INITIAL STUDY and MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FOR

Highway 86 Water Transmission Main, Phase 3 and 4 Project

Prepared for:

Coachella Valley Water District
75-515 Hovley Lane East
Palm Desert, CA 92211
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May 2025

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Acronyms

AB 52	Assembly Bill 52
ACBMI	Agua Caliente Band of Mission Indians
AFY	Acre-feet per Year
ALUCP	Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan
AP Zones	Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones
APE	Area of Potential Effect
AQ	Air Quality
AQMD	Air Quality Management District
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
BGS	Below ground surface
BMP	Best Management Practices
BRTR	*Biological Resources Technical Report*
CDFW	California Department of Fish & Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CGP	Construction General Permit
CH_4	Methane
CO	Carbon monoxide
CO_2	Carbon dioxide
CO_2E	Carbon dioxide equivalent
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CRIR	*Cultural Resources Inventory Report*
CVMSHCP	Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
CVWD CAAP	Coachella Valley Water District Climate Action & Adaption Plan
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substance Control
DWA	Desert Water Agency
ECVAP	East Coachella Valley Area Plan
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EO	Executive Order
EOP	Emergency Operation Plans
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FRA	Federal Regulation Area
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GP	General Plan
GWP	Global warming potential
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
I	Interstate
ICAPCD	Imperial County Air Pollution Control District
ICGP	Imperial County General Plan
IS	Initial Study
LRA	Local Regulation Area
LST	Localized significance threshold
MLD	Most Likely Descendent
MM	Mitigation measure
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration

$MTCO_2E$/year	Metric tonnes per year of carbon dioxide equivalents
N_2O	Nitrous oxide
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
NO_2	Nitrogen dioxide
NO_X	Oxides of nitrogen
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
PM-10	Particulate matter 2.5 to 10 microns in diameter
PM-2.5	Particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter
QSD	Qualified SWPPP Developer
QSP	Qualified SWPPP Practitioner
RCWMD	Riverside County Waste Management District
ROW	Right of Way
RUWMP	2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SO_2	Sulfur dioxide
SR	State Route
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TCR	Tribal cultural resources
TMDCI	Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
VHFHSZ	Very High Fire Severity Zone
VMT	Vehicles miles traveled
VOC	Volatile organic compounds
WEAP	Workers Environmental Awareness Program
WEAT	Workers Environmental Awareness Training

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Title

Highway 86 Water Transmission Main, Phase 3 and 4 Project.

1.2 Lead Agency

Coachella Valley Water District

Lead Agency Contact:

William Patterson, Environmental Supervisor, Environmental Services Department
Phone: (760) 398-2651; Email: WPatterson@cvwd.org

1.3 Purpose of the Document

Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) has prepared this Initial Study (IS) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts related to implementation of the Highway 86 Water Transmission Main, Phase 3 and 4 Project, which entails the replacement of approximately 14.5 miles of existing 16-inch and 18-inch diameter asbestos cement pipe (ACP) and ductile iron pipe (DIP) domestic water transmission mains with approximately 15.4 miles of 24-inch diameter DIP water transmission main to serve the communities of Salton Sea Beach, Desert Shores, Salton City, and unincorporated areas in Riverside and Imperial Counties on the west side of the Salton Sea.

1.4 Scope of this Document

This Initial Study environmental review document has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.), the *CEQA Guidelines* (California Code of Regulations Sections 15000 et seq.), and the Coachella Valley Water District's Local Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (2021 Revision). Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) is the lead agency, and Riverside County, Imperial County and California Department of Transportation are responsible agencies for CEQA purposes.

Section 15063(c) of the State *CEQA Guidelines* lists the following purposes of an Initial Study:

1. *Provide the Lead Agency with information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare an EIR or a negative declaration;*
2. *Enable an applicant or Lead Agency to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts before an EIR is prepared, thereby enabling the project to qualify for a negative declaration;*
3. *Assist in the preparation of an EIR, if one is required;*
4. *Facilitate environmental assessment early in the design of a project;*
5. *Provide documentation of the factual basis for the finding in a negative declaration that a project will not have a significant effect on the environment;*
6. *Eliminate unnecessary EIRs; and*
7. *Determine whether a previously prepared EIR could be used with the project.*

According to Section 15070 (Decision to prepare a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration) of Article 6 (Negative Declaration Process) of the CEQA Guidelines:

A public agency shall prepare or have prepared a proposed negative or mitigated negative declaration for a project subject to CEQA when:

a) The initial study shows that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment, or

b) The initial study identified potentially significant effects, but:

1) Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by, or agreed to by the applicant before a proposed mitigated negative declaration and initial study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, and

2) There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.

The purpose of this Initial Study is to assess the potential for any significant environmental effects associated with the adoption of the Highway 86 Water Transmission Main, Phase 3 and 4 Project (proposed Project) and to assess at a project-level, impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the Project. The assessment provided in Section 4 is based on technical reports and scientific studies prepared for the Project and supplemented with other public information sources, as provided in the list of references.

The discussion and level of analysis are commensurate with the expected magnitude and severity of each potential impact to the environmental resource. Mitigation measures have been developed, where necessary, to reduce potential environmental impacts to a less than significant level. This IS/MND evaluates the potential for environmental impacts to resource areas identified in Appendix G of the 2025 State CEQA Guidelines. The environmental resource areas analyzed in this document include:

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

This IS/MND is organized as follows:

1. Introduction, which provides the context for review along with applicable citation pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines, discusses the purpose and need for the project.

2. Project Description describes the proposed Project.

3. Environmental Checklist Form, which provides information regarding the project location, general plan and zoning designation, surrounding land uses and setting, other public agencies whose approval is required, and a summary of the consultation process completed per Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 (AB 52).

4. Environmental Analysis, which as suggested in Section 15063(d)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines provides an environmental impact assessment consisting of CVWD's checklist and accompanying analysis for responding to the checklist questions. The form is used to evaluate whether or not there are any significant environmental effects associated with implementation of the proposed Project.

5. Federal Cross-Cutting Environmental Regulation Evaluation (CEQA-Plus), addresses the requirements of CEQA-Plus and provides project analysis per the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Clean Water SRF Program Evaluation for Environmental Review and Federal Coordination. The SWRCB acts as the "federal clearinghouse" for review of the document by federal agencies due to federal dollars being assigned to the project though the Environmental Protection Agency-funded SRF program.

6. Alternatives Analysis, presents an analysis of the No Project/No Action Alternative.

7. References, which includes a list of reference sources, the location of reference material used in the preparation of this IS/MND, and identifies those responsible for preparation of the IS/MND and other parties contacted during the preparation of the IS/MND.

1.5 CEQA Process

The environmental review being undertaken for the proposed Project began with the project's proposal and environmental research to analyze and disclose to the public the potential project impacts and efforts to reduce those project impacts. Pursuant to Section 15073 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Draft IS/MND will be circulated for a 30-day period to the State Clearinghouse, responsible agencies, and interested parties for review and comment. Comments received from the public review period for this project and CVWD's responses to each comment will be included in the Response to Comments document.

1.6 Impact Terminology

The scope of the environmental resource areas is listed above in Section 1.4. The level of significance for each resource area uses CEQA terminology as specified below:

- No Impact. No adverse environmental consequences have been identified for the resource or the consequences are negligible or undetectable.
- Less than Significant Impact. Potential adverse environmental consequences have been identified. However, they are not adverse enough to meet the significance threshold criteria for that resource. No mitigation measures are required.

- Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. Adverse environmental consequences that have the potential to be significant but can be reduced to less than significant levels through the application of identified mitigation strategies that have not already been incorporated into the proposed project.
- Potentially Significant. Adverse environmental consequences that have the potential to be significant according to the threshold criteria identified for the resource, even after mitigation strategies are applied and/or an adverse effect that could be significant and for which no mitigation has been identified. If any potentially significant impacts are identified, an EIR must be prepared to meet the requirements of CEQA.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project Overview

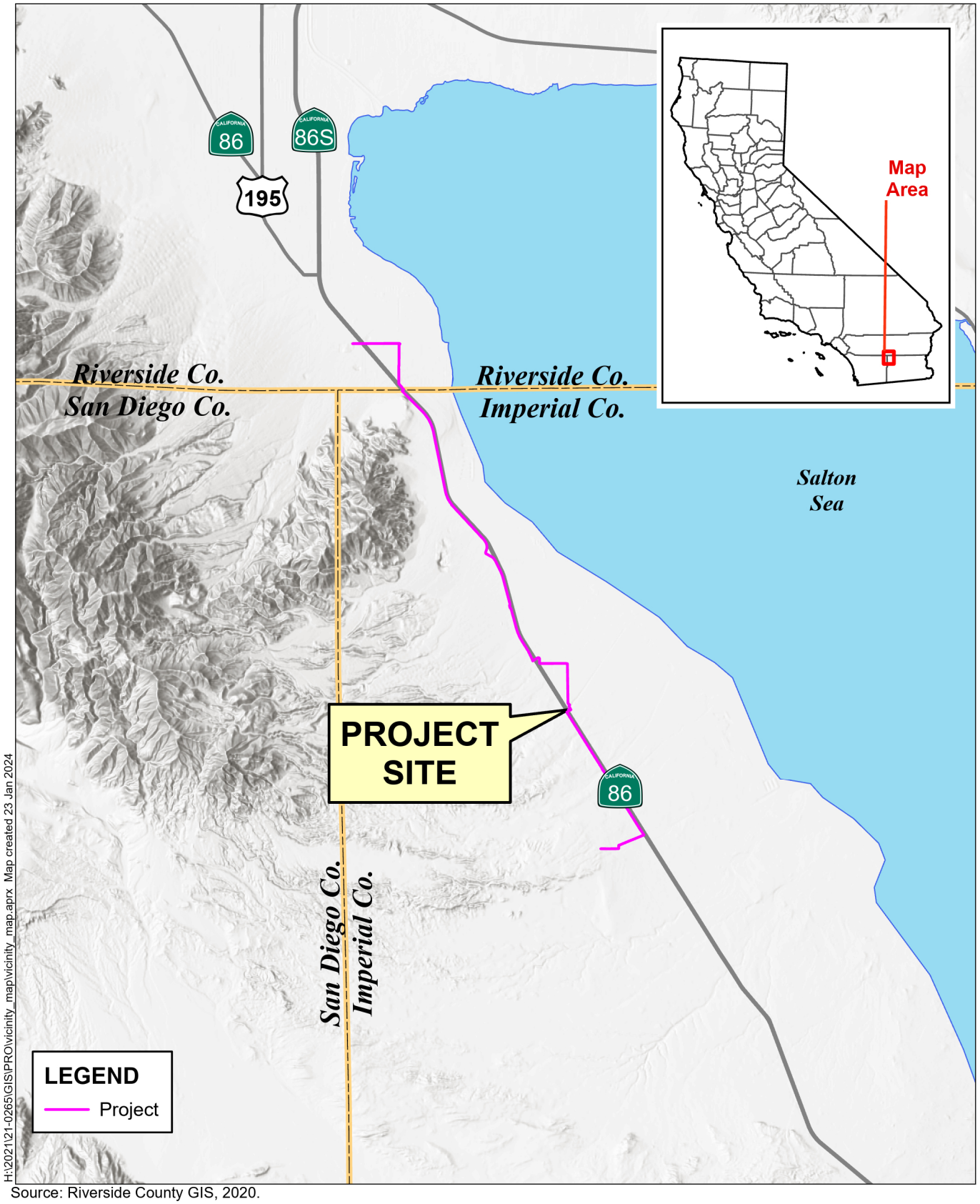
CVWD proposes improvements to the domestic water distribution system serving the communities in the vicinity of Oasis and Salton City, California as part of the Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4 Project (Project) in Riverside County and Imperial County (**Figure 1 –Vicinity Map)**. The proposed Project entails the replacement of approximately 14.5 miles of existing 16-inch and 18-inch diameter asbestos cement pipe (ACP) and ductile iron pipe (DIP) domestic water transmission mains with approximately 15.4 miles of 24-inch diameter DIP water transmission main to serve the communities of Salton Sea Beach, Desert Shores, Salton City, and unincorporated areas in Riverside and Imperial Counties on the west side of the Salton Sea, hereinafter referred to as the Pipeline. Approximately 13 miles of the Pipeline, would be located within Caltrans Right of Way (ROW); approximately two (2) miles of the Pipeline would be located within existing street ROW or newly obtained utility easements across private property outside of Caltrans ROW.

The proposed Pipeline would connect to the existing water distribution system via connection to an existing 30-inch diameter DIP west of Highway 86 at the intersection of Lincoln Street/84th Avenue in Riverside County. The Pipeline Alignment would follow 84th Avenue east for approximately one mile before turning southward where it would run roughly parallel to southbound Highway 86 in Caltrans ROW. Near Postmile 61, approximately one mile south of the Red Earth Casino, the Pipeline Alignment turns east for approximately 0.75, then continues south along Lesser Drive. The Pipeline would then intersect and run parallel to southbound Highway 86 for approximately 3 miles to Golden Avenue where the Pipeline would turn west and terminate at CVWD's existing Reservoir No. 1092 at the end of Diamond Avenue in Salton City in Imperial County. (**Figure 2 – Project Location.)** The proposed Pipeline would connect to existing water mains in Service Road and Golden Avenue.

2.2 Project Construction

Pipeline construction would consist of both open trench and subsurface boring, The Pipeline would be installed with a minimum of 42 inches of earthen cover. Vertical deflections and restrained joints would be installed where the Pipeline crosses other utilities including irrigation mains, agricultural drain lines, storm drain culverts, and buried telephone lines. In-line valves would be installed at half-mile intervals and crosses to accommodate future connections that may be installed. The Pipeline would be placed in polyethylene wrap to protect the Pipeline from mildly corrosive soils. The portions of the Pipeline crossing under Caltrans access-control ROW would be encased within 36-inch diameter steel encasement. Once the new Pipeline is installed, it would be flushed, pressure tested, chlorinated, and dechlorinated. Approximately 3.5 million gallons of water would be used during the process. This water would be discharged to nearby open space or agricultural lands percolate into the ground. Water used during construction would not be discharged into jurisdictional waters. The location of where this water would be discharged would be identified as part of the contract documents per mitigation measure **MM HYD-1**.

The existing ACP pipeline is proposed to be abandoned in place and filled with inert material, such as slurry or sand, to prevent further erosion. However, a small portion of the ACP pipe within Coolridge Springs Road may require removal. All removal, transport, and disposal of any portion of the ACP pipe will be in compliance with all applicable standards for asbestos containing materials and will be properly transported to a landfill that accepts asbestos containing materials.



Source: Riverside County GIS, 2020.

Figure 1 – Vicinity Map

Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phase 3 and Phase 4 Project

0 2 4 6 Miles

ALBERT A. WEBB ASSOCIATES

Sources: Esri imagery, 2024.

0 2,500 5,000 7,500 Feet

Figure 2 - Project Location

Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phase 3 and Phase 4 Project

ALBERT A. WEBB ASSOCIATES

Project construction is anticipated to take approximately 17 months with two construction crews working simultaneously. Equipment to be used includes concrete/industrial saws, excavators, tractors, loaders, backhoes, pavers, rollers, and a drill rig. All Pipeline improvements would be completed and operational prior to taking the existing pipeline out of service prevent any delay or disruption in service.

