implementation of mitigation measures TRANS-1 through TRANS-3.

TRANS-1 Prior to construction, a construction traffic control plan shall be prepared by DPW with input from SCE, Caltrans, and other applicable regulatory agencies. The plan shall include, at minimum, advanced signing, alerting motorists to roadway construction and an increase in construction vehicle movement; signing to alert motorists to temporary or limited access points to adjacent properties; and appropriate barricades. Further, this shall address such issues as access for local businesses and residents, truck routing, dust control, construction worker parking, hours of operation, potential temporary street closures, detouring, and materials storage. At least one point of ingress/egress shall be maintained by DPW to all properties adjacent to construction area. The contractor may request changes to the traffic control plan with the approval of DPW.

TRANS-2 Temporary traffic cones/barricades, temporary striping, and delineators shall be appropriately placed by DPW in order to maintain one through lane in each direction during the peak hours. Lane widths within these areas may be reduced.

TRANS-3 Prior to construction, DWP shall provide written notification to fire, police, and paramedic departments, regarding the schedule and duration of construction activities, and to identify alternative routes that may be used to avoid response delays.

Operation

Operation of the proposed project would not generate additional traffic or the number of vehicle trips per day. The proposed project would not increase the volume to capacity ratio for roads, and would not increase traffic congestion at intersections. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access during operation of the proposed project.

f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

No Impact. The proposed project would not conflict with policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation, e.g., bicycles, buses, carpools, vanpools, ridesharing, walking, etc. In addition, the proposed project would not involve the construction or removal of alternative transportation facilities. No impacts would occur.

4.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the Project:

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

Less than Significant Impact. Construction activities would be subject to County inspection. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. As such, the proposed project would be required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DW, pursuant to the NPDES permitting program (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). Further, all construction activities would be required to prepare a SWPPP that specifies appropriate BMPs that meet or exceed federal, state, and local mandated guidelines for stormwater treatment to control erosion and to protect the quality of surface water runoff during construction activities, in compliance with Los Angeles County Code. Minimum BMPs may include, but are not limited to, covering stockpiles; retaining eroded sediments and pollutants onsite; and proper storage for fuels, oils, solvents, and other toxic materials. A more detailed discussion of BMPs is provided in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices (DPW 2005b). Construction projects that include grading activities during the rainy season must also develop a WWECP. Compliance with the County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations would ensure that construction would not violate any water quality standards or discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality.

No population increase would result from the construction and operation of the proposed project. It would not provide new housing or a large number of employment opportunities. The proposed project would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable RWQCB. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

No Impact. The proposed project would not require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities. No population increase on or in the vicinity of the proposed project site would result from the construction and operation of the proposed project. It would not provide new housing or a large number of employment opportunities. Construction of the proposed project would not require new water or wastewater facilities or the expansion of existing facilities. Operation of the proposed project would require similar amounts of water as currently supplied. No impacts would occur and no further analysis is required.

c) Require or result the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less than Significant Impact. Construction and operation of the proposed project would not generate a significant amount of stormwater.

Construction

Project construction activities have the potential to degrade water quality through the exposure of surface runoff (primarily rainfall) to exposed soils, dust, and other debris, as well as from runoff from construction equipment. The total construction area would be approximately 3.6 acres in size. The proposed project would be required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ, pursuant to the NPDES permitting program (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). The proposed project would be required to implement appropriate BMPs that meet or exceed federal, state, and local mandated guidelines for stormwater treatment to control erosion and to protect the quality of surface water runoff during construction activities, in compliance with NPDES requirements and Los Angeles County Code. As discussed in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices, these BMPs include measures for temporary soil stabilization (e.g. preservation of existing vegetation; hydroseeding; and slope drains); temporary sediment control (e.g. silt fence; storm drain protection; and wind erosion control); and tracking control (e.g. stabilized construction entrance/exit) (DPW 2005b). These BMPs would be detailed in the SWPPP in compliance with NPDES Stormwater regulations. Further, as discussed, construction projects that include grading activities during the rainy season must also develop a WWECP. Compliance with the County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations would ensure that construction would not violate any water quality standards, discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrade water quality. Implementation of construction BMPs would control runoff from the project site during construction activities. Therefore, the proposed project's construction-related water quality impacts would not require the construction or expansion of stormwater drainage facilities. The impact would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

Operation

Following implementation of the proposed project, the proposed project would result in the same amount of permeable surfaces as under existing conditions. Thus, no increase in the amount of runoff from the project site is anticipated. The proposed project would not require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities. Impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

No Impact. Sufficient water supplies are available to serve the proposed project from existing entitlements and resources. The Los Angeles County Waterworks District 29 currently serves the site. Construction and operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to generate any population increase. Further, no groundwater wells are located on-site and the proposed project does not involve the withdrawal of groundwater (DPW 2010b). The proposed project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. No impacts would occur and no further analysis is required.

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

No Impact. The proposed project would not result in any population increase. The proposed project does not include building any habitable structures, thus, it would not provide new housing or a large number of employment opportunities. The proposed project would not require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities. No impacts would occur and no further analysis is required.

f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

Less than Significant Impact. Solid waste would be generated during construction of the proposed project. Construction waste from the project site would be disposed of at the Calabasas Sanitary Landfill, which is owned and operated by the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (Los Angeles Sanitation Districts 2010). The Calabasas Sanitary Landfill is approximately 13 miles northwest of the project site. The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) was enacted to reduce, recycle, and reuse solid waste generated in the State to the maximum amount feasible. Specifically, AB 939 required city and county jurisdictions to identify an implementation schedule to divert 50 percent of the total waste stream from landfill disposal by the year 2000. AB 939 also requires each city and county to promote source reduction, recycling, and safe disposal or transformation. California cities and counties are required to submit annual reports to the California Integrated Waste Management Board to update the Board on their progress toward AB 939 goals.

Construction

Construction activities associated with development of the proposed project would generate debris that would need to be disposed of at the Calabasas Sanitary Landfill. Construction debris includes concrete, asphalt, metals, and other miscellaneous and composite materials. As shown in Table 4.17-1, it is estimated that the proposed project would generate approximately 1,579 pounds per day of construction debris.

Table 4.17-1
Estimated Proposed Project Construction Debris

Construction Activity	Size	Rate[a]	Debris Generated (lbs./day)
Construction/Demolition	148,104 sf	10.66 lbs./1,000 sf/day	**1,579**

• USEPA Report No. EPA530-98-010, *Characterization of Building Related Construction and Demolition Debris in the United States*, July 1998. Utilizing the "Non-Residential" generation rate.

Per AB 939 requirements, much of this material would be recycled and salvaged to the maximum extent feasible. Materials not recycled would be disposed of at the Calabasas Sanitary Landfill. By recycling much of the solid waste generated by construction of the proposed project, short-term construction impacts on landfills would be reduced.

As discussed, construction waste generated by the proposed project would be disposed of at the Calabasas Sanitary Landfill. This landfill is permitted to intake a maximum of 3,500 tons per day and has a remaining capacity of approximately 18,100,000 cubic yards (State of California Integrated Waste Management Board 2010). Therefore, this landfill has sufficient remaining capacity to accommodate the 1,579 pounds per day of construction waste estimated to be generated by the proposed project. Impacts associated with construction debris would be less than significant.

Operation

Operation of the proposed project would not generate any solid waste; therefore, no operational impacts would occur.

g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Less than Significant Impact. As discussed in the response to Section 4.17, Utilities and Service Systems, Question (f), the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) was enacted to reduce, recycle, and reuse solid waste generated in the State to the maximum amount feasible. Specifically, the Act required city and county jurisdictions to identify an implementation schedule to divert 50 percent of the total waste stream from landfill disposal by the 2000, and 70 percent by the year 2020. The Act also requires each city and county to promote source reduction, recycling, and safe disposal or transformation.

AB 939 further requires each county to prepare a Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE) to describe how it would reach the goals. The SRRE contains programs and policies for fulfillment of the goals of the Act, including the above-noted diversion goals and must be updated annually to account for changing market and infrastructure conditions. As projects and programs are implemented, the characteristics of the waste stream, the capacities of the current solid waste disposal facilities, and the operational status of those facilities are upgraded, as appropriate.

California counties are required to submit annual reports to the California Integrated Waste Management Board to update the Board on their progress toward AB 939 goals.

As discussed, the proposed project would generate less than significant quantities of construction waste, and no operational solid waste, per day. Construction waste generated at the project site would be disposed of in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations related to solid waste as described above. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

4.18 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

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

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. The analysis conducted in this IS/MND results in a determination that the proposed project would not result in any significant adverse effect on the environment that cannot be mitigated to a less-than-significant level.

As described in the analysis, implementation of the proposed project would have no impact on the following:

- Aesthetics (impacts related to scenic vista and shade and shadow)
- Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- Biological Resources (habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFG or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Geology and Soils (impacts related to earthquake fault; seismic ground shaking; liquefaction; landslides; septic tanks)
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials (impacts related to hazardous materials listed on Government Code Section 65962.5; airport land use plan; private airstrip; wildland fires)
- Hydrology and Water Quality (impacts related to depleting groundwater supplies; 100-year flood hazard area; failure of levee or dam; inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow)
- Land Use and Planning (impacts related to dividing an established community)
- Mineral Resources
- Noise (impacts related to airport land use plan; private airstrip)
- Population and Housing
- Public Services (impacts related to schools; parks)
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic (impacts related to a change in air traffic patterns; hazards due to a design feature; conflict with adopted public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facility)
- Utilities and Service Systems (impacts related to construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities; sufficient water supplies; adequate capacity of wastewater treatment provider)

The following issue areas were found to be less than significant:

