INITIAL STUDY &

MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Chiquito Battery Energy Storage Facility Project
(Planning Application No. 22-0026)

Lead Agency:

City of Wildomar
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1. **Appendix 1 –** Project Development Plans, Stantec (July 8, 2021).
2. **Appendix 2** – Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Modeling, Stantec (April 12, 2022).
3. **Appendix 3** – Biological Resources Technical Report, Stantec (May 5, 2022).
4. **Appendix 4** – Cultural Resources Assessment, Stantec (March 2022).
5. **Appendix 5** – Geotechnical Investigation Report, Stantec (November 15, 2021)
6. **Appendix 6 –** Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Report, Stantec (December 1, 2021)
7. **Appendix 7 –** Project Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP), Stantec (July 7, 2023)
8. **Appendix 8** – Preliminary Drainage Study, Stantec (June 20, 2023)
9. **Appendix 9** – Noise Memorandum, Stantec (April 29, 2022)

Note to Reader: To save natural resources, the appendices are contained on a CD-ROM/USB included with the printed copy of this Initial Study. The appendices are also available on the City's Environmental Documents Center webpage at the following web address: (https://www.cityofwildomar.org/212/Environmental-Documents-Center).

The documents can also be viewed here**:**

City of Wildomar, Community Development Department
23873 Clinton Keith Road, Suite 110
Wildomar, CA 92595
Hours: Monday–Thursday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. (closed Fridays)

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I. INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Summary

The project proposes to construct a new 80-megawatt (MW) Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project, which would be capable of meeting a 4-hour duration, on a vacant lot located north of the intersection of Clinton Keith Road and Grand Avenue. The project proposes to interconnect to the existing Southern California Edison (SCE) 115 kilovolt (kV) Tenaja Substation located directly to the south. The proposed project would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a Generator Interconnection Agreement (GIA) with Southern California Edison (SCE).

Purpose and Project Overview

This Initial Study evaluates the proposed project which is being processed through the following development applications:

- **Conditional Use Permit (CUP):** The proposed project requires a CUP to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission.
- **Plot Plan (PP):** The project will require approval of a plot plan to develop the 80-megawatt (MW) Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project on the 2.83-acre site. The project must be consistent with the City's commercial design standards and guidelines.

The purpose of this Initial Study is to evaluate the potential environmental effects associated with the construction and occupancy of the planned development project and to provide mitigation where necessary to avoid, minimize, or lessen environmental effects.

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Project Site

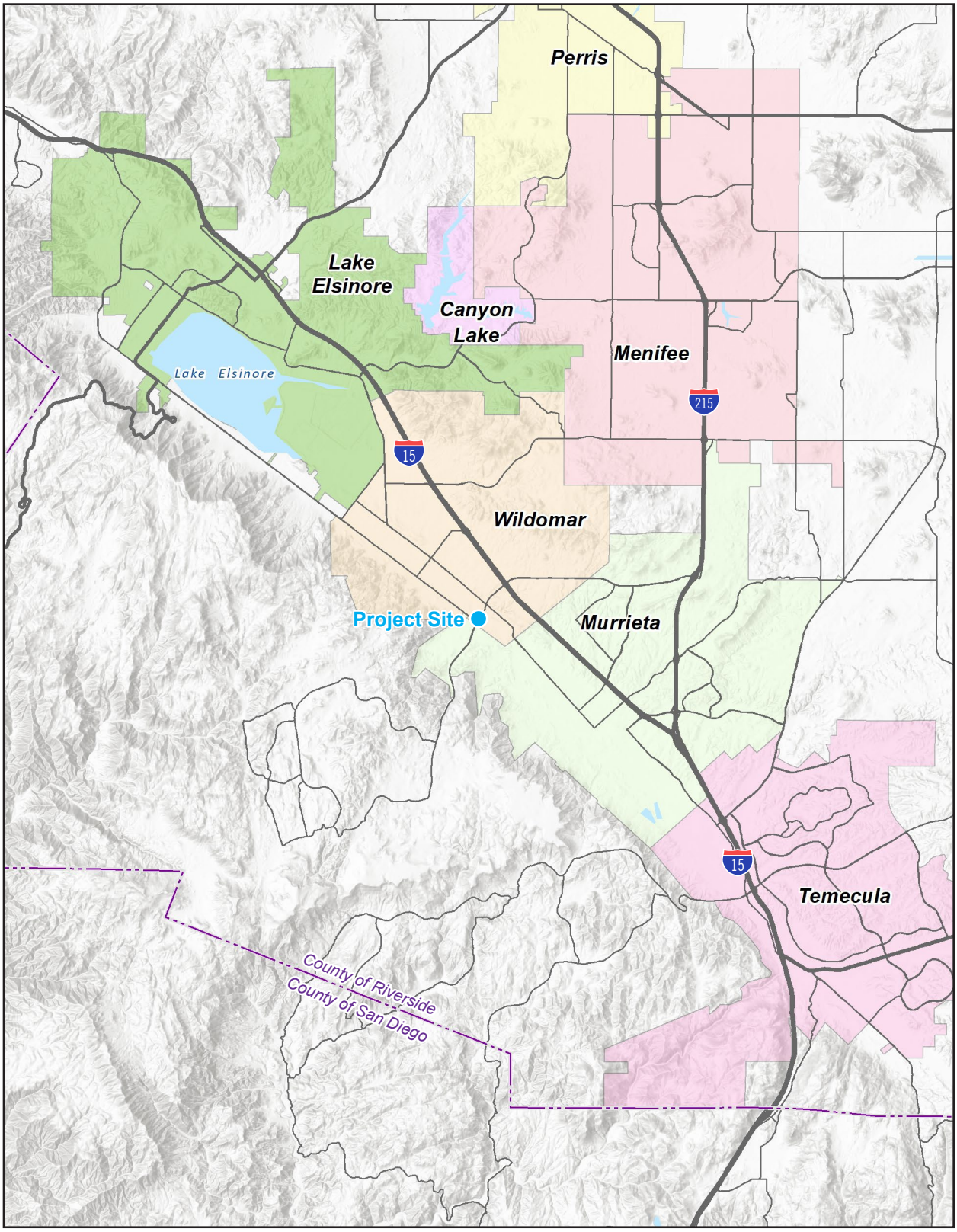
Project Location

The project site is located on the northside of Clinton Keith Road, about 430 feet north of Grand Avenue in the City of Wildomar, Riverside County, California. The project site is approximately 2.83 acres and is comprised of Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 380-150-019 and 380-150-020. Regional and local vicinity maps of the project site are shown in **Figure 1**, Regional Location, and **Figure 2**, Local Vicinity. An aerial photograph of the site is shown in **Figure 3**, Aerial Photograph.

Surrounding Area

The project site is surrounded by commercial uses to the north, vacant land to the east, the SCE Tenaja Substation to the south, and residential uses to the west that appear to be unoccupied. The parcel to the north is zoned C-1/C-P (General Commercial), the parcel to the east is zoned C-1/C-P (General Commercial) with a Mixed Use Overlay, and the parcels to the west and south are zoned R-R (Rural Residential).

Figure 1 - Regional Location



0 3
Scale (Miles)

Source: Generated using ArcMap 2023.

Figure 2 - Local Vicinity

Project Boundary

0 2,000
Scale (Feet)

Source: Generated using ArcMap 2023.

Figure 3 - Aerial Photograph

Project Boundary

0 180
Scale (Feet)

Source: Nearmap 2023.

Access

Regional access to the project site is provided by Interstate 15 (I-15) located approximately 0.8-mile north. In addition, local access to the site is provided by Clinton Keith Road directly east of the site, and Grand Avenue is approximately 430 feet south of the site.

Physical Setting

The project site is undeveloped and vacant with ruderal vegetation scattered onsite. The project site's existing conditions are shown in **Figure 3**, Aerial Photograph.

Conservation

The proposed project site is not within a Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Criteria Cell (WRCRCA 2023a). However, the project site is within a Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Plan Fee Area and the MSHCP Fee Area (Riverside County 2023a).

Natural Hazards

The project site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Zone, and no active faults traverse the site (Stantec 2021a). The project site does not fall within a mapped Riverside County Fault Hazard Zone (Riverside County 2023a). The nearest known active fault is the Elsinore Fault, approximately 0.4-mile northeast of the site (Stantec 2021a). The project site is not located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) (CAL FIRE 2023).

Regulatory Setting

The project site has a General Plan Land Use designation of Commercial Retail (CR) and is zoned C-1/C-P (General Commercial). The proposed plan would require the approval of a Conditional Use Permit and Plot Plan.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site is currently vacant and undeveloped, and consists of ruderal vegetation. The proposed project would construct a new 80-MW BESS on the project site. The BESS would be capable of meeting a 4-hour duration. The proposed project would interconnect to the existing 115 kilovolt (kV) SCE Tenaja Substation located directly to the south of the site. The proposed project would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a GIA with SCE. The main transformer on the project site would be 22 feet tall, and would be the tallest structure onsite. The site's natural and unpaved ground would be covered with gravel. **Figure 4,** Conceptual Site Plan, shows the configuration of the battery equipment onsite. The proposed development plans are provided in **Appendix 1** (Stantec 2021b)**.**

Project Components

The proposed project would consist of battery storage cabinet series, and each series would consist of bidirectional inverters, a transformer, and a battery enclosure(s) or an interconnected series cabinets. Each container would be self-enclosed, housing batteries, fire detection and suppression systems, controls, and cooling units. A total of 49 battery modules with associated inverters (49 units) and 49

generator step-up transformers (GSUs), and one large transformer would be included onsite. Major equipment would include:

- Battery modules assembled in racks inside enclosures monitored by a Battery Management System (BMS)
- Bidirectional inverters
- Battery chiller units
- Fire detection/suppression systems
- Gas detection
- Electrical switching equipment and auxiliary power panels
- Computer and telecommunications equipment
- Transformers
- Switchgear or medium-voltage outdoor circuit breakers
- Control enclosure
- Security lighting and signage
- Perimeter wall or fence

Project Operations

The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, and would entail maintenance staff who would maintain the facility on a periodic basis. The proposed project would require a maximum four-person crew for maintenance visits once every two-to-three months, on average. The crew would normally consist of one operator, one contracted field engineer, and two mechanical or electrical technicians.

Typical maintenance intervals for major project components would include:

- Fire Protection System – twice a year
- HVAC and chiller units – twice a year
- Battery cabinet – once a year
- Relay protection – once in two years
- Project performance testing – once a year
- Project HV substation – once a year

The proposed project would be designed with multiple automatic and manual power-down/safety mechanisms including passive fire suppression systems built into each container. Electrical and fire systems would be designed to open breakers automatically during fault conditions. Each fire protection system would have a signal that would trigger core power-down during fire, electrical fire, overheating,

etc. The entire proposed project's power-down would occur automatically during electrical fault conditions (e.g., high-voltage, high-frequency, ground fault, etc.). In addition, the proposed project would be equipped with breakers that could be opened manually to power-down different equipment or the proposed project as a whole.

The proposed project would be designed to be in operation for 20 years, with the option to be reassessed for an additional five years of continued operation, up to 35 years. After completion of 35 years of operations, most of the proposed project's electrical equipment (breakers, transformers, inverters) would be removed and recycled. Project batteries would be returned to the battery manufacturer for recycling, and equipment foundations and pads would be demolished and removed.

Landscaping

The perimeter of the site would include landscaping to screen the proposed uses from the surrounding areas, as shown in **Figure 5,** Conceptual Landscaping Plan, and **Figure 6a**, Visual Simulation – Street View, through **Figure 6c,** Visual Simulation – Street View. A variety of trees, shrubs, vines, and ground covers would be used. Approximately 12,620 square feet (0.28-acre) of landscaping would be included onsite. All plants would be in the low water use hydrozone, and a combination of subsurface low flow drip, bubblers, and/or low volume rotator sprays would be installed in all planters.

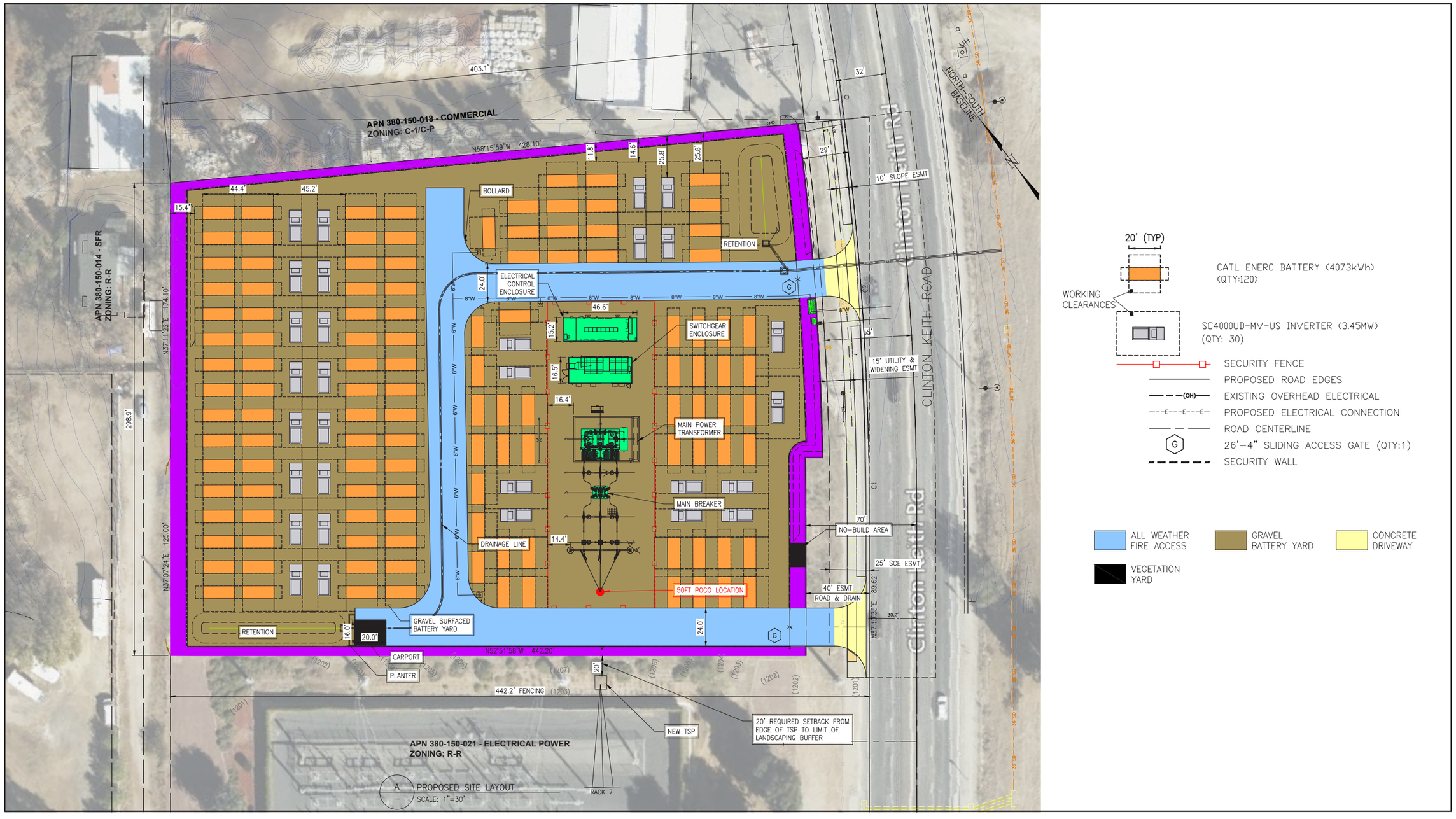
Access

Access to the project site would be provided via two driveways along Clinton Keith Road (see **Figure 4**, Conceptual Site Plan). The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely with a maximum of four maintenance staff working on the site every two-to-three months. As such, vehicle trips generated by the proposed project would be negligible.

Water/Sewer

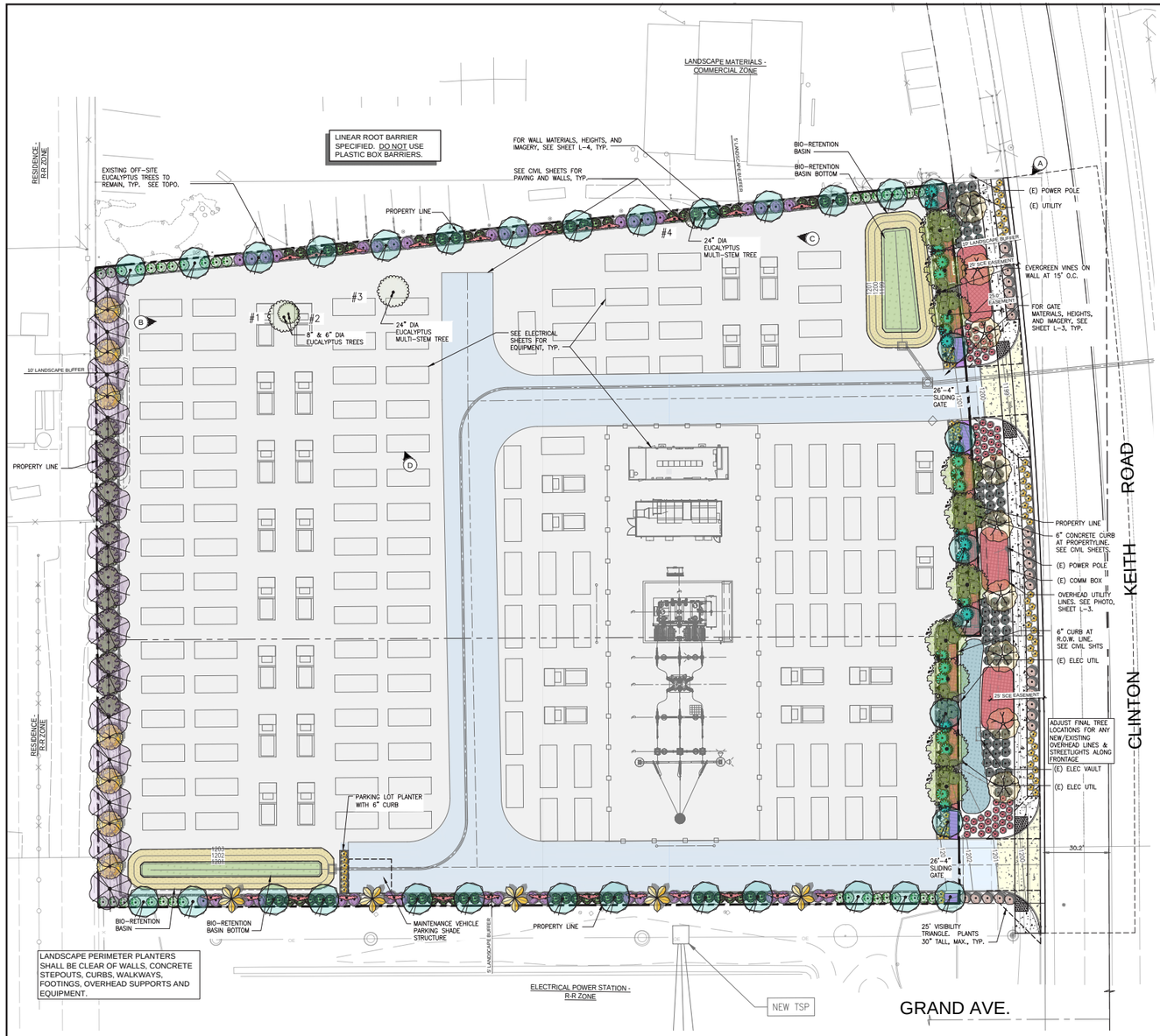
As the site would be primarily operated remotely, no restrooms are proposed. Limited water required during construction would be trucked to the site, as necessary.

Figure 4 - Conceptual Site Plan



Source: Stantec 2023.