Jack-and-bore or other trenchless construction methods would be used to cross Highway 86 and the following drainages (listed from north to south) along the Pipeline Alignment:

Drainage Name	Caltrans Mile Post[1]	Drainage Name	Caltrans Mile Post[1]
• Cophy Ditch	1.38	• Travertine Palms Wash	0.09
• Perone Ditch	0.36	• Dinal Ditch)	0.19
• Travertine Ditch	0.09	• Shoreline Ditch	65.68
• Coolidge Springs	65.36	• Zanthe Ditch	65.21
• Parosa Ditch	65.00	• Romney Ditch	64.83
• Ambig Ditch	64.75	• Matis Ditch	64.62
• Calyx Ditch	64.34	• Godeta Ditch	64.10
• Farinosa Drainage	63.79	• Encilia Ditch	63.50
• Incienso Ditch	63.35	• Floris Ditch	63.22
• Folius Ditch	63.14	• Torif Ditch	62.99
• Bexar Ditch	62.65	• Daroca Ditch	63.32
• Tonalee Ditch	62.20	• Talofa Ditch	61.81
• Electra Ditch	61.70	• Ibycus Wash)	61.55
• Verbena Wash	61.37	• Aster Wash	61.23
• Virgo Wash	60.90	• Valerie Wash Tributary	60.58
• Tesla Wash Tributaries	60.47	• Gravel Wash?	59.78
• Coral Wash	59.18	• Palm Wash	58.28
• Anza Ditch	57.82	• Verde Wash	57.69
• Iberia Wash at Service Road	56.60	• Iberia Wash at Golden Road	56.59

Source:

1. *California Log of Bridges on State Highways, District 11,* available at https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/maintenance/documents/f0009158-logd11-a11y.pdf and *California Log of Bridges on State Highways, District 11,* available https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/maintenance/documents/f0009155-logd08-a11y.pdf.

The locations of these washes are shown on **Figure 8 – Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes**.

2.3 Purpose and Need

CVWD's service area covers approximately 1,000 square miles from the San Gorgonio Pass to the Salton Sea, mostly within the Coachella Valley, in Riverside County, California. CVWD's service area extends into small portions of Imperial and San Diego counties. CVWD meets the water-related needs of more than 110,000 homes and businesses and is the largest provider of drinking water in the Coachella Valley. It operates 92 active domestic wells with a total well capacity of 236 million gallons per day and serves a population of 270,000 from Cathedral City to the Salton Sea. CVWD delivers 87,959 acre-feet of water per year to its 1,000 square mile service area, from Sky Valley to Salton Sea communities. Domestic water supplies come from the Coachella Valley aquifer and is pumped from wells and stored until needed in more than 63 distribution reservoirs with a storage capacity of 43.2 million gallons per day. The water is delivered via a network of nearly 2,015 miles of distribution piping. (CVWD-A.)

The existing 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP transmission mains were constructed in the early 1960s and 1990s, respectively. Asbestos-cement pipes have a life expectancy of approximately 50–70 years and the oldest segments of the existing transmission main is over 60 years old. The existing pipeline is undersized and does not have the capacity to transmit effectively the amount of water that CVWD needs in order to serve existing residents and planned future growth. CVWD has also recorded numerous leaks and failures along this transmission main, which indicates, at minimum, the existing water pipeline is in need of maintenance/replacement to eliminate and reduce pipeline failures and leaks in order to continue to provide domestic water service to the existing approximately 2,760 services, which serves approximately 7,400 residents. Because the existing transmission main is undersized and near the end of its useful life, replacement with a new, larger diameter pipeline is preferable to continuing to maintain and repair an undersized and outdated facility.

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3. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. **Project title:** Highway 86 Water Transmission Main, Phase 3 and 4 Project
2. **Lead Agency name and address:**
   Coachella Valley Water District
   75-515 Hovley Lane East
   Palm Desert, CA 92211
   (760) 398-2651

   Responsible Agency name and address:
   (Per CEQA Guidelines § 15381, "Responsible Agency" means a public agency which proposes to carry out or approve a project, for which a Lead Agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR or Negative Declaration. For the purposes of CEQA, the term "Responsible Agency" includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency which have discretionary approval power over the project.)

   Riverside County Planning Department
   77588 El Duna Court Suite H
   Palm Desert, CA 92211
   (760) 863-8277

   Imperial County Planning & Development Services 801 Main Street
   El Centro, CA 92243
   (442) 265-1736

   California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 11
   4050 Taylor Street
   San Diego, CA 92110
   (619) 688-6699

   Cooperating Federal Agencies
   Bureau of Indian Affairs

3. **Contact person email address and phone number:**
   William Patterson, Environmental Supervisor, Environmental Services Department
   WPatterson@cvwd.org
   (760) 398-2651

4. **Project location:**
   The Project includes facilities within unincorporated Riverside County and unincorporated Imperial County. The Project is located within Township 8 South, Range 9 East, Sections 31, 32, and 33; Township 9 South, Range 9 East, Sections 4, 5, 9, 21, 22, 27, 34, 35, and 36; Township 10 South, Range 9 East, Sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 16, and 25; and Township 10 South, Range 10 East, Sections 18, 19, and 30, San Bernardino Base and Meridian. Refer to **Section 2 – Project Description** and **Figure 2 – Project Location** and **Figure 3 – USGS Map**.

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Sources: ESRI / USGS 2011, Quads: OASIS, SEVENTEEN PALMS, TRUCKHAVEN.

0 4,000 8,000 12,000 Feet

Figure 3 - USGS Map

Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phase 3 and Phase 4 Project

ALBERT A. WEBB ASSOCIATES

5. Project sponsor's name and address:

Coachella Valley Water District
75-515 Hovley Lane East
Palm Desert, CA 92211
(760) 398-2651

6. General Plan Land Use Designation:

The Pipeline Alignment is mostly located within road and Highway 86 ROW , which are not always assigned a land use designation. Land use designations of properties within and adjacent to the Project Alignment are shown on **Figure 4 – General Plan Land Use Designations** and identified in **Table A** below.

Table A – General Plan Land Use Designations

General Plan Land Use Designation	Project Alignment is within or adjacent to this land use designation	Portion of the Project Alignment within Caltrans ROW is within or adjacent to this land use designation
Unincorporated Riverside County		
Commercial Retail (CR)	Yes	No
Commercial Tourist (CT)	Yes	No
High Density Residential (HDR)	Yes	No
Highest Density Residential (HHDR)	Yes	Yes
Medium High Density Residential (MHDR)	Yes	No
Mixed Use Area (MUA)	Yes	No
Indian Lands	Yes	Yes
Water (W)	Yes	Yes
Unincorporated Imperial County		
Recreation/Open Space	Yes	Yes
Urban Area	Yes	Yes
Specific Plan Area (SPA)	Yes	Yes

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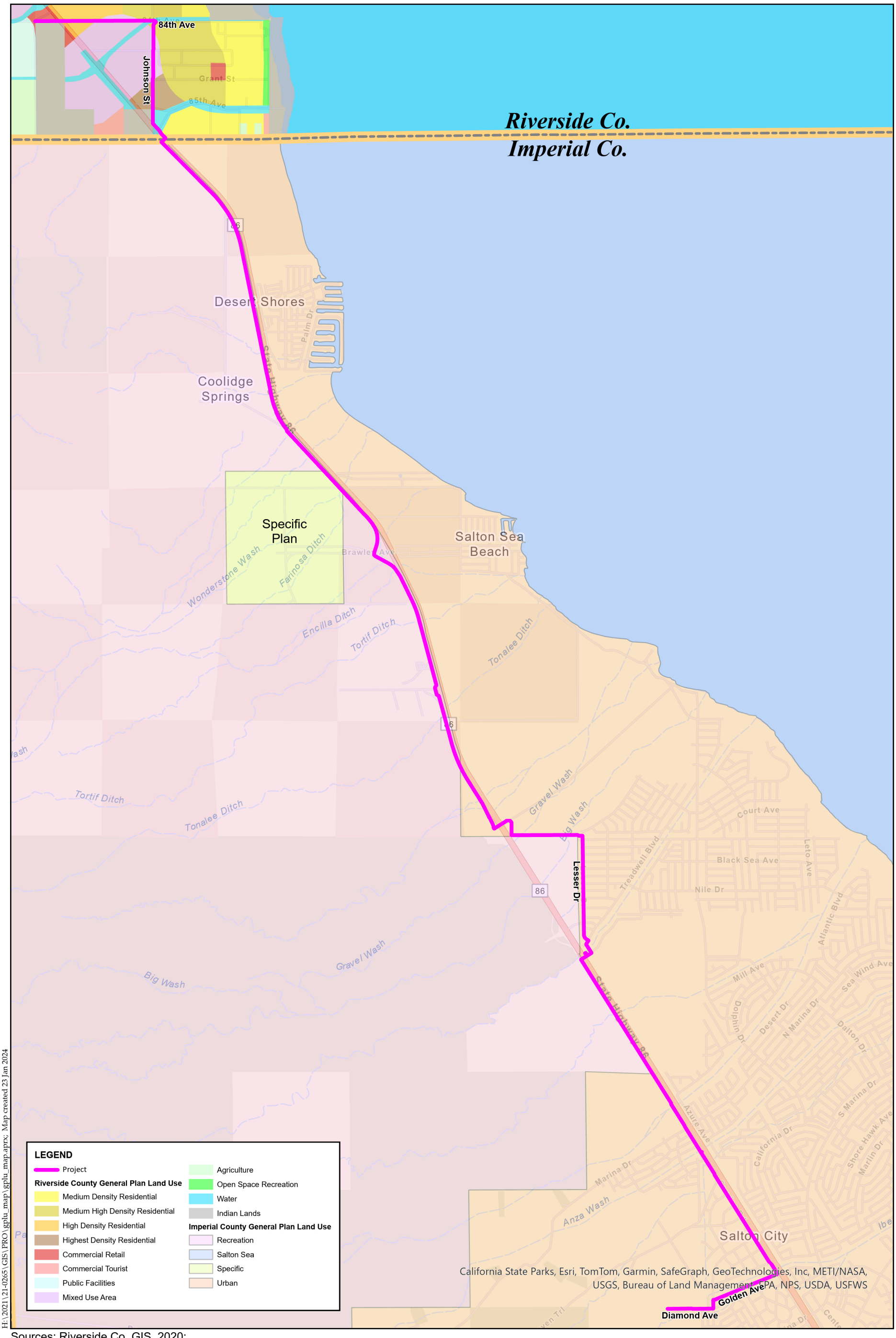

Sources: Riverside Co. GIS, 2020;
Imperial Co. GIS, 2018.

0 1 2 3 Miles

Figure 4 - General Plan Land Use Designations

Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phase 3 and Phase 4 Project

ALBERT A. WEBB ASSOCIATES

7. Zoning:

The Project would be located mostly within road and Hwy 86 ROW that are not assigned zoning designations. Zoning of properties adjacent to the Project Alignment are shown on **Figure 5 – Zoning Designations** and listed in **Table B** below by jurisdiction.

Table B – Zoning Designations

Zoning Designation	Project Alignment is within or adjacent to this zoning designation	Portion of the Project Alignment within Caltrans ROW is within or adjacent to this zoning designation
Unincorporated Riverside County		
S-P – Specific Plan	Yes	Yes
W-2 – Controlled Development Area	Yes	Yes
Unincorporated Imperial County		
C-1 – Light Commercial Area	Yes	Yes
C-2 – Medium Commercial Area	Yes	No
M-1 – Light Industrial Area	Yes	Yes
M-2 – Medium Industrial Area	Yes	No
NAT_AMER – Native American Cultural Area	Yes	Yes
R-1 – Low Density Residential Area	Yes	Yes
R-2 – Medium Density Residential Area	Yes	No
R-3 – Medium High Density Residential Area	Yes	No
R-4 – Manufactured Home Area/Subdivision	Yes	No
S-1 – Open Space/Residential	Yes	No
S-2 – Open Space/Preservation	Yes	Yes
S-2-PE – Open Space/Preservation-Pre-Existing Allowed/Restricted	Yes	Yes

8. Project Description:

The Project is the construction and operation of an approximately 15.4 mile new 24-inch diameter DIP water transmission main (Pipeline) to replace aging 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP pipelines. Approximately 13.4 miles of the Pipeline is located within Caltrans ROW adjacent to Highway 86 with the remaining 5 miles located within public street ROWs and utility easements across private property. Refer to **Section 2 – Project Description** for additional details.

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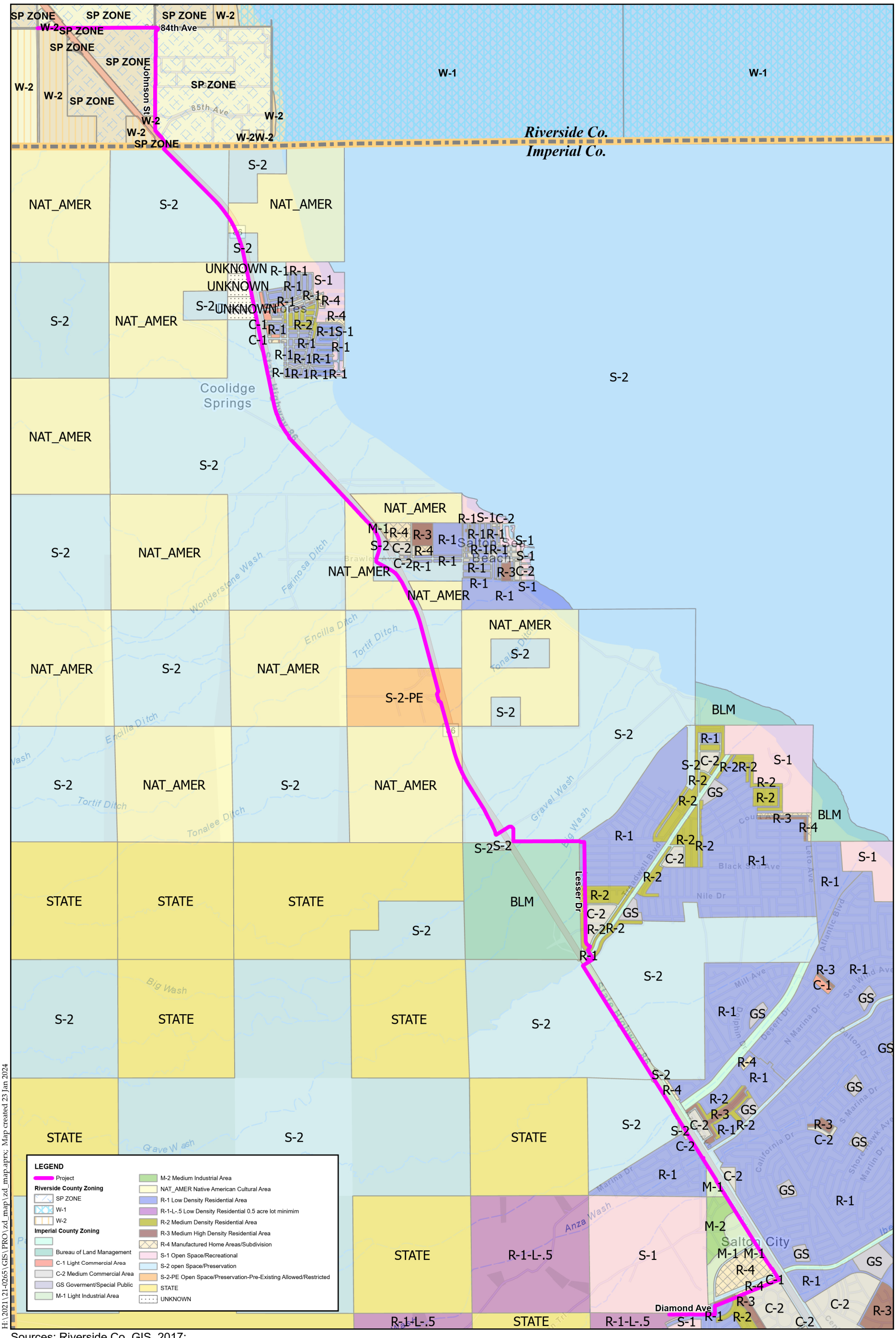

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Sources: Riverside Co. GIS, 2017;
Imperial Co. GIS, 2016.

0 5,000 10,000 15,000 Feet

Figure 5 - Zoning Designations

Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phase 3 and Phase 4 Project

ALBERT A. WEBB ASSOCIATES

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:

Regionally the Project is located within the Coachella Valley, west of the Salton Sea and roughly adjacent to southbound Highway 86. The Project is located within the Sonoran Desert Floristic Province. Existing land uses adjacent to the Project Alignment include vacant land, the Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area, date palm orchards, residential, and commercial uses.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

- Federal Agencies
  - Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA): Easement for public pipeline installation.