- Aesthetics (impacts related to scenic resources; degrading existing visual character; light and glare)
- Air Quality (impacts related to implementation of applicable air plan; violating air quality standards; cumulative net increase of criteria pollutant; exposure of sensitive receptors; releasing objectionable odors)
- Biological Resources (impacts related to conflicting with any local policies)
- Cultural Resources (impacts related to historical resources as defined in § 15064.5)
- Geology and Soils (impacts related to unstable geological unit; located on expansive soil)
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions (impacts related to generating greenhouse gas emissions directly or indirectly; conflicting with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation reducing greenhouse gas emissions)
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials (impacts related to creating a significant hazard to the public through routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; creating a significant hazard to the public through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions; emitting hazardous emissions within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school)
- Noise (impacts related to exposure to noise levels in excess of established standards; exposure to excessive groundborne vibration; substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels; substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels)
- Public Services (impacts related to other public facilities)
- Utilities and Service Systems (impacts related to exceeding wastewater treatment requirements per the Regional Water Quality Control Board; resulting in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities; service by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity; compliance with federal, state, and local statutes)

The following issue areas were found to be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures:

- Biological Resources (impacts related to riparian habitat per the CDFG or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act; impacts related to movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors; conflicting with any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan)
- Cultural Resources (impacts related to disturbing an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5; directly or indirectly destroying a unique paleontological resource; disturbing any human remains)
- Geology and Soils (impacts related to substantial soil erosion)
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials (impacts related to impairment or interference with an adopted emergency response plan)

- Hydrology and Water Quality (impacts related to violating water quality standards or waste discharge requirements; altering existing drainage pattern that would result in substantial erosion; altering existing drainage pattern that would result in flooding; creating or contributing runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems; substantially degrading water quality)
- Land Use and Planning (impacts related to conflicting with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation; conflicting with applicable habitat conservation plan)
- Public Service (impacts relating to acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire and police protection)
- Transportation and Traffic (impacts related to conflicting with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy relating to the performance of the circulation system; conflicting with an applicable congestion management program; resulting in inadequate emergency access)

To avoid impacts related to riparian habitat per the CDFG or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service mitigation measure BIO-1, as discussed in Section 4.4, Biological Resources, is provided BIO-1 requires initial consultation with CDFG in order to determine the applicability of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement for the proposed project. With incorporation of BIO-1, potentially significant effects on biological resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, and land use and planning would result in less-than-significant impacts.

To avoid potential impacts to native nesting birds that may be present on the site, mitigation measures BIO-2 and BIO-3, as discussed in Section 4.4, Biological Resources, are provided. With incorporation of these mitigation measures, potentially significant effects on native nesting birds would result in less-than-significant impacts.

The project may result in impacts to one archaeological resource (CA-LAN-8), as defined in § 15064.5. To avoid potential impacts to CA-LAN-8, mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-3, as discussed in Section 4.5 Cultural Resources, are provided. With incorporation of these mitigation measures, potentially significant effects on archaeological resources pursuant to § 15064.5 would result in a less-than-significant impact. A paleontological record check conducted on December 6, 2010 indicated that there are no vertebrate fossil localities that lie directly within the project boundaries. However, significant fossil vertebrate remains may be encountered during construction. With the implementation of mitigation measure CUL-4, potential impacts to paleontological resources would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Although the records search indicated that no previously-recorded cemeteries or places of human internment are located within a ½-mile radius, it does not preclude the possibility that unknown human remains may be encountered within the project site. With implementation of mitigation measure CUL-5, potential impacts to human remains would be reduced to a less-than- significant level.

Easement acquisition may be required for construction and maintenance. It is anticipated that the proposed project would require permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. The easement

ensures SCE the right to use and access a specific area of property in order to conduct routine maintenance, equipment repair, or restoration of any service disruption. As such, it is anticipated that the proposed project would require permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. It is assumed that SCE would take the lead in coordination efforts with property owners for any permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. Implementation of mitigation measure LU-1, as discussed in Section 4.10, Land Use and Planning, would ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained for any project components that are not owned by Los Angeles County or SCE. With incorporation of LU-1 potential land use impacts would be less than significant.

To minimize impacts related to emergency access during construction, mitigation measures TRANS-1 through TRANS-3, as discussed in Section 4.16, Transportation and Traffic, are provided. With incorporation of these mitigation measures, potentially significant effects on hazards and hazardous materials, public service, and transportation and traffic would result in less-than-significant impacts.

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

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. As discussed in the IS/MND, the proposed project would result in impacts to some environmental resources. The implementation of the identified project-specific mitigation measures and compliance with applicable codes, ordinances, laws, and other required regulations would minimize impacts.

The project site is located in the unincorporated community of Topanga in Los Angeles County. Topanga is located in the Santa Monica Mountains and is bounded on three sides by Topanga State Park. The project site is also bordered by a number of State Park or conservancy lands, including Santa Ynez Canyon Park to the east, Red Rock Canyon State Park to the west, Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park to the north, and Tuna Canyon Park to the south. As the project site is located in an area of little development, it is not likely that other development projects would have the potential to contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact.

As previously discussed, impacts related to Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water quality, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts when considered in conjunction with other related projects.

As described in the analysis, the proposed project has the potential to impact riparian habitat per the CDFG or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Mitigation measure BIO-1, as discussed in Section 4.4, Biological Resources, requires DPW, in coordination with SCE, to conduct initial

consultation with CDFG in order to determine the applicability of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement for the proposed project. With incorporation of BIO-1, potentially significant effects on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified by CDFG or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would result in a less-than-significant impact. As such, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to biological resources.

The proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on native nesting birds that may be present on the site. With incorporation of mitigation measures BIO-2 and BIO-3, as discussed in Section 4.4, Biological Resources, potentially significant effects on native nesting birds would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. As such, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to biological resources.

The proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on archaeological resources pursuant to § 15064.5 and paleontological resources. With incorporation of mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4, potentially significant effects would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. Although the records search indicated that no previously-recorded cemeteries or places of human internment are located within a ½-mile radius, it does not preclude the possibility that unknown human remains that may be encountered in the project site. With the implementation of mitigation measure CUL-5, potential impacts to human remains will be reduced to a less-than- significant level. As such, the proposed project is not anticipated to result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to cultural resources.

The proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on land use and planning. Easement acquisition may be required for construction and maintenance. The easement ensures SCE the right to use and access a specific area of property in order to conduct routine maintenance, equipment repair, or restoration of any service disruption. As such, it is anticipated that the proposed project would require permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. It is assumed that SCE would take the lead in coordination efforts with property owners for any permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. Implementation of mitigation measure LU-1, as discussed in Section 4.10, Land Use and Planning, would ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained for any project components that are not owned by Los Angeles County or SCE. With incorporation of LU-1 potential land use impacts would be less than significant. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to land use and planning.

The proposed project has the potential to have a significant impact on emergency access and disaster routes due to temporary lane closures during construction activities. While the proposed project is not anticipated to result in full roadway closures, vehicle access to intersecting streets would likely be limited during some of the construction period. The proposed project would be required to prepare and implement a construction traffic control plan in order to minimize construction impacts. The traffic control plan that would address such issues as access for local businesses and residents, truck routing, dust control, construction worker parking, hours of

operation, potential temporary street closures, detouring, and materials storage. Implementation of mitigation measures TRANS-1 through TRANS-3, as discussed in Section 4.16, Transportation and Traffic, would result in less-than-significant impacts. The proposed project is not anticipated to result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to emergency access during construction for hazards and hazardous materials, public service, and transportation and traffic.

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

Less than Significant Impact. The proposed would not result in substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. As discussed above, mitigation measures are provided to reduce the proposed project's potential effects to below the level of significance on Biological Resources (BIO-1 through BIO-3), Cultural Resources (CUL-1 through CUL-5), Hazards and Hazardous Materials (TRANS-1 through TRANS-3), Land Use and Planning (LU-1), Public Service (TRANS-1 through TRANS-3), and Transportation and Traffic (TRANS-1 through TRANS-3). No additional mitigation measures would be required. Adverse effects on human beings resulting from implementation of the proposed project would be less than significant.

5.0 RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

The Draft IS/MND was circulated for a period of 30 days for public review and comment. The public review period for this Draft IS/MND was scheduled for April 21, 2011 and concluded on May 20, 2011. The Draft IS/MND was specifically distributed to interested or involved public agencies, organizations, and private individuals for review. Approximately 3,000 notices were sent to community residents. Due to construction of the Topanga Library, the Draft IS/MND was made available for general public review at Woodland Hills Library (22200 Ventura Boulevard, Woodland Hills) and Santa Monica Public Library (601 Santa Monica Boulevard, Santa Monica). In addition, the Draft IS/MND was available online at: http://dpw.lacounty.gov/cons/topanga/.

During this public review period, a total of six comment letters were received. This consisted of comment letters from three public agencies, two public utility companies, and one private citizen. A copy of the comment letters are provided in this section, as well as responses to the individual comments are contained in Appendix C. Table 5-1 summarizes the comments received for the Draft IS/MND.

Table 5-1
List of Commenters

Letter	Commenter	Date	Comment Number	Comment Topic(s)
1	Native American Heritage Commission	April 29, 2011	NAHC-1	Cultural Resources
2	California Department of Fish and Game	May 12, 2011	CDFG-1	Biological Resources
3	Topanga Anthropological Consultants	May 17, 2011	King-1	Cultural Resources
4	AT&T Mobility	May 17, 2011	AT&T-1	Project Description; Construction Impacts; Utilities
5	Snell & Wilmer L.L.P on behalf of T-Mobile West Corporation	May 18, 2011	T-Mobile-1	Project Description; Construction Impacts; Utilities
6	Governor's Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit	May 20, 2011	SCH-1	CEQA Requirements; Cultural Resources

6.0 CLARIFICATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

The following clarifications and revisions are intended to update the Draft IS/MND in response to the comments received during the public review period. These changes, which have been incorporated into the Draft IS/MND, constitute the Final IS/MND, to be presented to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors for certification and approval. These clarifications and modifications clarify, amplify, or make insignificant changes to the Draft IS/MND. Revisions to the Draft IS/MND have not resulted in new significant impacts or mitigation measures, nor has the severity of an impact increased.

The changes to the Draft IS/MND are listed by section. Text which has been removed is shown in this chapter with a strikethrough line, while text that has been added is shown <u>underlined</u>. All of the changes shown described in this section have also been made in the corresponding Final IS/MND sections. Minor editorial corrections (e.g. typographical, grammatical, etc.) have been made throughout the document and are not indicated by strikethrough line or underlined text. Please refer to Section 5.0, Response to Comments and Appendix C, for referenced comment letters and corresponding responses to comments.