Figure 5 - Conceptual Landscaping Plan



PLANT SCHEDULE - ONSITE BESS

TREES	QTY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CONT	HT X WIDTH	WATER USE	
	35	JUNIPERUS CHINENSIS 'SPARTAN'	SPARTAN JUNIPER	15 GAL	15'X5'	LOW	
	33	LAURUS X 'SARATOGA', STD (EVERGREEN)	SARATOGA HYBRID LAUREL	15 GAL	20'X20'	LOW	
	10	PARKINSONIA X 'DESERT MUSEUM', STD.	DESERT MUSEUM PALO VERDE	15 GAL	20'X20'	LOW	
	15	RHUS LANCEA, STD (EVERGREEN)	AFRICAN SUMAC	15 GAL	25'X20'	LOW	
EXISTING TREES TO BE REMOVED	QTY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CONT	HT X WIDTH	WATER USE	
	1	EUCALYPTUS	SEE MITIGATION TABLE, SHEET L-2	EXISTING			
	1	EUCALYPTUS	SEE MITIGATION TABLE, SHEET L-2	EXISTING			
	1	EUCALYPTUS	SEE MITIGATION TABLE, SHEET L-2	EXISTING			
	1	EUCALYPTUS	SEE MITIGATION TABLE, SHEET L-2	EXISTING			
SHRUBS	QTY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CONT	HT X WIDTH	WATER USE	
	34	FRANGULA CALIFORNICA 'EVE CASE' (EVERGREEN SCREENING SHRUB)	EVE CASE COFFEEBERRY	5 GAL	4'X6'	LOW	
	5	FREMONTODENDRON X 'CALIFORNIA GLORY' OR 'SAN GABRIEL' (EVERGREEN)	PACIFIC SUNSET FLANNEL BUSH	15 GAL	12'X12'	LOW	
	56	GREVILLEA X 'NOELLII'	NOEL GREVILLEA	5 GAL	4'X5'	LOW	
	14	GREVILLEA X 'RED HOOKS' (EVERGREEN SCREENING SHRUB)	RED HOOKS GREVILLEA	5 GAL	10'X10'	LOW	
	26	LEUCOPHYLLUM FRUTESCENS 'GREEN CLOUD' (EVERGREEN SCREENING SHRUB)	GREEN CLOUD TEXAS RANGER	5 GAL	6'X6'	LOW	
	7	PRUNUS ILICIFOLIA 'LYONII'	HOLLYLEAF CHERRY	5 GAL	12'X12'	LOW	
	40	RHUS INTEGRIFOLIA (EVERGREEN)	LEMONADE BERRY	15 GAL	6'X6'	LOW	
	27	SALVIA GREGGII (EVERGREEN/DECIDUOUS FLOWERING ACCENT)	AUTUMN SAGE	5 GAL	3'X3'	LOW	
VINES	QTY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CONT	HT X WIDTH	WATER USE	
	19	FICUS PUMILA, STAKED	CREEPING FIG	5 GAL	3'X5'	MOD	
	25	MACFADYENA UNGUIS-CATI, STAKED (MOSTLY EVERGREEN)	CAT'S CLAW CREEPER	5 GAL	6'X13'	LOW	
GROUND COVERS	QTY	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	CONT	HT X WIDTH	WATER USE	SPACING
	856 SF	ARCTOSTAPHYLOS X 'PACIFIC MIST'	PACIFIC MIST MANZANITA	1 GAL	2'X6'	LOW	48" o.c.
	1,344 SF	BIO-RETENTION BASIN - BOTTOM 60% JUNCUS PATENS, 20% SISYRINCHIUM CALIFORNICUM & 20% IRIS DOUGLASIANA, IN GROUPINGS OF 15 SF		1 GAL	2'X2'	LOW	24" o.c.
	2,258 SF	BIO-RETENTION BASIN - SIDES 25% CAREX TUMULICOLA, 25% BOUTELOUA 'BLOND AMBITION', 25% MIMULUS ARANTIACUS, 25% DESCHAMPSIA CAESPITOSA, GROUPINGS OF 25 SF		1 GAL	-	LOW	24" o.c.
	213 SF	LANTANA MONTEDIVENSIS (EVERGREEN)	TRAILING LANTANA	1 GAL	1'X6'	LOW	36" o.c.

SITE / POWER LEGEND

SEE SHEET L-3 FOR EQUIPMENT PHOTOS AND DIMENSIONS

- CATL ENERC BATTERY (4073kWh)
- SC4000UD-MV-US INVERTER (3.45MW)
- FENCE
- PROPOSED ROAD EDGES
- EXISTING OVERHEAD ELECTRICAL
- PROPOSED ELECTRICAL CONNECTION
- ROAD CENTERLINE
- 7' TALL SECURITY WALL WITH SOLID GATES. SEE SHEET L-3 FOR WALL MATERIALS, HEIGHTS, AND IMAGERY.
- ALL WEATHER FIRE ACCESS
- GRAVEL BATTERY YARD
- CONCRETE DRIVEWAY

0 60
Scale (Feet)

Source: Stantec 2023.

Figure 6a - Visual Simulation – Street View

Street View 01 - Existing

Street View 01 - Simulation

Project Boundary

Key Map

Source: Stantec 2023.

Figure 6b - Visual Simulation – Street View

Street View 02 - Existing

Street View 02 - Simulation

Project Boundary

Key Map

Source: Stantec 2023.

Figure 6c - Visual Simulation – Street View

Street View 03 - Existing

Street View 03 - Simulation

Project Boundary

Key Map

Source: Stantec 2023.

IV. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through analysis provided in this MND, it was determined that the proposed project has the potential to result in significant environmental impacts to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Wildfire. Mitigation measures are identified that would reduce all impacts to less than significant levels. **Table ES-1,** Project Impact and Mitigation Summary, presents an at-a-glance summary of the identified significant impact issue areas and required mitigation measures.

Table ES-1 Project Impact and Mitigation Summary			
4. Biological Resources			
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
BIO-1 Prior to construction activities, the Project applicant/developer shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a pre-disturbance rare plant survey to further evaluate the rare plant species onsite, and the following shall be implemented: • A Workers Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training shall be provided to all construction personnel to ensure onsite workers are aware of which special-status plants are on site. • The construction limits shall be clearly flagged to ensure impacts to rare plant species are avoided or minimized to the extent feasible. Such flagging of construction limits and sensitive resources shall be verified by the qualified biologist. *Timing/Implementation:* *Prior to construction* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Community Development Department*			
BIO-2 Prior to construction activities, the Project applicant/developer shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a pre-disturbance nesting bird survey and prepare a Project-Specific Nesting Bird Management Plan, if work cannot be conducted outside the nesting season (March 15th to September 15th), in accordance with the following: • The survey shall be conducted no more than three (3) days prior to the initiation of clearance/construction work; • If pre-disturbance surveys indicate that bird nests are not present or are inactive, or if potential habitat is unoccupied, no further mitigation is required; • If active nests of birds are found during the surveys, a species-specific no-disturbance buffer zone shall be established by a qualified biologist around active nests until a qualified biologist determines that all young have fledged (i.e., no longer reliant upon the nest). *Timing/Implementation:* *Within three (3) days prior to the initiation of clearance/construction work* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Community Development Department*			

Table ES-1 Project Impact and Mitigation Summary			
BIO-3 The project applicant shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a 30-day pre-construction survey for burrowing owl. The results of the survey would be submitted to the City prior to obtaining a grading permit. If burrowing owls are not detected during the pre-construction survey, no further mitigation is required. If burrowing owls are detected during the pre-construction survey, the project applicant shall implement relocation to safely relocate burrowing owl out of harm's way, in consultation with the CDFW. Notification to the CDFW shall occur if burrowing owls are found to be present onsite and the development of a conservation strategy in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Service, the CDFW, and the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) shall be conducted. *Timing/Implementation:* *Prior to construction* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Community Development Department*			
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?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement **Mitigation Measure BIO-2**.			
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?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement **Mitigation Measure BIO-3**.			
5. Cultural Resources			
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement **Mitigation Measures TRI-1** through **TRI-8** (see Tribal Cultural Resources, below).			
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
CUL-1 **Human Remains.** If human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Riverside County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to Public Resource Code Section 5097.98(b) remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to			

Table ES-1 Project Impact and Mitigation Summary			
the treatment and disposition has been made. If the Riverside County Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission shall be contacted within the period specified by law (24 hours). Subsequently, the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the "most likely descendant." The most likely descendant shall then make recommendations and engage in consultation concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. *Timing/Implementation:* *During any ground-disturbing construction activities* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department* Implement **Mitigation Measure TRI-7** (see Tribal Cultural Resources, below).			
7. Geology and Soils			
a) 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.			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
GEO-1 The project applicant/developer shall incorporate the recommendations of the Geotechnical Report prepared by Stantec (**Appendix 5**) into project plans related to the proposed project. The project's building plans shall demonstrate that they incorporate all applicable recommendations of the Geotechnical Report and comply with all applicable requirements of the latest adopted version of the California Building Code. *Timing/Implementation:* *During building plan check, prior to any ground-disturbing construction activities* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Community Development Department and Building and Safety Department*			
a) ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**			
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**			

Table ES-1 Project Impact and Mitigation Summary			
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?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**			
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
GEO-2 A paleontological grading observation schedule by a Certified Paleontologist shall be maintained when grading in bedrock units to further evaluate the fossil resources of the site. Paleontological monitoring may be reduced upon observations and recommendations of the professional-level project paleontologist. Salvage operations shall be initiated by the Certified Paleontologist and coordinated with the developer if other significant concentrations of fossils, as determined by the Certified Paleontologist, are encountered. Any paleontological resources shall be provided for curation at a local curation facility, or any other local museum or repository willing and able to accept and house the resource to preserve for future scientific study. *Timing/Implementation:* *During ground-disturbing construction activities* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Community Development Department and Building and Safety Department*			
9. Hazards and Hazardous Materials			
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
HAZ-1 Prior to the issuance of building permits, the project applicant/developer shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the City Building Official and the Riverside County Fire Chief, compliance with the 2022 California Building Code (or the most recent edition) (Part 2 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) and the 2022 California Fire Code (or the most recent edition) (Part 9 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations), including those regulations pertaining to materials and construction methods intended to mitigate wildfire exposure as described in the 2022 California Building Code and California Residential Code (or most recent edition); specifically California Building Code Chapter 7A; California Residential Code Section R327; California Residential Code Section R337; California Referenced Standards Code Chapter 12-7A; and California Fire Code Chapter 49.			

Table ES-1 Project Impact and Mitigation Summary			
	Timing/Implementation: *Prior to issuance of building permits* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Building Department and Riverside County Fire Department*		
HAZ-2	Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, the applicant shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the City Building Official and the County Fire Chief, compliance with the vegetation management requirements prescribed in California Fire Code Section 4906 and California Government Code Section 51182. *Timing/Implementation:* *Prior to issuance of certificate of occupancy* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Building Department and Riverside County Fire Department*		
18. Tribal Cultural Resources			
a) i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k).			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
TRI-1	**Inadvertent Archeological Find.** If during ground disturbance activities, cultural resources are discovered that were not assessed by the archaeological report(s) and/or environmental assessment conducted prior to project approval, the following procedures shall be followed. Cultural resources are defined, as being multiple artifacts in close association with each other, but also include fewer artifacts if the area of the find is determined to be of significance due to its sacred or cultural importance as determined in consultation with the lead agency and Native American Tribe(s) that elected to consult under AB 52 ("Consulting Tribe(s)"). a. All ground disturbance activities within 100 feet of the discovered cultural resources shall be halted until a meeting is convened between the developer, the archaeologist, the tribal representative(s) and the Community Development Director to discuss the significance of the find. b. At the meeting, the significance of the discoveries shall be discussed and after consultation with the tribal representative(s), developer, and the archaeologist, a decision shall be made, with the concurrence of the Community Development Director, as to the appropriate mitigation (documentation, recovery, avoidance, etc.) for the cultural resources. c. Grading or further ground disturbance shall not resume within the area of the discovery until an agreement has been reached by all parties as to the appropriate mitigation. Work shall be allowed to continue outside of the buffer area and will be monitored by additional Tribal monitors if needed.		

Table ES-1 Project Impact and Mitigation Summary	
	d. Treatment and avoidance of the newly discovered resources shall be consistent with the Treatment and Monitoring Agreements entered into with the Consulting Tribe(s) and the applicant. This may include avoidance of the cultural resources through project design, in-place preservation of cultural resources located in native soils and/or re-burial on the Project property so they are not subject to further disturbance in perpetuity as identified in Mitigation Measures TRI-2 and TRI-7. e. If the find is determined to be significant and avoidance of the site has not been achieved, a Phase III data recovery plan (see Mitigation Measure TRI-6) shall be prepared by the project archeologist, in consultation with the Consulting Tribe(s), and shall be submitted to the City for their review and approval prior to implementation of the said plan. f. Pursuant to Calif. Pub. Res. Code § 21083.2(b) avoidance is the preferred method of preservation for archaeological resources and tribal cultural resources. If the landowner and the Consulting Tribe(s) cannot agree on the significance or the mitigation for the archaeological or tribal cultural resources, these issues will be presented to the Community Development Director for decision. The City's Community Development Director shall make the determination based on the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act with respect to archaeological and tribal cultural resources, recommendations of the project archeologist, and shall take into account the cultural and religious principles and practices of the Consulting Tribe(s). Notwithstanding any other rights available under the law, the decision of the City Community Development Director shall be appealable to the City Planning Commission and/or City Council. *Timing/Implementation: During any ground-disturbing or construction activities* *Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*
TRI-2	**Cultural Resources Disposition.** In the event that Native American cultural resources are discovered during the course of grading (inadvertent discoveries), the following procedures shall be carried out for final disposition of the discoveries: a. One or more of the following treatments, in order of preference as numbered below, shall be employed with the Consulting Tribe(s). Evidence of such shall be provided to the City of Wildomar Community Development Department: i. Preservation-In-Place of the cultural resources, if feasible. Preservation in place means avoiding the resources, leaving them in the place where they were found with no development affecting the integrity of the resources. ii. Reburial of the resources on the Project property. The measures for reburial shall include, at least, the following: Measures and provisions to protect the

future reburial area from any future impacts in perpetuity. Reburial shall not occur until all legally required cataloging and basic recordation have been completed, with an exception that sacred items, burial goods and Native American human remains are excluded. Any reburial process shall be culturally appropriate. Listing of contents and location of the reburial shall be included in the confidential Phase IV report (see Mitigation Measure TRI-6). The Phase IV Report shall be filed with the City under a confidential cover and not subject to Public Records Request.

iii. If preservation in place or reburial is not feasible then the resources shall be curated in a culturally appropriate manner at a Riverside County curation facility that meets State Resources Department Office of Historic Preservation Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Resources ensuring access and use pursuant to the Guidelines. The collection and associated records shall be transferred, including title, and are to be accompanied by payment of the fees by the Applicant necessary for permanent curation. Evidence of curation in the form of a letter from the curation facility stating that subject archaeological materials have been received and that all fees have been paid, shall be provided by the landowner to the City. There shall be no destructive or invasive testing on sacred items, burial goods, and Native American human remains, as defined by the cultural and religious practices of the Most Likely Descendant. Results concerning finds of any inadvertent discoveries shall be included in the Phase IV monitoring report.

Timing/Implementation: During grading activities

Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department

TRI-3 **Archaeologist Retained.** Prior to issuance of a grading permit the project applicant shall retain a Riverside County qualified Registered Professional Archaeologist (RPA), to monitor all ground disturbing activities in an effort to identify any unknown archaeological resources.

The Registered Professional Archaeologist and the Tribal monitor(s) required by Mitigation Measures TRI-4 and TRI-5 shall manage and oversee monitoring for all initial ground disturbing activities and excavation of each portion of the project site including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, mass or rough grading, trenching, stockpiling of materials, rock crushing, structure demolition and etc. The Registered Professional Archaeologist and the Tribal monitor(s), shall independently have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground disturbance activities to

Table ES-1 Project Impact and Mitigation Summary
allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources in coordination with any required special interest or tribal monitors. The developer/permit holder shall submit a fully executed copy of the contract to the Community Development Department to ensure compliance with this condition of approval. Upon verification, the Community Development Department shall clear this condition. In addition, the Registered Professional Archaeologist, in consultation with the Consulting Tribe(s), the contractor, and the City, shall develop a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) in consultation pursuant to the definition in AB 52 to address the details, timing and responsibility of all archaeological and cultural activities that will occur on the project site. A consulting tribe is defined as a tribe that initiated the AB 52 tribal consultation process for the Project, has not opted out of the AB 52 consultation process, and has completed AB 52 consultation with the City as provided for in Cal Pub Res Code Section 21080.3.2(b)(1) of AB52. Details in the Plan shall include: a. Project grading and development scheduling; b. The Project archaeologist and the Consulting Tribes(s) shall attend the pre-grading meeting with the City, the construction manager and any contractors and will conduct a mandatory Cultural Resources Worker Sensitivity Training to those in attendance. The Training will include a brief review of the cultural sensitivity of the Project and the surrounding area; what resources could potentially be identified during earthmoving activities; the requirements of the monitoring program; the protocols that apply in the event inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources are identified, including who to contact and appropriate avoidance measures until the find(s) can be properly evaluated; and any other appropriate protocols. All new construction personnel that will conduct earthwork or grading activities that begin work on the Project following the initial Training must take the Cultural Sensitivity Training prior to beginning work and the Project archaeologist and Consulting Tribe(s) shall make themselves available to provide the training on an as-needed basis; c. The protocols and stipulations that the contractor, City, Consulting Tribe(s) and Project archaeologist will follow in the event of inadvertent cultural resources discoveries, including any newly discovered cultural resource deposits that shall be subject to a cultural resources evaluation. *Timing/Implementation: Prior to issuance of grading permit* *Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*

Table ES-1 Project Impact and Mitigation Summary	
TRI-4	**Native American Monitoring (Pechanga).** Tribal monitor(s) shall be required on-site during all ground-disturbing activities, including grading, stockpiling of materials, engineered fill, rock crushing, etc. The land divider/permit holder shall retain a qualified tribal monitor(s) from the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the developer shall submit a copy of a signed contract between the above-mentioned Tribe and the land divider/permit holder for the monitoring of the project to the Community Development Department and to the Engineering Department. The Tribal Monitor(s) shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground-disturbance activities to allow recovery of cultural resources, in coordination with the Project Archaeologist. *Timing/Implementation: During ground-disturbing activities* *Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*
TRI-5	**Native American Monitoring (Soboba).** Tribal monitor(s) shall be required on-site during all ground-disturbing activities, including grading, stockpiling of materials, engineered fill, rock crushing, etc. The land divider/permit holder shall retain a qualified tribal monitor(s) from the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the developer shall submit a copy of a signed contract between the above-mentioned Tribe and the land divider/permit holder for the monitoring of the project to the Community Development Department and to the Engineering Department. The Tribal Monitor(s) shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground-disturbance activities to allow recovery of cultural resources, in coordination with the Project Archaeologist. *Timing/Implementation: During ground-disturbing activities* *Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*
TRI-6	**Archeology Report - Phase III and IV.** Prior to final inspection, the developer/permit holder shall prompt the Project Archeologist to submit two (2) copies of the Phase III Data Recovery report (if required for the Project) and the Phase IV Cultural Resources Monitoring Report. The Phase IV report shall include evidence of the required cultural/historical sensitivity training for the construction staff held during the pre-grade meeting. The Community Development Department shall review the reports to determine adequate mitigation compliance. Provided the reports are adequate, the Community Development Department shall clear this condition. Once the report(s) are determined to be adequate, two (2) copies shall be submitted to the Eastern Information Center (EIC) at the University of California Riverside (UCR) and

Table ES-1 Project Impact and Mitigation Summary			
one (1) copy shall be submitted to the Consulting Tribe(s) Cultural Resources Department(s). *Timing/Implementation:* *Prior to final inspection* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department* **TRI-7** **Non-Disclosure of Reburial Locations**. It is understood by all parties that unless otherwise required by law, the site of any reburial of Native American human remains or associated grave goods shall not be disclosed and shall not be governed by public disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act. The Coroner, pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code Section 6254 (r)., parties, and Lead Agencies, will be asked to withhold public disclosure information related to such reburial. *Timing/Implementation:* *During discovery of Native American human remains* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department* **TRI-8** **No-Build Easement or Similar Instrument.** In the event that Native American artifacts are found and buried within the project vicinity, a no-build easement, or similar legal instrument, shall be used to preclude future development from taking place on the reburial site(s). *Timing/Implementation:* *After Reburial of Native American Artifacts* *Enforcement/Monitoring:* *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department* Implementation of **Mitigation Measure CUL-1**.			
a) ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision(c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement **Mitigation Measures TRI-1** through **TRI-8**, and **CUL-1.**			
20. Wildfire			
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement **Mitigation Measures HAZ-1** and **HAZ-2**			

Table ES-1 Project Impact and Mitigation Summary			
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement **Mitigation Measures HAZ-1** and **HAZ-2**			
Mandatory Findings of Significance			
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number of restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement Mitigation Measures **BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, CUL-1**, **GEO-1**, **GEO-2**, **HAZ-1**, **HAZ-2**, and **TRI-1** through **TRI-8**.			
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).			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement Mitigation Measures **BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, CUL-1**, **GEO-1**, **GEO-2**, **HAZ-1**, **HAZ-2**, and **TRI-1** through **TRI-8**.			
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			
Level of Significance without Mitigation	Potentially Significant	**Resulting Level of Significance**	Less Than Significant
Implement **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**			

V. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

A. BACKGROUND

1. Project Title:

Chiquito Battery Energy Storage Facilities IS/MND (Planning Application No. 22-0026)

2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**

   City of Wildomar, 23873 Clinton Keith Road, Suite 110, Wildomar, CA 92595

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**

   Matthew Bassi, Community Development Director; (951) 677-7751, ext. 213

4. **Project Location:**

   The project site is located on the northside of Clinton Keith Road, about 430 feet north of Grand Avenue in the City of Wildomar, Riverside County, California. The project site is approximately 2.83 acres and is comprised of Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 380-150-019 and 380-150-020.