- State Agencies
  - California Department of Transportation (Caltrans): Encroachment permit for construction within Caltrans ROW
  - State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water: Apply for an amendment to the Domestic Water Supply Permit for Public Water System CA3310001
  - California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW): Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement if the Project will impact waters under the jurisdiction of the State
  - State Water Resources Control Board: NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges associated with Construction Activities

- Regional Agencies
  - Riverside County: Encroachment Permit for use of public ROW
  - Imperial County: Encroachment Permit for use of public ROW
  - Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board: General Permit for Construction Discharges
  - Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board: Section 401 Water Quality Certification/ Waste Discharge requirement if the project will impact jurisdictional Waters of the State
  - Imperial County Air Pollution Control District: Dust Control Plan per Regulation VIII (Rules 800-805)
  - South Coast Air Quality Management District: Dust Management Plan

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, has consultation begun?1

CVWD provided "Notification of Tribal Consultation Opportunity" on March 27, 2023 pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) to Tribes that have previously requested such a notice from CVWD. Notification was sent to seven (7) Tribes: Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (ACBMI), Augustine Band of Cahuilla

[1] Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

Indians, Cabazon Band of Mission Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, and Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians.

In a letter dated April 5, 2023, the ACBCI stated that the Project area was not located within the ACBCI Traditional Use Area. ACBMI deferred to the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians and stated the April 5, 2023 letter concluded their consultation efforts. As of May 18, 2023, no responses were received from any of the other six (6) notified tribes and CVWD has concluded the consultation process.

TMDCI sent an email to CVWD on March 14, 2024 requesting to consult on the Project. As the March 14, 2024, response was received more than 30 days after the March 27, 2023 initial consultation letter notification was sent, formal consultation under AB-52 is not triggered; however, CVWD will continue to coordinate with the TMDCI outside of the formal AB 52 process. As of May 20, 2024, the TMDCI have not requested designation of a Tribal Cultural Landscape, TCR, or Traditional Cultural Property.

Refer to the discussions in threshold 3.5, Cultural Resources and threshold 3.18, Tribal Cultural Resources for additional information.

3.1 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this Project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages. With adherence to the mitigation program identified within this IS/MND, the potentially significant impacts would be reduced or minimized to a less than significant level.

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

3.2 Evaluation of Environmental Impacts:

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

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

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

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

5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). Earlier analyses are discussed below:

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

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

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

6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts *(e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances)*. Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated. A source list should be attached and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

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

8) The explanation of each issue should identify:

a. the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and

the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

3.3 Determination

(TO BE COMPLETED BY THE LEAD AGENCY)

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 the mitigation measures described on an attached sheet have been added to the project. 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.

Prepared by	_____	_____
	Environmental Services Department Albert A. WEBB Associates	Date
Reviewed by:	_____	_____
	Carlos Huerta Environmental Resources Analyst Coachella Valley Water District	Date
Reviewed by	_____	_____
	William Patterson Environmental Services Program Supervisor Coachella Valley Water District	Date
Submitted by:	_____	_____
	Joanne Le Director of Environmental Services Coachella Valley Water District	Date
Approved by:	_____	_____
	Sylvia Bermudez Clerk of the Board Coachella Valley Water District	Date

4. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

4.1 AESTHETICS.	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099**,** Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from public accessible vantage points.) 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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(Sources: Caltrans Scenic Highways, Project Description, ICGPEIR, Google Earth, CORGP)

4.1a Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less than significant impact. A scenic vista is a distant and picturesque view of a natural landscape. Both Riverside and Imperial Counties have a wide array of unique desertscape. On a clear day there are views of the Santa Rosa and Vallecito mountains towards the west, the Superstition mountains to the southwest and Chocolate mountains and Salton Sea to the east. Public views of these mountains would not be altered as the Project would be located on the valley floor between these mountains, which are visible from different vantage points throughout the Project Alignment. While both Counties consider desert areas, mountains, and hillsides as scenic visual resources (ICGPEIR, pp. III-201 – III-204, CORGP, pp. OS-52 – OS-53) the proposed Project would not alter these views upon Project completion because the Project would be located underground within existing paved road ROWs and utility easements and the ground surface returned to its existing condition. In addition, all appurtenant features that are required with the Pipeline would also be located at or below grade, including manholes, air valves, and drains.

Project construction may create a temporary aesthetic nuisance for motorists and residents in proximity to the Pipeline segment being constructed. Exposed surfaces, construction debris, and construction equipment may temporarily impact the aesthetic quality of the immediate areas. Project construction would be temporary, and the construction equipment would move as construction proceeds along the Pipeline Alignment. Because the Pipeline and appurtenant structures would be at or below grade and construction impacts are temporary, impacts regarding a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista associated with the Project are less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: The approximately 13 miles of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would be located underground and the ground surface returned to its original condition. Construction within Caltrans ROW would be temporary and the construction equipment would move as construction proceeds along the Pipeline Alignment. Construction equipment would move along the portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW as construction ceases and be removed from Caltrans ROW

when construction ceases. For these reasons, impacts associated with construction and operation of the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW regarding the creation of a substantial adverse impact on a scenic vista would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

4.1b Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

No impact. The Project is not located within or along a state designated or state eligible scenic highway. There are two state eligible scenic highways located in the general vicinity of the Project site. State Route 78 (SR-78), which is located approximately 11.43 miles south of the Project site, and SR-111, which is located approximately 13 miles east of the existing CVWD 1092 Reservoir Site, which is part of the Project. (Caltrans Scenic Highways, Google Earth.) Because the Project site is not within or adjacent to a state designated or state eligible scenic highway there would be no impact with regard to substantially damaging scenic resources within a state scenic highway and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: Because Highway 86 is not a state-designated or state-eligible scenic highway, there would be no impacts regarding substantial damage to scenic resources within a state scenic highway No mitigation is required.

4.1c In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from public accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Less than significant impact. The Project Alignment is not located within an urbanized area as defined by CEQA Statue Section 21071. Therefore, this discussion is regarding whether the Project would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings.

The Project traverses through unincorporated areas and communities of both Riverside and Imperial Counties. Since the majority of the Pipeline Alignment is located within public street ROWs, the construction equipment would be visible during Project construction. As discussed in the response to threshold 4.1a. the Pipeline and appurtenant facilities would be located underground and once construction is complete the ground surface would be returned to its previous condition. For these reasons, the proposed Project would not substantially degrade the visual character of its alignment or surrounding area, and impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: The entirety of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW would be visible from Highway 86 and construction equipment would be visible from Highway 86 during construction. However, as discussed in the response to threshold 4.1a, because this portion of the Pipeline would be located underground and the ground surface returned to its previous condition, the portion of the proposed Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would not substantially degrade the visual character of views from Highway 86. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

4.1d Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less than significant impact. Temporary nighttime lighting may be used for security purposes during the construction phase. However, any security lighting would be directed downward and not onto adjacent properties. Once construction is complete the proposed Pipeline would be underground. Thus Project operation would not create a new source of light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in

the area. Because any temporary lighting would be directed downward and not onto adjacent properties, such lighting would not adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Construction of the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW may include the use of temporary nighttime lighting for security purposes. Any security lighting used would be directed downward and not onto adjacent properties and comply with conditions set forth in the Caltrans encroachment permit. Once construction is complete the portion of the proposed Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would be underground. Thus operation of the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would not create a new source of light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Because any temporary lighting would be directed downward and not onto adjacent properties, such lighting would not adversely affect daytime or nighttime views within Caltrans ROW or the surrounding area. For these reasons, impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Aesthetics Mitigation Measures

Aesthetic impacts are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

Aesthetics Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

Aesthetic impacts are less than significant for the portions of the Project within Caltrans ROW; therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.2 AGRICULTURAL and FORESTRY RESOURCES.	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Source: FMMP, Williamson Act Map, ICGP, ICGPEIR, CORG, Project Description)

4.2a Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

The portions of the Pipeline Alignment within Imperial County are designated by the California Department of Conservation as Other Land. (See **Figure 6 – Important Farmland.**) Portions of the Pipeline within Riverside County traverse through land designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Other Land as shown below in **Table C**.

Table C – Designated Farmland within Riverside County

Farmland Designation	Entire Project Disturbance Area (in acres)	Portion of Project Disturbance Area Outside of Caltrans ROW (in acres)	Portion of Project Disturbance Area Within Caltrans ROW
Prime Farmland	3.1	3.1	0.0
Unique Farmland	1.9	1.6	0.3
Other Land	1.5	1.0	0.5
Total Acres	6.5	5.7	0.8

Less than significant impact. As shown above in **Table C**, there is a total of 5.0 acres of Farmland (3.1 acres of Prime Farmland and 1.9 acres of Unique Farmland) within the Project's disturbance area. Although the Project Alignment would be constructed within or adjacent to Farmland, the Pipeline would be constructed underground within Caltrans or other road ROWs, and utility easements and the ground surface would be restored to its pre-Project condition. The proposed Project would not convert Farmland to a non-agricultural use. Therefore, impacts regarding the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural uses would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: As shown in **Table C – Designated Farmland within Riverside County**, there is a total of 0.3 acres of Unique Farmland within the portion of the Project's disturbance area in Caltrans ROW. Although the portion of the Project Alignment within Caltrans ROW would be constructed underground within Caltrans ROW and the ground surface would be restored to its pre-Project condition, Project implementation within Caltrans ROW would not convert Farmland to a non-agricultural use. Therefore, impacts regarding the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural uses within Caltrans ROW would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

4.2b Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

Agriculture production is a major contributor to both Riverside County's and Imperial County's economy. (ICGP, p. AE-3, CORGP, p. OS-16.) Approximately 20 percent of land within Imperial County is used for agricultural purposes, however as shown in *Figure 1 Existing Agricultural Land in Imperial County* of the Agricultural Element of the Imperial County General Plan (ICGP) agricultural areas are mostly located in the central areas known as Imperial Valley, Bard Valley and Palo Verde Valley. (ICGP, pp. AE-4 – AE-6.) In 2010, Imperial County ceased to renew Williamson Act contracts and is no longer approving any additional contracts. In December 2019 the final Williamson Act contract expired, leaving Imperial County as the only agricultural county in the State of California to not have the Williamson Act. (BOS.)

No impact. There are no Williamson Act contracted lands within the portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Riverside County. As shown on **Figure 5 – Zoning Designation** and summarized in **Table B – Zoning Designations**, there is no agriculturally zoned property along or adjacent to the Pipeline Alignment. For the above reasons, the Project would not conflict with existing zoning for an agricultural use or a Williamson Act Contract. There will be no impact in this regard and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: There are no Williamson Act contracted lands within or adjacent to the portions of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW. As shown on **Figure 5 – Zoning Designation** and summarized in **Table B – Zoning Designations**, there is no agriculturally zoned property along or adjacent to the portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW. For the above reasons, the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would not conflict with existing zoning for an agricultural use or a Williamson Act Contract. There will be no impact in this regard and no mitigation is required.

4.2c 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))?

Forest land, as defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) section 12220(g) is land that can support 10 percent of native tree cover of any species under natural conditions and that allows for the management of one or more forest resources. Timberland, as defined in PRC section 4526, means land other than land owned by the federal government and land designated as experimental forest land, which is capable of growing a crop of trees for any commercial species, including Christmas trees.

No impact. The Project Alignment does not traverse any areas zoned as forest land, timberland or for Timber Production within Riverside County or Imperial County as shown in **Table B – Zoning Designations** and on **Figure 5 – Zoning Designations**. Therefore, since the Project Alignment is not located within or within proximity to any existing areas zoned for forest land, timberland, and or Timberland Production, there would be no impact regarding conflicts with existing zoning for these uses. No mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: As shown in **Table B – Zoning Designations**. the portion of the Project Alignment within Caltrans ROW does not traverse any areas zoned as forest land, timberland or for Timber Production within Riverside County or Imperial County. Since the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW is not located within or within proximity to any existing areas zoned for forest land, timberland, and or Timberland Production, there would be no impact regarding conflicts with existing zoning within Caltrans ROW. No mitigation is required.

4.2d Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No impact. As stated in the response to threshold 3.2c, there is no forest land within or in close proximity to the Project Alignment. Because Project implementation would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land; there would be no impact in this regard and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: As stated in the response to threshold 4.2c, there is no forest land within or in close proximity to the portion of the Project Alignment within Caltrans ROW. Because Project implementation would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land within Caltrans ROW; there would be no impact in this regard and no mitigation is required.

4.2e Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No impact. The proposed Project consists of a water transmission main that would be constructed underground. The Project would not result in land use changes and would therefore not convert Farmland to a non-agricultural use. As stated in the response to threshold 4.2d, there is no forest land within the Pipeline Alignment; therefore, Project implementation would not convert forest land to a non-forest use. For these

reasons, there would be no impacts regarding changes in the existing environment that would result in the conversion of Farmland or forest land to non-agricultural or non-forest uses. No mitigation is required.

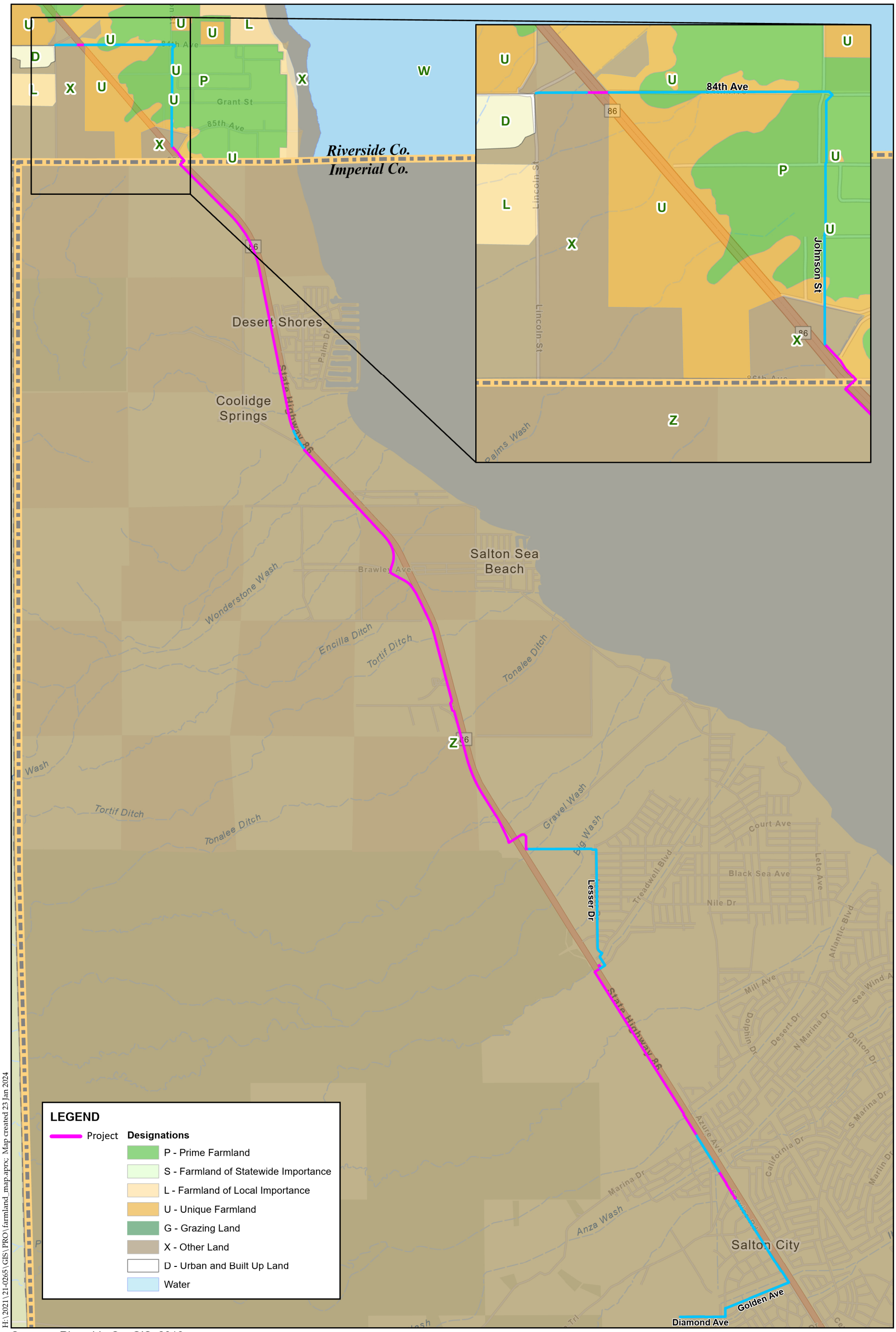
Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW does not entail land use changes and would therefore not convert Farmland to a non-agricultural use. As stated in the response to threshold 4.2d, there is no forest land within the portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW; therefore, Project implementation would not convert forest land to a non-forest use in Caltrans ROW. For these reasons, there would be no impacts regarding changes in the existing environment which would result in the conversion of Farmland or forest land to non-agricultural or non-forest uses within Caltrans ROW. No mitigation is required.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources Mitigation Measures

Impacts to agricultural and forestry resources are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

Impacts to agricultural and forestry resources within Caltrans ROW are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.