CHAPTER 1.0 INTRODUCTION

SECTION CLARIFICATION/REVISION

1.0 *The second paragraph has been revised as follows:*

The proposed project would relocate overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Those utility lines that currently cross aerially over the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be placed alongside the bridge via a utility conduit. All other utility lines, which represent seven various companies (including SCE), would be placed underground primarily within the existing right-of-way (ROW). The proposed project would remove 28 existing utility poles, which is comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines <u>(SCE 2010). The proposed project extends approximately 1,600 feet along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres.</u>

CHAPTER 2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

SECTION CLARIFICATION/REVISION

2.2.2 *The third paragraph in Subsection 2.2.2, Malibu Coastal Zone has been revised as follows:*

Any project in the Coastal Zone, which requires discretionary approval, will require a Coastal Development Permit. A Coastal Development Permit is a document required by state law to permit construction of certain uses in a designated "Coastal Zone." A Coastal Development Permit ensures that areas designated as protected coastal land are protected and that the safety, health, and welfare of surrounding neighborhoods and communities are upheld. ~~Los Angeles County is responsible for applying for a coastal development permit from the California Coastal Commission.~~

2.2.2 *The fourth paragraph in Subsection 2.2.2, Malibu Coastal Zone has been revised as follows:*

The Malibu Coastal Zone in Los Angeles County extends approximately 27 miles from the Ventura County line on the west to the Los Angeles city limits on the east. Inland, the Malibu Coastal Zone boundary extends approximately 5 miles to include the coastal slopes of the Santa Monica Mountains. Land Use patterns vary considerably throughout the region. Both commercial and residential development flanks the Pacific Coast Highway from Topanga to Point Dume (Malibu Local Coastal Program 1986). The proposed project is situated within the Malibu Coastal Zone and is subject to the requirements of the California Coastal Act. Per the *Repair, Maintenance and Utility Hook-up Exclusions from Permit Requirements* of the California Coastal Act, a "coastal permit is not required to install, test, place in service, maintain, replace, modify or relocate underground facilities or to convert existing overhead facilities to underground facilities provided that work is limited to public road or railroad rights-of-way or public utility easements (P.U.E.)." As such, a Coastal Development Permit would not be required in order to approve and implement the proposed project. However, per recommendation from the California Coastal Commission, DPW, in coordination with SCE, will obtain a written exemption determination from the South Central Coast District Office prior to project approval (Ainsworth 2011).

2.2.4 *To further clarify regulatory requirements regarding undergrounding utilities, a new subsection has been inserted titled, "2.2.4 Los Angeles County Code, Division 2 of Title 16 Provisions."*

2.2.4 LOS ANGELES COUNTY CODE, DIVISION 2 OF TITLE 16 PROVISIONS

The ordinance codified as Division 2 of Title 16 in the Los Angeles County Code is cited as the "undergrounding of utilities ordinance (Los Angeles County Code 2010)." This allows existing overhead electric or communication facilities presently located within certain designated areas to be removed and replaced with underground electric or communication facilities, which can be designated by the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors as an underground utility district. The Board of Supervisors findings may be based on one or more of the following reasons (Section 16.32.060):

- Such undergrounding will avoid or eliminate an unusually heavy concentration of overhead electric or communication facilities;
- Such designated areas, or sections thereof, are extensively used by the general public and carry a heavy volume of pedestrian or vehicular traffic;
- Such designated areas, or sections thereof, adjoin or pass through civic areas or public recreation areas or areas of unusual scenic interest to the general public;
- Overhead electric or communication facilities within such designated area have been or will be converted to underground locations; therefore, additional or new electric or communication facilities thereafter installed in said area after such conversion has been completed should be underground to conform to the undergrounding pattern.

The following types of facilities are exempted from Division 2 of Title 16, Chapter 16.32.100:

a. Any county facilities or equipment installed under the supervision and to the satisfaction of the commissioner;
b. Poles or electroliers used exclusively for street lighting;
c. Overhead wires (exclusive of supporting structures) crossing any portion of such district within which overhead wires have been prohibited, or connecting to buildings on the perimeter of such district, when such wires originate in an area from which poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures are not prohibited;
d. Overhead wires attached to the exterior surface of a building by means of a bracket or other fixture and from one location on the building to another location on the same building or to an adjacent building without crossing any public street;
e. Antennae, associated equipment and supporting structures used by a utility for furnishing communication services;
f. Equipment appurtenant to underground facilities, such as surface-mounted transformers, pedestal-mounted terminal boxes and meter cabinets, and concealed ducts;
g. Temporary poles, overhead wires and associated overhead structures used or to be used in conjunction with construction projects.

The proposed project would be designed in compliance with Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code (Los Angeles County Code 2010).

2.3.1 *The fourth paragraph in Subsection 2.3.1, Existing Land Use has been revised as follows:*

~~There are approximately 28 utility distribution poles, which is comprised of 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines within the proposed UUD. There are three types of aboveground public utility lines that are found along the project site: 1) electrical; 2) telephone; and 3) cable. The average kilovolt (kV) along the project site is 16kV, 4kV, and 120/240V, which are typically found in retail/commercial developments.~~ Utility providers in the project site include the following: 1) SCE; 2) NextG Networks, Inc.; 3) Cable Engineering Services (utility owner is Verizon Wireless); 4) Verizon California; 5) BMS Engineering (utility owner is AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile); 6) Ericson Contractor (utility owner is Sprint); and 7) Charter Communications (Dunn 2010). No other utilities providers are known to exist within the project site.

2.3.1 *The fifth paragraph in Subsection 2.3.1, Existing Land Use has been revised as follows:*

There are approximately 28 utility distribution poles, which is comprised of 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines within the proposed UUD (SCE 2010). There are four ~~three~~ types of aboveground public utility lines that are found along the project site: 1) electrical; 2) telephone; 3) wireless, and ~~3)~~ 4) cable. The average kilovolt (kV) along the project site is 16kV, 4kV, and 120/240V, which are typically found in retail/commercial developments.

2.3.1 *A sixth paragraph in Subsection 2.3.1, Existing Land Use has been added to further clarify the existing conditions:*

In addition to the utility poles, there are existing overhead equipment (i.e. transformers, capacitors, and switches), which may be placed at grade or underground. There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that provide wireless transmission.

2.3.1 *The first paragraph in Subsection 2.3.1, Existing Land Use under the heading "General Plan and Zoning Designations that lists the permitted uses in the Unlimited Commercial Zone (C-3) has been revised to include the following:*

1. Sales (e.g. antique shops, art galleries, bookstores, bicycle shops, gift shops, grocery stores, hobby supply stores, pet stores, and etc.)
2. Services (e.g. automobile service stations, beauty shops, libraries, offices [business or professional], restaurants, gas metering and control stations, public utility, and etc.)
3. Recreation and Amusement (e.g. golf courses, parks, riding and hiking trails; and etc.)

2.4.1 *The second paragraph in Subsection 2.4.1, Project Background under the heading "Proposed Topanga Underground Utility District" has been revised as follows:*

The proposed project extends approximately 1,600 feet along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD, is approximately 3.6 acres and is described as follows:

2.4.2 *The discussion provided in Subsection 2.4.2, Project Goals under the heading "Heavy Concentration of Overhead Facilities" has been revised to include the following:*

Heavy Concentration of Overhead Facilities. There are approximately 28 utility distribution poles identified within the proposed Topanga UUD, which is comprised of 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). There are four types of aboveground public utility lines that are found along the project site: 1) electrical; 2) telephone; 3) wireless, and 4) cable. Utility providers in the project site include the following: 1) SCE; 2) NextG Networks, Inc.; 3) Cable Engineering Services (utility owner is Verizon Wireless); 4) Verizon California; 5) BMS Engineering (utility owner is AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile); 6) Ericson Contractor (utility owner is Sprint); and 7) Charter Communications (Dunn 2010). No other utilities providers are known to exist within the project site. The proposed project would underground, where applicable up to three each, 16kV circuits (SCE) multiple 4kV distribution lines (SCE), as well as associated 120/240V services (SCE). Per the requirements of the proposed UUD, no overhead utility lines would be allowed within the proposed boundary. As displayed on Figures 2-5 and 2-6, there were a number of lines that dropped from the overhead lines in order to provide services to the affected business owners fronting Topanga Canyon Boulevard, specifically, at the intersection of Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Figure 2-6 displays existing overhead utility lines fronting the retail/commercial developments at the intersection of Cuesta Cala Road along South Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

2.4.3 *The second paragraph in Subsection 2.4.3, Project Objectives under the heading "Providing Comparable Service" has been revised to include the following:*

There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that provide wireless transmission. In order to maintain service of existing wireless (i.e. RF or antenna) systems, the wireless systems would be maintained aboveground. However, it is anticipated that the design, equipment, and location of the existing above ground wireless systems would be agreed upon by each utility provider and DPW, in coordination with SCE, on a case by case basis during the final design phase. It is also anticipated that wireless telephone service providers will continue to provide a comparable level of service through their existing or relocated locations with appropriate permissions obtained from property owners and regulators in compliance with applicable regulatory permitting requirements. Further, the proposed project would be designed in compliance with Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code (Los Angeles County Code 2010). Thus, the proposed project would meet this project objective.

2.5 *The first paragraph in Section 2.5, Project Description has been revised to include the following:*

The proposed project would relocate overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The proposed project extends approximately 1,600 feet along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. As displayed on Figure 2-9, the proposed project starts at the intersection of Cuesta Cala Road and South Topanga Canyon Boulevard, loops north and branches off along Old Topanga Canyon Road, then terminates north along Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

2.5 *The second paragraph in Section 2.5, Project Description has been revised to include the following:*

Per SCE, the term "underground electric system" means an electric system with all wires installed underground, except those wires in surface mounted equipment enclosures (SCE 2002). The proposed project would remove approximately 28 utility distribution poles and relocate approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard (SCE 2010). The utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Canyon Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be placed alongside the bridge via a utility conduit.