5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:**

   James Damon, Chiquito Grid, LLC, 621 West Randolph Street, Chicago, IL 60661

6. **General Plan Designation:**

   Commercial Retail (CR)

7. **Zoning:**

   C-1/C-P (General Commercial)

8. **Description of Project:**

   The project proposes to construct a new 80-megawatt (MW) Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project on a vacant lot located on the northside of Clinton Keith Road, about 430 feet north of Grand Avenue. The BESS is capable of meeting a 4-hour duration. The project proposes to interconnect to the existing Southern California Edison (SCE) Tenaja Substation located directly to the south. The proposed project would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a Generator Interconnection Agreement (GIA) with Southern California Edison (SCE). The proposed development plans are provided in **Appendix 1.**

9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:**

ADJACENT LAND USE, LAND USE DESIGNATION, AND ZONING			
Location	**Current Land Use**	**General Plan Land Use Designation**	**Zoning**
North	Commercial uses	Commercial Retail (CR)	C-1/C-P (General Commercial)
East	Vacant land	Mixed Use Planning Area (MUPA)	C-1/C-P (General Commercial) with a Mixed Use Overlay
South	SCE Tenaja Substation	Public Facilities (PF)	R-R (Rural Residential)
West	Residential uses	Low Density Residential (LDR)	R-R (Rural Residential)

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval May Be Required:

- San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District
- Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

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

The City of Wildomar sent notice to tribes on June 27, 2023, that have requested to be notified of projects pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 Native Americans: California Environmental Quality Act and Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1. Please refer to section V.18 of the Initial Study, Tribal Cultural Resources, for more information on tribal cultural resources.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project involving at least one impact that is "Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

C. 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 of the incorporated mitigation measures and 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.

City Representative

Matthew Bassi

09/29/23

Matthew C. Bassi, Community Development Director

Date

Applicant

Pursuant to Section 15070(b)(1) of the California Environmental Quality Act, as the project applicant, I agree to revisions of the project plans or proposals as described in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration to avoid or reduce environmental impacts of my project to a less than significant level.

James Damon

September 28, 2023

James Damon (Chiquito Grid, LLC), Applicant

Date

D. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

1. Aesthetics

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

DISCUSSION

a) Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would result in the development of a BESS onsite. The average elevation across the site is 1,210 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Scenic vistas in the project vicinity include mountain ridgelines north, south, east, and west of the project site ranging from approximately 4,000 feet amsl to 10,000 feet amsl. The site is vacant and surrounded by commercial uses to the north, vacant land to the east, SCE Tenaja Substation to the south, and residential uses to the west, most of which partially obstruct the ridgelines. Views of these hills may be altered by construction of the proposed structures onsite for the residences to the west of the site; the main transformer would be approximately 22 feet tall. The proposed project would not fully obstruct any scenic view or resource. Views of the surrounding ridgelines would not be obstructed from offsite viewpoints. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista, and impacts would be less than significant.

b) No Impact. There are no State Scenic Highways proximate to the project site. The nearest officially designated State Scenic Highway is the portion of State Route (SR-74) that runs through San Bernardino National Forest, which is approximately 27.5 miles northeast of the project site; I-15, approximately 0.8-

mile north of the site, is an Eligible State Scenic Highway (Caltrans 2019). Additionally, the proposed project would not require the removal of any tree, rock outcropping, or historic building that has been recognized as a scenic resource. Therefore, there are no impacts to scenic resources within a State Scenic Highway.

c) Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is in an urbanized area is surrounded by commercial uses to the north, vacant land to the east, SCE Tenaja Substation to the south, and residential uses to the west. The existing SCE Tenaja Substation contains perimeter landscaping and tan colored perimeter walls. The proposed project would include landscaping and tan-colored walls around the perimeter, as shown in **Figure 6a**, Visual Simulation – Street View, through **Figure 6c,** Visual Simulation – Street View, which would be similar to the existing SCE Tenaja Substation, and would screen the proposed uses onsite from the surrounding areas.

Furthermore, the proposed project is required to undergo review by the Planning Commission to determine its consistency with other design styles in the area. The proposed project is also reviewed under the City's Commercial Design Standards and Guidelines. The Planning Commission will make the final decision on compatibility with the adopted design standards. If the project is consistent with the design standards, then it will not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. The Commission will determine consistency and can establish conditions of approval to ensure compliance with the design standards. The project would be consistent with the standards of the Chapter 17.72, C-1 and C-P General Commercial Zones, of the Wildomar Municipal Code, including the restriction of building height to 50 feet. The City does not have any additional regulations regarding scenic quality. This impact is less than significant.

d) Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would result in new and increased sources of nighttime lighting and illumination including signage and security lighting. Chapter 8.64, Light Pollution, of the Wildomar Municipal Code, establishes limits on the types of fixtures and size of bulbs used in all aspects of development. The project is required to comply with this ordinance, which is verified as part of the building permit application process and again during building and site inspections of the site to ensure that the project's lighting would not create significant impacts. Consistent with the City's lighting standards (Wildomar Municipal Code Section 8.64.090), all proposed exterior light fixtures must have full cutoff so that there is no light pollution created above the 90-degree plane of the light fixtures. Additionally, the proposed project would include perimeter landscaping which would reduce impacts of lights in the surrounding area. The project would not adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area, and the project would not contribute to night sky pollution. Therefore, this impact is less than significant.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. The project is required to comply with the provisions of Wildomar Municipal Code Chapter 8.64, Light Pollution.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

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

DISCUSSION

a) Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is classified as Farmland of Local Importance, and the State Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) does not designate the site as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (CDC 2022a). The project site is surrounded by urbanized uses. As the proposed project would not convert lands designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural uses, impacts would be less than significant.

b) No Impact. The project site is not zoned for agricultural use by the City, nor are there any Williamson Act contracts on the project site (CDC 2023). Therefore, no impact would occur.

c) No Impact. The project site is not designated as forestland or timberland by the City, and there is no forestland or timberland adjacent to these sites. The project site is designated under the class "Farmland of Local Importance" (CDC 2022a). The project site is in an urbanized portion of the City. Therefore, no impact would occur.

d) No Impact. The project site does not contain forestland, nor is the project site zoned as forestland by the City. Implementation of the proposed project would not convert forestland to non-forest use or result in a loss of forestland. Therefore, no impact would occur.

e) Less Than Significant Impact. The project site does not contain forestland or unique farmland. The project site is in an urbanized area, as shown in **Figure 3,** Aerial Photograph. Development on the site would not result in the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses or forestland to non-forest uses. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

None required.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

3. Air Quality

Issues, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			✓	
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?			✓	
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			✓	
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?			✓	

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Modeling was prepared by Stantec on April 12, 2022 (Stantec 2022a) and is included as **Appendix 2**.

DISCUSSION

a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site is in the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB), which is under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD). The South Coast AQMD is required, pursuant to the federal Clean Air Act, to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants for which the basin is in nonattainment: ozone (O3), coarse particulate matter (PM10), and fine particulate matter (PM2.5). These are considered criteria pollutants because they are three of several prevalent air pollutants known to be hazardous to human health. An area designated as nonattainment for an air pollutant is an area that does not achieve national and/or state ambient air quality standards for that pollutant.

In order to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants for which the SoCAB is in nonattainment, the South Coast AQMD has adopted the 2022 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). The 2022 AQMP establishes a program of rules and regulations directed at reducing air pollutant emissions and achieving state (California) and national air quality standards. The 2022 AQMP is a regional and multi-agency effort including the South Coast AQMD, the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The 2022 AQMP pollutant control strategies are based on the latest scientific and technical information and planning assumptions, including SCAG's 2020–2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, updated emission inventory methodologies for various source categories, and SCAG's latest growth forecasts,

defined in consultation with local governments and with reference to local general plans. The project is subject to the South Coast AQMD's AQMP.

Criteria for determining consistency with the AQMP are defined by the following indicators:

- Consistency Criterion No. 1: The proposed project will not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations, or cause or contribute to new violations, or delay the timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP.
- Consistency Criterion No. 2: The proposed project will not exceed the assumptions in the AQMP based on the years of project buildout phase.

Consistency Criterion 1

Consistency Criterion No. 1 refers to violations of the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). CAAQS and NAAQS violations would occur if Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) or regional significance thresholds were exceeded. As shown in **Table 3-1**, Project Construction Regional Emissions, and **Table 3-2**, Project Operational Regional Emissions, the proposed project would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds and would be consistent with the first criterion. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 3-1 Project Construction Regional Emissions

Year	Pollutant Emissions (lbs/day)					
	ROG	**NO_X**	**CO**	**SO_x**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
2022	2.08	39.30	16.34	0.12	11.25	5.19
2023	39.25	9.97	14.24	0.02	0.79	0.55
SCAQMD Regional Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Source: Stantec 2022a (Appendix 2)

Table 3-2 Project Operation Regional Emissions

Year	Pollutant Emissions (lbs/day)					
	ROG	**NO_X**	**CO**	**SO_x**	**PM_{10}**	**$PM_{2.5}$**
Area	2.76	0.0001	0.012	0.00	<0.001	<0.001
Energy	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mobile	<0.001	0.001	0.006	<0.001	0.002	<0.001
Offroad	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	**2.76**	**0.001**	**0.02**	**<0.001**	**0.002**	**<0.001**
SCAQMD Regional Threshold	75	100	550	150	150	55
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Source: Stantec 2022a (Appendix 2)

Consistency Criterion 2

The 2016 AQMP demonstrates that the applicable ambient air quality standards can be achieved within the timeframes required under federal law. Growth projections from local general plans adopted by cities in the district are provided to the SCAG, which develops regional growth forecasts, which are then used to develop future air quality forecasts for the AQMP. Development consistent with the growth projections in City of Wildomar General Plan is considered to be consistent with the AQMP.

The City's General Plan designates the project site Commercial Retail (CR), and the site is zoned C-1/C-P (General Commercial). The proposed project would construct a BESS, which is considered a permitted use under the C-1/C-P (General Commercial) zone. Therefore, as the proposed project would be consistent with the City's existing land use and zoning designations, the proposed project is not anticipated to exceed the AQMP assumptions and would be consistent with the second criterion. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

b) Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is in the SoCAB. State and federal air quality standards are often exceeded in many parts of the basin. A discussion of the project's potential short-term construction-period and long-term operational-period air quality impacts are provided below.

Construction Emissions

Construction activities associated with the project would result in emissions of reactive organic gases (ROGs), NO_x, CO, SO_x, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. Emissions would result from site preparation, grading, construction, and paving. As shown in **Table 3-1**, above, emissions resulting from project construction would not exceed pollutant thresholds established by South Coast AQMD for emissions of any criteria pollutant. Therefore, criteria pollutant emissions generated during construction of the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operational Emissions

Operational activities associated with the proposed project would result in emissions of ROGs, NO_x, CO, SO_x, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. Operational emissions would be expected from area sources, energy sources, and mobile sources.

As shown in **Table 3-2**, above, the proposed project's daily regional emissions from on-going operations would not exceed the South Coast AQMD's regional threshold. Therefore, criteria pollutant emissions generated during operation of the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. Impacts would be less than significant.

c) Less Than Significant Impact The proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutants. LSTs represent the maximum emissions from a project that would not cause or

contribute to an exceedance of the most stringent applicable NAAQS and CAAQA at the nearest location where an individual can be expected to remain for 24 hours.

Localized Construction Impacts

LSTs only account for onsite emissions of NO_x, CO, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$. The City of Wildomar is located in Source Receptor Area 25 (Stantec 2022a). The project site is 2.83 acres, and therefore, the LSTs for a 2-acre site with receptors approximately 25 meters away was used for **Table 3-3**, Project Localized Emissions.

Table 3-3 Project Localized Emissions

Year	Pollutant Emissions (lbs/day)			
	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
2022	16.98	10.06	4.00	2.24
2023	8.61	11.68	0.43	0.40
SCAQMD LST Threshold	234	1,100	7	4
Threshold Exceeded?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Source: Stantec 2022a (Appendix 2)
Note: Emissions include implementation of SCAQMD Rule 403

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

CO attainment in the South Coast Air Basin by the SCAQMD was analyzed as part of the SCAQMD's 2003 AQMP and the 1992 Federal Attainment Plan for Carbon Monoxide. As part of the 1992 CO Plan, an analysis for CO "hot spots," adverse CO concentrations, was conducted for four intersections in Los Angeles at the peak morning and afternoon time periods. This hot spot analysis did not predict any violation of CO standards. The busiest intersection evaluated was that at Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue, which has a daily traffic volume of approximately 100,000 vehicles per day.

The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely with a maximum of four maintenance staff working on the site every two-to-three months. As such, vehicle trips generated by the proposed project would be negligible. The 1992 CO Plan showed that an intersection which has a daily traffic volume of approximately 100,000 vehicles per day would not violate the CO standard. Therefore, as the traffic volume for the proposed project falls short of the 100,000 vehicles per day, no CO hotspot modeling was performed, and no significant long-term air quality impact is anticipated. Therefore, project impacts associated with CO hot spots are less than significant.

d) Less Than Significant Impact.

The potential for the proposed project to generate objectionable odors has also been considered. Land uses generally associated with odor complaints include:

- Agricultural uses (livestock and farming)
- Wastewater treatment plants
- Food processing plants
- Chemicals plants
- Composting operations
- Refineries
- Landfills
- Dairies
- Fiberglass molding facilities

The proposed project does not contain land uses typically associated with emitting objectionable odors. Potential odor sources associated with the proposed project may result from construction equipment exhaust and VOCs and the application of asphalt during construction activities and intermittent vehicle emissions associated with the proposed project's long-term operational activity. Standard construction requirements would minimize odor impacts from construction. The construction odor emissions would be temporary, short-term, and intermittent in nature and would cease upon completion of the respective phase of construction and is therefore considered less than significant. As the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, refuse generation would be negligible. The proposed project would also be required to comply with South Coast AQMD Rule 402 to prevent occurrences of public nuisances. Therefore, odors associated with the proposed project construction and operational activities would be less than significant.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Compliance with SCAQMD Rules including 402, 403, and 1113.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

4. Biological Resources

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

Stantec prepared a Biological Resources Technical Report on May 5, 2022, for the project, which is included as **Appendix 3** (Stantec 2022b).

DISCUSSION

a) Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

The project site is not within a Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) criteria cell[1]; however, there is a criteria cell approximately 500 feet east of the site (Stantec 2022b). The project site is within a Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Plan Fee Area and the MSHCP Fee Area (Riverside County 2023a). According to the Biological Resources Technical Report (BRTR), the biological survey area (BSA), which includes the project site and a 300-foot buffer, included the following vegetation types: Arroyo Willow Thicket, Eucalyptus – Tree of Heaven – Black Locust Groves, Goodding's Willow – Red Willow Riparian Woodland and Forest, Hardstem and California Bulrush Marshes, Red Brome or Mediterranean Grass Grassland, Disturbed Red Brome or Mediterranean Grass Grasslands, Smartweed – Cocklebur Patches, and developed uses (Stantec 2022b). The BRTR also indicated that 49 plant species (29 native and 20 non-native plants) within the BSA were observed.

The following wildlife were observed in the BSA: European honeybee, Clouded Sulfur, Argentine ant, Western tiger swallowtail, cabbage white, harvester ant, western fence lizard, western side blotched lizard, red-shouldered hawk, Anna's hummingbird, Nuttall's woodpecker, bushtit, wren, American crow, house finch, song sparrow, lesser goldfinch, kingbird, mourning dove, California ground squirrel, and brush rabbit.

There are no special-status natural communities within the BSA and the project site is not within designated critical habitat (Stantec 2022b).

One special-status plant species, paniculate tarplant (*Deinandra paniculata)*, was observed in the southern portion of the site, near Clinton Keith Road and in the eastern portion of the site near the commercial property adjacent to the site (Stantec 2022b). Smooth tarplant (*Centromadia pungens* ssp. *laevis*) has a moderate potential to occur in the BSA (Stantec 2022b). With the implementation of **Mitigation BIO-1,** which requires a rare plant survey, impacts would be less than significant.

The California horned lark (*eremophila alpestris actia*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), and yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*), while not observed during the September 2021 survey, have been documented in the northern portion of the BSA in the riparian habitat along Murrieta Creek (Stantec 2022b). With the implementation of **Mitigation BIO-2,** which requires a pre-construction nesting bird survey, impacts would be less than significant. Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) has a moderate potential to occur in the BSA. With the implementation of **Mitigation BIO-3,** which requires a focused burrowing owl survey, impacts would be less than significant.

b) No Impact. Riparian/riverine areas are lands which contain habitat dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergent vegetation, or emergent mosses and lichens, which occur close to, or which depend

[1] A criteria cell is a roughly 160-acre rectangle overlaid onto parcels within the MSHCP Plan Area and that has areas described for conservation (WRCRCA 2023b).

upon soil moisture from nearby freshwater sources, or areas with freshwater flow during all or a portion of the year. The BRTR concluded that there were no hydrologic features onsite, however, an isolated concrete drainage channel occurs along the northside of the SCE Tenaja Substation, and begins on the westside of the project site. Murrieta Creek and the associated wetlands and riparian vegetation occur more than 100 feet from the project site. The National Wetlands Inventory did not identify riparian resources onsite (USFWS 2023). Therefore, no impact would occur.

c) No Impact. The BRTR concluded that there were no hydrologic features onsite, however, an isolated concrete drainage channel occurs along the northside of the SCE Tenaja Substation, and begins on the westside of the project site. Murrieta Creek and the associated wetlands and riparian vegetation occur more than 100 feet from the project site. The National Wetlands Inventory did not identify wetlands onsite (USFWS 2023). Therefore, no impact would occur.

d) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Wildlife corridors refer to established migration routes commonly used by resident and migratory species for passage from one geographic location to another. Movement corridors may provide favorable locations for wildlife to travel between different habitat areas, such as foraging sites, breeding sites, cover areas, and preferred summer and winter range locations. They may also function as dispersal corridors allowing animals to move between various locations within their range.

The BRTR indicated that the Murrieta Creek and riparian vegetation north of the project site provides a wildlife corridor. The Murrieta Creek and surrounding riparian vegetation are used by resident and migratory bird species for foraging and nesting, as well as by amphibians, fish, mammals, and reptiles. As project construction would occur within the boundaries of the project site, the wildlife corridor along Murrieta Creek would not be impacted. The BSA is within the Pacific Flyway, a major north-south for migratory birds in America, extending from Alaska to Patagonia (Stantec 2022b).