H:\2021\21-0265\GIS\PRO\farmland_map.aprx; Map created 23 Jan 2024

Sources: Riverside Co. GIS, 2018;
Imperial Co. GIS, 2018.

Figure 6 - Important Farmland

Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phase 3 and Phase 4 Project

ALBERT A. WEBB ASSOCIATES

4.3 AIR QUALITY	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(Sources: Appendix A, CARB 2024, ICAPCD 2017, ICAPCD 2018, SCAQMD 1993, SCAQMD 2003, SCAQMD 2022, Project Description)

4.3a Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

The Project is located in the Salton Sea Air Basin (Basin) and extends through the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) jurisdictions. The SCAQMD and ICAPCD prepare an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), respectively, for the Basin. The SCAQMD and ICAPCD set forth a comprehensive program that would lead the Basin into compliance with all federal and state air quality standards. The SCAQMD AQMP's and the ICAPCD air quality plans include control measures and related emission reduction estimates that are based upon emissions projections for a future development scenario derived from land use, population, and employment characteristics defined in consultation with local governments. Accordingly, if a project demonstrates compliance with local land use plans and/or population projections, then the AQMP would have taken into account such uses when it was developed. The SCAQMD is required to update its plans on a regular basis; the SCAQMD 2022 AQMP is the most recent plan. (SCAQMD 2022.) ICAPCD is required to develop an air quality plan for nonattainment criteria pollutants, and most recently adopted an Ozone State Implementation Plan (SIP) in 2017 (ICAPCD 2017) and an Annual Particulate Matter Less than 2.5 Microns in Diameter State Implementation Plan in 2018 (ICAPCD 2018.)

No impact. The Project Alignment would not conflict with any land use plan of the jurisdictions along the alignment by virtue of its underground nature and location in proximity to roadways. Since the Project would not in and of itself result in any changes to the existing land use patterns in the Project area, the proposed Project does not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the SCAQMD AQMP nor the ICAPCD air quality plans, and no impacts would occur. No mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: As with the proposed Project, because the Project would not in and of itself result in any changes to the existing land use patterns in the Project area, there would be no impact with regard to conflicting or obstructing the implementation of applicable air quality plans. No mitigation is required.

4.3b 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?

The portion of the Basin within which the proposed Project Alignment is located is designated as a non-attainment area for ozone (both Riverside County and Imperial County) and particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM-10) (Riverside County only) under the State standards and for ozone (both Riverside

and Imperial County) , PM-10 (Riverside County only), and PM-2.5 (Imperial County only) under Federal standards. (CARB 2024.) The SCAQMD considers the thresholds for project-specific impacts and cumulative impacts to be the same. (SCAQMD 2003.) Therefore, projects that exceed project-specific significance thresholds are considered by SCAQMD to be cumulatively considerable. Based on SCAQMD's regulatory jurisdiction over regional air quality in Riverside County, it is reasonable to rely on an air district's thresholds to determine whether there is a cumulative air quality impact.

Air quality impacts can be described in short- and long-term perspectives. Short-term impacts are anticipated to occur during site preparation and Project construction and consist of fugitive dust and other particulate matter, as well as exhaust emissions generated by construction-related vehicles. Long-term air quality impacts would occur once the Project is in operation.

All active operations (any activity capable of generating fugitive dust, including, but not limited to, earth-moving activities, construction/demolition activities, disturbed surface area, or heavy- and light-duty vehicular movement) within the Basin would be required to comply with existing SCAQMD rules for the reduction of fugitive dust emissions, which is established in SCAQMD Rule 403. Compliance with this rule would be achieved through application of standard best management practices in construction and operation activities, such as the application of water or chemical stabilizers to disturbed soils, reducing haul road dust by application of water, covering haul vehicles, restricting vehicle speeds on unpaved roads to 15 mph, sweeping loose dirt from paved site access roadways, cessation of construction activity when winds exceed 25 mph and establishing a permanent, stabilizing ground cover on finished sites. In addition, SCAQMD Rule 403.1 requires specific measures for reducing fugitive dust in the Coachella Valley. Compliance with this regulation includes having an approved Fugitive Dust Control Plan for activities disturbing more than 5,000 square feet, maintenance of a daily dust control log on-site, installation of construction project signage with contact information for complaints, and the presence of an environmental observer for construction sites larger than 50 acres.

The portion of the Project Alignment within ICAPCD jurisdiction will adhere to the procedures established by ICAPCD Regulation VIII for fugitive dust control, which includes Rules 800 through 805. Regulation VIII mandates Reasonably Available Control Measures during construction and operation to reduce particulate matter. Examples include water or chemical soil stabilizers, speed reduction for construction vehicles, covering haul vehicles, and Track-Out Prevention devices. Rule 800 addresses PM-10 emissions from anthropogenic fugitive dust sources. Rules 801, 802, 803, 804, and 805 set opacity limits, require dust management plans, and limit dust emissions from various sources.

Pursuant to the ICAPCD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* (ICAPCD 2017), regardless of the size of the project, standard measures for construction equipment and fugitive PM-10 must be implemented at all construction sites. The implementation of discretionary mitigation measures, as listed in Section 7.1 of the handbook, apply to those construction sites that are 5 acres or more for non-residential developments. The footprint for the Project Alignment is approximately 45 acres. Standard and discretionary measures from the ICAPCD handbook include:

Standard Measures for Fugitive PM-10 Control:

a. All disturbed areas, including bulk material storage which is not being actively utilized, shall be effectively stabilized and visible emissions shall be limited to no greater than 20 percent opacity for dust emissions by using water, chemical stabilizers, dust suppressants, tarps or other suitable material such as vegetative ground cover.

b. All on-site and off-site unpaved roads will be effectively stabilized and visible emissions shall be limited to no greater than 20 percent opacity for dust emissions by paving, chemical stabilizers, dust suppressants and/or watering.

c. All unpaved traffic areas one acre or more with 75 or more average vehicle trips per day will be effectively stabilized and visible emission shall be limited to no greater than 20 percent opacity for dust emissions by paving, chemical stabilizers, dust suppressants and/or watering.

d. The transport of bulk materials shall be completely covered unless six inches of freeboard space from the top of the container is maintained with no spillage and loss of bulk material. In addition, the cargo compartment of all haul trucks is to be cleaned and/or washed at delivery site after removal of bulk material.

e. All track-out or carry-out will be cleaned at the end of each workday or immediately when mud or dirt extends a cumulative distance of 50 linear feet or more onto a paved road within an urban area.

f. Movement of bulk material handling or transfer shall be stabilized prior to handling or at points of transfer with application of sufficient water, chemical stabilizers or by sheltering or enclosing the operation and transfer line.

g. The construction of any new unpaved road is prohibited within any area with a population of 500 or more unless the road meets the definition of a temporary unpaved road. Any temporary unpaved road shall be effectively stabilized and visible emissions shall be limited to no greater than 20 percent opacity for dust emission by paving, chemical stabilizers, dust suppressants and/or watering.

Discretionary Measures for Fugitive PM-10 Control:

a. Water exposed soil with adequate frequency for continued moist soil.

b. Replace ground cover in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.

c. Automatic sprinkler system installed on all soil piles.

d. Vehicle speed for all construction vehicles shall not exceed 15 mph on any unpaved surface at the construction site.

e. Develop a trip reduction plan to achieve a 1.5 average vehicle ridership for construction employees.

f. Implement a shuttle service to and from retail services and food establishments during lunch hours.

Standard Measures for Construction Combustion Equipment:

a. Use of alternative fueled or catalyst equipped diesel construction equipment, including all off-road and portable diesel-powered equipment.

b. Minimize idling time either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the time of idling to five minutes as a maximum.

c. Limit, to the extent feasible, the hours of operation of heavy-duty equipment and/or the amount of equipment in use.

d. Replace fossil fueled equipment with electrically driven equivalents (provided they are not run via a portable generator set).

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Air quality impacts from the Project were evaluated in the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas (AQ/GHG) Analysis*, provided in Appendix A.

As described above, construction of the Project would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403 and 403.1 for fugitive dust in Riverside County, as well as the ICAPCD Rules 801, 802, 803, 804, and 805 for fugitive dust in Imperial County.

Short-term emissions from Project construction were evaluated using the CalEEMod program. Operational emissions related to the water transmission main would be primarily from the infrequent visits by vehicles driven by CVWD operations and maintenance personnel and are considered negligible; therefore, only short-term impacts were evaluated.

The estimated construction period for the proposed Project is approximately one year and 17 months (see the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas (AQ/GHG) Analysis* for further details. The results of the analysis of short-term construction emissions from each phase are presented in **Table D – Unmitigated Maximum Daily Construction Emissions**.

Table D – Unmitigated Maximum Daily Construction Emissions

Activity	Peak Daily Emissions (lb/day)					
	VOC	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM-10	PM-2.5
Pipeline Trenching/Installation 2023	**1.49**	**13.64**	**19.73**	**0.04**	**29.85**	**3.57**
Pipeline Trenching/Installation 2024	1.41	12.84	19.69	0.04	29.79	3.50
Pipeline Trenching/Installation 2025	1.32	11.94	19.60	0.04	29.71	3.43
Jack and Bore 2024	**1.46**	**13.11**	**19.66**	**0.04**	**22.21**	**2.74**
Pipeline Paving 2025	1.02	5.43	7.98	0.02	15.19	1.74
Maximum[1]	**2.87**	**25.95**	**39.33**	**0.08**	**51.99**	**6.24**
SCAQMD Daily Construction Thresholds	**75**	**100**	**550**	**150**	**150**	**55**
ICAPCD Threshold	**75**	**100**	**550**	**--**	**150**	**--**
Exceeds Threshold?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Source: Appendix A, Table 2

Note:

[1] Maximum emissions are the greater of either Pipeline Trenching/Installation 2023, the sum of Pipeline Trenching/Installation 2024 and Jack and Bore 2024, Pipeline Trenching/Installation 2025, or Paving 2025 since some activities overlap. Maximum Emissions are shown in bold.

As shown in **Table D** above, the estimated emissions from construction of the Project are less than the applicable daily construction thresholds established by SCAQMD and ICAPCD for all the criteria pollutants. In addition, the short-term estimated emissions do not exceed SCAQMD's localized significance thresholds (LST) for the portion of Project construction within Riverside County and therefore SCAQMD's jurisdiction. (Appendix A, Table 4.) The ICAPCD has not established localized thresholds of significance. For these reasons, construction-related air quality impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

The long-term emissions from the operation of the Project, as discussed previously, are primarily in the form of mobile source emissions, with no stationary sources of emissions present. According to the SCAQMD's LST methodology, LSTs only apply to the operational phase if a project includes stationary sources or on-site mobile equipment generating on-site emissions. The proposed Project does not include such uses. Therefore, no long-term LST analysis is needed and operational emissions would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

In sum, the Project's short-term emissions do not exceed the established thresholds of significance from the SCAQMD or ICAPCD and the Project does not include long-term stationary sources or on-site mobile equipment generating on-site emissions. Therefore, the Project will not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria pollutant emissions for which the Project region is in non-attainment and thus impacts are considered less than significant. Nonetheless, the Project contractor(s) would implement mitigation measure **MM AQ-1**, and prepare a Dust Control Plan for review and approval by CVWD.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant with mitigation incorporated: As with the proposed Project, because the construction emissions are below applicable thresholds of significance, the Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant. Impacts would be less than significant. Nonetheless, the Project contractor(s) would implement mitigation measure **MM AQ-1** and prepare a Dust Control Plan for review and approval by CVWD.

4.3c Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

A sensitive receptor is a person in the population who is particularly susceptible to health effects due to exposure to an air contaminant including children, the elderly, and persons with pre-existing respiratory and/or cardiovascular illness. SCAQMD defines a "sensitive receptor" as a land use or facility such as residences, schools, child care centers, athletic facilities, playgrounds, retirement homes, and convalescent homes where these persons are typically located. (SCAQMD 1993.)

A sensitive receptor is a person in the population who is particularly susceptible to health effects due to exposure to an air contaminant including children, the elderly, and persons with pre-existing respiratory and/or cardiovascular illness. SCAQMD defines a "sensitive receptor" as a land use or facility such as residences, schools, child care centers, athletic facilities, playgrounds, retirement homes, and convalescent homes where these persons are typically located. (SCAQMD 1993.)

Less than significant impact. The closest sensitive receptor to the Riverside County portion of the Project Alignment is a residence that is approximately one mile north of the alignment, near the intersection of Johnson Street/82nd Avenue. The nearest sensitive receptors in Imperial County include scattered existing residential homes adjacent to the Project Alignment. The construction emissions were found to be less than significant, as indicated above in the response to threshold 4.3b. Operational emissions were also found to be less than significant (refer to the response to threshold 4.3b). Hence, the Project will not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: As with the proposed Project, because the construction emissions are estimated to be below thresholds, impacts would be less than significant regarding the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Impacts associated with the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW are less than significant and no mitigation is required.

4.3d Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Less than significant impact. Water does not generate other emissions such as those leading to odors. Therefore, the proposed Project would not be a source of other emissions during operation of the Pipeline. Construction of the Pipeline presents the potential for generation of odors in the form of diesel exhaust during construction in the immediate vicinity of the segment of Pipeline under construction. Odors generated during construction would be short-term and would move along the Pipeline Alignment as construction takes place;

thus, construction of the Project would not result in the long-term creation of other emissions or odors. Recognizing the short-term duration and quantity of construction emissions in the proposed Project area, impacts with regard to other emissions such as odors affecting a substantial number of people would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: As with the proposed Project, because other emissions (such as odors) generated during construction are short-term and would move along the Project Alignment, impacts resulting from other emissions within Caltrans ROW would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Air Quality Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce impacts to air quality to less than significant.

> **MM AQ-1: Dust Control Plan.** A Dust Control Plan shall be prepared by the contractor(s) , approved by CVWD, and implemented during Project construction activities.

Air Quality Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

Implementation mitigation measure **MM AQ-1** would reduce impacts to air quality within Caltrans ROW to less than significant.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☒	☐	☐
f. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(Sources: Appendix B, CVMSHCP)

The analysis in this section is based on the findings of the *Biological Resources Technical Report - Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4 Project* (the "BRTR" or Appendix B), which is included as Appendix B of this Initial Study. The Project's BRTR, included as Appendix B, was prepared by Dokken Engineering in September 2024, to review and evaluate the potential impacts to threatened, endangered, proposed listed, or sensitive species and protected habitat resources that may result from the proposed Project. General biological surveys were conducted within a Biological Study Area (BSA) which encompasses the proposed Project centerline plus an approximate 50-foot buffer along either side of the proposed centerline. The BSA encompasses approximately 186 acres. Literature research, habitat assessments, and field surveys were conducted to determine the potential for special status species to occur within the Project area. (Appendix B, pp. 1, 8.)