2.5 *The third paragraph in Section 2.5, Project Description has been revised to include the following:*

All the other overhead utility lines, which represent a total of seven various companies, would be placed underground primarily within the existing ROW. The utility companies include: 1) SCE; 2) NextG Networks, Inc.; 3) Cable Engineering Services (utility owner is Verizon Wireless); 4) Verizon California; 5) BMS Engineering (utility owner is AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile); 6) Ericson Contractor (utility owner is Sprint); and 7) Charter Communications (Dunn 2010). No other utility providers are known to exist within the project site. In addition to the utility poles, there are existing overhead equipment (i.e. transformers, capacitors, and switches), which may be placed at grade or underground.

2.5 *A fourth paragraph in Section 2.5, Project Description has been inserted to further clarify the existing conditions and includes the following:*

There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that provide wireless transmission. It is assumed that existing aboveground wireless (i.e. RF or antenna) systems would be maintained, relocated, and/or restored. However, it is understood that these wireless systems would need to remain aboveground in order to provide wireless

data. At the time of this study, only a conceptual-level design was available. During the final design phase, it is anticipated that the affected utilities would be identified and the final design of the proposed project, equipment, and location would be agreed upon by each utility provider and DPW, in coordination with SCE, on a case by case basis. It is also anticipated that wireless telephone service providers will continue to provide a comparable level of service through their existing or relocated locations with appropriate permissions obtained from property owners and regulators in compliance with applicable regulatory permitting requirements. Lastly, the proposed project would be designed in compliance with Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code (Los Angeles County Code 2010).

2.5 *The fifth paragraph in Section 2.5, Project Description has been revised to include the following:*

The proposed project would underground, where applicable up to three each, 16kV circuits, (SCE) multiple 4kV distribution lines (SCE), as well as associated 120/240V services (SCE). The proposed project is anticipated to permanently impact approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). The total project footprint is 1,600 feet along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

2.5 *The sixth paragraph in Section 2.5, Project Description has been revised to include the following:*

There are ~~three~~ four types of aboveground public utility lines that are found along the project site: 1) electrical; 2) telephone; 3) wireless, and ~~3)~~4) cable. In addition, there are several streetlights. Most of the utility distribution poles are shared by the electric, telephone, wireless, and cable companies along with streetlights. Each distribution pole, having shared utilities, has higher voltage electric transmission lines at the top, followed in descending order by electricity distribution wires, telephone wires, followed by cable lines and finally the streetlight attachment itself. The highest voltage of transmission line found at the project site is 16 kV. The average kV along the project site is 16 kV, 4kV, and 120/240V, which are typically found in retail/commercial developments.

2.5 *The eighth paragraph in Section 2.5, Project Description has been revised to include the following:*

The proposed project would install a joint-use trench to house the other utility lines (electrical, telephone, wireless, and cable) represented by the seven companies, including SCE. It is anticipated that the join-use trench would include, at minimum, six 5-inch conduits for SCE's utility lines. It is assumed that the various other companies with

utility lines in the project site would install their own conduits, which could vary in size and quantity.

2.6 *The first paragraph under Section 2.6, Construction Scenario under the heading "Notification" has been revised to include the following:*

Prior to construction, all property owners and affected business owners would receive notices. In general, all electrical service to both commercial and residential customers would remain largely uninterrupted. It is anticipated that any utility disruptions and relocations due to the project would occur only during the construction phase.

2.6 *The second paragraph under Section 2.6, Construction Scenario under the subsection "Notification" has been revised to include the following:*

Scheduled outages would take place utilizing the accepted notification protocol currently in place between DPW and SCE. It is anticipated that during construction, the interruption of services (electrical or otherwise) would be kept to a minimum, avoided wherever possible, and, in most cases (baring incident or accident), only occur on a 'planned outage' basis. In most cases, it is anticipated that existing utility systems would absorb temporary outages (if any). However, in the event of temporary outages, DPW, in coordination with SCE, would arrange substitute services, specific to the affected utility in question. Further, DPW and SCE would work closely with property owners and utility providers to coordinate the cut-over (transition from overhead existing utility lines to underground utility lines) in an effort to minimize any service disruptions.

2.6 *The first paragraph in Section 2.6, Construction under the heading "Construction" has been revised to include the following:*

Construction is anticipated to occur within the existing ROW. The trench lines are anticipated to be located within the street, as there is minimal shoulder width on the street (Figure 2-9). However, easement acquisition outside the Topanga UUD boundary may be required for construction and maintenance purposes. The easement ensures SCE the right to use and access a specific area of property in order to conduct routine maintenance, equipment repair, or restoration of any service disruption. As such, it is anticipated that the proposed project would require permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. Typically, temporary construction easements would be acquired from adjacent properties. Permanent easement acquisitions would be negotiated with individual property owners. It is assumed that SCE would take the lead in coordination efforts with property owners for any permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition.

2.6 *The third paragraph in under Section 2.6, Construction under the heading "Construction" has been revised to include the following:*

The proposed project would relocate approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard (SCE 2010). This would entail trenching into the public ROW to lay the conduits, pull boxes, handholes, vaults, vault vents, and appurtenances necessary for the undergrounding of utilities. In general, the construction process for the proposed project would include the following components: (1) site preparation, including fencing, staking, and signage; (2) vegetation clearing and pavement removal; (3) grading; (4) building; and (5) repaving. During construction, it is anticipated that the perimeter of the site would be surrounded with safety fencing and posted with signs indicating an active construction zone. Typical construction equipment would include skip loaders, backhoes, hydraulic hammers, roll off bins, excavators, bottom dumps, cranes, pick-up trucks, concrete ready-mix trucks, delivery vehicles, paving machines, and assorted power-operated hand tools.

2.6 *The fifth paragraph in Section 2.6, Construction under the heading "Construction" has been revised to include the following:*

All the other overhead utility lines, which represent a total of seven various companies, would be placed underground primarily within the existing ROW. As discussed, utility providers in the project site include the following: 1) SCE; 2) NextG Networks, Inc.; 3) Cable Engineering Services (utility owner is Verizon Wireless); 4) Verizon California; 5) BMS Engineering (utility owner is AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile); 6) Ericson Contractor (utility owner is Sprint); and 7) Charter Communications (Dunn 2010). No other utility providers are known to exist within the project site. In addition to the utility poles, there are existing overhead equipment (i.e. transformers, capacitors, and switches), which may be placed at grade or underground. There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that provide wireless transmission. It is assumed that existing aboveground wireless (i.e. RF or antenna) systems would be maintained, relocated, and/or restored. However, it is understood that these wireless systems would need to remain aboveground in order to provide wireless data. At the time of this study, only a conceptual-level design was available. During the final design phase, it is anticipated that the affected utilities would be identified and the final design of the proposed project, equipment, and location would be agreed upon by each utility provider and DPW, in coordination with SCE, on a case by case basis. It is also anticipated that wireless telephone service providers will continue to provide a comparable level of service through their existing or relocated locations with appropriate permissions obtained from property owners and regulators in compliance with applicable regulatory permitting requirements. Lastly, the proposed project would be designed in compliance with Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code (Los Angeles County Code 2010).

2.6 *The seventeenth paragraph in Section 2.6, Construction under the heading "Construction" has been revised to include the following:*

~~If applicable, the project applicant would be required to obtain an encroachment permit from the California Coastal Commission to perform work in the public right-of-way along the site frontage for the duration of the construction period.~~ Construction occurring near private property and requiring access roads would necessitate an encroachment permit from private property owners. It is anticipated that SCE would obtain any encroachment permits from Caltrans and private property owners.

2.6 *The eighteenth paragraph in Section 2.6, Construction Scenario under the heading "Construction" has been revised as follows:*

As discussed, the proposed project is situated within the Malibu Coastal Zone and is subject to the requirements of the California Coastal Act. Per the *Repair, Maintenance and Utility Hook-up Exclusions from Permit Requirements* of the California Coastal Act, a "coastal permit is not required to install, test, place in service, maintain, replace, modify or relocate underground facilities or to convert existing overhead facilities to underground facilities provided that work is limited to public road or railroad rights-of-way or public utility easements (P.U.E.)." As such, a Coastal Development Permit would not be required in order to approve and implement the proposed project. However, per recommendation from the California Coastal Commission, DPW, in coordination with SCE, will obtain a written exemption determination from the South Central Coast District Office prior to project approval (Ainsworth 2011).

2.7 *The list provided in Section 2.7, Project Approvals Required has been revised to delete the California Coastal Commission. It has been determined that a Coastal Development Permit will no longer be required for the proposed project. In addition, the list under "Southern California Edison" has been modified.*

- ~~California Department of Fish and Game, South Coast Region (Region 5)~~
  - ~~Lake and Streambed Alteration Program Notification Requirement~~

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
  - Construction Staging Permit
  - Demolition and Construction Debris Recycling Plan
  - Grading, drainage, traffic control, and building permits
  - Parking permits
  - Sewer Plan approval
  - SWPPP

- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4
  - General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ
  - Issuance of waste discharge requirements

- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

- Southern California Edison and Other Public Utility Providers Within the Project Site
  - Easement Acquisition
  - Encroachment Permit

CHAPTER 3.0 INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

SECTION CLARIFICATION/REVISION

11. *The section under "Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required" has been modified to include the following:*

- ~~California Department of Fish and Game, South Coast Region (Region 5)~~
  - ~~Lake and Streambed Alteration Program Notification Requirement~~

- Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
  - Construction Staging Permit
  - Demolition and Construction Debris Recycling Plan
  - Grading, drainage, traffic control, and building permits
  - Parking permits
  - Sewer Plan approval
  - SWPPP

- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4
  - General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DWQ
  - Issuance of waste discharge requirements
  - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

- Southern California Edison and Other Public Utility Providers Within the Project Site
  - Easement Acquisition
  - Encroachment Permit

14. Public Services *The determination for Question 14(v) in the checklist has been changed "less than significant."*

CHAPTER 4.0 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

SECTION CLARIFICATION/REVISION

4.1 *Section 4.1, Aesthetics, Question(c) has been revised as follows:*

Less than Significant Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. The overall character of the surrounding area is a range of local and regional business uses, including retail stores, office buildings, and service businesses; institutional uses (i.e., post office, Topanga Library, etc.); and single-family residences interspersed throughout the vicinity of the project site. The Topanga Library (122 North Topanga Canyon Boulevard), which is currently under construction; a Verizon Wireless Telecommunication facility; and various retail/commercial developments are located on the eastern portion of the project site. The Topanga Creek traverses the western portion of the project site. An SCE substation, an equestrian center, various retail/commercial establishments, and a restaurant were identified along Old Topanga Canyon Road, also on the western portion of the project site. Additional retail/commercial developments, restaurants, a post office (101 South Topanga Canyon Boulevard), and office complexes are located on the southern portion of the project site. Office complexes, along with several oak and ornamental trees are located north of the project site (Figure 2-3).