In general, impacts to all bird species (common and special status) can be avoided by conducting work outside of the nesting season (generally March 15th to September 15th), and conducting a worker awareness training. If all work cannot be conducted outside of the nesting season, a Project-specific Nesting Bird Management Plan would be prepared to determine suitable buffers (see **Mitigation Measure BIO-2**) to avoid any potential project-related impacts to nesting birds. Disturbing or destroying active nests is a violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). In addition, nests and eggs are protected under California Fish and Wildlife Code Section 3503. In order to avoid violation of the MBTA and California Fish and Wildlife Code, implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-2** would ensure raptors and other nesting bird species that may or may not be covered under the MSHCP would be protected. Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation.

e) No Impact. The City Wildomar Municipal Code Section 12.08.050, regulates trees within the public right of way. The project site contains no trees within a public right-of-way. There are no other city policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Therefore, no impact would occur.

f) Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. The Western Riverside MSHCP is a habitat conservation plan and natural community conservation plan to which the City of Wildomar is a permittee

(i.e., signatory). Although the project site is located in the Elsinore Area Plan of the MSHCP, it is not located in a Criteria Cell. Since the site is not located in a Criteria Cell, there are no conservation requirements on the property. As the project site is not within a criteria cell, no Habitat Evaluation and Acquisition Negotiation Strategy (HANS) or Joint Project Review (JPR) are required.

The project site does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for criteria area plant species, therefore, no surveys are required and the proposed project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.3.2. The project site does not occur within a predetermined Survey Area for narrow endemic plant species' therefore, no surveys are required; the project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.1.3. The project site does not occur within the Amphibian Species Survey Area; therefore, no surveys are required and the project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.3.2. The project site does not occur within the Mammal Species Survey Area; therefore, no surveys are required and the project site is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.3.2. The project site does occur within the Burrowing Owl Survey Area; therefore, focused BUOW surveys are required (see **Mitigation Measure BIO-3**).

Based on the results of the habitat assessment and aquatic resource assessment, no MSHCP 6.1.2 riparian, riverine, or vernal pool resources were documented onsite. An MSHCP Determination of Biological Equivalent or Superior Preservation (DBESP) will not be required; the project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.1.2. The Urban/Wildlands Interface guidelines presented in Section 6.1.4 of the MSHCP are intended to address indirect effects associated with locating commercial, mixed-use, and residential developments in proximity to an MSHCP Conservation Area. The project site is not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area. The project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.1.4. The fuels management guidelines presented in Section 6.4 of the MSHCP are intended to address brush management activities around new development within or adjacent to MSHCP Conservation Areas. The project site is not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area. The project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.4.

Additionally, as required per the City's Municipal Code, the project applicant/developer would be required to pay MSHCP and Stephens' Kangaroo Rat fees.

Therefore, impacts would be less than significant upon implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-3**.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. As required by Section 3.42.070 of the Wildomar Municipal Code, the project applicant/developer is required to submit fees to the City in accordance with the requirements of the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Mitigation Fee.

1. As required by Section 3.43.070 of the Wildomar Municipal Code, the project applicant/developer is required to submit fees to the City in accordance with the requirements of the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan Mitigation Fee Area.

MITIGATION MEASURES

BIO-1 Prior to construction activities, the Project applicant/developer shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a pre-disturbance rare plant survey to further evaluate the rare plant species onsite, and the following shall be implemented:

- A Workers Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training shall be provided to all construction personnel to ensure onsite workers are aware of which special-status plants are on site.
- The construction limits shall be clearly flagged to ensure impacts to rare plant species are avoided or minimized to the extent feasible. Such flagging of construction limits and sensitive resources shall be verified by the qualified biologist.

Timing/Implementation: Prior to construction

Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Wildomar Community Development Department

BIO-2 Prior to construction activities, the Project applicant/developer shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a pre-disturbance nesting bird survey and prepare a Project-Specific Nesting Bird Management Plan, if work cannot be conducted outside the nesting season (March 15th to September 15th), in accordance with the following:

- The survey shall be conducted no more than three (3) days prior to the initiation of clearance/construction work;
- If pre-disturbance surveys indicate that bird nests are not present or are inactive, or if potential habitat is unoccupied, no further mitigation is required;
- If active nests of birds are found during the surveys, a species-specific no-disturbance buffer zone shall be established by a qualified biologist around active nests until a qualified biologist determines that all young have fledged (i.e., no longer reliant upon the nest).

Timing/Implementation: Within three (3) days prior to the initiation of clearance/construction work

Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Wildomar Community Development Department

BIO-3 The project applicant shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a 30-day pre-construction survey for burrowing owl. The results of the survey would be submitted to the City prior to obtaining a grading permit. If burrowing owls are not detected during the pre-construction survey, no further mitigation is required. If burrowing owls are detected during the pre-construction survey, the project applicant shall implement relocation to safely relocate burrowing owl out of harm's way, in consultation with the CDFW. Notification to the CDFW shall occur if burrowing owls are found to be present onsite and the development of a conservation strategy in cooperation with the U.S.

Fish and Service, the CDFW, and the Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) shall be conducted.

Timing/Implementation: Prior to construction

Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Wildomar Community Development Department

5. Cultural Resources

Issues, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?				✓
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?		✓		
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?		✓		

Cultural Resources Assessment was prepared for the proposed project by Stantec in March 2022 which is included as **Appendix 4** (Stantec 2022c).

DISCUSSION

a) No Impact. Section 15064.5 defines historic resources as resources listed or determined to be eligible for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission, a local register of historical resources, or lead agency. Generally, a resource is considered to be "historically significant" if it meets one of the following criteria:

i. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;

ii. Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;

iii. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or

iv. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The Cultural Resources Assessment indicated that cultural resources more than 50-years in age were not identified on the project site. Additionally, the project site is vacant and undeveloped. Therefore, no impact to historic resources would occur.

b) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Archaeological resources are prehistoric or historic evidence of past human activities, including structural ruins and buried resources.

The records search indicated that no previously recorded resources were recorded within the project site; however, four resources (three prehistoric and one historic built environment resource) were previously documented within the Study Area (project site and 0.5-mile buffer).

As the project site is within an area of sensitivity for cultural, archaeological, and historical resources, and due to construction and ground-disturbing activities, there is potential for archaeological resources to be discovered onsite. Implementation of **Mitigation Measures TRI-1** through **TRI-8** (see V. 19, Tribal Cultural Resources) would ensure that any archaeological resources discovered on the project site would be properly managed by having a qualified archaeologist to monitor construction and grading activities, complying with provisions outlined in the Tribal Cultural Resources Treatment and Monitoring Agreement, and halting construction within 100 feet of discovered resources in the event that they are uncovered. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

c) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Construction activities associated with project implementation would require grading and excavation of the site below the surface. Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 70520.5, in the event of an accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains on the site, no further excavation or disturbance of the site shall be permitted until the coroner of the county is contacted and has conducted an investigation into the circumstances, manner, and cause of any death, and recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to his or her authorized representative. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and if the coroner recognizes or has reason to believe the human remains to be those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission. The project would comply with existing law, and potential impacts to human remains is less than significant with the implementation of **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and **TRI-7**.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

None required.

MITIGATION MEASURES

CUL-1 **Human Remains.** If human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Riverside County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to Public Resource Code Section 5097.98(b) remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and disposition has been made. If the Riverside County Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission shall be contacted within the period specified by law (24 hours). Subsequently, the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the "most likely descendant." The most likely descendant shall then make recommendations and engage in consultation concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98.

Timing/Implementation:	*During any ground-disturbing construction activities*
Enforcement/Monitoring:	*City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*

6. Energy

Issues, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?			✓	
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?			✓	

a) Less Than Significant Impact.

Construction

During construction, the project would consume energy in two general forms: (1) the fuel energy consumed by construction vehicles and equipment; and (2) bound energy in construction materials, such as asphalt, steel, concrete, pipes, and manufactured or processed materials such as lumber and glass.

Construction of the proposed project would require the use of construction equipment for grading, hauling, and building activities. Electricity use during construction would vary during different phases of construction—construction equipment during grading would be gas powered or diesel powered, and the later construction phases would require electricity-powered equipment. Construction also includes the vehicles of construction workers traveling to and from the project site and haul trucks for the export of materials from site clearing. The surrounding area is already served by electricity provided by Southern California Edison (SCE).

The construction contractors would minimize idling of construction equipment during construction as required by state law. These required practices would limit wasteful and unnecessary electrical energy consumption. Furthermore, there are no unusual project characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that is less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in other parts of the state. Therefore, the proposed short-term construction activities would not result in inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary fuel consumption. Impacts would be less than significant.

Transportation

Transportation energy use depends on the type and number of trips, vehicle miles traveled, fuel efficiency of vehicles, and travel mode. Transportation energy use during construction would come from the transport and use of construction equipment, delivery vehicles and haul trucks, and construction employee vehicles that would use diesel fuel and/or gasoline. The use of energy resources by these vehicles would fluctuate according to the phase of construction and would be temporary. Impacts related

to transportation energy use during construction would be temporary and would not require expanded energy supplies or the construction of new infrastructure. Impacts would not be significant.

Operation

The proposed project would construct an 80-MW BESS onsite. The project site would be primarily operated remotely, with maintenance crew (maximum of four individuals) visiting the site once every two-to-three months, on average, which would result in a negligible increase for gasoline/diesel, as well as vehicle trips. The proposed project would interconnect to the existing SCE Tenaja Substation located directly south of the site, and would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a Generator Interconnection Agreement (GIA) with SCE, thereby providing reliable and secure electricity supply. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

b) Less Than Significant Impact. The City of Wildomar is within SCAG's 2020–2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals.

The RTP/SCS sets forth a development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network and other transportation measures and policies, would reduce GHG emissions from transportation (excluding goods movement) by reducing fuel consumption. The RTP/SCS is meant to provide individual jurisdictions with growth strategies that, when taken together, achieve the regional GHG emissions reduction targets. Specifically, the SCS distributes growth forecast data to transportation analysis zones for the purpose of modeling performance. As described in Section V.14*,* Population and Housing, the proposed project would not exceed the growth projections described in SCAG's RTP/SCS. The proposed project would not obstruct the implementation of the RTP/SCS.

The City of Wildomar does not have its own renewable energy plan or energy efficiency plan; however, the City does encourage the use of renewable energy via solar panels, recycling, etc. The proposed project would provide electricity through a GIA with SCE. All contractors and waste haulers are required to comply with the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan, which requires a minimum diversion of 50 percent of waste/project materials from being disposed. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

None required.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

7. Geology and Soils

Issues, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.		✓		
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?		✓		
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			✓	
iv) Landslides?				✓
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?		✓		
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?		✓		
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?			✓	
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?				✓

Issues, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?		✓		

Stantec prepared a Geotechnical Investigation Report on November 15, 2021 (Stantec 2021a) for the proposed project which is included as **Appendix 5**.

DISCUSSION

a) i) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated**. According to the Geotechnical Report, the site is not within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, and no known active faults traverse the site. However, the project site is within a seismically active region of Southern California. The nearest known active fault is the Elsinore fault system, which is located approximately 0.4-mile northeast of the site (Stantec 2021a). The project site is not located within a mapped Riverside County Fault Hazard zone (Riverside County 2023a). Compliance with seismic design criteria contained in the California Building Code (CBC) would minimize impacts to the extent feasible. Additionally, compliance with **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**, which states that the project applicant/developer shall incorporate all recommendations made in a final geotechnical report as approved by the City related to temporary excavations, grading, utility trench backfill, and so forth. Compliance shall be confirmed by the City as part of the building permit and inspection requirements. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

ii) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** The project site is in a seismically active region. Strong ground shaking due to moderate to severe earthquakes can be expected at the site within the lifetime of the project. Structures must also be designed and constructed to resist the effects of seismic ground motions as outlined in the most recent version of the California Building Code (CBC) Section 1613. After implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1,** which states that the project applicant/developer shall incorporate all recommendations made in a final geotechnical report, impacts would be less than significant.

iii) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Medium dense to very dense granular soils and stiff to hard fine-grained soils are generally present from the ground surface to a depth of at least 26 feet at the site. Based on the denseness of granular soils and consistency of fine-grained soils, most of these soils in the top 26 feet are not considered susceptible to liquefaction. The Geotechnical Report indicated that relatively significant portions of the alluvial valley deposits between 17 and 23 feet below ground surface (bgs) are subject to liquefaction induced settlement, which is estimated to

be on the order of 1.3 inches. However, the Geotechnical Report indicated that the project site is not within a liquefaction zone. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

iv) **No Impact.** The project site is flat and not mapped as being in a landslide hazard zone (CDC 2022b). Therefore, no impact would occur.

b) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The proposed project would include ground-disturbing activities that could subject surface soils to erosion. The City routinely requires the submittal of detailed erosion control plans with any grading plans to comply with the state water quality regulations. Since this project involves clearing, grading, or excavation that causes soil disturbance of one or more acres, it is subject to the provisions of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) State General Permit (Order No. R8-2010-0033). Furthermore, the project is required to prepare and comply with an approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that provides a schedule for the implementation and maintenance of erosion control measures and a description of the erosion control practices, including appropriate design details and a time schedule.

Construction activities related to the proposed project would be subject to compliance with the CBC and would include best management practices (BMPs). Additionally, the SWPPP would consider the full range of erosion control BMPs, including any additional site-specific and seasonal conditions. BMPs may include but are not limited to covering of the disturbed or stockpiled soil, use of a dust-inhibiting material, landscaping, use of straw and jute to slow and channelize stormwater runoff, hydroseeding, and grading in a pattern than slows stormwater flow and reduces the potential for erosion. Compliance with BMPs is required by the federal and state Clean Water Acts.

The State General Permit also requires that those implementing SWPPPs meet prerequisite qualifications that would demonstrate the skills, knowledge, and experience necessary to implement such plans. NPDES requirements would significantly reduce the potential for substantial erosion or topsoil loss to occur in association with new development. Additionally, as part of the approval process, prior to grading plan approval, the project applicant/developer would be required to comply with Wildomar Municipal Code Chapter 13.12, Stormwater Drainage System Protection, which establishes requirements for stormwater and non-stormwater quality discharge and control that require new development or redevelopment projects to control stormwater runoff by implementing appropriate BMPs to prevent the deterioration of water quality. Water quality features intended to reduce construction-related erosion impacts are required to be clearly denoted on the grading plans for implementation by the construction contractor. For a discussion of erosion and runoff impact post-construction, see Section V.10, Hydrology and Water Quality.

As indicated by the Geotechnical Report, any highly organic soil should be removed, and existing soil should be excavated to a minimum depth of 3 feet below the bottom of the footings. The removed soils can be placed back in the excavation as compacted fill. Compliance with the recommendations of a final geotechnical report (see **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**) would reduce impacts to less than significant. Therefore, project impacts to erosion and topsoil would be mitigated to less than significant.

c) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. See discussions above in a.iii) and a.iv). The project site is not at risk for landslide, collapse, liquefaction, or lateral spreading due to the relatively level terrain of the site. According to Figure S-7 in the City of Wildomar General Plan, the site is located within an area that is susceptible to subsidence. Groundwater was encountered during the geotechnical investigation at depths ranging from 19.5 feet to 23 feet. However, given the anticipated shallow foundations, groundwater would not be a significant consideration for the proposed project, and therefore, subsidence potential would not be significant. The CBC includes common engineering practices requiring special design and construction methods that reduce or eliminate potential impacts related to unstable soils. Compliance with CBC regulations and implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** would ensure adequate design and construction of building foundations to resist soil movement. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated**.**

d) Less Than Significant Impact. The soils found onsite are considered to possess a low expansion potential (Stantec 2021a). Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

e) No Impact. The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely and therefore, no restrooms are proposed. As such, sewer connections are not required, and no septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal would be proposed. Therefore, no impact would occur.

f) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Paleontological resources are fossilized remains of past life on earth such as bones, shells, leaves, tracks, burrows, and impressions. As shown in Figure OS-8 of the General Plan, the project site is within an area with high paleontological sensitivity. According to the Geotechnical Report, the near surface soils appear to be young alluvial valley deposits (Qyv) of Holocene and Late Pleistocene age which are considered to have a moderate-to-high paleontological potential. Given that the proposed project would require ground-disturbing activities, there is a potential to uncover paleontological resources. As such, implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-2,** which requires paleontological monitoring, would reduce impacts to less than significant.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. The project shall comply with the California Building Code and Wildomar Municipal Code Chapter 13.12, Stormwater Drainage System Protection.

MITIGATION MEASURES

GEO-1 The project applicant/developer shall incorporate the recommendations of the Geotechnical Report prepared by Stantec (**Appendix 5**) into project plans related to the proposed project. The project's building plans shall demonstrate that they incorporate all applicable recommendations of the Geotechnical Report and comply with all applicable requirements of the latest adopted version of the California Building Code.

Timing/Implementation:	*During building plan check, prior to any ground-disturbing construction activities*
Enforcement/Monitoring:	*City of Wildomar Community Development Department and Building and Safety Department*

GEO-2 A paleontological grading observation schedule by a Certified Paleontologist shall be maintained when grading in bedrock units to further evaluate the fossil resources of the site. Paleontological monitoring may be reduced upon observations and recommendations of the professional-level project paleontologist. Salvage operations shall be initiated by the Certified Paleontologist and coordinated with the developer if other significant concentrations of fossils, as determined by the Certified Paleontologist, are encountered. Any paleontological resources shall be provided for curation at a local curation facility, or any other local museum or repository willing and able to accept and house the resource to preserve for future scientific study.

Timing/Implementation:	*During ground-disturbing construction activities*
Enforcement/Monitoring:	*City of Wildomar Community Development Department and Building and Safety Department*

8. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Issues, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			✓	
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			✓	

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Modeling was prepared by Stantec on April 12, 2022 (Stantec 2022a) and is included as **Appendix 2**.

DISCUSSION

a) **Less Than Significant Impact**. According to **Table 8-1**, Proposed Project GHG Emissions, the proposed project would result in a net total of approximately 410 pounds per day (286.4 $MTCO_2e$/year) of ROG. As the proposed project's emissions would be below SCAQMD's thresholds, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 8-1 Proposed Project GHG Emissions

Source	ROG (lbs/day)
Amortized Construction	9.55
Area	>0.001
Energy	218
Mobile	0.19
Offroad	0.00
Waste	77
Water	105
Total	**410[1]**
SCAQMD Thresholds $MTCO_2e$/year	3,000
Exceed Threshold?	***No***

Source: Stantec 2022a (Appendix 2)

[1] Total construction emissions are approximately 286.4 $MTCO_2e$/year. Emissions were amortized over a 30-year timeframe.

b) Less Than Significant Impact.

AB 32/SB 32 and 2008 and 2017 CARB Scoping Plans Consistency

As the proposed project's emissions meet the threshold for compliance with Executive Order S-3-05, the project's emissions also comply with the goals of AB 32 and the CARB Scoping Plan. The proposed project's consistency with the CARB Scoping Plan is analyzed in **Table 8-2**, 2008 Scoping Plan Measures Consistency Summary, and **Table 8-3**, 2017 Scoping Plan Update Recommended Actions Consistency Summary.

Table 8-2 2008 Scoping Plan Measures Consistency Summary

2008 Scoping Plan Measures to Reduce GHGs	Project Compliance with Measure
California Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Standards. Implement adopted standards and planned second phase of the program. Align zero-emission vehicle, alternative and renewable fuel and vehicle technology programs with long-term climate change goals.	**No Conflict.** These are CARB enforced standards; vehicles that access the project site, that are required to comply with these standards, would comply with this measure.
Energy Efficiency. Maximize energy efficiency building and appliance standards; pursue additional efficiency including new technologies, policy, and implementation mechanisms. Pursue comparable investment in energy efficiency from all retail providers of electricity in California.	**No Conflict**. The proposed project would construct an 80-MW BESS that would interconnect to SCE's Tenaja Substation and would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a GIA with SCE. The proposed project would be required to comply with applicable energy efficiency standards, and would therefore, comply with this measure.
Low Carbon Fuel Standard. Develop and adopt the Low Carbon Fuel Standard.	**No Conflict**. These are CARB enforced standards; vehicles that access the project site, that are required to comply with these standards, would comply with this measure.
Vehicle Efficiency Measures. Implement light-duty vehicle efficiency measures.	**No Conflict**. These are CARB enforced standards; vehicles that access the project site, that are required to comply with these standards, would comply with this measure.
Medium/Heavy-Duty Vehicles. Adopt medium and heavy-duty vehicle efficiency measures.	**No Conflict**. These are CARB enforced standards; vehicles that access the project site, that are required to comply with these standards, would comply with this measure.
Green Building Strategy. Expand the use of green building practices to reduce the carbon footprint of California's new and existing inventory of buildings.	**No Conflict.** The proposed project would construct an 80-MW BESS that would interconnect to SCE's Tenaja Substation and would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a GIA with SCE. The proposed project would be required to comply with applicable energy efficiency standards, and would therefore, comply with this measure.