Literature research was conducted through the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (iPaC), the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), and the CNPS Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants in order to identify habitats and special-status species having the potential to occur within the Project area. (Appendix B, p. 8.)

In order to characterize and identify potential sensitive plant and wildlife habitats and to establish the accuracy of the data identified in the literature search, field surveys and jurisdictional delineations were conducted between April 25 and April 27, 2022. Field survey methods consisted of walking meandering transects through

the BSA, observing and mapping the boundary of vegetation communities, compiling notes on observed flora and fauna, photographing the site, and assessing the potential for existing habitat to support sensitive plants and wildlife species. In addition, Dokken biologists conducted delineations of the Waters of the U.S. and State following the technical methods outlined in *A Field Guide to the Identification of the Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM) in the Arid West Region of the Western United States*. A follow up delineation was completed in 2024 to map resources that were inaccessible during the 2022 surveys. (Appendix B, p. 8.)

4.4a Would the Project 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?

The Project BSA contains three vegetation communities: Disturbed Desert Scrub, Desert Wash Habitat, Orchard, and Urban/Barren land cover types, with Disturbed Desert Scrub being the predominant habitat within the BSA. The location of these communities are shown on **Figure 6 – Vegetation Communities**[2] and the approximate area and land cover within the BSA are presented listed in **Table E** below. The proposed Pipeline Alignment crosses through a total of 38 desert washes, which are discussed in threshold 4.4b below.

Table E – Vegetation Communities and Land Cover

Vegetation Community	Approximate Area within BSA (acres)	Land Cover within BSA
Disturbed Desert Scrub	89	48%
Desert Wash Habitat	7	4%
Orchard	6	3%
Urban/Barren	84	45%
Totals	186	100%

Disturbed Desert Scrub

Disturbed desert scrub habitat encompasses approximately 89 acres within the BSA. Construction of rural communities and supporting infrastructure, regional agricultural, and invasion by non-native plants have modified this habitat community so that it reflects different species composition and density than what would be expected in less disturbed areas of desert scrub. The southern portion of the BSA is adjacent to the Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area and the desert scrub habitat in this area exhibited lots of damage from off-highway vehicles and illegal dumping. Common species include native plants such as creosote bush *(Larrea tridentata*), cheesebrush (*Ambrosia salsola*), and cattle saltbush (*Atriplex polycarpa*), as well as the non-native and invasive saltcedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*). Disturbed Desert Scrub habitat provides ample foraging habitat for local bird and reptile species. (Appendix B, p. 9.)

Desert Wash Habitat

Desert wash habitat encompasses approximately 7 acres within the BSA and is formed and maintained by the runoff from the Santa Rosa Mountains west of the Project. Vegetation within desert wash habitat is sparse but includes scattered desert shrubs/trees that serve as habitat and food sources for local wildlife populations. Typical vegetation within this habitat includes blue paloverde (*Parkinsonia florida*), smoketree (*Psorothamnus*

[2] **Figure 7 – Vegetation Communities** is an 11 page figure that commences on page 51.

spinosus), cattle saltbush, saltcedar, and creosote bush. As further discussed in the response to threshold 4.14b, the proposed alignment crosses 38 desert washes, many of which are highly disturbed by off-road vehicular recreation. (Appendix B, p. 21.)

Orchard
Orchard habitat encompasses approximately 6 acres within the BSA and consists exclusively of date palms (*Phoenix dactylifera*). This habitat primarily occurs north of 86th Avenue, in the northern extent of the BSA. Orchard habitat provides adequate cover and foraging habitat for a variety of birds. (Appendix B, p. 9.)

Urban/Barren
Roadways, which are interspersed throughout the BSA are either paved or barren and are devoid of any vegetation. The primary roadway within the BSA is Highway 86 and its associated frontage roads. Roadways associated with urban centers adjacent to Highway 86 are also present in the BSA. Urban development is interspersed along the entire Pipeline Alignment, but primarily occur within the communities of Desert Shores and Salton City. (Appendix B, p. 9, 21.)

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Prior to field surveys, a list of regional special-status plant and wildlife species with potential to occur within the Project vicinity was compiled from database searches. The database searches returned a total of 12 plant species and 34 wildlife species with the potential to occur within the region. No special-status plant species have the potential to occur within the BSA and no special status plant species were identified during the biological surveys. Based on the results of database searches for federal and state listed species, no federal or state listed plant species are anticipated to occur within the BSA.

Of the 34 wildlife species with the potential to occur within the region, six (6) sensitive special-status wildlife species have the potential to occur within the BSA. These consist of two (2) bird species, burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) and LeConte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*), two (2) mammal species, Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsi*) and western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*), and two (2) reptile species, Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard (*Uma nonata*) and flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*). No federal or state listed wildlife species are anticipated to occur within the BSA. **Table F – Special Status Wildlife Species Assessment** presents a description of the habitat for each species, the presence of habitat within the BSA, and the potential for each species to occur within the BSA.

Table F – Special Status Wildlife Species Assessment

Species Name (*Scientific Name*) Status	**Habitat Description**	**Habitat Present / Absent**	**Potential for Occurrence and Rationale**
Bird Species			
Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) Fed: -- State -- CDFW: SSC	The species inhabits arid, open areas with sparse vegetation cover such as deserts, abandoned agricultural areas, grasslands, and disturbed open habitats. Can be associated with open shrub stages of pinyon-juniper and ponderosa pine habitats. Nests in old small mammal burrows but may dig own burrow in soft soil. Nests are lines with excrement, pellets, debris, grass, and feathers. The species may use pipes, culverts, and nest boxes, and even buildings where burrows are	**Present**	**High Potential:** The BSA includes arid, open areas that are sparsely vegetated. In addition, the BSA includes gently sloping terrain with soft soils, and sparsely spaced mammal burrows were found throughout the BSA. There is a recent (2021) eBird occurrence located directly adjacent to Highway 86 and North Marina Drive, approximately 230 feet west of the BSA and numerous other recent occurrences south of the BSA near the Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge. No burrowing owl or signs of burrowing owl were observed during the survey. However, due to the

Table F – Special Status Wildlife Species Assessment

Species Name (*Scientific Name*) Status	**Habitat Description**	**Habitat Present / Absent**	**Potential for Occurrence and Rationale**
	scarce. Breeding occurs March through August (below 5,300 feet).		presence of potentially suitable habitat and recent local occurrences, burrowing owls have a high potential to occur within the BSA.
LeConte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*) Fed: -- State -- CDFW: SSC	An uncommon desert resident inhabiting open desert wash, desert scrub, alkali desert scrub, desert succulent shrub and Joshua tree habitats with scattered desert shrubs and cacti. Often nests in dense, spiny shrub or densely branched cactus in desert wash habitat, usually 2-8 feet above ground. Breeds January through June. The species is especially wary of human disturbance.	**Absent**	**Low to Moderate Potential:** There is a recent (2019) eBird occurrence of this species approximately 7 miles west of the BSA. The BSA includes disturbed desert scrub habitat with scattered shrubs as well as open space. Due to the presence of suitable habitat and a recent nearby occurrence, LeConte's thrasher has a low to moderate potential to occur within the BSA.
Mammal Species			
Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathuslongimembris bangsi*) Fed: -- State -- CDFW: SSC	Species occurs only in the Coachella Valley. Inhabits flat to gently sloping topography, sparse to moderate vegetative cover, and loosely packed or sandy soils of desert wash, Sonoran Desert scrub communities with preference to creosote dominated desert scrub. Species is unlikely to utilize areas with compacted, stony, and cobbly soils, in saltbush dominated communities, or in areas of human disturbance. Hibernation is believed to occur below ground from October to March.	**Absent**	**Low to Moderate Potential:** Within the BSA, disturbed desert scrub is comprised primarily of saltbush and creosote bush, providing potentially suitable habitat for this species. In addition, there is a recent (2015) CNDDB occurrence of this species approximately 4 miles southwest of the Project. Due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat and recent local occurrences, the species has a low to moderate potential to occur within the Project area.
Western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*) Fed: -- State -- CDFW: SSC	Species known in California only in Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties south to the Mexican border. Inhabits valley foothill riparian, desert riparian, desert wash, and palm oasis habitats in proximity to water. Species utilizes trees and palms for roosting and maternity colonies. Births in June and July (below 2,000 feet).	**Absent**	**Low to Moderate Potential:** There is a historic (1976) CNDDB occurrence of this species in Oasis, CA, approximately 1.2 miles north of the BSA. The northern extent of the BSA includes orchards of date palms that may provide suitable roosting habitat for this species. In addition, agricultural reservoirs near the northern part of the BSA may provide additional prey base for the species. Due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat features and the local historic occurrence, the species is presumed to have a low to moderate potential to occur

Table F – Special Status Wildlife Species Assessment

Species Name (*Scientific Name*) Status	**Habitat Description**	**Habitat Present / Absent**	**Potential for Occurrence and Rationale**
			within the northern section of the BSA where date palms are present.
Reptile Species			
Colorado Desert fringe toed lizard *(Uma notata)* Fed: -- State -- CDFW: SSC	Found in the Colorado and Sonoran deserts south of the Salton Sea in Imperial and San Diego County. Restricted to fine sand dunes, dry lakebeds, desert washes, and sparse desert scrub habitat communities. Fringe-toed lizards utilize shrubs and rodent burrows for cover. Escapes from predators via running bipedally or burrowing into the sand.	**Habitat Present**	**Low to Moderate Potential:** The BSA is largely comprised of sparse desert scrub habitat with fine sandy soils that may be suitable for the species. In addition, the Project falls within the northern range of this species and there are recent (2018) research-grade iNaturalist occurrences within 2 miles of the BSA. As such, the species has a low to moderate potential to occur.
Flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii)* Fed: -- State -- CDFW: SSC	Species inhabits desert scrub, desert wash, succulent shrub, and alkali scrub habitats. Common in sandy desert hardpan, gravel flats with scattered vegetation, and areas with fine windblown sand (but rarely dunes). Requires an adequate source of ants for food; species is an ant specialist, particularly Harvester ants. Hibernation occurs as early as October and can extend to March but may emerge in January or February. Breeds in early spring and may produce multiple clutches within a breeding season; young appear in July through September (below sea level-750 feet).	**Habitat Present**	**Low to Moderate Potential:** The BSA has desert scrub habitat with scattered vegetation and fine sandy soils. Furthermore, there are multiple recent (2002-2014) CNDDB occurrences of this species located in the vicinity of the Project, the closest being a 2009 occurrence approximately 1.7 miles west of the Project. Due to recent local occurrences and presence of potentially suitable habitat, the species is presumed to have a low to moderate potential to occur within the BSA.

Notes: CDFW: SSC = California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern

Source: Compiled from Appendix B, pp. 23-38.

Burrowing Owl

Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia)* is not a state or federally listed species but is a CDFW Species of Special Concern and a USFWS Migratory Nongame Bird of Management Concern. Burrowing owls are also protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), California Fish and Game (CFG) code §3515, and are a covered species under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). Due to the transient nature of the species, the unknown time between the environmental clearance phase and construction phases of the Project, and the recorded instances of burrowing owl in proximity to the BSA, a protocol breeding season survey was not completed. A habitat assessment survey was completed to identify and map the portions of the BSA with potentially suitable habitat and assess the distribution of burrowing owl occurrences in the BSA to determine the potential for burrowing owl to use the Pipeline Alignment. (Appendix B, p. 53.)

The disturbed desert scrub and desert wash habitat within the BSA are arid, open, and sparsely vegetated, and may provide suitable habitat for burrowing owls. These habitat communities are comprised of friable soils with mammal burrows that may serve as potentially suitable nesting habitat for this species. During the field survey small mammal burrows were sparsely observed along the Pipeline Alignment; however, no mammalian species, burrowing owl, or owl sign were observed. Although no evidence of burrowing owls was observed during the biological surveys, the presence of potentially suitable habitat features as well as the recent local occurrences of the species indicate that burrowing owls have a high potential to occur during Project construction. (Appendix B, p. 53–54.)

Project construction is anticipated to temporarily impact approximately 38 acres of suitable burrowing owl habitat (35 acres of disturbed desert scrub habitat and 3 acres of desert wash habitat). Potential impacts to burrowing owls would be less that significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** and **MM BIO-2,** which requires environmental awareness training for construction personnel and preconstruction burrowing owl surveys.

LeConte's thrasher

LeConte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*) is not a state or federally listed species but is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. LeConte's thrasher is also protected by the MBTA, CFG code §3515, and is a covered species under the CVMSHCP. The disturbed desert scrub habitat within the BSA may serve as potentially suitable nesting and/or foraging habitat for this species. Although no LeConte's thrashers were observed during the biological survey, the LeConte's thrasher is presumed to have a low to moderate potential to occur within the BSA due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat and a 2019 reported occurrence approximately seven (7) miles west of the BSA. (Appendix B, pp. 55–56.)

Project construction is anticipated to temporarily impact approximately 35 acres of disturbed desert scrub habitat, which may serve as suitable nesting and foraging habitat for LeConte's thrasher. Potential Impacts to Le Conte's thrasher would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1**, **MM BIO-3**, and **MM BIO-4.** Mitigation measure **MM BIO-4** provides vegetation removal guidance to protect habitat to the extent feasible.

Palm Springs pocket mouse

The Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsi*) is not a state or federally listed species but is a CDFW Species of Special Concern and is a covered species under the CVMSHCP. Within the BSA, disturbed desert scrub habitat is comprised primarily of cattle saltbush and creosote bush, providing marginally suitable habitat for this species. Although no Palm Springs pocket mice were observed during the biological survey, due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat features as well as the recent (2015) local occurrence approximately 4 miles west of the southerly terminus of the Pipeline, this species is presumed to have a low to moderate potential to occur within the Project area. (Appendix B, pp. 30–31.)

The Project is anticipated to temporarily impact approximately 35 acres of disturbed desert scrub habitat, which is potentially suitable Palm Springs pocket mouse habitat. Potential impacts to Palm Springs pocket mouse habitat would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** and **MM-BIO-5**. (Appendix B, p. 56.)

Western yellow bat

The western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*) is not a federally or state listed species but is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. The western yellow bat is not a covered species under the CVMSHCP. The BSA north of 86th Avenue passes through a date palm orchard, a habitat type known to be used by maternal colonies of this species. Furthermore, proximal water sources are present adjacent to the BSA in the form of local agricultural reservoirs. Due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat features as well as the local historic occurrence, the species is presumed to have a low to moderate potential to occur in the date orchards in the northern portion of the BSA. (Appendix B, pp. 56–57.)

Construction does not propose to remove any date palms, which serve as suitable habitat for this species. Roosting bats may be temporarily disturbed by the presence of construction equipment and personnel. These indirect impacts would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** and **MM BIO-4**. Implementation of mitigation measure **MM BIO-4,** sets forth the conditions under which date palms nay be removed to minimize direct impacts to the species nesting habitat. (Appendix B, p. 57.)

Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard

The Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard is not a federal or state listed species but is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. The BSA is largely comprised of sparse desert scrub and desert wash habitat with fine sandy soils that would serve to support the Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard. Additionally, the BSA falls within the northern range of this species and there are several recent occurrences of this species within two miles of the BSA's southern extent. Although no Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizards were observed during the biological survey, due to the presence of potentially suitable habitat as well as the recent local occurrences of this Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard, it is anticipated that the Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard has a low to moderate potential to occur within the BSA. (Appendix B, pp. 57–58.)

The Project is anticipated to temporarily impact approximately 35 acres of suitable habitat for the Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard (3 acres of desert wash habitat and 35 acres of disturbed desert scrub habitat). Potential impacts to this species and its habitat would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1, MM BIO-5,** and **MM BIO-6**. Mitigation measure **MM BIO-5** sets forth measures to be implemented during Project construction to prevent inadvertent entrapment during construction. Implementation of mitigation measure **MM BIO-6** identifies measures to minimize general impacts to local wildlife. (Appendix B, p. 58.)