The project site also contains a bridge (Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge) located north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon. As discussed, the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge is categorized as a “Category 5” in the Caltrans bridge index, which is not eligible for designation in the NRHP. Further, the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge did not demonstrate sufficient importance under Criteria A (NRHP) or Criteria 1 (CRHP). The A-frame truss bridge was determined as neither an innovative design of a significant method of construction nor a bold engineering achievement and not eligible under Criterion C (NRHP) or Criteria 3 (CRHP). As further discussed in Section 4.5, Cultural Resources, Question (a), the impact to historical resources as defined in §15064.5 would be less than significant.

The project site is relatively flat and is situated in a canyon surrounded by hillsides within the Santa Monica Mountains. Views of the project site are limited to residents, motorists, and pedestrians traveling along Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road. As previously described, the project site does not contain a scenic vista and is not within an officially designated state scenic highway. However, there are several scenic resources in the project area, including mature oak trees. Decorative street and pedestrian lighting are located along a small portion of Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

The construction of the proposed project would occur within the existing public ROW. The construction process would include site preparation, vegetation clearing and pavement removal, grading, trenching and building, and repaving. The proposed project would require tree trimming, pruning, and/or vegetation clearing.

<u>At the time of this study, only a conceptual-level design was available. However, it is assumed that existing aboveground enclosures (e.g. pad-mounted transformer</u>

installations, load break fuse cabinets, capacitor cabinets, equipment boxes, etc.) would be maintained. In addition, there are existing overhead equipment (i.e. transformers, capacitors, and switches) that may be placed at grade or underground. There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that may be relocated, but would be maintained aboveground. During the final design phase, it is anticipated that the affected utilities would be identified and the final design of the proposed project, equipment, and location would be agreed upon by each utility provider and DPW, in coordination with SCE, on a case by case basis. Relocation or modification of these aboveground enclosures, overhead equipment, aboveground antennas, and other aboveground facilities would not result in impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the site during the construction phase.

Numerous existing overhead utility distribution lines are located along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard, which disrupt the views of the hillsides and diminish the visual character of the project area. There are currently 28 existing utility poles, which is comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). The placement of the existing overhead utility lines underground would substantially reduce the visual clutter that is currently present and would enhance the appearance of the existing mature trees that line Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Accordingly, the visual character and quality of the proposed project site and surroundings would be improved, and would not be significantly degraded as a result of the proposed project. Although, the construction process, particularly the trenching activities, would alter the visual character of the project area, this visual change would be temporary. As such, impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the site during the construction phase would be less than significant.

Operation of the proposed project would result in a visual character improvement to the project site and area. The proposed project would relocate all lines within the proposed UUD and would remove approximately 28 utility poles, comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines; thus, generally improving the scenic quality of the project area (SCE 2010). Impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the site during the operation phase would be less than significant.

4.3 *The fifth paragraph under Section 4.3, Air Quality, Question(a) has been revised as follows:*

The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. The proposed project would remove approximately 28 utility poles comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). Those utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge

just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be placed alongside the bridge via a utility conduit. The other utility lines, which represent seven various companies, including SCE, would be placed underground primarily within the existing ROW.

4.8 *The first paragraph in Section 4.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Question(a) under "Construction" has been revised as follows:*

Construction

The proposed project extends approximately 1,600 feet along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. The proposed project would remove approximately 28 utility poles comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). Construction is anticipated to start in fall 2012 and take approximately 18–24 months to complete, ending in summer/fall 2013. It is estimated that the project site would be returned to full operation by the end of spring 2014.

4.9 *The first paragraph in Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, Question(e) has been revised as follows:*

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. Due to the small size of the project site, construction of the proposed project would not result in substantial additional runoff that would exceed the capacity of the existing drainage ditches along Topanga Canyon Boulevard or Old Topanga Canyon Road.

4.10 *Section 4.10, Land Use and Planning, Question(b) has been revised as follows:*

Less than Significant After Mitigation Incorporated. Per the Los Angeles County General Plan, the properties adjacent to the project site is zoned primarily Unlimited Commercial Zone (C-3). Adjacent properties north and west of the project site are zoned Light Agricultural (A-1-1). Single-family residences (R-1), which have a 10,000 square foot minimum, are found east of the project site are along Cuesta Cala Road and South Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Light Manufacturing Zones under a Development Program (M-1-DP) are found along South Topanga Canyon Boulevard. Per the Los Angeles County Code, Zone DP was established to provide a zone in which development occurring after property has been rezoned will conform to plans and exhibits submitted by the applicant in instances where such plans and exhibits constitute a critical factor in the decision to rezone (DRP 2010, Los Angeles County Code 2010). Please refer to Figure 2-4, Zoning.

The proposed project is situated within the Malibu Coastal Zone and is subject to the requirements of the California Coastal Act. Per the *Repair, Maintenance and Utility Hook-up Exclusions from Permit Requirements* of the California Coastal Act, a "coastal permit is not required to install, test, place in service, maintain, replace, modify or relocate underground facilities or to convert existing overhead facilities to underground facilities provided that work is limited to public road or railroad rights-of-way or public utility easements (P.U.E.)." As such, a Coastal Development Permit would not be required in order to approve and implement the proposed project. However, per recommendation from the California Coastal Commission, DPW, in coordination with SCE, will obtain a written exemption determination from the South Central Coast District Office prior to project approval (Ainsworth 2011).

~~The project site is also located within the Malibu Coastal Zone and is subject to the permitting requirements of the California Coastal Commission. A Coastal Development Permit would be required in order to approve and implement the proposed project. Los Angeles County is responsible for applying for a coastal development permit from the California Coastal Commission.~~

Additionally, the project site is located within the boundaries of the Topanga Canyon Community Standards District, as outlined in Section 22.44.119 of the Los Angeles County Code (Los Angeles County Code 2010). The Topanga Canyon Community Standards District, which was adopted on May 1990, was established to implement policies related to small lot subdivision development (Malibu Local Coastal Program 1986). The proposed project does not include development of a subdivision. The proposed project would not alter the land use of the project site or surrounding area, and would not conflict with any applicable land use plans.

Construction is anticipated to occur within the existing ROW. The trench lines are anticipated to be located within the street, as there is minimal shoulder width on the street. However, easement acquisition outside the Topanga UUD boundary may be required for construction and maintenance purposes. The easement ensures SCE the right to use and access a specific area of property in order to conduct routine maintenance, equipment repair, or restoration of any service disruption. It is anticipated that the proposed project would require permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. Temporary construction easements would be acquired from adjacent properties. Permanent easement acquisitions would be negotiated with individual property owners. It is assumed that SCE would take the lead in coordination efforts with property owners for any permanent and/or temporary easement acquisition. Implementation of mitigation measure LU-1 would ensure that appropriate approvals are obtained for any project components that are not owned by Los Angeles County or SCE. With incorporation of LU-1 potential land use impacts would be less than significant.

LU-1 Prior to the initiation of any construction activities on privately-owned property, SCE shall coordinate with that private or public landowner to obtain all appropriate approvals, easements, and/or use permits to allow project implementation on their property.

4.12 *Section 4.12, Noise, Question(a) under the heading "Operation" has been revised as follows:*

Operation

This alternative would not generate operational noise that would be subject to County operational noise limits. The proposed project would remove approximately 28 utility poles comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). The proposed project would not result in additional traffic volumes or capacity. Therefore, no operational noise would be generated. No mitigation is required.

4.14 *Section 4.14, Public Services, Question(a)(v) has been revised as follows:*

Less than Significant. ~~**No Impact.**~~ The proposed project does not include development of residential uses and would not generate any new permanent residents that would increase the demand on other public facilities. ~~Therefore, no impacts would occur and no further analysis is required.~~

The proposed project would result in the relocation of utility facilities. Specifically, the proposed project would relocate approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution lines along Old Topanga Canyon Road and Topanga Canyon Boulevard (SCE 2010). Those utility lines that currently cross aerially over Topanga Creek at the Topanga Canyon Creek Bridge just north of Topanga Canyon Boulevard on Old Topanga Canyon Road would be attached alongside the bridge via a utility conduit. All the other overhead utility lines, which represent a total of seven various companies, would be placed underground primarily within the existing ROW. As discussed, utility providers in the project site include the following: 1) SCE; 2) NextG Networks, Inc.; 3) Cable Engineering Services (utility owner is Verizon Wireless); 4) Verizon California; 5) BMS Engineering (utility owner is AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile); 6) Ericson Contractor (utility owner is Sprint); and 7) Charter Communications (Dunn 2010). No other utility providers are known to exist within the project site.

In addition to the utility poles, there are existing overhead equipment (i.e. transformers, capacitors, and switches), which may be placed at grade or underground. There are also aboveground antennas mounted to the utility poles that provide wireless transmission. It is assumed that existing aboveground wireless (i.e. RF or antenna) systems would be maintained, relocated, and/or restored. However, it is understood that these wireless

systems would need to remain aboveground in order to provide wireless data. At the time of this study, only a conceptual-level design was available. During the final design phase, it is anticipated that the affected utilities would be identified and the final design of the proposed project, equipment, and location would be agreed upon by each utility provider and DPW, in coordination with SCE, on a case by case basis.