Table 8-2 2008 Scoping Plan Measures Consistency Summary	
2008 Scoping Plan Measures to Reduce GHGs	**Project Compliance with Measure**
High Global Warming Potential Gases. Adopt measures to reduce high global warming potential gases.	**No Conflict.** CARB identified five measures that reduce HFC emissions from vehicular and commercial refrigeration systems; vehicles that access the project site that are required to comply with these standards would comply with this measure**.**
Recycling and Waste. Reduce methane emissions at landfills. Increase waste diversion, composting, and commercial recycling. Move toward zero-waste.	**No Conflict.** The proposed project would construct an 80-MW BESS that would interconnect to SCE's Tenaja Substation and would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a GIA with SCE. As the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, waste generation would be minimal. The proposed project would comply with all applicable standards, and would therefore comply with this measure.
Water. Continue efficiency programs and use cleaner energy sources to move and treat water.	**No Conflict.** The proposed project would construct an 80-MW BESS that would interconnect to SCE's Tenaja Substation and would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a GIA with SCE. As the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, water use would be minimal. The proposed project would comply with all applicable standards, and would therefore comply with this measure.

Table 8-3 2017 Scoping Plan Update Recommended Actions Consistency Summary	
2017 Scoping Plan Recommended Actions to Reduce GHGs	**Project Compliance with Recommended Action**
Implement Mobile Source Strategy. Further increase GHG stringency on all light-duty vehicles beyond existing Advanced Clean Car regulations.	**No Conflict.** These are CARB enforced standards; vehicles that access the project site, that are required to comply with these standards, would comply with this strategy.
Implement Mobile Source Strategy. At least 1.5 million zero emission and plug- in hybrid light-duty electric vehicles by 2025 and at least 4.2 million zero emission and plug-in hybrid light-duty electric vehicles by 2030.	**No Conflict.** These are CARB enforced standards; vehicles that access the project site, that are required to comply with these standards, would comply with this strategy.
Implement Mobile Source Strategy. Innovative Clean Transit: Transition to a suite of to-be-determined innovative clean transit options. Assumed 20 percent of new urban buses purchased beginning in 2018 will be zero emission buses with the penetration of zero-emission technology ramped up to 100 percent of new sales in 2030. Also, new natural gas buses, starting in 2018, and diesel buses, starting in 2020, meet the optional heavy-duty low- NOX standard.	**No Conflict.** These are CARB enforced standards; vehicles that access the project site, that are required to comply with these standards, would comply with this strategy.
Implement Mobile Source Strategy. Last Mile Delivery: New regulation that would result in the use of low NOX or cleaner engines and the deployment of increasing numbers of zero-emission trucks primarily for class 3-7 last mile delivery trucks in California. This measure assumes ZEVs comprise 2.5 percent of new Class 3–7 truck sales in local fleets starting in 2020, increasing to 10 percent in 2025 and remaining flat through 2030.	**No Conflict.** These are CARB enforced standards; vehicles that access the project site, that are required to comply with these standards, would comply with this strategy.
Implement SB 350 by 2030. Establish annual targets for statewide energy efficiency savings and demand reduction that will achieve a cumulative doubling of statewide energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas end uses by 2030.	**No Conflict.** The proposed project would construct an 80-MW BESS that would interconnect to SCE's Tenaja Substation and would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a GIA with SCE. The proposed project would be required to comply with applicable energy efficiency standards, and would therefore, comply with this measure.

Table 8-3 2017 Scoping Plan Update Recommended Actions Consistency Summary	
2017 Scoping Plan Recommended Actions to Reduce GHGs	**Project Compliance with Recommended Action**
By 2019, develop regulations and programs to support organic waste landfill reduction goals in the SLCP and SB 1383.	**No Conflict.** The proposed project would construct an 80-MW BESS that would interconnect to SCE's Tenaja Substation and would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a GIA with SCE. As the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, waste generation would be minimal. The proposed project would comply with all applicable standards, and would therefore comply with this measure.

As summarized in **Table 8-2** and **Table 8-3**, the proposed project would not conflict with any of the provisions of the Scoping Plan. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Consistency with Western Riverside County of Governments (WRCOG) Subregional Climate Action Plan (CAP)

The City of Wildomar has not adopted the WRCOG Subregional Climate Action Plan (CAP) but uses the provisions of the CAP to evaluate development projects. Projects that demonstrate consistency with the strategies, actions, and emission reduction targets contained in the CAP would have a less than significant impact on climate change. **Table 8-4,** WRCOG Subregional CAP Reduction Measure Project Consistency, shows the proposed project's compliance with the local reduction measures of the WRCOG Subregional CAP. As summarized in **Table 8-4**, the proposed project would not conflict with any of the provisions of the CAP. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Table 8-4 WRCOG CAP Local Reduction Measure Project Consistency	
WRCOG Local Reduction Measure	**Project Compliance with Measure**
E-1: Energy Action Plan. Improve municipal and community wide energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption through the adoption of local Energy Action Plans (EAP).	**Not Applicable.** This measure is not directly applicable to the proposed project; however, the project would comply with apply standards.
E-3: Shade Trees. Strategically plant trees to reduce the urban heat island effect.	**No Conflict.** The proposed project would include perimeter landscaping.
T-2: Bicycle Parking. Provide additional options of bicycle parking.	**Not Applicable.** As the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, bicycle parking would not be warranted.
T-8: Density. Improve jobs-housing balance and reduce vehicle miles traveled by increasing household and employment densities.	**No Conflict.** The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, with maintenance crew visiting the site every two-to-three months, on average. The

Table 8-4 WRCOG CAP Local Reduction Measure Project Consistency	
WRCOG Local Reduction Measure	**Project Compliance with Measure**
	employees would likely be from within the region, thereby reducing VMT.
T-10: Design/Site Planning. Design neighborhoods and sites to reduce VMT.	**No Conflict.** The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, with maintenance crew visiting the site every two-to-three months, on average. The employees would likely be from within the region, thereby reducing VMT.
T-11: Pedestrian Only Access. Encourage walking by providing only community areas.	**Not Applicable.** The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, with maintenance crew visiting the site every two-to-three months, on average. The proposed project would operate as a BESS and would not be open to the public. Pedestrian-only access would not be warranted.
T-14: Voluntary Transportation Demand Management. Reduce demand for roadway travel through incentives for alternative modes of transportation and disincentives for driving.	**Not Applicable.** The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, with maintenance crew visiting the site every two-to-three months, on average. The proposed project would operate as a BESS, and the project's VMT would be negligible.
T-15: Accelerated Bike Plan Implementation. Accelerate the implementation of all or specific components of a jurisdiction's adopted bike plan.	**Not Applicable.** As the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, bicycle parking would not be warranted.
T-16: Fixed Guideway Transit. Introduce a fixed-route transit service in the jurisdiction.	**Not Applicable.** This measure is not directly applicable to the project.
T-17: Neighborhood Electric Vehicle Programs. Implement development requirements to accommodate Neighborhood Electric Vehicles and supporting infrastructure.	**Not Applicable.** This measure is not directly applicable to the project.
T-18: Subsidized Transit. Increase access to transit by providing free or reduced passes.	**Not Applicable.** This measure is not directly applicable to the project.
SW-1: Yard Waste Collection. Provide green waste collection bins community-wide.	**Not Applicable.** This measure is not directly applicable to the project.
SW-2: Food Scrap and Paper Division. Divert food and paper waste from landfills by implementing collection system.	**No Conflict.** The proposed project would construct an 80-MW BESS that would interconnect to SCE's Tenaja Substation and would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a GIA with SCE. As the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, waste generation would be minimal. The proposed project would comply with all applicable standards, and would therefore comply with this measure.

Summary

Compliance with regulations would ensure the proposed project's GHG emissions would be below the SCAQMD threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ /year. The proposed project would also be in compliance with the reduction goals of the WRCOG Subregional Climate Action Plan, the CARB Scoping Plan, AB 32, and SB 32. Furthermore, the proposed project would comply with applicable building and energy efficiency standards. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

None required.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

9. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

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

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Update (ESA) was prepared by Stantec on December 1, 2021 (Stantec 2021c), which is included as **Appendix 6**.

DISCUSSION

a) Less Than Significant Impact. Construction activities at the project site would involve the use of hazardous materials such as fuel, asphalt, lubricants, toxic solvents, pesticides, and herbicides which would be transported to and from the site and be present temporarily during construction. These potentially hazardous materials would not be used in quantities sufficient enough to pose a significant hazard to public health and safety or the environment, and their use during construction would be short-term.

Operation of the project would involve the use of hazardous materials such as cleaners, solvents, paints, degreasers, pesticides, fertilizers, and other custodial products. The materials used and stored onsite would be clearly labeled and safely stored in compliance with state and federal requirements. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

The transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials would be required to comply with existing regulations established by several agencies, including the Department of Toxic Substances Control, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the US Department of Transportation, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Moreover, any businesses that transport, generate, use, and/or dispose of hazardous materials in Wildomar are subject to existing local hazardous materials regulations, such as those implemented by the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health which is the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for Riverside County. This program is responsible for consolidating, coordinating, and making consistent the administrative requirements, permits, inspections, and enforcement activities of state standards regarding the transportation, use, and disposal of hazardous materials in Riverside County, including Wildomar. However, as the proposed project would construct an 80-WM BESS, which would be primarily operated remotely, the use of hazardous materials would be minimal. Compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations would result in a less than significant impact.

b) Less Than Significant Impact. As described in the response to 9.a), above, construction and operation of the proposed project would involve the transport, storage, and use of hazardous materials on the site including common cleaning substances, building maintenance products, lubricants, paints, solvents, herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers.

An impact could occur if construction and operation of the proposed project would create conditions where hazardous materials could easily contaminate surrounding soil, water, or air.

Construction projects typically maintain supplies onsite for containing and cleaning small spills of hazardous materials. However, construction activities would not involve a significant amount of hazardous materials, and their use would be temporary. Furthermore, project construction workers would be trained on the proper use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials. Also, construction activities would be conducted in accordance with the SWPPP as part of the NPDES permit, as detailed in Section V.10, Hydrology and Water Quality. The primary objective of the SWPPP is to identify, construct, implement, and maintain best management practices (BMPs) to reduce pollutants in stormwater

discharges and authorized non-stormwater discharges from the construction site. BMPs for hazardous materials include, but are not limited to, off-site refueling, placement of generators on impervious surfaces, establishing clean out areas for cement, etc.

Operation of the proposed project would not warrant use of hazardous materials in quantities that could result in hazardous conditions.

While the risk of exposure to hazardous materials cannot be eliminated, adherence to existing regulations would ensure compliance with safety standards related to the use and storage of hazardous materials and with the safety procedures mandated by applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Therefore, transport, use, and/or disposal of hazardous materials during construction and operation of the proposed project would be properly managed, and impacts would be less than significant.

c) No Impact There are no schools within a quarter mile of the site. The nearest school to the project site is the Sycamore Academy Charter School, approximately 0.3-mile northeast of the site. Therefore, no impact would occur.

d) No Impact. The project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials databases compiled by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) or the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) (DTSC 2023; SWRCB 2023). According to the Phase I ESA, there is no evidence of Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) or underground/above ground storage tanks onsite, however the following Business Environmental Risks (BERs) were identified with the site: potential biological resources, proximity to the Elsinore Fault Zone, and proximity to the Zone AE flood zone (Stantec 2021c). The project site would implement mitigation and building standards to address these BERs, as substantiated within this IS/MND. As the project site is not listed on any hazardous materials databases and there are no RECs onsite, no impact would occur.

e) No Impact. The project site is not located within any airport land use plan. The closest public airport is French Valley Airport, which is located approximately 7 miles east of the project site. Given the distance and because the project is not in the airport land use plan area for French Valley Airport, there is no impact.

f) Less Than Significant Impact. Access to the project site would be provided via two driveways along Clinton Keith Road. Construction would take place within the project site; no roadway closures are anticipated. If roadway closure(s) or reduction in access/capacity is necessary during construction (i.e., to connect to utilities), the City will require that the applicant submit appropriate detour plans for review prior to the issuance of a building permit. Adherence to these requirements would ensure that the project would not have a significant impact on emergency response and evacuation plans. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

g) Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. California Government Code Chapter 6.8 directs the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to identify areas of very high fire hazard severity within Local Responsibility Areas (LRA). Mapping of the areas, referred to as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), is based on data and models of potential fuels over a 30- to 50-year time

horizon and their associated expected fire behavior and expected burn probabilities, which quantifies the likelihood and nature of vegetation fire exposure to buildings. LRA VHFHSZ maps were initially developed in the mid-1990s and are now being updated based on improved science, mapping techniques, and data. In 2008, the California Building Standards Commission adopted California Building Code Chapter 7A requiring new buildings in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to use ignition-resistant construction methods and materials.

The eastern and western portions of the City of Wildomar have been designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The project site is not within a VHFHSZ (CAL FIRE 2023). Nonetheless, development on the project site would be subject to compliance with the 2022 California Building Code (CBC) (or the most current version) and the 2022 edition of the California Fire Code (CFC) (or the most current version). The 2022 CFC (Part 9 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) includes Section 4905.2, Construction Methods and Requirements within Established Limits. Fire Code Chapter 49 cites specific requirements for wildland-urban interface areas that include, but are not limited to, providing defensible space and hazardous vegetation and fuel management. Wildomar is covered under the Wildomar Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Riverside County Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan and the Riverside County Operation Area Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (Riverside County 2019; Riverside County 2023b). These plans provide guidance to effectively respond to any emergency, including wildfires.

The proposed project would be designed with multiple automatic and manual power-down/safety mechanisms including passive fire suppression systems built into each container. Electrical and fire systems would be designed to open breakers automatically during fault conditions. Each fire protection system would have a signal that would trigger core power-down during fire, electrical fire, overheating, etc. The entire proposed project's power-down would occur automatically during electrical fault conditions (e.g., high-voltage, high-frequency, ground fault, etc.). In addition, the proposed project would be equipped with breakers that could be opened manually to power-down different equipment or the proposed project as a whole. Moreover, speed bumps at the project site would be required to be cleared by the Riverside County Fire Department, thereby ensuring that they do not conflict with emergency access.

In addition, all proposed construction in the City is required to meet minimum standards for fire safety, and **Mitigation Measures HAZ-1** and **HAZ-2,** which require conformance with the California Building Code and Fire Code, will be implemented. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. City of Wildomar Municipal Code Chapter 8.28, Fire Code, requires compliance with the 2016 California Building Code (or most current version) and the 2016 edition of the California Fire Code (Part 9 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations).
2. City of Wildomar Municipal Code Chapter 8.28, Fire Code, requires adherence to California Fire Code Chapter 49, which cites specific requirements for wildland-urban interface areas.

MITIGATION MEASURES

HAZ-1 Prior to the issuance of building permits, the project applicant/developer shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the City Building Official and the Riverside County Fire Chief, compliance with the 2022 California Building Code (or the most recent edition) (Part 2 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations) and the 2022 California Fire Code (or the most recent edition) (Part 9 of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations), including those regulations pertaining to materials and construction methods intended to mitigate wildfire exposure as described in the 2022 California Building Code and California Residential Code (or most recent edition); specifically California Building Code Chapter 7A; California Residential Code Section R327; California Residential Code Section R337; California Referenced Standards Code Chapter 12-7A; and California Fire Code Chapter 49.

Timing/Implementation: *Prior to issuance of building permits*

Enforcement/Monitoring: *City of Wildomar Building Department and Riverside County Fire Department*

HAZ-2 Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, the applicant shall demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the City Building Official and the County Fire Chief, compliance with the vegetation management requirements prescribed in California Fire Code Section 4906 and California Government Code Section 51182.

Timing/Implementation: *Prior to issuance of certificate of occupancy*

Enforcement/Monitoring: *City of Wildomar Building Department and Riverside County Fire Department*

10. Hydrology and Water Quality

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

The following analysis is based on the Project Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) prepared by Stantec on July 7, 2023, and is included as **Appendix 7** (Stantec 2023a), and the Preliminary Drainage Study by Stantec dated June 20, 2023, and included as **Appendix 8** (Stantec 2023b) to this Initial Study.

DISCUSSION

a) Less Than Significant Impact.

Construction

As part of Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, the US Environmental Protection Agency has established regulations under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to control direct stormwater discharges. The NPDES program regulates industrial pollutant discharges, which include construction activities. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) administers the NPDES permitting program and is responsible for developing NPDES permitting requirements.

Wildomar Municipal Code Section 13.12.050 requires development to comply with a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit from the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board. Section F.1 of the MS4 permit specifies requirements for new developments, and Section F.1.D details the requirements for standard stormwater mitigation plans (also known as water quality management plans). The MS4 permit imposes pollution prevention requirements on planned developments, construction sites, commercial and industrial businesses, municipal facilities and activities, and residential activities. Even though Wildomar is split by two watersheds (Santa Ana and Santa Margarita) that affect some of the properties in the City, the entire City is governed by the MS4 permit for the Santa Margarita region.

Requirements for waste discharges potentially affecting stormwater from construction sites of one acre or more are set forth in the SWRCB's Construction General Permit Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-0006-DWQ. The site is larger than one acre and would be subject to requirements of the Construction General Permit. Projects obtain coverage under the Construction General Permit by filing a Notice of Intent with the SWRCB prior to grading activities and preparing and implementing a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) during construction. The primary objective of the SWPPP is to identify, construct, implement, and maintain BMPs to reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater discharges and authorized non-stormwater discharges from the project site, and to contain hazardous materials. BMPs categories include, but are not limited to, erosion control and wind erosion control, sediment control, tracking control, non-storm water management controls, and waste management controls. Implementation of BMPs and monitoring required under the SWPPP would reduce, minimize, reduce and or treat pollutants and prevent short-term intermittent impacts to water quality from construction activities to less than significant levels.

Operation

The primary constituents of concern during the project operational phase would be solids, oils, and greases from parking area and driveways that could be carried offsite. Site design BMPs as stated in the Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP), included as **Appendix 7** to this IS/MND, would include, but are not limited to, using native landscaping to minimize irrigation and marking storm drain inlets "Only Rain

Down the Storm Drain" (Stantec 2023a). The BMPs would properly manage flow and prevent stormwater pollution by reducing the potential for contamination at the source, as listed in the WQMP (see **Appendix 7**). The BMPs specific to the project have been determined as part of the WQMP to be approved by the City.

Additionally, onsite landscaping and gravel covering the native ground would assist with minimizing the amount of runoff from the site by providing permeable areas for water infiltration and decreasing runoff volume.

Under existing conditions, stormwater that drains to the east and south discharges to the street gutter on Clinton Keith Road to a curb inlet located approximately 450 feet southeast of the project site. The curb inlet outlets to a rock-lined ditch via a 24-inch reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) that ultimately discharge to Murrieta Creek (Stantec 2023b). The stormwater that drains to the northwest corner of the site drains to the street gutter on Grand Avenue and is captured by a curb inlet on the northside of Clinton Keith Road approximately 100 feet southwest of the site. The stormwater is conveyed to a 36-inch RCP via a double 24-inch RCPs to the southside of Clinton Keith Road and ultimately discharges to the Murrieta Creek.

Under proposed conditions, the site would surface flow to a detention basin in the northwest corner as well as to a detention basin in the southeast corner. The proposed detention basins attenuate post-development flows so as not to exceed the pre-development volume. Once sufficient volume is detained, the runoff would outlet through raised inlets. The upstream end of the onsite storm drain system would connect to the northwest basin with a 12-inch PVC pipe and follow the access road alignment prior to connecting to a 15-inch RCP servicing the southeast basin near the easterly entrance. The runoff would then outlet via an 18-inch RCP and connect to the existing 36-inch RCP on the southside of Clinton Keith Road (Stantec 2023b).