Flat-tailed horned lizard

The flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*) is not a federally or state listed species but is a CDFW Species of Special Concern and is a covered species under the CVMSHCP. The BSA encompasses desert scrub and desert wash habitat with scattered vegetation and fine, sandy soils that would support this species. Although no flat-tailed horned lizards were observed during the biological survey, due to the recent local occurrences and presence of potentially suitable habitat features, the species is presumed to have a low to moderate potential to occur within the BSA. (Appendix B, pp. 58–59.)

Project construction is anticipated to temporarily impact approximately 35 acres of suitable habitat for the flat-tailed horned lizard (3 acres of desert wash habitat and 35 acres of disturbed desert scrub habitat). Potential impacts to this species' habitat would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures MM **BIO-1** and **MM BIO-5**.

Although there is habitat present for the special-status wildlife species to occur within the BSA, the Project would not result in permanent impacts to the habitats or species within the BSA. Through the implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-6** temporary direct and indirect impacts to biological resources from Project Construction would be reduced to less than significant. (Appendix B, p. 59.) Therefore, the Project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant with mitigation incorporated: The results of the database searches indicate there are 12 plant species and 34 wildlife species with the potential to occur in the Project area. Of these, six species were determined to have the potential to occur within the BSA: burrowing owl, LeConte's thrasher, Palm Springs pocket mouse, western yellow bat, Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard, and flat-tailed horned lizard. No special status or federal or state-listed species were found within Caltrans ROW. Disturbed desert scrub habitat and desert wash habitat are present within Caltrans ROW which is potential habitat for the six species with potential to occur within the BSA.

Approximately 18 acres of disturbed desert scrub habitat and one (1) acre of desert wash habitat is within the Caltrans ROW. Impacts to these habitats would be temporary in nature and result from the construction disturbance associated with local construction access as well as the installation of the proposed Pipeline. To quantify temporary impacts, it was assumed that a 50-foot-wide corridor along the Pipeline would be disturbed to accommodate trenching, spoil piles, equipment access, and material staging. Temporary impacts would include linear excavation to install the proposed pipeline which would then be buried a minimum of 42-inches deep and the top surface would be regraded to pre-construction contours. The desert wash habitat is sparsely vegetated in nature and construction is not anticipated to disturb much vegetation along the channels. Therefore, the Project would not permanently alter the ecological functions or values of these washes and the impacts would be temporary.

Impacts to burrowing owl, LeConte's thrasher, Palm Springs pocket mouse, western yellow bat, Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard, and flat-tailed horned lizard and the habitats that support these species would be temporary in nature. Due to the potential for special status species to occur within the BSA, mitigation measure **MM BIO-1**, which requires environmental awareness training for construction crews would be implemented. Potential impacts to burrowing owl would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1**, **MM BIO-2**, and **MM BIO-6,** Potential impacts to LeConte's thrasher would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1**, **MM BIO-3,** and **MM BIO-4.** Potential impacts to Palm Springs pocket mouse would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO 1** and **MM BIO-5.** Potential impacts to western yellow bat would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM-BIO-1** and **MM BIO-4.** Potential impacts to Colorado desert fringed-toed lizard would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1, MM BIO–4, MM BIO-5,** and **MM BIO-6.** Potential impacts to flat-tailed horned lizard would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1**, **MM BIO-4, MM BIO-5,** and **MM BIO-6.**

Although there is habitat present for the special-status wildlife species to occur within Caltrans ROW, the Project would not result in permanent impacts to these habitats or species. Through the implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-6** temporary direct and indirect impacts to biological resources resulting from Project Construction would be reduced to less than significant. Therefore, the Project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species within Caltrans ROW, and impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

4.4b Would the Project 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?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The Pipeline Alignment crosses 38 ephemeral desert washes. (**Refer to Figure 8 – Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes.**) Although these washes have a fluvially defined bed, bank and channel, subsequent to the 2023 Sackett v. EPA Supreme Court ruling, these channels no longer meet the definition of a Water of the United States. However, they still are Waters of the State and are as such a natural community of special concern. (Appendix B, p. 39.)

The Pipeline would cross approximately 3 acres of ephemeral desert washes. The area of each wash, which would be crossed by the Pipeline are presented in **Table G**, below and shown on **Figure 8.**[3]

Table G – Ephemeral Desert Washes within the BSA

Name of Desert Wash[a]	Area within the BSA[a]
Cophy Ditch	0.28 acres
Travertine Palms Wash	0.03 acres
Perone Ditch	0.06 acres
Dinal Ditch	0.07 acres
Avertine Ditch	0.04 acres
Shoreline Ditch	0.03 acres
Coolidge Springs	0.04 acres
Zanthe Ditch	0.04 acres
Parosa Ditch	0.21 acres
Romney Ditch	0.15 acres
Ambig Ditch	0.03 acres
Matis Ditch	0.10 acres
Calyx Ditch	0.08 acres
Godetia Ditch	0.04 acres
Unnamed Drainage	0.19 acres
Encilia Ditch	0.06 acres
Incienso Ditch	0.07 acres
Floris Ditch	0.02 acres
Folius Ditch	0.04 acres
Torif Ditch	0.27 acres
Bexar Ditch	0.07 acres
Paroca Ditch	0.17 acres
Tonalee Ditch	0.09 acres
Talofa Ditch	0.17 acres
Electra Ditch	0.05 acres
Ibycus Wash	0.02 acres
Verbena Wash	0.06 acres
Aster Wash	0.10 acres
Virgo Wash	0.08 acres
Valerie Wash Tributary	0.05 acres
Tesla Wash Tributaries	0.12 acres
Grave Wash	0.17 acres
Coral Wash	0.07 acres
Palm Wash	0.12 acres
Anza Ditch	0.09 acres

[3] **Figure 8 – Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes** is an 11 page figure that commences on page 62

Table G – Ephemeral Desert Washes within the BSA

Name of Desert Wash[a]	Area within the BSA[a]
Verde Ditch	0.01 acres
Iberia Wash at Service Road	0.02 acres
Iberia Wash at Golden Avenue	0.01 acres

Source: Compiled from Appendix B Figure 4

Notes:

[a] Washes are listed from north to south along the Pipeline Alignment. Refer to **Figure 8** for the location and area of each wash.

Most of the desert washes within the BSA are sparsely vegetated, meaning very little vegetation along these channels would be disturbed by construction. (Appendix B, p. 39.) Nonetheless, open trenching across the ephemeral desert washes along the Pipeline Alignment could be a potentially significant impact. However, the Project would use trenchless methods, specifically jack and bore, to cross the ephemeral washes. Trenchless methods are assumed to have jacking pits approximately 12-feet by 40 feet on the northern side of the wash and receiving pits approximately 12 feet by 12-feet on the southerly side of the wash. The location of the jacking and receiving pits would be outside the desert wash habitat. Because the Pipeline would cross the desert washes using trenchless methods, no vegetation along these channels would be disturbed by construction. As such, the Project would not permanently alter the ecological functions or values of these washes and Project construction would only temporarily disturb the areas around these washes. Through crossing the desert washes vis trenchless construction techniques and implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1, MM BIO-4**, and **MM BIO-6**, the Project would not 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. (Appendix B, pp. 39, 52, 61.) Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant with mitigation incorporated: The Project is anticipated to temporarily impact a total of 3.32 acres of desert wash with approximately 1.1 acres being within Caltrans ROW. The impacts to each channel, starting at the northern end of the BSA are presented in **Table H** below**.**

Table H – Ephemeral Desert Washes within Caltrans ROW

Name of Desert Wash[a]	Temporary Impacts[a]
Perone Ditch	0.06 acres
Dinal Ditch	0.07 acres
Avertine Ditch	0.04 acres
Shoreline Ditch	0.03 acres
Coolidge Springs	0.04 acres
Zanthe Ditch	0.04 acres
Calyx Ditch	0.08 acres
Godetia Ditch	0.04 acres
Unnamed Drainage	0.19 acres

Table H – Ephemeral Desert Washes within Caltrans ROW

Name of Desert Wash[a]	Temporary Impacts[a]
Encilia Ditch	0.06 acres
Incienso Ditch	0.07 acres
Floris Ditch	0.02 acres
Paroca Ditch	0.17 acres
Grave Wash	0.17 acres
Palm Wash	0.12 acres
Anza Ditch	0.09 acres
Verde Ditch	0.01 acres
Iberia Wash at Service Road	0.02 acres

Source: Compiled from Appendix B

Notes:

[a] Washes are listed from north to south along the Pipeline Alignment. Refer to **Figure 8** for the location and area of each wash.

Approximately 1.10 acres of desert wash habitat is located within Caltrans ROW. Because the Pipeline would cross these desert washes using trenchless methods, no vegetation along the channels within Caltrans ROW would be disturbed by construction. As such, the Project would not permanently alter the ecological functions or values of washes within Caltrans ROW and Project construction would only temporarily disturb the areas around these washes. Through crossing the desert washes vis trenchless construction techniques and implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1**, **MM BIO-4**, and **MM BIO-6**, the Project would not 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 within Caltrans ROW. (Appendix B, pp. 39, 52, 61.) Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

4.4c Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

No impact. There are no federally protected wetlands as defined by Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 within the BSA. (Appendix B, p. 60.) Thus, the Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands and there would be no impact in this regard.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: There are no federally protected wetlands as defined by Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 within the Caltrans ROW. (Appendix B, p. 60.) Thus, the Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands within Caltrans ROW and there would be no impact in this regard.

4.4d Would the Project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. There are no native wildlife nursery sites within the BSA. The Pipeline Alignment is located directly west of the Salton Sea and adjacent to southbound Highway 86. The

Salton Sea is a critical link for numerous migratory bird species along the Pacific Flyway Corridor. (ICGP EIR, p. III-123.) Additionally, the BSA contains habitat that supports avian foraging that could be used by migratory birds. The Project area was reviewed to determine if the BSA was within an Essential Connectivity Area. The highest ranking that occurs within the BSA is Terrestrial Connectivity Rank 3 – Connections with implementation flexibility. This ranking indicates the area has been identified for its connectivity importance but has not been specifically designated as a channelized area, species corridor, or habitat linkage. (Appendix B, p. 22.) The proposed Project is an underground water transmission pipeline and Project construction and operation would not permanently fragment any existing natural habitats or existing connectivity networks. The Project would implement mitigation measures **MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-6** to reduce potential temporary and permanent impacts to habitat within BSA that could support avian or terrestrial migration and movement. Therefore, Project impacts regarding interfering substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impeding the use of native wildlife nursery sites would be less than significant with mitigation.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant with mitigation incorporated: There are no native wildlife nursery sites within Caltrans ROW. Portions of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW is located directly west of the Salton Sea and adjacent to southbound Highway 86. The Salton Sea is a critical link for numerous migratory bird species along the Pacific Flyway Corridor. (ICGP EIR, p. III-123.) Additionally, Caltrans ROW contains habitat that supports avian foraging that could be used by migratory birds. Caltrans ROW is within the Essential Connectivity Area with a Terrestrial Connectivity Rank 3 – Connections with implementation flexibility. This ranking indicates the area has been identified for its connectivity importance but has not been specifically designated as a channelized area, species corridor, or habitat linkage. (Appendix B, p. 22.) With implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-6**, potential temporary and permanent impacts to habitat within Caltrans ROW that could support avian or terrestrial migration and movement, impacts regarding interfering substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impeding the use of native wildlife nursery sites within CAltrans ROW would be less than significant with mitigation.

4.4e Would the Project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Less than significant impact. The Project is located within portions of unincorporated Riverside County and portions of unincorporated Imperial County. The respective Code of Ordinances for these counties do not specify tree preservation policies or ordinances. As discussed below in response to threshold 4.4f, the portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Riverside County is subject to the provisions of the CVMSHCP, of which CVWD is a permittee. The portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Riverside County is within the Eastern Coachella Valley Plan (ECVAP). The ECVAP contains one policy regarding biological resources, which states:

> ECVAP 16.1 Protect visual and biological resources in the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan through adherence to General Plan policies found in the Preservation section of the Multipurpose Open Space Element, as well as policies contained in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan. (ECVAP, p. 77.)

The Preservation section of the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan contains three policies, which set forth the following County responsibilities (RCGP, pp. OS-45–OS-46):

> OS 17.1 Enforce the provisions of applicable MSHCP's and implement related Riverside County policies when conducting review of possible legislative actions such as general plan amendments, zoning ordinance amendments, etc. including policies regarding the handling of private and public stand alone applications for general plan amendments,

lot line adjustments and zoning ordinance amendments that are not accompanied by, or associated with, an application to subdivide or other land use development application. Every stand alone application shall require an initial Habitat Evaluation and Acquisition Negotiation Process (HANS) assessment and such assessment shall be made by the Planning Department's Environmental Programs Division. Habitat assessment and species specific focused surveys shall not be required as part of this initial HANS assessment for stand alone applications but will be required when a development proposal or land use application to subsequently subdivide, grade or build on the property is submitted to the County.

OS 17.2 Enforce the provisions of applicable MSHCP's and implement related Riverside County policies when conducting review of development applications.

OS 17.3 Enforce the provisions of applicable MSHCP's and implement related Riverside County policies when developing transportation or other infrastructure projects that have been designated as covered activities in the applicable MSHCP.

Policy OS 17.1 and OS 17.2 are not applicable to the Riverside County portion of the Project because the Project does not include a legislative action or development application requiring approval by Riverside County. Policy OS 17.3 is not applicable to the Riverside County portion of the Project because CVWD is the Project proponent, not Riverside County. Nonetheless, there is no component of the Project or the manner in which it would be implemented by CVWD that would conflict with these policies.

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the Imperial County General Plan has two goals regarding biological resources.

Goal 1: Environmental resources shall be conserved for future generations by minimizing environmental impacts in all land use decisions and educating the public on their value.

Goal 2: The City will integrate programmatic strategies for the conservation of critical habitats to manage their integrity, function, productivity, and long-term viability.

Each of these goals include a number of objectives to be implemented by Imperial County through the development approval process. These policies are not applicable to the Imperial County portion of the Project because Imperial County does not have any discretionary approval over the Project. Although, there is no component of the Project or the manner in which it would be implemented by CVWD that would conflict with the policies, in order to prevent the introduction of invasive species and minimize general wildlife impacts, the Project shall incorporate the measures identified in **MM BIO-6**.

For the reasons set forth in the preceding paragraphs, the Project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. Impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

4.4f Would the Project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Less than significant impact. CVWD is a Permittee to the CVMSHCP. Approximately 14.4 acres of the proposed Project, that portion within Riverside County, is within the boundary of the CVMSHCP; however, no portion of the BSA is located within a CVMHSCP designated Conservation Area. The Project qualifies as a Covered Activity as outlined under Section 7.1 of the CVMSHCP. Take of federally and/or state listed species is

not anticipated to result from this Project; as such, coordination for take authorization under the CVMSHCP's Section 10(a) Permit and Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) Permit is not anticipated. CVWD will coordinate with the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission to ensure that the temporary impacts associated with construction of the portion of the Pipeline within Riverside County are appropriately mitigated. The portion of the Pipeline within Imperial County is not within an approved local, regional, or state habitat conservations plan. Because the Project is a Covered Activity under the CVMSHCP and CVWD would comply with the applicable provisions of the CVMSHCP, impacts regarding conflicts with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan would be less than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Caltrans is a Permittee to the CVMSHCP. The portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW in Riverside County is within the boundary of the CVMSHCP. No portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW is a CVMSHCP Conservation Areas. The Project is a Covered Activity as outlined under Section 7.1 of the CVMSHCP. Take of federally and/or state listed species is not anticipated to result from this Project; as such, coordination for take authorization under the CVMSHCP's Section 10(a) Permit and NCCP Permit is not anticipated. Because CVWD will coordinate with the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission to ensure that the temporary impacts associated with construction of the pipeline are appropriately mitigated. Because the Project is a Covered Activity under the CVMSHCP and CVWD would comply with the applicable provisions of the CVMSHCP, impacts regarding conflicts with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan associated with the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would be less than significant.