The proposed project would not result in impacts to E911 services, the emergency telephone number used to link people experiencing an emergency with the applicable emergency provider. AT&T Mobility's facility is integrated into the E911 response system for this area. It is anticipated that wireless telephone service providers will continue to provide a comparable level of service through their existing or relocated locations with appropriate permissions obtained from property owners and regulators in compliance with applicable regulatory permitting requirements. It is also anticipated that any utility disruptions and relocations due to the proposed project would occur only during the construction phase. The interruption of services (electrical or otherwise) would be kept to a minimum, avoided wherever possible, and, in most cases (baring incident or accident), only occur on a 'planned outage' basis. In the event of any anticipated service disruptions, all property owners and affected business owners would receive notices prior to construction. Further, the proposed project would be designed in compliance with Division 2 of Title 16 of the Los Angeles County Code, which allows existing antennas to be maintained aboveground (Los Angeles County Code 2010). Lastly, DPW and SCE would work closely with property owners and utility providers to coordinate the cut-over (transition from overhead existing utility lines to underground utility lines) in an effort to minimize any service disruptions. As such, the proposed project is not anticipated to disrupt services to the E911 response system. The impacts to existing utility facilities would be less than significant.

4.16 *Section 4.16, Transportation and Traffic, Question(a), the first paragraph under the heading "Construction" has been revised as follows:*

Construction

Construction is anticipated to occur within the existing ROW. The proposed project extends 1,600 feet along Topanga Canyon Boulevard and Old Topanga Canyon Road. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. The proposed project would remove approximately 28 utility poles, which is comprised of approximately 2,100 linear feet of overhead utility distribution conductor lines (SCE 2010). Construction is anticipated to start in fall 2012 and take approximately 18-24 months (360-480 working days) to complete, ending in summer/fall 2013. It is estimated that the project site would be returned to full operation by the end of spring 2014.

4.17 *Under Section 4.17, Utilities and Service Systems, Question(a), the first paragraph has been revised as follows:*

Less than Significant Impact. Construction activities would be subject to County inspection. The project area of the proposed Topanga UUD is approximately 3.6 acres. As such, the proposed project would be required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, General Construction Permit 2009-0009-DW, pursuant to the NPDES permitting program (California Environmental Protection Agency 2010). Further, all construction activities would be required to prepare a SWPPP that specifies appropriate BMPs that meet or exceed federal, state, and local mandated guidelines for stormwater treatment to control erosion and to protect the quality of surface water runoff during construction activities, in compliance with Los Angeles County Code. Minimum BMPs may include, but are not limited to, covering stockpiles; retaining eroded sediments and pollutants onsite; and proper storage for fuels, oils, solvents, and other toxic materials. A more detailed discussion of BMPs is provided in Section 2.6.1, Best Management Practices (DPW 2005b). Construction projects that include grading activities during the rainy season must also develop a WWECP. Compliance with the County Code and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations would ensure that construction would not violate any water quality standards or discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality.

4.18 *Under Section 4.18, Mandatory Findings of Significance, Question(a), the "No Impact" list has been revised as follows:*

- Aesthetics (impacts related to scenic vista and shade and shadow)
- Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- Biological Resources (habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFG or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
- Geology and Soils (impacts related to earthquake fault; seismic ground shaking; liquefaction; landslides; septic tanks)
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials (impacts related to hazardous materials listed on Government Code Section 65962.5; airport land use plan; private airstrip; wildland fires)
- Hydrology and Water Quality (impacts related to depleting groundwater supplies; 100-year flood hazard area; failure of levee or dam; inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow)
- Land Use and Planning (impacts related to dividing an established community)
- Mineral Resources
- Noise (impacts related to airport land use plan; private airstrip)
- Population and Housing

- Public Services (impacts related to schools; parks~~; other public facilities~~)
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic (impacts related to a change in air traffic patterns; hazards due to a design feature; conflict with adopted public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facility)
- Utilities and Service Systems (impacts related to construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities; sufficient water supplies; adequate capacity of wastewater treatment provider)

4.18 *Under Section 4.18, Mandatory Findings of Significance, Question(a), the "Less than Significant" list has been revised as follows:*

- Aesthetics (impacts related to scenic resources; degrading existing visual character; light and glare)
- Air Quality (impacts related to implementation of applicable air plan; violating air quality standards; cumulative net increase of criteria pollutant; exposure of sensitive receptors; releasing objectionable odors)
- Biological Resources (impacts related to conflicting with any local policies)
- Cultural Resources (impacts related to historical resources as defined in § 15064.5)
- Geology and Soils (impacts related to unstable geological unit; located on expansive soil)
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions (impacts related to generating greenhouse gas emissions directly or indirectly; conflicting with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation reducing greenhouse gas emissions)
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials (impacts related to creating a significant hazard to the public through routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials; creating a significant hazard to the public through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions; emitting hazardous emissions within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school)
- Noise (impacts related to exposure to noise levels in excess of established standards; exposure to excessive groundborne vibration; substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels; substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels)
- <u>Public Services (impacts related to other public facilities)</u>
- Utilities and Service Systems (impacts related to exceeding wastewater treatment requirements per the Regional Water Quality Control Board; resulting in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities; service by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity; compliance with federal, state, and local statutes)

CHAPTER 9.0 REFERENCES

The following references have been added:

Ainsworth, John

2011 E-mail correspondence between John Ainsworth (California Coastal Commission) and Susan Nissman (DPW). April 7, 2011.

California Coastal Commission

1978 *Repair, Maintenance, and Utility Hook-up Exclusions from Permit Requirements.* II. B. 2.b. Electrical Transmission & Distribution & Communication Facilities. Adopted by the California Coastal Commission on September 5, 1978,

Southern California Edison (SCE)

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2010 Input provided on Draft IS/MND. October 26.

7.0 MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

CEQA requires public agencies to adopt a reporting or monitoring program for the changes to the project that have been adopted to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment (PRC Section 21081.6). The purpose of this program is to ensure that when an MND identifies measures to reduce potential environmental impacts to less than significant levels, that those measures are implemented as detailed in the environmental document. The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) includes the following information for each mitigation measure:

- the phase of the project during which the required mitigation measure must be implemented;
- the phase of the project during which the required mitigation measure must be monitored;
- the enforcement agency; and
- the monitoring agency.

The MMRP also includes a checklist to be used during the mitigation monitoring period (Table 7-1). The checklist will verify the name of the monitor, the date of the monitoring activity, and any related remarks for each mitigation measure.

As lead agency, DPW is responsible for implementation of the MMRP. Once the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors adopts the MMRP, DPW, in coordination with SCE, will incorporate the mitigation monitoring/reporting requirements in the appropriate permits (i.e., engineering specifications, engineering construction permits, and/or real estate entitlements). Therefore, in accordance with the aforementioned requirements, this MMRP lists each mitigation measure, describes the methods for implementation and verification, and identifies the responsible party or parties as detailed below.

Table 7-1
Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Phase	Monitoring Phase	Enforcement Agency	Verification of Compliance		
				Initial	Date	Remarks
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES						
BIO-1: DPW, in coordination with SCE, shall consult with CDFG's South Coast Region (Region 5) office in order to determine applicability of a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement for the proposed project.	Final Plans and Specifications	Final Plans and Specifications	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
BIO-2: Should construction, clearing, grading, tree trimming, or tree removal activities occur during the breeding season (February 1-September 15) for migratory non-game native bird species, a qualified biologist with experience in conducting nesting bird surveys shall conduct nesting birds surveys three days prior to construction. High quality nesting habitat occurs adjacent to and along the entire length of the utility line. Therefore, a nesting bird survey is recommended immediately preceding the start of trimming/construction activities to allow thorough coverage in order and detection of any protected native birds in the trees to be removed and other suitable nesting habitat within 300 feet of the construction work area (500 feet for raptors). If an active nest is found, all clearance/construction disturbance activities shall be halted in suitable nesting habitat or within 300 feet of nesting habitat (within 500 feet for raptor nesting habitat) until September 15 or additional surveys shall be conducted in order to determine that a buffer less than 300 feet is acceptable for a particular nest, based on the type of construction/clearing activities scheduled to take place. Construction limits shall be established in the field with flagging and stakes or construction fencing to avoid a nest and	Pre-Construction; Construction	Pre-Construction; Construction	DPW, in coordination with SCE			

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Phase	Monitoring Phase	Enforcement Agency	Verification of Compliance		
				Initial	Date	Remarks
construction personnel shall be instructed on the sensitivity of the area. The results of this measure shall be recorded to document compliance with applicable State and Federal laws pertaining to the protection of native birds.						
BIO-3: A biologist shall be on-site to flag trimming limits for riparian vegetation and to monitor trimming activities in preparation for placement of new utilities.	Construction	Construction	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
CULTURAL RESOURCES						
CUL-1: As the excavation along the alignment will result in an adverse effect and impacts to significant archaeological resources, it is recommended that during the final design phase, DPW, in coordination with SCE, shall design the trench to be placed along the south/western side of the ROW in order to avoid areas with high potential to contain intact cultural deposits**.**	Final Plans and Specifications	Final Plans and Specifications	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
CUL-2: It is anticipated that all staging areas would take place within the Study Area boundaries, However, **s**hould staging areas, or other project related areas of impact be designed to be located outside of the Study Area, these areas will require additional survey prior to the start of construction to determine that the location is free of cultural resources.	Pre-Construction; Final Plans and Specifications	Pre-Construction; Final Plans and Specifications	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
CUL-3: The following *Monitoring Protocol and Data Recovery Treatment Plan* is required to be implemented for all ground disturbing activities associated with the project. The *Monitoring Protocol and Data Recovery Treatment Plan* includes a plan for the recovery of significant information during construction monitoring of all ground-disturbing activities associated with the	Pre-Construction; Construction	Construction	DPW, in coordination with SCE			

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Phase	Monitoring Phase	Enforcement Agency	Verification of Compliance		
				Initial	Date	Remarks
proposed project:						

Monitoring Protocol and Data Recovery Treatment Plan

As part of the *Monitoring Protocol and Data Recovery Treatment Plan*, a qualified archaeological monitor and a Native American representative shall be present to monitor any and all ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed project. This includes construction activities. All hand excavation conducted by archaeologists will also have a Native American monitor in attendance. The implementation of the *Monitoring Protocol and Data Recovery Treatment Plan* will be overseen by a qualified Principal Investigator in Prehistoric Archaeology meeting the Caltrans Professionally Qualified Staff standards as identified in Section 106 PA Attachment 1.