In general, projects must control pollutants, pollutant loads, and runoff volume from the project site by controlling runoff. Projects must incorporate BMPs in accordance with the requirements of the municipal NPDES permit. The proposed project would comply with water quality standards, and impacts are less than significant.

b) Less Than Significant Impact.

According to the Geotechnical Report, groundwater was encountered at depths ranging from 19.5 feet to 23 feet. The project site lies within the Santa Margarita River Watershed, and the Murrieta Creek and Wildomar Sub-Watersheds (Stantec 2023a). Although the project site is within the Temecula Valley Groundwater Basin, it would be subject to the Elsinore Basin Groundwater Management Plan as the site would be served by the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District (DWR 2023a).

Groundwater recharge occurs when water seeps through soil to replenish underground aquifers. Groundwater recharge is a major practice in Southern California. The primary sources of groundwater recharge in basins are:

- Recharge from precipitation – Rainfall directly to the basin.
- Surface water infiltration – Recharge from infiltration of surface waters such as streams.

- Infiltration from land use – Direct surface recharge from application of water for irrigation.
- Infiltration from septic tanks – Infiltration in areas serviced by septic systems in the basin.

The Elsinore Basin, which is a major source of potable groundwater supply for Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District (EVMWD), has not been identified to be in a state of overdraft (DWR 2023b). Furthermore, active groundwater management and conjunctive use programs have been implemented by EVMWD to ensure the balance of inflows and outflows of the Elsinore Basin (EVMWD 2021). Therefore, the proposed project would not impede sustainable groundwater management of the Basin, and impacts would be less than significant.

c)

i, ii) **Less Than Significant Impact**.

Please refer to issue b) in Section V.7, Geology and Soils, for further discussion of erosion. Surface water drainage would be controlled by building regulations, with the water directed toward existing streets, flood control channels, storm drains, and catch basins. The proposed drainage for the site would not channel runoff on exposed soils, would not direct flows over unvegetated soils, and would not otherwise increase the erosion or siltation potential of the site or any downstream areas. As discussed above, the proposed project is subject to NPDES requirements and the countywide MS4 permit. Additionally, the project applicant/developer is required to submit a SWPPP to reduce erosion and sedimentation of downstream watercourses during project construction. Furthermore, the applicant is required to prepare and submit a detailed erosion control plan for City approval prior to obtaining a grading permit. Implementation of an erosion plan would address any erosion issues associated with proposed grading and site preparation. The proposed project would cover the site's native ground with gravel, and the site's surface flow would be directed to detention basins in the northwestern and southeastern corners of the site.

The site currently is undeveloped with exposed soils and shrubs that generally drains from the east to south, and discharges to the street gutter along Clinton Keith Road. The site would surface flow to a detention basin in the northwest corner and a detention basin in the southeast corner; the proposed detention basins would attenuate post-development flows so as to not exceed the pre-development volume (Stantec 2023b).

The project-specific WQMP provides BMPs for after construction, such as using native landscaping to reduce irrigation. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site, or flooding on- or off-site. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

iii) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project is required to comply with Wildomar Municipal Code Section 13.12.050, which requires development to comply with a MS4 Permit from the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board. The proposed project would include detention basins to capture surface flow, and the proposed project's post-development flows

would not exceed pre-development flows. Therefore, the proposed project would not exceed the capacity of the existing stormwater system. Impacts would be less than significant.

iv). **No Impact.** The project site is within Zone X, which is designated as an area determined to be outside the 0.2 percent annual chance floodplain based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)'s Flood Insurance Rate Map (Map #06065C2684G) (Stantec 2021a). Therefore, no impacts would occur.

d) No Impact. As provided in V.10.c.iv, the project site is not within a flood hazard zone. The project site is not in an area that is subject to seiches, mudflows, or tsunamis due to the absence of any nearby bodies of water and mud/debris channels (Stantec 2021a). Additionally, the County of Riverside identifies dam inundation hazard areas throughout the county. A review of records maintained at the California Office of Emergency Services provided potential failure inundation maps for 23 dams affecting Riverside County; these maps were compiled into geographic information system (GIS) digital coverage of potential dam inundation zones. The County's dam inundation zones are identified in Figure S-10 of the Wildomar General Plan. As shown in Figure S-10, the project site is not in any dam inundation hazard zones (Wildomar 2003). In addition, the project is not in the vicinity of any levees (USACE 2022). Therefore, the project would not be exposed to seiches, mudflows, or tsunami hazards, and no impact would occur.

e) Less Than Significant Impact. As provided in Section V.10.b, above, although the project site is within the Temecula Valley Groundwater Basin, it would be subject to the Elsinore Basin Groundwater Management Plan as the site would be served by the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District (EVMWD) which gets its water from the Elsinore Basin. The proposed project would not conflict or obstruct implementation of EVMWD's Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). Additionally, active groundwater management and conjunctive use programs have been implemented by EVMWD to ensure the balance of inflows and outflows of the Elsinore Basin (EVMWD 2021).

The project site is in the Water Quality Improvement Plan for the Santa Margarita River Watershed Management Area. The proposed project would comply with water quality requirements set forth in the Statewide General Construction Permit, the NPDES, and the City of Wildomar Municipal Code Section 13.12 (Stormwater Discharge System Protection). Additionally, given that the project site would be primarily operated remotely, water use would be negligible. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan, and impacts would be less than significant.

<u>STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS</u>

1. Wildomar Municipal Code Section 13.12.060 requires that new construction and renovation control stormwater runoff so as to prevent any deterioration of water quality that would impair subsequent or competing uses of the water. The City shall identify the BMPs that may be implemented in addition to those provided in the WQMP to prevent such deterioration, as part of the building plan check review process prior to construction.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

11. Land Use and Planning

Issues, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?				✓
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?			✓	

DISCUSSION

a) No Impact. The project site is in an urbanized area characterized by a mix of land uses. The surrounding area includes residential, commercial, and undeveloped uses. The site is vacant and zoned C-1/C-P (General Commercial) and has a land use designation of Commercial Retail (CR). Implementation of the proposed project would be consistent with the existing uses in the surrounding area and would conform to the City's vision for development in this area. The proposed project would not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community as project development would occur within the project site boundaries; therefore, no impact would occur.

b) Less Than Significant Impact. The project site has a land use designation of Commercial Retail (CR) and is zoned C-1/C-P (General Commercial). The proposed project is consistent with the policies and development standards established under these designations and ordinances.

As described in Section 17.72, C-1 and C-P General Commercial Zones, of the Wildomar Municipal Code, the site's C-1/C-P zoning designation permits electrical substations with the approval of a plot plan. The development standards listed in the Section 17.72, C-1 and C-P General Commercial Zones, of the Wildomar Municipal Code, restrict structures to a maximum height of 50 feet. The tallest structure, the main transformer, of the proposed project, would be 22 feet. The proposed project would adhere to all additional development standards listed in Section 17.72, C-1 and C-P General Commercial Zones, of the Wildomar Municipal Code, and other applicable standards of the Municipal Code.

Additionally, the City is a signatory to the MSHCP and the project site is within the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Plan Fee Area, as discussed in Issue V.4.a, Biological Resources, of this Initial Study, and therefore, the proposed project is required to pay fees. Compliance with the MSHCP, applicable General Plan policies, and zoning ordinances would result in a less than significant impact.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Section 3.44.060 of the Wildomar Municipal Code requires that the applicant pay appropriate development impact fees prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the development project.

2. As required by Section 3.43.070 of the Wildomar Municipal Code, the project applicant/developer is required to submit fees to the City in accordance with the requirements of the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan Mitigation Fee Area.
3. Section 17.248.030 of the Wildomar Municipal Code requires that the applicant apply for a conditional use permit for the concurrent sale of motor vehicle fuels and beer and wine for off-premises consumption.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

12. Mineral Resources

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

DISCUSSION

a) No Impact. There are no mines mapped on the project site (CDC 2016). Additionally, the project site is in an area designated as MRZ-3 by the Wildomar General Plan (Wildomar 2003). The MRZ-3 zone includes areas where the available geologic information indicates that while mineral deposits are likely to exist, the significance of the deposit is undetermined. As a result, no impacts would occur.

b) No Impact. There are no known locally important mineral resource recovery sites identified on the project site in the Wildomar General Plan or in a specific plan or other land use plan. Construction of the proposed project would not create a substantial demand of aggregate resources. As a result, no impact would occur.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

None required.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

13. Noise

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

A Noise Memorandum was prepared by Stantec. on April 29, 2022 (Stantec 2022d) which is summarized herein and included as **Appendix 9**.

Noise Impact Fundamentals and Terminology

For a point source, such as electrical equipment, sound attenuates at a rate of 6 dB per doubling of distance. For a line source, such as free-flowing traffic on a roadway, sound attenuates at a rate of 3 dB per doubling of distance. Atmospheric conditions including wind, temperature gradients, and humidity can change how sound propagates over distance and can affect the level of sound received at a given location. Barriers, such as solid fences, buildings, and topography that block the line of sight between a source and receptor, also increase the attenuation of sound over distance.

DISCUSSION

a) Less Than Significant Impact.

Significance Criteria

According to Table 1, Sound Level Standards, in Chapter 9.48, Noise Regulations, of the Wildomar Municipal Code, the maximum noise level are as follows:

- RR (Rural Residential)
    - Daytime (7:00 a.m. – 10 p.m.): 45 dBA (Maximum)

    - Nighttime (10 p.m. – 7 a.m.): 45 dBA (Maximum)
- Commercial:
    - Daytime (7:00 a.m. – 10 p.m.): 65 dBA (Maximum)
    - Nighttime (10 p.m. – 7 a.m.): 55 dBA (Maximum)

Analysis Conditions

The following conditions and assumptions were included in the exterior noise analysis:

- The predicted noise levels were calculated using the SoundPLAN acoustic modeling software which uses standardized prediction techniques (per ISO 9613) and accounts for distance, topography, vegetation, and the effect of shielding and reflections produced by buildings and acoustic barriers.
- All receivers were position at 5 feet above ground level.
- Transformer and inverter units were modeled as a point source.
- Battery modules were modeled as an area source.
- Where data was not provided, typical, generic equipment noise data was used based on the size and typical operating speeds of the equipment.
- All units were assumed to be operating at full capacity, continuously.
- Noise from the project site was analyzed to the adjacent properties.
- The proposed fence around the site was assumed to be a 6-foot-high open link fence with no acoustic properties.

Construction Noise (on-site)

The project site is surrounded by commercial uses to the north, vacant land to the east, the SCE Tenaja Substation to the west, and residential uses that appear to be unoccupied to the west. As such, there are no sensitive residences directly adjacent to the project site. However, approximately 570 feet[2] south of the project site, in the City of Murrieta, there are occupied single-family homes. Construction noise typically occurs intermittently and varies on the nature or phase of construction (e.g., land clearing, grading, etc.). Construction activities would occur throughout the project site and would not be concentrated in one location. Construction activities would be short-term in nature.

In addition, the City's Noise Ordinance (Section 9.48.020 of the Wildomar Municipal Code) indicates that noise sources associated with private construction projects located within one-quarter of a mile from an inhabited dwelling are permitted between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. during the months of June through September, and between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. during the months of October through July. These permitted hours of construction are included in the code recognize that construction

[2] Measured from property-line-to-property-line.

activities undertaken during daytime hours are a typical part of living in an urban environment and do not cause a significant disruption. Project construction activities would comply with the above allowed hours.

In addition to adherence to the City of Wildomar Municipal Code Section 9.48.020, which limits the construction hours of operation, the following best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented to further reduce construction noise emanating from the proposed project:

1. All construction equipment, fixed or mobile, would be equipped with properly operating and maintained mufflers, consistent with manufacturer standards.
2. All stationary construction equipment would be placed so that emitted noise is directed away from the noise sensitive receptors nearest the project site.
3. As applicable, shut off all equipment when not in use.
4. Equipment staging shall be located in areas that create the greatest distance between construction-related noise/vibration sources and sensitive receptors surrounding the project site.
5. Jackhammers, pneumatic equipment, and all other portable stationary noise sources would be directed away from existing residences east of the project site. Either one-inch plywood or sound blankets can be utilized for this purpose. They should reach up from the ground and block the line of sight between equipment and the nearest off-site residences. The shielding should be without holes and cracks.
6. No amplified music and/or voice would be allowed on the project site.
7. Haul truck deliveries would not occur outside of the hours presented as exempt for construction per City's Municipal Code Section 9.48.020.

Compliance with the City's Municipal Code and implementation of the BMPs would ensure construction noise impacts would be less than significant.

Construction Noise (off-site)

During construction, short-term construction-related vehicle trips would be generated during the span of construction activities. Given the project site's proximity to I-15, it is anticipated that vendor and/or haul truck traffic would take the most direct route to the appropriate freeway ramps. Given the size and nature of the proposed project, off-site project generated construction vehicle trips would result in a negligible noise level increase and would not result in a substantial increase in ambient noise levels. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operations

<u>Onsite Operations</u>

Table 13-1, Project Operational Noise, shows that the proposed noise levels would not exceed the City's nighttime noise standards. Therefore, the estimated noise levels at the property lines and noise sensitive properties are not expected to exceed the City of Wildomar daytime and nighttime noise thresholds. Impacts would be less than significant.

Table 13-1 Project Operational Noise			
Property Location	**Predicted Sound Pressure Level (SPL) (dBA)**	**Maximum Sound Level Standards (Day/Night)**	**Exceeds Standards?**
Adjacent north property line (27 feet) shared with Commercial zoned property	47	65/55	No
Adjacent south property line (75 feet) share with Rural Residential zoned property	45	45/55	No
Receiver south residential neighborhood (568 feet)	31	45/55	No
Adjacent east property line (95 feet) shared with Commercial zoned property	44	65/55	No
Adjacent west property line (33 feet) shared with Rural Residential zoned property	44	45/45	No
Source: Stantec 2022d (Appendix 9)			

Project-Generated Vehicle Traffic

The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely with a maximum of four maintenance staff working on the site every two-to-three months. As such, vehicle trips generated by the proposed project would be negligible, and noise generated from vehicle traffic would be less than significant.

b) Less Than Significant Impact.

Construction

Groundborne vibration is rarely annoying to people who are outdoors, so it is usually evaluated in terms of indoor receivers. For annoyance, vibration is typically noticed nearby when objects in a building generate noise from rattling windows or picture frames. Construction activities are typically distributed throughout a project site, and therefore, vibration annoyance would not be concentrated in one area. There are no sensitive uses directly adjacent to the site; the residential uses to the west appear to be unoccupied. For vibration annoyance, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) uses a vibration level limit of 72 VdB. The nearest sensitive receptors to the site are the occupied residential uses approximately 570 feet south of the project site. At distances beyond 135 feet, vibration annoyance from typical construction equipment (excluding equipment used for pile driving or blasting) would be below the 72 VdB FTA vibration threshold. This is because the loudest typically used construction equipment, which is the vibratory roller, has a vibration level of 94 VdB at 25 feet and would attenuate to exactly 72 VdB at 135 feet. Therefore, as this is the most perceptible piece of construction equipment, all other construction equipment would either be at or below the 72 VdB threshold at 135 feet. Therefore, the construction-

generated vibration would not significantly impact the sensitive receptors 570 feet south of the project site, and impacts would be less than significant.

Operations

Operation of the proposed project would not include any substantial long-term vibration sources. Therefore, no significant vibration effects from operations would occur.

c) No Impact. The project is not located within an airport land use plan. There is no public airport or public use airport located within two miles of the project site; however, the nearest airport is the French Valley Airport located approximately 7 miles east of the project site. The proposed project would not expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels. Therefore, no impact would occur.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. As required by the City of Wildomar Municipal Code Sections 9.48.020 and 15.04.010, all construction and general maintenance activities shall be limited to the hours 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM from October through May (Monday–Saturday), and between 6:30 AM and 6:00 PM (Monday–Saturday) from June through September. No construction is permitted on Sundays or City-observed holidays unless approved by the City Building Official or City Engineer.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

14. Population and Housing

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

DISCUSSION

a) Less than Significant Impact. Construction of the proposed project would require contractors and laborers. Because of the size of the proposed project, the City expects that the supply of general construction labor would be available from the local and regional labor pool. The unemployment rate for Riverside County region is 4.4 percent (BLS 2023). The proposed project would not result in a long-term increase in employment from short-term construction activities.

The proposed project would require a maximum four-person crew for maintenance visits once every two-to-three months, on average. As such, the proposed project employment generation is not expected to result in a significant relocation of employees to the region due to the size of the existing labor pool in the area. Additionally, when compared to the Southern California Association of Government's (SCAG) employment 2045 projection of 11,200 workers in the City, the proposed project's contribution to overall population increases due to employment is marginal (SCAG 2020). Therefore, the proposed project would not directly nor indirectly induce substantial unplanned growth to the City's population.

b) No Impact. The project site is vacant and does not contain any housing, and project construction would occur within the project site boundaries. Therefore, the construction of the proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing units, which could necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impact would occur.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

None required.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

15. Public Services

Issues, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a) Fire protection?			✓	
b) Police protection?			✓	
c) Schools?			✓	
d) Parks?			✓	
e) Other public facilities?			✓	

DISCUSSION

a) Less Than Significant Impact. The Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD) provides fire protection and safety services to the City of Wildomar. RCFD Fire Station 75 on 38900 Clinton Keith Road in the City of Murrieta is approximately 1.45 miles southwest of the site and RCFD Fire Station 61 on 32637 Gruwell Street in the City of Wildomar is approximately 1.85 miles to the west of the site. These and several other Riverside County and Murrieta Fire Department stations in the surrounding area would be able to provide fire protection services to the project site, if needed.

The proposed project would be designed with multiple automatic and manual power-down/safety mechanisms including passive fire suppression systems built into each container. Electrical and fire systems would be designed to open breakers automatically during fault conditions. Each fire protection system would have a signal that would trigger core power-down during fire, electrical fire, overheating, etc. The entire proposed project's power-down would occur automatically during electrical fault conditions (e.g., high-voltage, high-frequency, ground fault, etc.). In addition, the proposed project would be equipped with breakers that could be opened manually to power-down different equipment or the proposed project as a whole.

A standard Condition of Approval for the proposed project includes compliance with the requirements of the Riverside County Fire Department and the payment of standard City development impact fees, which

include a fee for fire service impacts. The proposed project is not expected to result in activities that create unusual fire protection needs, therefore any such impacts are considered less than significant.

b) Less Than Significant Impact. Police protection services are provided in Wildomar by the Riverside County Sheriff's Department (RCSD). The nearest sheriff's station is located at 333 Limited Street in Lake Elsinore, approximately 7.2 miles west of the project site. Traffic enforcement is provided in this area of Riverside County by the California Highway Patrol, with additional support from local Riverside County Sheriff's Department personnel.

The Sheriff's Department strives to maintain a recommended servicing of 1.2 sworn law enforcement personnel for every 1,000 residents (Wildomar 2018). As discussed in Section V.14, Population and Housing, the proposed project is not anticipated to induce substantial population growth in the area; additionally, no residential uses are proposed. Therefore, would not be expected to substantially increase the demand for police protection services.