Biological Resources Mitigation Measures

The following biological resources mitigation measures would reduce impacts to less than significant.

> **MM BIO-1: Worker Environmental Awareness Program.** Prior to construction, a qualified biologist shall prepare a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) that will provide information regarding the sensitive habitats and special status species with the potential to occur within the Project area, as well as the avoidance and minimization measures that must be complied with. Such measures shall include making sure construction workers and equipment stay out of the desert washes. The biologist or designee(s) shall present the WEAP to the construction contractor and each of the construction crews working on the Project at a preconstruction meeting. No individual shall be permitted to work at the Project site until they have completed WEAP training. In lieu of in-person training, the WEAP may be recorded and presented to any contractor or crew member not present at the initial in-person training. This training may be conducted concurrently with other environmental (e.g. cultural resources) or safety training.
>
> **MM BIO-2: Preconstruction Burrowing Owl Survey**. A qualified biologist shall conduct a take avoidance survey in accordance with the 2012 CDFW *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* within 2 months and again within 14 days prior to the start of ground disturbance for each phase of construction. Surveys must be conducted in all portions of the Project footprint that encompass suitable habitat for the species, with an approximate 50 meter buffer. If no active burrows are discovered, no further avoidance or minimization measures are required.
>
> If burrows are detected but determined to be inactive or it is outside the burrowing owl breeding season (February 1 – August 31), exclusion methods shall be implemented to prevent

owls from occupying the burrows during Project activities. If active burrows are identified, a no work buffer shall be placed around the burrow and CVWD must notify CDFW within 48 hours of the discovery. The buffer shall be 200 meters between April 1 – Oct 15 and 50 meters between Oct 16 – Mar 31. The buffer shall be demarcated with temporary high visibility fencing installed under the supervision of a biologist. Additional biological monitoring or other avoidance measures if required by CDFW shall be implemented.

If passive relocation actions outside the breeding season (September 1 – February 14) are determined to be necessary, coordination with CDFW will occur prior to the initiation of relocation activities.

MM BIO-3: Preconstruction Nesting Bird Survey. Prior to vegetation removal or initial ground disturbance during the nesting bird season, which is February 15 – September 15 for passerine species and January 1 – September 15 for raptors, a pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be conducted by the Project Biologist prior to the start of work. The nesting bird survey shall include the BSA plus a 100-foot buffer, where feasible. Within 72 hours of the nesting bird survey, all Project impact areas surveyed by the Project Biologist must be cleared of vegetation by the contractor or a follow-up nesting bird survey is required.

A minimum 100 foot no-disturbance buffer shall be established around any active nest of migratory birds and a minimum 250 foot no-disturbance buffer shall be established around any nesting special status species including LeConte's thrasher and burrowing owl. The contractor shall immediately stop work in the buffer area until the appropriate buffer is established and is prohibited from conducting work that could disturb the birds (as determined by the Project Biologist and in coordination with wildlife agencies) in the buffer area until a qualified biologist determines the young have fledged. A reduced buffer can be established if determined appropriate by the Project biologist.

MM BIO-4 Vegetation Removal. Vegetation removal shall be avoided to the greatest extent practicable. Where feasible, low-lying vegetation, such as native shrubs, shall be trimmed rather than removed. Removal or trimming of date palms (*Phoenix dactylifers)* shall not take place during the maternity season for Western yellow bat, which is from July 1 – July 31. If date palms must be trimmed or removed during the maternity season, the subject tree shall be surveyed by a biologist, with specialized experience working with bats, within 24 hours prior to any trimming or removals. If evidence of current bat occupation is found, the tree shall not be removed until after the maternity season.

MM BIO-5: Animal Entrapment. To avoid inadvertent entrapment of animals during construction, all excavated, steep-walled holes or trenches greater than 6 inches deep shall be covered at the end of the day or contain at least one escape ramp made of earth fill or wooden planks. All holes shall be inspected at the beginning of each workday and before the holes and trenches are filled. Anything stored within the holes or trenches overnight shall be inspected for special status species (i.e., Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard, flat-tailed horned lizard) before being moved.

MM BIO-6: Measures to Incorporated into the Project Design to Minimize the Spread of Invasive Species and General Impacts to Local Wildlife. To avoid the spread of invasive

species and minimize general impacts to local wildlife, the final Project plans and contract specifications shall require the contractor to implement the following measures:

a. Prior to initial arrival at the Project site and prior to final departure the Project site, construction equipment that may contain invasive plants and/or seeds shall be cleaned to reduce the spreading of noxious weeds.

b. All food-related trash shall be disposed into closed containers and shall be removed from the Project area daily. Construction personnel shall not feed or otherwise attract wildlife to the Project area.

c. The contractor shall not apply rodenticide or herbicide within the Project area during construction.

Biological Resources Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project within Caltrans ROW

Implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1 through MM BIO-6**, above, would reduce impacts to biological resources for the portions of the Project within Caltrans ROW to less than significant.

Proposed Alignment
County Boundaries
Water Resources

Salton Sea

Riverside County
Imperial County

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Page 3
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Desert Shores
Salton Sea Beach
Salton City

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Riverside County
San Diego County
Imperial County
San Diego County

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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 3/21/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 5,000 feet

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Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 1 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 3/21/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

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Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 2 of 11
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Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 3 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
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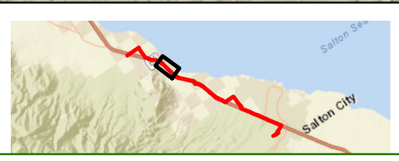

Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 4 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

Biological Study Area (185.98 acres)

Vegetation Communities

Disturbed Desert Scrub (88.73 acres)

Urban/Barren (84.23 acres)

Desert Wash (6.89 acres)

Orchard (6.13 acres)

Matchline - See Page4

Coolidge Springs

Zanthe Ditch

Parosa Ditch

Romney Ditch

Ambig Ditch

Matis Ditch

Calyx Ditch

Godetia Ditch

86

Coolidge Springs Road

Matchline - See Page6

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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 3/21/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

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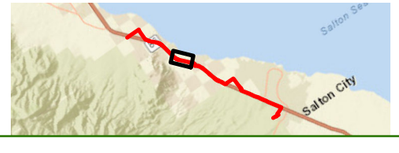

Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 5 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

Biological Study Area (185.98 acres)

Vegetation Communities

Disturbed Desert Scrub (88.73 acres)

Urban/Barren (84.23 acres)

Desert Wash (6.89 acres)

Orchard (6.13 acres)

86

Godetia Ditch

Encilia Ditch

Incienso Ditch

Floris Ditch

Folius Ditch

Torif Ditch

Unnamed Drainage

Bexar Ditch

Matchline - See Page5

Matchline - See Page7

Brawley Avenue

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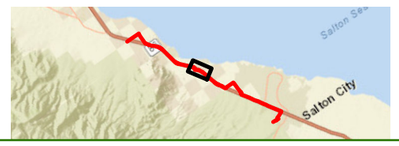

Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 6 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

Biological Study Area (185.98 acres)

Vegetation Communities

Disturbed Desert Scrub (88.73 acres)

Urban/Barren (84.23 acres)

Desert Wash (6.89 acres)

Orchard (6.13 acres)

Matchline - See Page6

Matchline - See Page8

Bexar Ditch

Paroca Ditch

Tonalee Ditch

Talofa Ditch

Electra Ditch

Ibycus Wash

Verbena Wash

Aster Wash

Black Diamond Road

86

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1 inch = 500 feet

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Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 7 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

Biological Study Area (185.98 acres)

Vegetation Communities

- Disturbed Desert Scrub (88.73 acres)
- Urban/Barren (84.23 acres)
- Desert Wash (6.89 acres)
- Orchard (6.13 acres)

Treadwell Boulevard

Tesla Wash Tributaries

Valerie Wash Tributaries

Virgo Wash

Aster Wash

Grave Wash

86

Matchline - See Page7

Matchline - See Page9

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Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 8 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

Biological Study Area (185.98 acres)

Vegetation Communities

Disturbed Desert Scrub (88.73 acres)

Urban/Barren (84.23 acres)

Desert Wash (6.89 acres)

Orchard (6.13 acres)

Matchline - See Page8

Grave Wash

86

Coral Wash

Matchline - See Page10

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Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 9 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

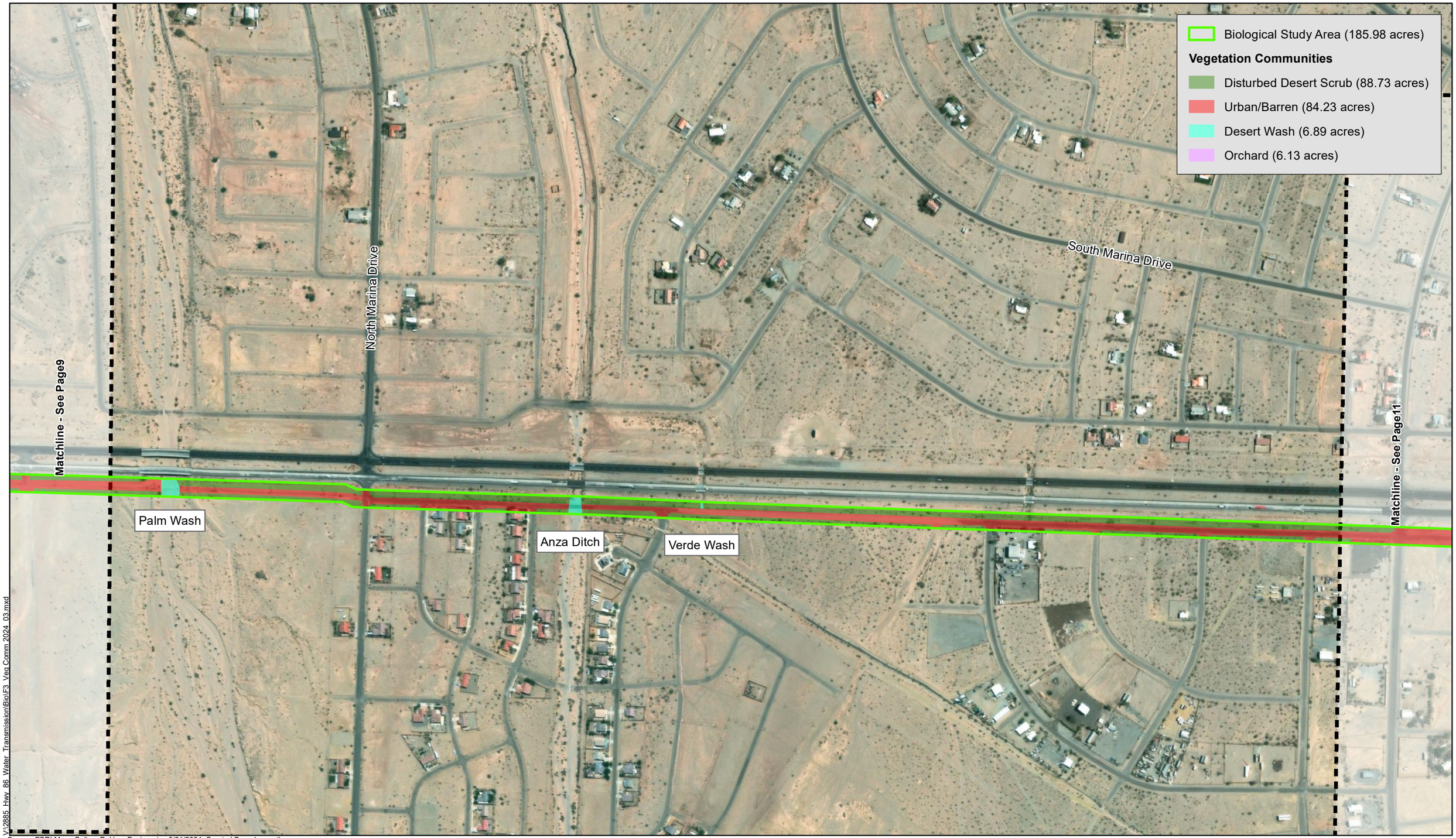

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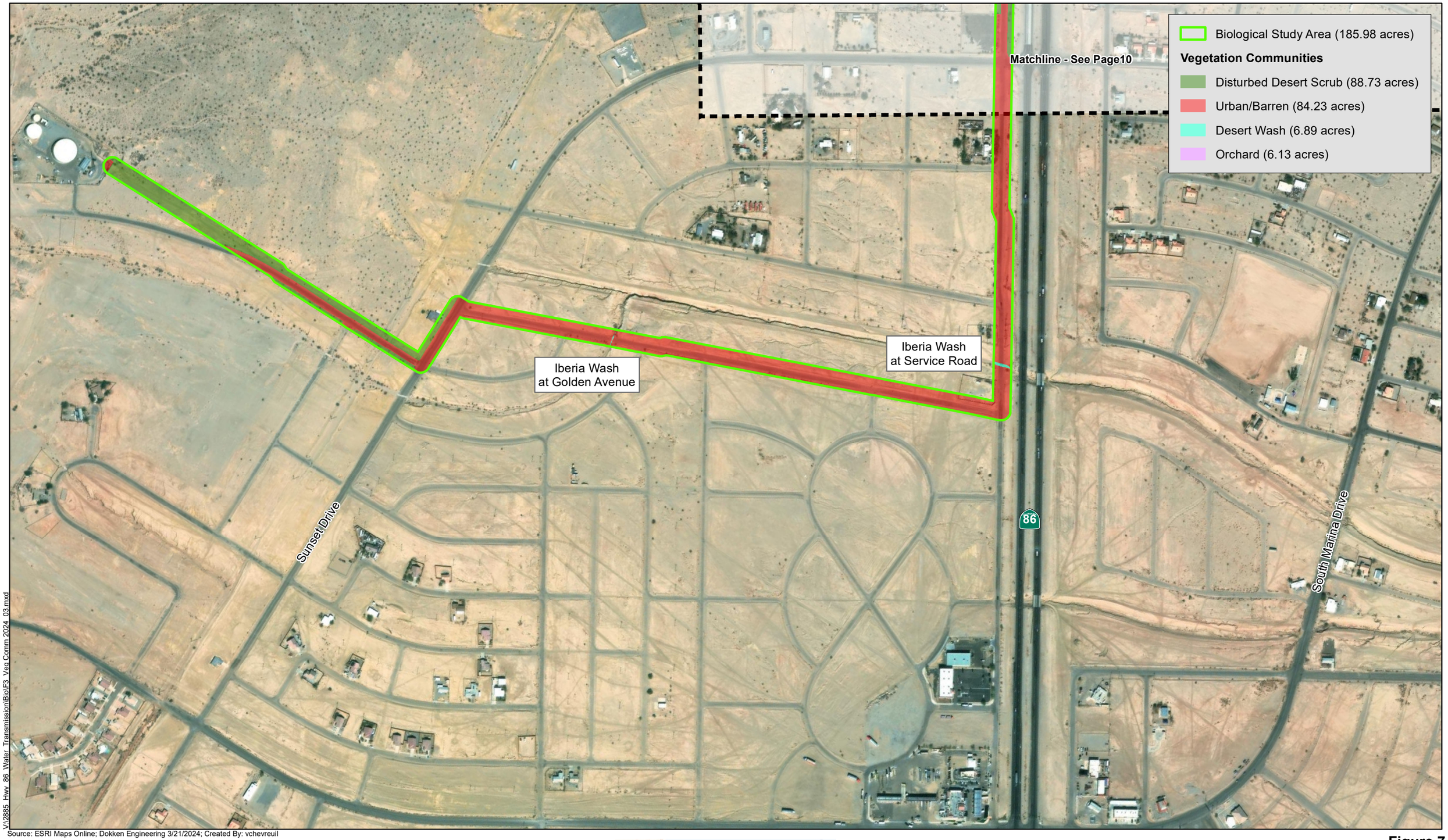
Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 10 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California