Mechanical Excavation. Because the intact deposits are beneath the road and likely under a layer of fill, all excavation for the proposed project will be monitored by a qualified archaeological monitor and Native American Monitor. After project design, portions of the project located within the mapped location of CA-LAN-8 (see Figure 4, Appendix B) will be excavated under the direction of the archaeological monitor and the archaeological Principal Investigator. During this process the existing pavement will be removed and any recent fill associated with road construction or previous installation of utilities will be mechanically removed. This excavation will be carefully monitored by an archaeologist and a Native American.

Controlled Excavation. When apparently intact archaeological deposits are encountered (manifested by organically-rich soil with artifacts and shell), the entire archaeological deposit exposed by the mechanical trenching will be excavated by hand using standard archaeological techniques. These will include the following:

- *Excavation Units:* Excavation units will measure 1 by 1 m and will be hand-excavated in 10-cm levels to sterile sediments. Depending on the compactness of the soil, tools used during the excavation may include picks, dig bars, shovels, and trowels. The soil from the units will be transported to a water-screening facility where they will be processed through 1/8-inch mesh hardware cloth and all cultural materials will be collected. The units will be excavated through at least one sterile level or to bedrock. Each unit will be documented in a standard unit notebook. If subsurface hearths, house floors, artifact concentrations, or other features are encountered, they will be carefully exposed and partially pedestaled to assess their structure and extent. Typically, the features will then be bisected to expose a cross section prior to their removal.

- *Field Documentations and Data Management:* The locations of the excavation units will be controlled with reference to the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) grid using a submeter Global Positioning System (GPS). Collections from each unit will be bagged and labeled with the site number, unit designation, level, date, and excavator. Each bag will be assigned a unique number that will be entered in a daily bag log. The field director will check in each bag at the end of each field day. The completed bags will be placed in labeled cardboard banker's boxes until the completion of each unit, when the boxes will be transported to the laboratory. The field director will maintain sets of field notes that will document daily activities.

Special Samples. The field investigations are likely to include the collection of a variety of specialized samples. Although the full range of such samples will depend on specific findings in the field, it is anticipated that samples for radiocarbon dating, protein residue, and soil flotation will be collected. Procedures to collect and process these samples in the field are described below.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Phase	Monitoring Phase	Enforcement Agency	Verification of Compliance		
				Initial	Date	Remarks

- *Radiocarbon:* Radiocarbon samples collected in the field will be wrapped in foil and placed in separate containers. Fragile samples, such as charcoal, will be protected by placing them in film canisters or small cardboard boxes.

- *Soil and Column Samples:* Two column samples will be taken from selected units for flotation and fine-mesh screening. The column samples will measure 10 by 10 cm and will be removed in 10-cm levels. If natural strata are visible, soil from those strata will be segregated within the column samples. The soil from each 10-cm level will be placed in labeled plastic bags for transport to the laboratory. Additional soil samples from hearths or other features will also be placed in labeled plastic bags.

- *Protein Residue:* Up to 10 flaked lithic specimens (projectile points or apparent scraping tools) will be placed in plastic zip-closure bags for protein residue analysis. To avoid contamination these will receive minimal handling.

Laboratory Procedures and Cataloging

At the completion of fieldwork, materials collected in the field will be transported to the AECOM laboratory. The materials will arrive at the laboratory in labeled plastic or paper bags placed in labeled cardboard banker's boxes (exceptions may include extremely large artifacts such as complete metates; these will be tied with string and labeled tags attached). The boxes will be placed in a check-in area of the lab, where the arriving materials will be checked against the field logs. Once check-in is complete, the materials will be washed, with the exception of soil and column samples and pieces that may be selected for special studies or that may be useful for such studies in the future. Groundstone, for example, will not typically be washed unless necessary for typological identification. Projectile points and other flaked stone tools, which may contain protein residues, will also not be washed unless necessary for adequate description and analysis. Washed materials will be air-dried in labeled drying racks and rebagged for cataloging.

Upon completion of the washing and drying, the materials will be separated into major classes (flaked stone debitage and tools; groundstone; bone tools; modified and unmodified shell; faunal bone; column samples; and the like) and entered into a master catalog. The catalog will be in Microsoft Access or Excel and will include catalog number, provenience, material type, counts, and weights.

As indicated above, a series of column samples will be taken from selected units, and additional soil samples will be taken as appropriate from hearths or other features. Soil from these samples will be subjected to flotation by gently agitating it in water to separate the light from heavy fraction. The heavy fraction will be screened through 1/16-inch mesh hardware cloth, dried, and sorted. Identified cultural materials will be analyzed according to the procedures discussed below. The light fraction will also be sorted and materials that may relate to prehistoric cultural activities (such as charcoal or carbonized seeds) will be collected and analyzed by the paleobotanical specialist. Initial processing of the column and soil samples will be undertaken at the AECOM laboratory.

Analysis. The analyses of collected materials will commence after the completion of the master catalog. Although specific procedures for the analyses will depend to some extent on the findings at individual sites, the data currently at hand do indicate several classes of materials likely to be recovered. These include flaked stone artifacts, ground and battered artifacts, fire-affected rock, and faunal remains. The analyses of these materials will be directed at providing data useful in addressing the research issues discussed previously.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Phase	Monitoring Phase	Enforcement Agency	Verification of Compliance		
				Initial	Date	Remarks

Debitage Analysis. The analyzed lithic debitage will be sorted into gross categories according to size, material type, and amount of cortex. Following that, samples of debitage from selected proveniences will be analyzed in detail. Analytical variables will include the following:

- *Material Type:* As discussed above, material type may be useful in assessing mobility and exchange patterns. For the present analysis, *volcanic* refers to material derived from extruded igneous rocks that have crystallized on the surface at atmospheric pressures. Common examples are basalt, dacite, and rhyolite. The term *metavolcanic* refers to the same volcanic minerals that have been metamorphosed by heat and pressure. The term *cryptocrystalline* (CCS) refers to rocks or minerals that are high in silicates such as chert and chalcedony.

- *Completeness:* Debitage assemblages from Southern California often contain high frequencies of incomplete flakes, which are usually uninformative with respect to other variables relating to technology. For this reason, flakes that are missing substantial portions of the proximal, distal, or lateral edges will be considered incomplete and will not be further analyzed.

- *Flake Size:* In a general sense, the relative size of individual flakes can provide basic information on tool production; for example, evenly distributed size categories might suggest that the full range of production took place on-site; while higher frequencies of small flakes could suggest that only late-stage tool finishing and retouch took place there. This, in turn, has implications with respect to mobility and site function. To assess size, the debitage will be sorted into five size categories (<1 cm, 1.1–2 cm, 2.1-3 cm, 3.1–4 cm, and >4 cm) based on maximum flake length.

- *Cortex:* Similar to flake size, the amount of cortex represented in debitage assemblages can provide information on stage of production. Higher frequencies of cortical flakes suggest early-stage production, for example, and could suggest procurement in the local area. Noncortical flakes are later stage. Categories for cortex amount include primary flakes (cortex completely covering the dorsal side), secondary (cortex partially covering the dorsal side), and interior (no cortex).

- *Technological Stage:* Technological analysis can provide important information on the types of and variability of tools that are manufactured on-site. Major categories to be used in the debitage analysis include core reduction, biface reduction, pressure reduction, and angular waste. Core reduction flakes are identified as having platforms that are thick and wide in relation to the flake, usually with a single facet, although multiple facets may occasionally be present. Dorsal flake scars are variable but generally few in number and originate from a single direction. The flakes are flat in long section and usually have contracting terminations. Biface reduction flakes typically expand and are curved or twisted in longitudinal cross section. They have multiple flake scars, particularly on late-stage flakes that originate in different directions. Platforms are small in relation to the flake and may have either single or multiple facets. Terminations are feathered, thin, and have small edge angles. Pressure flakes are defined as the flakes removed from along the margins of tools in order to thin and sharpen the edges. Angular waste is defined as chunks of materials that lack the attributes of flakes.

Flaked Stone Tools. Flaked stone tools will be separated into several categories. These include flake tools, which include flakes that have been modified along the edge by minimal, intentional flaking (modified flakes); flakes that are unifacially retouched along one or more margins, with the retouch extending across one face (unifaces); and flakes that exhibit use wear but are otherwise unmodified (utilized flakes). The assemblage may also include tools that are retouched along one or more margins, with the retouch extending across both faces (bifaces), and projectile points.

- *Flake Tools:* Standard measures of size, weight, and material will be recorded for each flake tool, as well as completeness, flake type, and type of modification.

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Phase	Monitoring Phase	Enforcement Agency	Verification of Compliance		
				Initial	Date	Remarks

Flake type refers to whether the flake was struck from a core or biface, an important consideration in assessing how lithic materials were transported across the landscape. Type of modification will refer to how the edge was modified, i.e., obverse, inverse, alternating, and bifacial. Additionally, the number of modified edges will be recorded as a potential measure of the intensity of use of these artifacts.

- *Bifaces:* Attributes recorded for bifaces will include material, size, weight, completeness, and production stage. Material categories will be similar to those described above. Size will be measured by length, width, and thickness; for broken pieces, incomplete dimensions will not be included in the analyses. Production stage of each biface will be identified with reference to the five-stage sequence.

- *Projectile Points:* Although projectile points are typically (but not always) bifaces, they will be analyzed with reference to a number of additional attributes, including distal and proximal shoulder angles, neck widths, notch opening index, and basal width. These and the standard measures of length, width, and thickness will be applied to standard projectile point keys to assign points to types.

Groundstone Artifacts. For this analysis, each groundstone artifact will be assigned to a specific subcategory based on attributes suggestive of the item's function. For the present effort, it is anticipated that these subtypes will include milling implements, vessels, ritual paraphernalia, other groundstone tools, and undifferentiated groundstone artifacts. Milling implements are those used to reduce intermediate substances to a finer texture through the process of grinding, crushing, pounding, or pulverizing. Substances reduced by this process are typically vegetal resources but may also include animal products or pigments and clays. Groundstone artifacts falling within this class include netherstones and handstones. Netherstones and handstones are counterparts to one another in the milling process, with netherstones being the stationary surface on which the movable handstone is used. Subtypes of handstones identified during the present analysis will most likely consist of manos and pestles, while netherstones will likely include metates and mortars.