Regardless, pursuant to Section 3.44 of the Municipal Code, Fees, the project applicant/developer is required to pay standard development impact fees, which include a fee for police service to offset potential demand for new structures or expanded facilities associated with development. Consideration of adding more law enforcement personnel is a City Council decision and is not a CEQA issue. As the physical impacts of police force expansion are part of the impact fees that are required to be paid prior to building permit, this impact is less than significant.

c) Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is in the Lake Elsinore Unified School District (LEUSD). As discussed in issue a) in section V. 14, Population and Housing, the proposed project would not induce substantial growth to the City's population, and would not propose residential uses. The City provides a Notice of Impact Mitigation Requirement to applicants for a building permit, who then work with the school district to determine the precise amount of the fee. Once the fee has been paid in full, LEUSD prepares and provides a certificate to the City demonstrating payment of the fee. Payment of fees in compliance with Government Code Section 65996 fully mitigates all impacts to school facilities. Therefore, this impact is less than Significant.

d) Less Than Significant Impact. The City of Wildomar owns and manages four public parks with a combined acreage of 14.27 acres: Marna O'Brien Park, Regency Heritage Park, Windsong Park, and Malaga Park. Additionally, the City is proposing to develop two new park sites of 11 and 27 acres, respectively. The City requires 3 acres of neighborhood and community parkland per 1,000 residents as per the City of Wildomar Municipal Code Section 16.20.020 Park and recreation fees and dedications. The proposed project is not projected to add new residents as the proposed project would not construct residential uses. Payment of the City's development impact fees would reduce all impacts to less than significant.

e) Less Than Significant Impact. Development of the proposed project would not significantly increase demand for other public facilities. Any population growth associated with the proposed project would not exceed the City's growth projections, and would have been accounted for in long-range public facilities master plans. The project applicant/developer would be required to pay any applicable impact fees which

would contribute to offsetting this demand on local government services. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. The project applicant/developer is required to comply with the requirements of the Riverside County Fire Department and pay standard development impact fees for fire service impacts (Wildomar Municipal Code Section 3.44).
2. The project applicant/developer is required to pay standard development impact fees for police service impacts (Wildomar Municipal Code Section 3.44).
3. The City will require that the project applicant/developer work with the LEUSD to determine the precise amount for the Notice of School Impact Mitigation, and demonstrate payment of the fee prior to issuance of a building permit. (Wildomar Municipal Code Section 15.50.170)
4. The project applicant/developer is required to pay standard development impact fees for impacts to parks (Wildomar Municipal Code Section 3.44).

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

16. Recreation

Issues, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				✓
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				✓

DISCUSSION

a) No Impact. See response to issue V.15.d, Public Services, above. The proposed project would not result in a direct increase in population growth as the proposed project would not construct housing. Typically, residential uses result in a higher demand for recreational facilities compared to other uses. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

b) No Impact. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a direct increase in population growth as the proposed project would construct a BESS onsite which would be primarily operated remotely. Typically, residential uses result in a higher demand for recreational facilities compared to other uses. As the proposed project does not include new homes, the proposed project would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. No impact would occur.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

None required.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

17. Transportation

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

a) No Impact.

Public Transit, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Plans

There are no bus stops within the project area. The nearest bus stop is Riverside Transit Agency (RTA) Bus Route 23 located on Catt Road, approximately 0.77-mile northwest of the project site. RTA Bus Route 23 provides service for the cities of Wildomar, Murrieta, and Temecula (RTA 2023). Since the project site is not located directly along RTA Route 23, and project construction would occur within the project site boundaries, the proposed project would not propose changes to the route or its operations. The proposed project would not construct pedestrian or bicycle facilities.

Given that the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, and the maintenance crew that visit the site would likely use trucks to carry/transport maintenance equipment/tools, the proposed project would have a negligible impact to public transit, pedestrian, or bicycle facilities. The construction and operation phases of the proposed project would occur within the project site boundaries and would not interfere with the use of transit, pedestrian, or bicycle facilities.

The proposed project would be consistent with the General Plan's goals and policies, and the proposed project is not found to result in conflicts with adopted policies, plans, or programs, nor is it expected to negatively affect the performance or safety of existing or planned pedestrian, bicycle, or transit facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with any policies, plans, or programs related to public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities. No impact would occur.

Roadways and Intersections

Automobile delay, as described by Level of Service (LOS) or other measurements of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion, is no longer considered a significant impact under CEQA. However, the City uses LOS to determine the appropriate size of roadways and the need for intersection improvements. If the proposed project is projected to exceed the City's LOS standard, conditions of approval may be placed on the project to address the traffic impact. As CEQA must evaluate the whole of the project, physical impacts to the environment such as changes to roadways and/or intersection from either a mitigation measure or condition of approval must also be evaluated.

Although the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, the proposed project would require a maximum four-person crew for maintenance visits once every two-to-three months, on average. As such, any increases to LOS on the surrounding roadways as a result of project implementation would be negligible. Therefore, no impact would occur.

b) No Impact. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b), vehicle miles traveled (VMT) exceeding an applicable threshold of significance may indicate a significant impact.

The City's VMT guidelines state that VMT analyses are not required for projects that generate 110 trips or less. The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely with a maximum of four maintenance staff working on the site every two-to-three months. As such, vehicle trips generated by the proposed project would be negligible. Therefore, no impact would occur.

c) Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would include two driveways along its eastern boundary on Clinton Keith Road. The City of Wildomar implements development standards designed to ensure standard engineering practices are used for all improvements. The proposed project's driveways would be reviewed for compliance with these standards as part of the City's review process. Additionally, payment of the Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) by the project as required by Wildomar Municipal Code Chapter 3.40, Western Riverside County Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee, addresses the project's proportionate share of regional transportation improvements. Per Section 3.40.040(B) of the Wildomar Municipal Code, fees are calculated by WRCOG according to the calculation methodology fee set forth in the WRCOG TUMF Fee Calculation Handbook. Adherence to all applicable standards would ensure that roadway hazards are reduced, and impacts are less than significant.

d) Less than Significant Impact. The proposed project would provide two driveways along Clinton Keith Road that would provide ingress/egress, and would be all-weather fire access roads. Ingress and egress for the project site would be reviewed by the City and the CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department to ensure there is sufficient emergency access provided at the site as required by the City of Wildomar Municipal Code Chapter 8.28, Fire Code, for compliance with the California Fire Code. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

- Prior to issuance of any building permit on the project site, the project applicant/developer shall pay all development impact fees (Wildomar Municipal Code Chapter 3.44).

- Prior to issuance of any building permit on the project site, the project applicant/developer shall demonstrate payment of the Western Riverside County Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (Wildomar Municipal Code Chapter 3.40).
- As required by Municipal Code Chapter 8.28, Fire Code, review of the project design by the City and CAL FIRE / Riverside County Fire Department is required to ensure adequate emergency access.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

18. Tribal Cultural Resources

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

DISCUSSION

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i, ii) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The project site does not contain any structures or resources that are listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k) (see Section V.5, above).

Assembly Bill (AB) 52 established a formal consultation process for California tribes within the CEQA process. The AB 52 specifies that any project that may affect or cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource would require a lead agency to "begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditional and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project." Section 21074 of AB 52 also defines tribal cultural resources as sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe and that are either listed on, or eligible

for, the California Register of Historical Resources or a local historic register, or the lead agency chooses to treat the resource as a significant resource.

The City notified tribes that requested to be alerted of new projects on June 27, 2023, which included the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Pechanga Band of Mission Indians, Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians, and Soboba Band of Mission Indians.

The Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians notified the City on July 19, 2023, and stated that the project site is within the Traditional Use Area of the Luiseno people. The Rincon Tribe stated that they have no information on specific Tribal Cultural Resources within the project site and recommend that the City contact the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians and Soboba Band of Mission Indians tribes.

On July 20, 2023, the City met with the Pechanga Band of Mission Indians for consultation; the tribe requested that there be reburial sites on the project site in the event of an inadvertent discovery. The proposed reburial sites meet the Tribe's requirements (cannot be subject to: future development, paving, flooding, and erosion), and will be kept confidential in case these reburial sites are used.

The City works closely with the tribes and consults on all projects before the City. The Pechanga Band of Mission Indians provided cultural and tribal mitigation measure language which the Soboba Band of Mission Indians agreed upon. These mitigation measures have been incorporated into this IS/MND. With the inclusion of mitigation measures **TRI-1** through **TRI-8** and **CUL-1**, impacts to tribal cultural resources would be mitigated to a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

None required.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Refer to mitigation measure **CUL-1** in section V.5 of this document.

TRI-1 **Inadvertent Archeological Find.** If during ground disturbance activities, cultural resources are discovered that were not assessed by the archaeological report(s) and/or environmental assessment conducted prior to project approval, the following procedures shall be followed. Cultural resources are defined, as being multiple artifacts in close association with each other, but also include fewer artifacts if the area of the find is determined to be of significance due to its sacred or cultural importance as determined in consultation with the lead agency and Native American Tribe(s) that elected to consult under AB 52 ("Consulting Tribe(s)").

a. All ground disturbance activities within 100 feet of the discovered cultural resources shall be halted until a meeting is convened between the developer, the archaeologist,

the tribal representative(s) and the Community Development Director to discuss the significance of the find.

b. At the meeting, the significance of the discoveries shall be discussed and after consultation with the tribal representative(s), developer, and the archaeologist, a decision shall be made, with the concurrence of the Community Development Director, as to the appropriate mitigation (documentation, recovery, avoidance, etc.) for the cultural resources.
c. Grading or further ground disturbance shall not resume within the area of the discovery until an agreement has been reached by all parties as to the appropriate mitigation. Work shall be allowed to continue outside of the buffer area and will be monitored by additional Tribal monitors if needed.
d. Treatment and avoidance of the newly discovered resources shall be consistent with the Treatment and Monitoring Agreements entered into with the Consulting Tribe(s) and the applicant. This may include avoidance of the cultural resources through project design, in-place preservation of cultural resources located in native soils and/or re-burial on the Project property so they are not subject to further disturbance in perpetuity as identified in Mitigation Measures TRI-2 and TRI-7.
e. If the find is determined to be significant and avoidance of the site has not been achieved, a Phase III data recovery plan (see Mitigation Measure TRI-6) shall be prepared by the project archeologist, in consultation with the Consulting Tribe(s), and shall be submitted to the City for their review and approval prior to implementation of the said plan.
f. Pursuant to Calif. Pub. Res. Code § 21083.2(b) avoidance is the preferred method of preservation for archaeological resources and tribal cultural resources. If the landowner and the Consulting Tribe(s) cannot agree on the significance or the mitigation for the archaeological or tribal cultural resources, these issues will be presented to the Community Development Director for decision. The City's Community Development Director shall make the determination based on the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act with respect to archaeological and tribal cultural resources, recommendations of the project archeologist, and shall take into account the cultural and religious principles and practices of the Consulting Tribe(s). Notwithstanding any other rights available under the law, the decision of the City Community Development Director shall be appealable to the City Planning Commission and/or City Council.

Timing/Implementation: *During any ground-disturbing or construction activities*

Enforcement/Monitoring: *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*

TRI-2 **Cultural Resources Disposition.** In the event that Native American cultural resources are discovered during the course of grading (inadvertent discoveries), the following procedures shall be carried out for final disposition of the discoveries:

a. One or more of the following treatments, in order of preference as numbered below, shall be employed with the Consulting Tribe(s). Evidence of such shall be provided to the City of Wildomar Community Development Department:

   i. Preservation-In-Place of the cultural resources, if feasible. Preservation in place means avoiding the resources, leaving them in the place where they were found with no development affecting the integrity of the resources.

   ii. Reburial of the resources on the Project property. The measures for reburial shall include, at least, the following: Measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from any future impacts in perpetuity. Reburial shall not occur until all legally required cataloging and basic recordation have been completed, with an exception that sacred items, burial goods and Native American human remains are excluded. Any reburial process shall be culturally appropriate. Listing of contents and location of the reburial shall be included in the confidential Phase IV report (see Mitigation Measure TRI-6). The Phase IV Report shall be filed with the City under a confidential cover and not subject to Public Records Request.

   iii. If preservation in place or reburial is not feasible then the resources shall be curated in a culturally appropriate manner at a Riverside County curation facility that meets State Resources Department Office of Historic Preservation Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Resources ensuring access and use pursuant to the Guidelines. The collection and associated records shall be transferred, including title, and are to be accompanied by payment of the fees by the Applicant necessary for permanent curation. Evidence of curation in the form of a letter from the curation facility stating that subject archaeological materials have been received and that all fees have been paid, shall be provided by the landowner to the City. There shall be no destructive or invasive testing on sacred items, burial goods, and Native American human remains, as defined by the cultural and religious practices of the Most Likely Descendant. Results concerning finds of any inadvertent discoveries shall be included in the Phase IV monitoring report.

Timing/Implementation: During grading activities

Enforcement/Monitoring: City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department

TRI-3 **Archaeologist Retained.** Prior to issuance of a grading permit the project applicant shall retain a Riverside County qualified Registered Professional Archaeologist (RPA), to monitor

all ground disturbing activities in an effort to identify any unknown archaeological resources.

The Registered Professional Archaeologist and the Tribal monitor(s) required by Mitigation Measures TRI-4 and TRI-5 shall manage and oversee monitoring for all initial ground disturbing activities and excavation of each portion of the project site including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, mass or rough grading, trenching, stockpiling of materials, rock crushing, structure demolition and etc. The Registered Professional Archaeologist and the Tribal monitor(s), shall independently have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources in coordination with any required special interest or tribal monitors.

The developer/permit holder shall submit a fully executed copy of the contract to the Community Development Department to ensure compliance with this condition of approval. Upon verification, the Community Development Department shall clear this condition.

In addition, the Registered Professional Archaeologist, in consultation with the Consulting Tribe(s), the contractor, and the City, shall develop a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP) in consultation pursuant to the definition in AB 52 to address the details, timing and responsibility of all archaeological and cultural activities that will occur on the project site. A consulting tribe is defined as a tribe that initiated the AB 52 tribal consultation process for the Project, has not opted out of the AB 52 consultation process, and has completed AB 52 consultation with the City as provided for in Cal Pub Res Code Section 21080.3.2(b)(1) of AB52. Details in the Plan shall include:

a. Project grading and development scheduling;

b. The Project archaeologist and the Consulting Tribes(s) shall attend the pre-grading meeting with the City, the construction manager and any contractors and will conduct a mandatory Cultural Resources Worker Sensitivity Training to those in attendance. The Training will include a brief review of the cultural sensitivity of the Project and the surrounding area; what resources could potentially be identified during earthmoving activities; the requirements of the monitoring program; the protocols that apply in the event inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources are identified, including who to contact and appropriate avoidance measures until the find(s) can be properly evaluated; and any other appropriate protocols. All new construction personnel that will conduct earthwork or grading activities that begin work on the Project following the initial Training must take the Cultural Sensitivity Training prior to beginning work and the Project archaeologist and Consulting Tribe(s) shall make themselves available to provide the training on an as-needed basis;

c. The protocols and stipulations that the contractor, City, Consulting Tribe(s) and Project archaeologist will follow in the event of inadvertent cultural resources discoveries, including any newly discovered cultural resource deposits that shall be subject to a cultural resources evaluation.

Timing/Implementation: *Prior to issuance of grading permit*

Enforcement/Monitoring: *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*

TRI-4 **Native American Monitoring (Pechanga).** Tribal monitor(s) shall be required on-site during all ground-disturbing activities, including grading, stockpiling of materials, engineered fill, rock crushing, etc. The land divider/permit holder shall retain a qualified tribal monitor(s) from the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the developer shall submit a copy of a signed contract between the above-mentioned Tribe and the land divider/permit holder for the monitoring of the project to the Community Development Department and to the Engineering Department. The Tribal Monitor(s) shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground-disturbance activities to allow recovery of cultural resources, in coordination with the Project Archaeologist.

Timing/Implementation: *During ground-disturbing activities*

Enforcement/Monitoring: *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*

TRI-5 **Native American Monitoring (Soboba).** Tribal monitor(s) shall be required on-site during all ground-disturbing activities, including grading, stockpiling of materials, engineered fill, rock crushing, etc. The land divider/permit holder shall retain a qualified tribal monitor(s) from the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the developer shall submit a copy of a signed contract between the above-mentioned Tribe and the land divider/permit holder for the monitoring of the project to the Community Development Department and to the Engineering Department. The Tribal Monitor(s) shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground-disturbance activities to allow recovery of cultural resources, in coordination with the Project Archaeologist.

Timing/Implementation: *During ground-disturbing activities*

Enforcement/Monitoring: *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*

TRI-6 **Archeology Report - Phase III and IV.** Prior to final inspection, the developer/permit holder shall prompt the Project Archeologist to submit two (2) copies of the Phase III Data Recovery report (if required for the Project) and the Phase IV Cultural Resources

Monitoring Report. The Phase IV report shall include evidence of the required cultural/historical sensitivity training for the construction staff held during the pre-grade meeting. The Community Development Department shall review the reports to determine adequate mitigation compliance. Provided the reports are adequate, the Community Development Department shall clear this condition. Once the report(s) are determined to be adequate, two (2) copies shall be submitted to the Eastern Information Center (EIC) at the University of California Riverside (UCR) and one (1) copy shall be submitted to the Consulting Tribe(s) Cultural Resources Department(s).

Timing/Implementation: *Prior to final inspection*

Enforcement/Monitoring: *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*

TRI-7 **Non-Disclosure of Reburial Locations**. It is understood by all parties that unless otherwise required by law, the site of any reburial of Native American human remains or associated grave goods shall not be disclosed and shall not be governed by public disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act. The Coroner, pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code Section 6254 (r)., parties, and Lead Agencies, will be asked to withhold public disclosure information related to such reburial.

Timing/Implementation: *During discovery of Native American human remains*

Enforcement/Monitoring: *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*

TRI-8 **No-Build Easement or Similar Instrument.** In the event that Native American artifacts are found and buried within the project vicinity, a no-build easement, or similar legal instrument, shall be used to preclude future development from taking place on the reburial site(s).

Timing/Implementation: *After Reburial of Native American Artifacts*

Enforcement/Monitoring: *City of Wildomar Engineering Department and Community Development Department*

19. Utilities and Service Systems

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

DISCUSSION

a,c) Less Than Significant Impact.

Wastewater Treatment

The EVMWD currently operates three wastewater treatment facilities: The Regional Water Reclamation Facility (WRF), the Horsethief Canyon Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), and the Railroad Canyon WWTP (EVMWD 2021). In addition, flow in the southern part of the EVMWD's service area is treated at the Santa Rosa Water Reclamation Facility operated by the Rancho California Water District. The project site is within the Regional WRF wastewater collection area (EVMWD 2016).

As the site would be primarily operated remotely, no restrooms are proposed. Therefore, the proposed project would not generate wastewater at the site and no extension of sewer lines are needed. No impacts would occur.

Water Treatment

Water treatment facilities filter and/or disinfect water before it is delivered to customers. The EVMWD supplies water to the surrounding area and would supply water to the project site for irrigation. Water line improvements at the project site would be constructed in accordance with Title 13, Public Services, of the Wildomar Municipal Code.

EVMWD purchases water from the Western Municipal Water District (WMWD). The imported water is a blend of Colorado River water, State Water Project water, and local Western supplies (EVMWD 2021). The water provided by WMWD is treated by EVMWD prior to it being distributed to their customers. The EVMWD water treatment facilities, their capacities, and remaining available treatment capacities are shown in **Table 19-1**, EVMWD Water Treatment Facilities.

Table 19-1 EVMWD Water Treatment Facilities

Treatment Plant	Capacity (mgd)	Maximum Flow (mgd)	Remaining Treatment Capacity (mgd)
Canyon Lake Water Treatment Plant	7	7	0
Skinner Filtration Plant (via the Auld Valley Pipeline)	20.2	14.5	5.7
Mills Filtration Plant (via the Temescal Valley Pipeline)	12.7	8.9	3.8
Total:	**39.9**	**30.4**	**9.5**

Source: EVMWD 2021

As shown in **Table 19-1**, the EVMWD water treatment facilities have a remaining water treatment capacity of approximately 9.5 mgd. The proposed project would plant native vegetation that would be in the low water use hydrozone, and a combination of subsurface low flow drip, bubblers, and/or low volume rotator sprays would be installed in all planters. No restrooms would be installed onsite. As such, water use onsite would be negligible. Therefore, the current capacity of the EVMWD treatment facilities would be able to accommodate the water demands generated from the proposed project. The proposed project impacts to water treatment is less than significant.

Stormwater Drainage

Stormwater drainage impacts are addressed in Section V.10.c.iii, above. The proposed project would include detention basins to capture surface flow, and the proposed project's post-development flows would not exceed pre-development flows. Additionally, implementation of BMPs would improve water quality and reduce runoff. Stormwater drainage improvements associated with the proposed project have

been designed to not impact the local, off-site storm drain system. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Electricity and Natural Gas

The proposed project would construct an 80-MW BESS onsite, and the proposed project would not result in an increase in demand for electricity or natural gas at the project site during operations. The project site would be primarily operated remotely, with maintenance crew visiting the site once every two-to-three months, on average, which would result in a negligible increase for gasoline/diesel. The proposed project would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a Generator Interconnection Agreement (GIA) with SCE, thereby providing reliable and secure electricity supply. Utilities would be installed per the requirements listed in the City of Wildomar Municipal Code Section 16.40.010. The applicant would be responsible for the payment of utility connections. As described in section V.6, Energy, the project would not result in energy use such that new or expanded facilities would be required. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

b) Less Than Significant Impact. The project site is within the service boundary of the EVMWD. The EVMWD utilizes both groundwater and imported water supplies to ensure adequate water is available for consumers. Imported water is utilized to ensure that significant overdraft of local groundwater supplies does not occur. Imported water is obtained from the Metropolitan Water District, local surface water from Canyon Lake, and local groundwater from the Elsinore Basin. Since the adoption of the 2005 Groundwater Management Plan, EVMWD has limited pumping to 5,500 acre-ft/year to be consistent with the safe yield of the Elsinore Groundwater Basin (EVMWD 2021). The EVMWD has the ability to obtain a capacity of 26,296 acre-feet per year (23.4 mgd) during average years and wet years (EVMWD 2021).

As shown in the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, the projected 2025 water demand and supply would be 38,932 acre-feet per year and 47,218 acre-feet per year, respectively (EVMWD 2021); the supply would exceed the demand by 8,286 acre-feet/year. Therefore, this impact is less than significant because there would be sufficient water supply to meet the demand of the proposed project.

The California State Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) requires local agencies to adopt, implement, and enforce the MWELO or a local Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO) that is at least as effective as the MWELO. Chapter 17.276 of the City of Wildomar Municipal Code implements the MWELO and requires that a landscape documentation package be submitted to the City for review and approval prior to the issuance of any permits to install or construct any landscape-related improvements. This ensures that landscapes are planned, designed, installed, maintained, and managed in a manner that uses water efficiently, encourages water conservation, and prevents water waste. Compliance with the City's ordinance would additionally help to reduce impacts on water supplies and ensure that water resources would be available for the foreseeable future of the project. Impacts would be less than significant.

d) Less Than Significant Impact. The main solid waste disposal site that would serve the project site is the El Sobrante Landfill in Corona. The landfill is projected to reach its full capacity of 209,910,000 cubic yards in 2051 (CalRecycle 2019). The landfill covers approximately 1,322 acres and has a maximum

permitted throughput of approximately 16,054 tons/day (CalRecycle 2019). The El Sobrante Landfill has a remaining capacity of 143,977,170 tons (CalRecycle 2019).

As the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, operation-generated solid waste would be negligible. Therefore, the proposed project's impact on landfill capacity are less than significant**.**

e) Less Than Significant Impact. Solid waste would be generated during construction of the proposed project. As the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, operation-generated solid waste would be negligible. The Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991 requires that adequate areas be provided for collecting and loading recyclable materials such as paper, products, glass, and other recyclables. City of Wildomar Municipal Code Section 8.104 regulates solid waste handling and mandates that sufficient receptacles be in place onsite to accommodate refuse and recycling. Compliance with State law and the City's Municipal Code would ensure the project would result in a less than significant impact.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. As required by City of Wildomar Municipal Code Section 13.12.050, Regulatory Consistency, and the MS4 Permit from the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board, stormwater drainage improvements must be consistent and in accordance with these provisions.
2. As required by City of Wildomar Municipal Code Section 16.40.10, Installation Requirements, the project would comply with the installation requirements for undergrounding utilities.
3. As required by City of Wildomar Municipal Code Section 8.104, Solid Waste Collection and Disposal, the generation, accumulation, handling, collection, transportation, conversion, and disposal of solid waste must be controlled and regulated through the provisions of this chapter.
4. As required by City of Wildomar Municipal Code Section 17.276.060, a landscape documentation package shall be submitted and approved prior to installation of any landscaping.

MITIGATION MEASURES

None required.

20. Wildfire

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

a) Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated. California Government Code Chapter 6.8 directs the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) to identify areas of very high fire hazard severity within Local Responsibility Areas (LRA). Mapping of the areas, referred to as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), is based on data and models of potential fuels over a 30- to 50-year time horizon and their associated expected fire behavior and expected burn probabilities, which quantifies the likelihood and nature of vegetation fire exposure to buildings. LRA VHFHSZ maps were initially developed in the mid-1990s and are now being updated based on improved science, mapping techniques, and data. In 2008, the California Building Standards Commission adopted California Building Code Chapter 7A requiring new buildings in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones to use ignition-resistant construction methods and materials.

The eastern and western portions of the City of Wildomar have been designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ). The project site is not within a VHFHSZ (CAL FIRE 2023). Development on the project site would be subject to compliance with the 2022 CBC and 2022 CFC, or the current version of the CBC and CFC at the time of construction. Wildomar is covered under the Wildomar Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Riverside County Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan and the Riverside County

Operation Area Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (Riverside County 2019; Riverside County 2023b). These plans provide guidance to effectively respond to any emergency, including wildfires. In addition, all proposed construction is required to meet minimum standards for fire safety. Implementation of these plans and policies in conjunction with compliance with the Fire Code would minimize the risk of loss due to wildfires. Moreover, speed bumps at the project site would be required to be cleared by the Riverside County Fire Department, thereby ensuring that they do not conflict with emergency access.

Furthermore, the surrounding roadways would continue to provide emergency access to the project site and surroundings during construction and postconstruction. In addition, as with all projects in the City of Wildomar, **Mitigation Measures HAZ-1** and **HAZ-2**, which require conformance with the CBC and CFC, would be implemented. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

b) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. The project site is vacant and contains ruderal vegetation. The project site is generally flat, with an average elevation of 1,210 feet amsl. The City does not experience high-speed prevailing winds; average wind speeds are approximately 6 miles per hour during the windier part of the year, from November to June (Weather Spark 2023).

Developing the existing vacant and undeveloped site with the proposed structures would reduce the amount of exposed vegetation that could be used as fuel. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to an increase in exposure to wildfire risk. Additionally, development on the project site would be subject to compliance with the CBC and CFC. Moreover, the City of Wildomar is under the Wildomar Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Riverside County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, which provides guidance to effectively respond to and mitigate emergencies, including wildfires. While the project site is not within a VHFHSZ, as with all projects in the City of Wildomar, **Mitigation Measures HAZ-1** and **HAZ-2,** which require conformance with the CBC and Fire Code, would be implemented. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

c) Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would interconnect to the existing SCE Tenaja Substation and would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a GIA with SCE. The project applicant/developer is required to pay for connections and maintenance of onsite utility infrastructure. The utilities would be installed to meet service requirements. The construction of new and improved infrastructure for the proposed project would not directly increase fire risk. Additionally, the proposed project would be designed with multiple automatic and manual power-down/safety mechanisms including passive fire suppression systems built into each container. Electrical and fire systems would be designed to open breakers automatically during fault conditions. Each fire protection system would have a signal that would trigger core power-down during fire, electrical fire, overheating, etc. The entire proposed project's power-down would occur automatically during electrical fault conditions (e.g., high-voltage, high-frequency, ground fault, etc.). In addition, the proposed project would be equipped with breakers that could be opened manually to power-down different equipment or the proposed project as a whole. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

d) Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Section V.7, the project site is not within a flood hazard zone nor a landslide zone. There are no flooding or safety concerns caused by drainage or slope instability.

Construction activities related to the proposed project would be subject to compliance with the CBC and CFC, and would include BMPs. BMPs may include but are not limited to covering of the soil, use of a dust-inhibiting material, landscaping, use of straw and jute, hydroseeding, and grading in a pattern than slows stormwater flow and reduces the potential for erosion, landslides, and downstream flooding. Operationally, the proposed project would include detention basins to capture surface flow, and the proposed project's post-development flows would not exceed pre-development flows. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

STANDARD CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

None Required.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Implementation of mitigation measures **HAZ-1** and **HAZ-2** in Section V.9 of this document.

VI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Issues, does the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		✓		
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.)		✓		
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?		✓		

DISCUSSION

The following mandatory findings of significance are in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15065.

a) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. Based on the evaluations and discussion in this IS/MND, the proposed project has a limited potential to incrementally degrade the quality of the environment. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure BIO-1,** which requires a rare plant survey, **Mitigation Measure BIO-2,** which requires a pre-construction nesting bird survey, and **Mitigation Measure BIO-3,** which requires a focused burrowing owl survey, would reduce impacts to biological resources to less than significant.

With the implementation of **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and **TRI-1** through **TRI-8,** the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on archaeological resources, tribal cultural resources, and human remains. Furthermore, as discussed in Section V.7, Geology and Soils, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on geological and paleontological resources with implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1**, which requires the project to incorporate recommendations of the geotechnical report, and **Mitigation Measure GEO-2**, which requires a paleontological grading observation schedule during grading.

Implementation of **Mitigation Measures HAZ-1** and **HAZ-2** would reduce impacts of wildfires to a less than significant impact upon conformance with building codes and City standards. Therefore, the proposed project would not significantly affect the environment after implementation of the mitigation measures in this IS/MND. Therefore, any impacts would be considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

b) Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

Aesthetics

Implementation of the proposed project would not contribute to cumulative visual resource or aesthetic impacts. This project and other projects in Wildomar are required to comply with the City's light pollution ordinance. The project is proposed in a developing region of the City and is consistent with the proposed General Plan designation. While the proposed building may obstruct views of surrounding ridgelines from the project site, the proposed project, in combination with other development in the vicinity would not significantly impact any scenic vistas. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than cumulatively considerable impact to aesthetics.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in any impacts to agriculture or forestry resources and would therefore not contribute to cumulative impacts to these resources.

Air Quality

The South Coast Air Quality Management District's approach for assessing cumulative impacts is based on the Air Quality Management Plan forecasts for attainment of ambient air quality standards in accordance with the requirements of the federal and California Clean Air acts. In other words, the South Coast AQMD considers projects that are consistent with the AQMP, which is intended to bring the basin into attainment for all criteria pollutants, to also have less than significant cumulative impacts. The discussion in Section V.3, Air Quality, describes the South Coast AQMD criteria for determining consistency with the AQMP and further demonstrates that the proposed project would be consistent with the plan. Implementation of the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts, and would not contribute to cumulative impacts to Air Quality.

Cumulative Short-Term Emissions

The SCAB is designated nonattainment for O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ for State standards and nonattainment for O_3 and $PM_{2.5}$ for Federal standards. The project construction-related emissions by themselves would not have the potential to exceed the South Coast AQMD significance thresholds for criteria pollutants. Since these thresholds indicate whether individual project emissions have the potential to affect cumulative regional air quality, project-related construction emissions would not be cumulatively considerable. The South Coast AQMD has developed strategies to reduce criteria pollutant emissions outlined in the AQMP pursuant to the federal Clean Air Act mandates. With the compliance of these strategies, the proposed project would not exceed thresholds by the South Coast AQMD.

South Coast AQMD rules, mandates, and compliance with adopted AQMP emissions control measures are imposed on all construction projects throughout the air basin. Compliance with South Coast AQMD rules and regulations would reduce the proposed project construction-related impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, project-related construction emissions, in combination with those from other projects in the area, would not substantially deteriorate the local air quality. Construction emissions associated with the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant cumulative air quality impacts.

Cumulative Long-Term Impacts

The South Coast AQMD has not established separate significance thresholds for cumulative operational emissions. The nature of air emissions is largely a cumulative impact. As a result, no single project is sufficient in size to, by itself, result in nonattainment of ambient air quality standards. Instead, individual project emissions contribute to existing cumulatively significant adverse air quality impacts. The South Coast AQMD developed the operational thresholds of significance based on the level above which individual project emissions would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the SCAB's existing air quality conditions. Therefore, a project that exceeds the South Coast AQMD operational thresholds would also be a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact. With the implementation of applicable South Coast AQMD rules and regulations, the proposed project's operational emissions would not exceed South Coast AQMD thresholds as they would alleviate potential impacts related to cumulative conditions on a project-by-project basis. As a result, operational emissions associated with the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant cumulative air quality impacts. Project operations would not contribute a cumulatively considerable net increase of any nonattainment criteria pollutant.

Biological Resources

The project site is primarily vacant and undeveloped, and is not within a Criteria Cell. The project site is located within the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Fee Plan Area and MSHCP Fee Area. There are no special-status natural communities onsite. One special status plant species (paniculate tarplant) was observed onsite. While the California horned lark, Cooper's hawk, least Bell's vireo, white-tailed kite, and yellow-breasted chat were not observed during the site survey, they have been documented to occur in the project area. Additionally, burrowing owls have moderate potential to occur in the project area. As such, the proposed

project would implement **Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2,** and **BIO-3.** The proposed project would pay the MSHCP and Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Plan Area fees as required to ensure that there would be a less than cumulatively considerable impact on biological resources.

Cultural Resources

Development of the project site would contribute to a cumulative increase in potential impacts to cultural and archaeological resources. Other projects in the region could demolish or otherwise alter cultural resources. However, **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and **TRI-1** through **TRI-8** would reduce the potential impacts associated with development on the project site. Other projects in the region would also be required to comply with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, which requires the lead agency to determine if discovered resources are unique or historically significant, and if so, to avoid or mitigate impacts to such resources in accordance with the provisions of PRC Section 21083.2. Therefore, the project would have a less than cumulatively considerable impact.

Energy

Construction and operation of the proposed project would result in an increase in energy use as the site is currently vacant. Construction energy use would be temporary and normal of development in the region. The proposed project would store and deliver electricity to the grid through a GIA with SCE, thereby providing reliable and secure electricity supply. Section V.6, Energy, analyzed the project's cumulative contribution to energy in the region and determined the project would have a less than cumulatively considerable environmental impact to energy.

Geology and Soils

Project-related impacts on geology and soils associated with development on the project site are site specific, and project development would not contribute to seismic hazards or soil erosion. Implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1** would result in decreased exposure to the risks associated with seismic activity, and implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-2** would ensure impacts to paleontological resources are reduced to a less than significant level. Therefore, impacts are expected to be less than cumulatively considerable**.**

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The greenhouse gas analysis in Section V.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, analyzed the proposed project's cumulative contribution to global climate change and determined that the project would have a less than cumulatively considerable environmental impact resulting from greenhouse gas emissions.

Regarding goals for 2050 under Executive Order S-3-05, at this time it is not possible to quantify the emissions savings from future regulatory measures, as they have not yet been developed. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that operation of the proposed project would comply with all applicable measures that state lawmakers decide would lead to an 80 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2050.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The proposed project is not expected to utilize or contribute to hazards associated with the accidental release of hazardous materials. The proposed project is not within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone; implementation of **Mitigation Measures HAZ-1** and **HAZ-2** would ensure that the proposed project complies with the California Building Code, Fire Code, and City standards in regard to fire hazards. All projects in the City are required to comply with the California Building Code, Fire Code, and City standards Compliance with federal, state, and local regulations would ensure that cumulative hazard conditions are less than cumulatively considerable.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Water quality measures included in the proposed project and the WQMP and SWPPP prepared for the project would ensure that the quality of water discharged from the site during both construction and operational activities do not adversely affect any off-site uses or water resources. The site is not located within a flood hazard zone. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than cumulatively considerable impact related to hydrology.

Land Use and Planning

The proposed project would not divide an established community. The proposed project would comply with the standards for its zoning designation as listed in the Wildomar Municipal Code. As the proposed project would not change the zoning or land use designations for the site, the proposed project would be consistent with the General Plan thereby reducing physical impacts. Cumulative development projects in accordance with the General Plan would be subject to compliance with regional and local plans. Other cumulative development would be reviewed by the City to ensure general consistency with local land use plans. Therefore, the proposed project combined with related projects would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to land use and planning.

Mineral Resources

The proposed project would have no impact related to mineral resources and would therefore not contribute to any cumulative impacts to such resources.

Noise

As discussed in Section V.13, Noise, the proposed project would comply with all applicable noise standards and would have less than significant direct impacts related to construction and operational noise. It is possible that other construction projects in the vicinity could overlap with activity on the project site, but other such projects are required to mitigate their construction noise impacts and comply with the City's noise ordinances. Any combined impacts would be temporary, constituting intermittent annoyance perhaps, but not a significant cumulative noise impact. Therefore, compliance with the City's noise ordinance would reduce any construction noise impacts to less than cumulatively considerable. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than cumulatively considerable impact related to construction noise.

Implementation of the proposed project, in combination with other existing, planned, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development in the immediate area, may increase operational noise levels in the project area. However, the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely with a maximum of four maintenance staff working on the site every two-to-three months. As such, vehicle trips generated by the proposed project would be negligible. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than cumulatively considerable impact related to operational noise.

Population and Housing

As the project site is currently vacant, no housing units or people would be displaced, and the construction of replacement housing is not required. The proposed project would result in a temporary increase in employment during construction. Although the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely, the project would require a maximum four-person maintenance crew. Short- and long-term employees would be available from the local and regional labor pool. Therefore, the project would have a less than cumulatively considerable impact related to population and housing.

Public Services

Implementation of the proposed project, in combination with other existing, planned, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development in the immediate area, may increase the demand for public services such as fire and police protection. However, as a standard condition of approval, project applicants/developers are required to pay development impact fees to fund the expansion of such services. Development of any future public service facilities would be subject to CEQA review prior to approval that would identify and address any resulting impacts. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than cumulatively considerable impact on public services.

Recreation

The proposed project would have no impact related to recreational facilities and would therefore not contribute to any cumulative impacts to such facilities. Additionally, as a standard condition of approval, the project applicant/developer is required to pay development impact fees to fund the expansion of such facilities. Development of any future public facilities would be subject to CEQA review prior to approval that would identify and address any resulting impacts. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on recreational facilities.

Transportation

Cumulative traffic impacts are created because of a combination current and future developments contributing to the overall traffic impacts and requiring additional improvements to maintain acceptable level of service operations. A project's contribution to a cumulatively significant impact can be reduced to less than significant if the project implements or funds its fair share of improvements designed to alleviate the potential cumulative impact. As enforced by City Municipal Code Chapter 3.40, the Western Riverside County Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee, and the adopted City Traffic Signal Development Impact Fee (Article I, Development Impact Fees, of Municipal Code Chapter 3.44), the project applicant/developer

would be required to participate in the funding of off-site improvements, including traffic signals that are needed to serve cumulative traffic conditions.

The proposed project would be primarily operated remotely with a maximum of four maintenance staff working on the site every two-to-three months. As such, vehicle trips generated by the proposed project would be negligible. Therefore, cumulative traffic conditions would be less than cumulatively considerable.

Tribal Cultural Resources

Development of the project site would contribute to a cumulative increase in potential impacts to cultural, tribal cultural, and archaeological resources. However, **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and **TRI-1** through **TRI-8** would reduce the potential impacts to tribal cultural resources associated with development on the project site. As with the proposed project, each related cumulative project would be required to comply with AB 52 and PRC Section 21083.2(i), which addresses accidental discoveries of archaeological sites and resources, including tribal cultural resources, and would be required to implement **Mitigation Measures CUL-1** and **TRI-1** through **TRI-8**. Therefore, any discoveries of tribal cultural resources caused by the project or related projects would be mitigated to a less than significant level. Therefore, the project would have a less than cumulatively considerable impact.

Utilities and Service Systems

Implementation of the proposed project would not substantially increase demand for public utilities given that the proposed project would be primarily operated remotely. Therefore, the proposed project would have less than cumulatively considerable impacts on utilities and service systems.

Wildfire

The project site is not located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Implementation of **Mitigation Measures HAZ-1** and **HAZ-2** and compliance with the California Building Code, Fire Code, and other applicable federal, state, and local regulations would ensure that cumulative hazard conditions are less than cumulatively considerable.

c) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated**. The proposed project does not have the potential to significantly adversely affect humans, either directly or indirectly. Although a number of impacts were identified as having potential to significantly impact humans, with implementation of the identified mitigation measures, and implementation of standard conditions and requirements, these impacts are less than significant. With implementation of **Mitigation Measure GEO-1,** which would reduce impacts associated with earthquake faults and soils hazards, impacts to humans would be less than significant. Therefore, the project does not have any environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Furthermore, this document analyzes long-term and short-term impacts and mitigates all potential impacts to a less than significant level; therefore, the proposed project would not achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals. Any cumulative impacts are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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