Recorded attributes of handstones will include shouldering, shaping, pecking, and battering, and evidence for heat alteration. Manos will also be recorded as bifacial or unifacial. Metates will be categorized as "slab" or "basin" metates based on whether they exhibit any discernible depression on their grinding surfaces. Artifacts classified as mortars have basins exhibiting use-wear resulting from crushing, pounding, or abrading. Bowls, however, do not evidence use-wear, except in those instances when striations associated with stirring are present. The presence of broad basins and flat bottoms also distinguishes bowls from mortars, which usually possess round bottoms and conical-shaped basins. In cases where examination of these attributes does not reveal any clear indication as to whether an artifact was a mortar or bowl, a subtype of "mortar/bowl" may be applied.

The length, width, and thickness of all complete and fragmentary groundstone specimens will be measured and cataloged. Length is measured at the longest axis and width is measured at the axis perpendicular to length. Thickness measurements are taken at the thickest cross section. Each complete artifact and fragment will be examined macroscopically in an effort to identify indicators of patterned wear resulting from grinding activities on the operating surface of the tool. Such indicators include striations, crushed grains, leveled areas, and sheen or polish. Macroscopic examination will include observation of the specimens under high and low intensity light, and under both direct and cross lighting.

Evidence of pre-use manufacture or shaping will also be documented. Shaping is typically indicated by the presence of battering scars and/or pecking of the tool's ends or edges, and/or by grinding and polishing. Unshaped groundstone items will be categorized as "expedient" tools, while those exhibiting one or more of the characteristics associated with shaping will be categorized as "designed" tools. The number of surfaces evidencing use-wear will be noted for each specimen. Unifacial items are those

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Phase	Monitoring Phase	Enforcement Agency	Verification of Compliance		
				Initial	Date	Remarks
with a single operating surface, bifacial indicates two operating surfaces, and multi-facial indicates the presence of three or more operating surfaces. Evidence of resurfacing or retexturing of each tool's operating surface/s will also be noted. **Faunal Remains.** Each identified piece of animal bone will be sorted into identifiable and unidentifiable categories by both element and taxon. They then will be identified to genus or species where possible. When such identification is not possible, elements will be identified to the family, order, or class level. Specimens identified only to the class level (particularly mammals) will be separated into size categories of small, medium, and large animals. Those that cannot be identified at least to the class level will be simply identified as vertebrate bone. When possible each specimen will be identified to element (skull, humerus, femur, etc.). Identified portions of the elements, such as distal, proximal, or shaft, will also be recorded. Degree of burning will also be recorded, as well as any cultural or noncultural modifications such as cutmarks, polishing, weathering, gnawing, or digestive pitting. Because some of the bone (particularly bone of burrowing animals) may be intrusive, attempts will be made to distinguish culturally occurring from naturally occurring specimens. Various published methods will be applied to this effort, with primary factors including degree of weathering, color, presence of digestive pitting, staining, percentage of juvenile individuals, and distinctive feathering of long bone ends. Marine shell recovered during the testing will be sorted according to species. Because the shell is likely to be highly fragmentary, the represented species will be quantified by weight rather than counts. Hinges, however, will be counted and applied to estimates of minimum numbers of individuals. **Plant Remains.** Analyzed plant remains are likely to include macrofossils (charred seeds), charcoal, pollen, and phytoliths. Plant macrofossils will be targeted through flotation of soil from column samples or features. Pollen and phytoliths will be recovered from both soil samples and washes of selected groundstone artifacts. **Curation.** Recovered cultural materials will be curated at the San Diego Archaeological Center, which meets the requirements set forth in federal regulation 36 CFR Part 79 (Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archaeological Collections) and State of California Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Collections.						
CUL-4: In the event any paleontological resources are encountered during earthmoving activities, the construction contractor shall cease activity in the affected area until the discovery can be evaluated by a qualified paleontological resources specialist in accordance with the provisions of CEQA §15064.5.	Construction	Construction	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
CUL-5: Native American burials are often unmarked and can be disturbed during earth moving activities. As the activities proposed within the ROW are in a restricted location, avoidance of burials is difficult if not impossible. In the event human remains are encountered during construction activities, all excavation or disturbance in the area within the vicinity of the remains shall halt in	Construction	Construction	DPW, in coordination with SCE			

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Phase	Monitoring Phase	Enforcement Agency	Verification of Compliance		
				Initial	Date	Remarks
accordance with Health and Safety Code §7050.5, Public Resources Code §5097.98 and 5097.94, and §15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines and the Los Angeles County Coroner shall be contacted. Within 24 hours of notification, the coroner will call the NAHC if the remains are thought to be Native American. If the remains are deemed Native American in origin, the Native American Heritage Commission immediately designates a person or persons it believes to be the most likely descended from the deceased (MLD) under Public Resources Code §5097.98. The MLD will then recommend means for treating and disposing with appropriate dignity the human remains and associated items, within 48 hours. will be contacted to request consultation with a Native American Heritage Commission -appointed Most-Likely Descendant pursuant to Public Resources Code §5097.98 and CCR §15064.5.						
GEOLOGY AND SOILS						
BIO-1: See description provided under Biological Resources. BIO-1 requires initial consultation with CDFG in order to determine the applicability of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement for the proposed project. Implementation of BIO-1 would result in less-than-significant impacts relating to substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil.	Final Plans and Specifications	Final Plans and Specifications	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS						
TRANS-1 through TRANS-3: See description provided under Transportation and Traffic. Implementation of mitigation measures TRANS-1 through TRANS-3, as discussed in Section 4.16, Transportation and Traffic, during construction activities would reduce impacts to emergency response vehicles to a less-than-significant level.	Pre-Construction; Construction	Pre-Construction; Construction	DPW, in coordination with SCE			

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Phase	Monitoring Phase	Enforcement Agency	Verification of Compliance		
				Initial	Date	Remarks
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY						
BIO-1: See description provided under Biological Resources. BIO-1 requires initial consultation with CDFG in order to determine the applicability of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement for the proposed project. Implementation of BIO-1 would result in less-than-significant impacts relating to violating water quality standards; substantially alter the existing drainage pattern; contributing runoff water; and substantially degrading water quality.	Final Plans and Specifications	Final Plans and Specifications	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
LAND USE AND PLANNING						
LU-1 Prior to the initiation of any construction activities on privately-owned property, SCE shall coordinate with that private or public landowner to obtain all appropriate approvals, easements, and/or use permits to allow project implementation on their property.	Pre-Construction; Final Plans and Specifications	Final Plans and Specifications	SCE, in coordination with DPW			
BIO-1: See description provided under Biological Resources. The project site was determined to be located within an ESHA. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-1 would result in a less-than-significant impact to habitat conservations plans.	Final Plans and Specifications	Final Plans and Specifications	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
PUBLIC SERVICES						
TRANS-1 through TRANS-3: See description provided under Transportation and Traffic. Implementation of mitigation measures TRANS-1 through TRANS-3, as discussed in Section 4.16, Transportation and Traffic, during construction activities would reduce impacts to emergency response vehicles to a less-than-significant level.	Pre-Construction; Construction	Pre-Construction; Construction	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC						

Mitigation Measure	Implementation Phase	Monitoring Phase	Enforcement Agency	Verification of Compliance		
				Initial	Date	Remarks
TRANS-1: Prior to construction, a construction traffic control plan shall be prepared by DPW with input from SCE, Caltrans, and other applicable regulatory agencies. The plan shall include, at minimum, advanced signing, alerting motorists to roadway construction and an increase in construction vehicle movement; signing to alert motorists to temporary or limited access points to adjacent properties; and appropriate barricades. Further, this shall address such issues as access for local businesses and residents, truck routing, dust control, construction worker parking, hours of operation, potential temporary street closures, detouring, and materials storage. At least one point of ingress/egress shall be maintained by DPW to all properties adjacent to construction area. The contractor may request changes to the traffic control plan with the approval of DPW.	Pre-Construction	Construction	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
TRANS-2: Temporary traffic cones/barricades, temporary striping, and delineators shall be appropriately placed by DPW in order to maintain one through lane in each direction during the peak hours. Lane widths within these areas may be reduced.	Construction	Construction	DPW, in coordination with SCE			
TRANS-3: Prior to construction, DWP shall provide written notification to fire, police, and paramedic departments, regarding the schedule and duration of construction activities, and to identify alternative routes that may be used to avoid response delays.	Pre-Construction	Pre-Construction	DPW, in coordination with SCE			

8.0 PROPOSED FINDING

DPW has prepared this IS/MND to address the environmental effects of the proposed project. Based on the analysis provided in this IS/MND, DPW finds that, with the incorporation of above-described revisions, the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment.

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11.0 ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADT	Average Daily Traffic
APP	accumulated precipitation procedure
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
ARB	California Air Resources Board
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CH_4	Methane
CMP	Congestion Management Plan
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity DataBase
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
CO_2e	Carbon Dioxide-equivalent
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission
CRHP	California Register of Historic Resources
dB	Decibel
dBA	A-weighted Decibel
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
DPW	Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substance Control
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
ESHA	Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GHGs	Greenhouse Gases
GWP	Global Warming Potential
HFCs	Hydrofluorocarbons
HSC	Health and Safety Code
IS	Initial Study
kV	Kilovolt
LACFD	Los Angeles County Fire Department

LARWQCB	Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
LASD	Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
LCP	Local Coastal Program
L_{dn}	Day-night Average Sound Level
L_{eq}	Equivalent Noise Level
Metro	Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
MMRP	Mitigation and Monitoring Reporting Program
MLD	Most Likely Deceased
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
N_2O	Nitrous Oxide
NO_2	Nitrogen Dioxide
NO_X	Nitrogen Oxides
O_3	Ozone
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Pb	Lead
PCH	Pacific Coast Highway
PFCs	Perfluorocarbons
PM_{10}	Inhalable Particulate Matter
$PM_{2.5}$	Fine Particulate Matter
proposed project	Topanga Underground Utility District Project
ppv	peak particle velocity
ROGs	Reactive Organic Gases
ROW	right-of-way
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCE	Southern California Edison
SEA	Significant Ecological Area
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
SO_X	sulfur oxides
SR	State Route
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TACs	Toxic Air Contaminants
UUD	Topanga Underground Utility District
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VOCs	Volatile Organic Compounds
WWECP	Wet Weather Erosion Control Plan