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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 3/21/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

Figure 7
Vegetation Communities
Page 11 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

Proposed Alignment
County Boundaries
Water Resources

Salton Sea

Riverside County
Imperial County

Page 2
Page 3
Page 4
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Page 6
Page 7
Page 8
Page 9
Page 10
Page 11

Desert Shores
Salton Sea Beach
Salton City

86

Riverside County
San Diego County
Imperial County
San Diego County

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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 3/21/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 5,000 feet

0 5,000 10,000 15,000 20,000 25,000 Feet

Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes
Page 1 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

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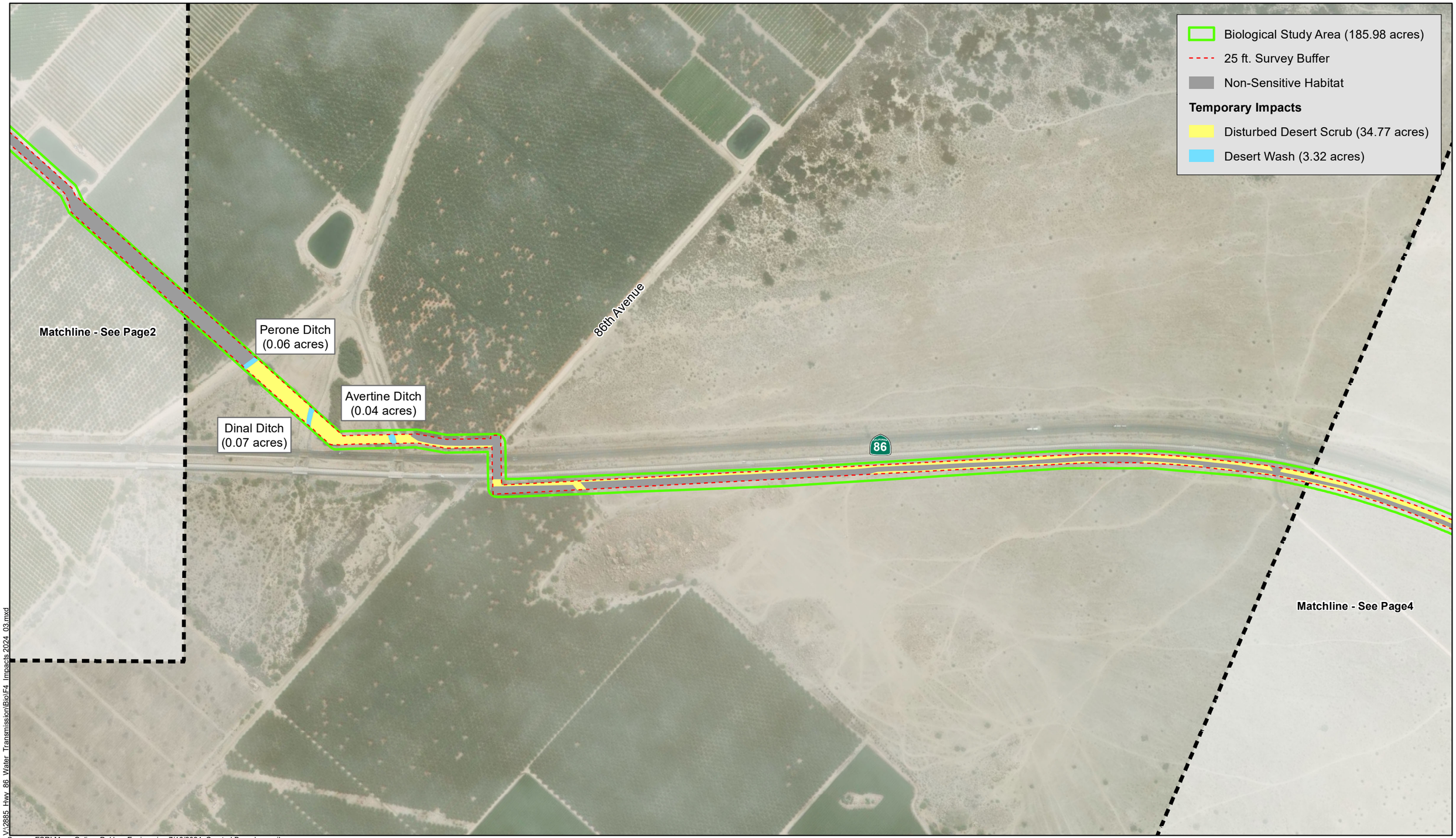
Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 7/16/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes
Page 2 of 11

Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California



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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 7/16/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes
Page 3 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 7/16/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

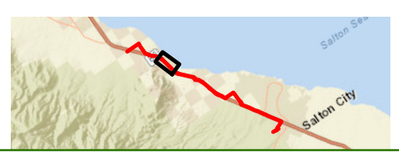
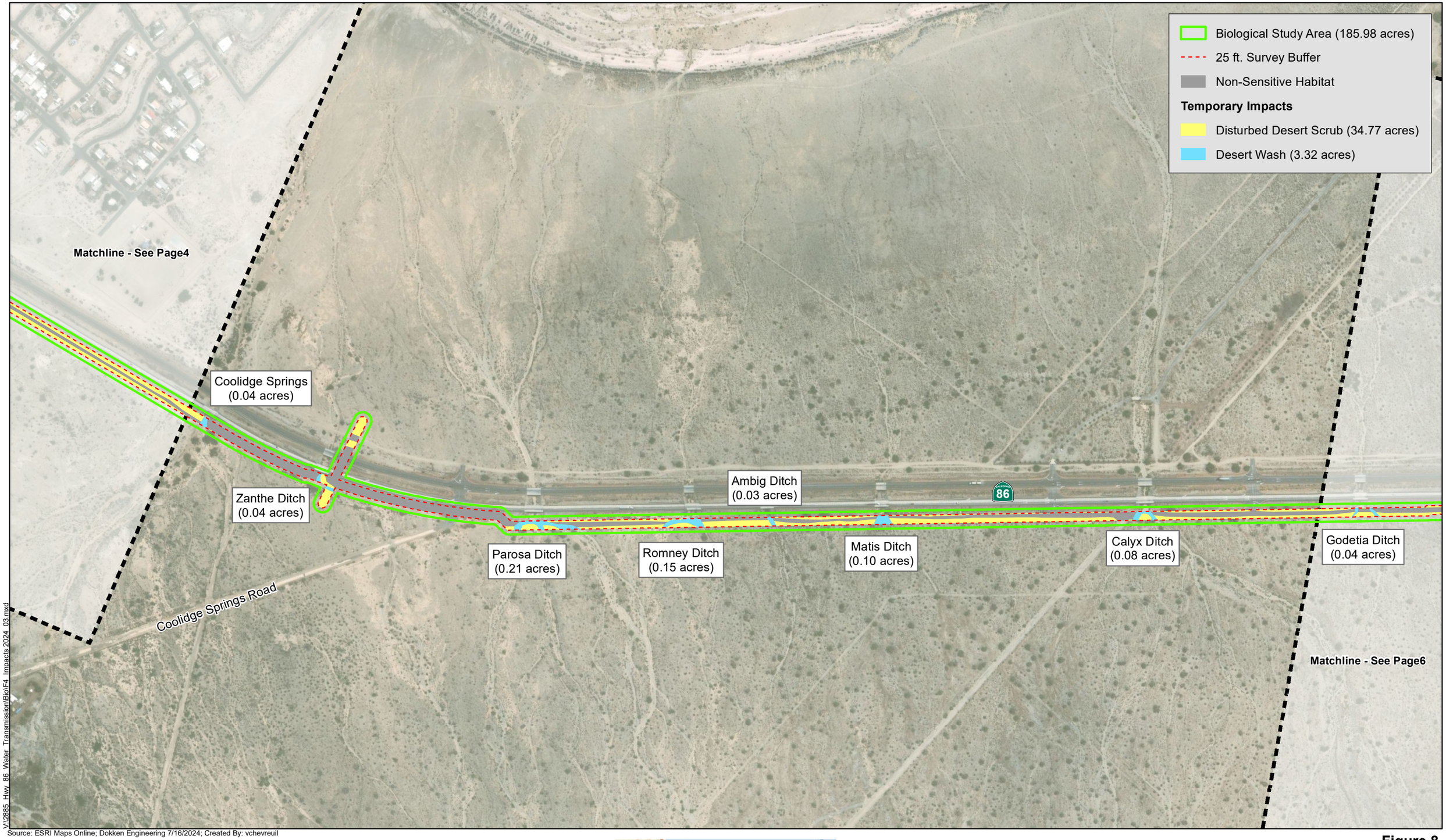


Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes
Page 4 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California



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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 7/16/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes
Page 5 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

V:\2885_Hwy_86_Water_Transmission\Bio\F4_Impacts 2024_03.mxd

Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 7/16/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

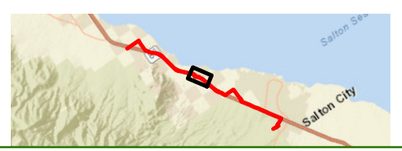

Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes
Page 6 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

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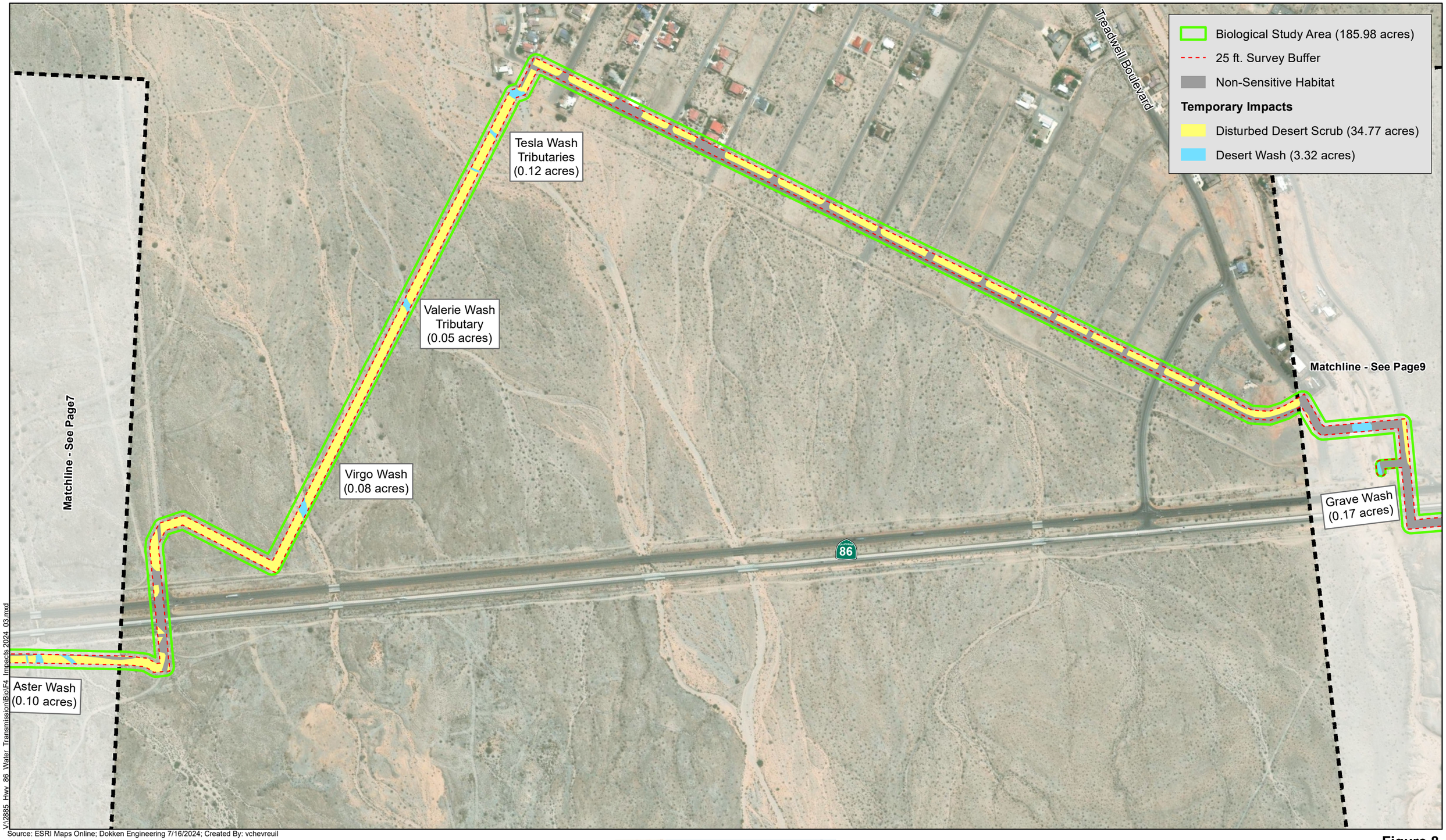
Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 7/16/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes
Page 7 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California



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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 7/16/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes
Page 8 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

V:\2885_Hwy_86_Water_Transmission\Bio\F4_Impacts 2024_03.mxd

Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 7/16/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes
Page 9 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 7/16/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes
Page 10 of 11
Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

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Source: ESRI Maps Online; Dokken Engineering 7/16/2024; Created By: vchevreuil

1 inch = 500 feet

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 Feet

Figure 8
Potential Impacts to Ephemeral Washes

Coachella Valley Water District
Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4
Riverside and Imperial Counties, California

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

(Sources: Appendix C)

The analysis regarding impacts in this section is based on the findings in the *Cultural Resources Inventory Report – Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4 Project* (the "CRIR" or Appendix C), which was prepared by Dokken Engineering (Dokken) in May 2024. The CRIR is considered confidential due to the inclusion of sensitive information; therefore, it will not be provided as an appendix. As part of Appendix C, a records search at the Eastern Information Center (EIC) and the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC), literature and historical map review, and consultation with Native Americans was conducted. (Appendix C, p. 12.)

Appendix C analyzes the area of potential effect (APE) which incorporates all ground disturbing activities required to construct the Project. The APE consists of the Pipeline Alignment continuing for approximately 15.3 miles between the town of Oasis and Salton City plus a 15-foot buffer on each side of the alignment for construction activities. The APE encompasses approximately 18.5 acres with approximately 1.8 acres of land owned by the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians (TMDCI). The tight constraints of the horizontal APE are due to limited temporary construction easements. The vertical APE was defined to a depth of 7 feet below ground surface for the maximum proposed depth of the Pipeline and subbase. The northern end of the APE is surrounded by agricultural fields, while the central and southern portions of the APE are largely barren with the exception of a few residential developments within the APE. (Appendix C, p. 2.)

A record search with a 1,000-foot buffer surrounding the Project Alignment was requested from the EIC and SCIC on January 24, 2022. The search examined the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), the Directory of Properties in the Historic Property Data File, the California Historic Landmarks (1996), the California Inventory of Historic Resources (1976), and the California Points of Historical Interest listing (May 1992 and updates). Additional research efforts conducted outside the EIC and SCIC included a review of historic USGS topographic maps, historic aerials and other pertinent historic data specific to Riverside and Imperial Counties. The EIC and SCIC reported 22 previously recorded cultural resources have been recorded within the APE and 178 cultural resources within the 1,000-foot search buffer. (Appendix C, p. 12.)

On October 24-26, 2022 and December 6, 2023, Dokken archaeologists conducted a ground surface inventory of the APE. A representative from the TMDCI was present for the October 25 and 26, 2022 field survey. No wider than ten-meter-wide pedestrian transects were used, where appropriate, to inspect the ground surface. The buried site potential was addressed by visually inspecting all cut banks, burrow holes, and other exposed sub-surface areas for the presence of archaeological resources, soil color change, and/or staining that could indicate past human activity or buried deposits. Ground visibility was generally very good with approximately 90 percent visibility throughout. Of the 22 previously recorded cultural resources, 13 could not be reidentified (i.e.,

located) and may have been removed by various utility and roadway construction activities and three (3) were linear resources with no components within the APE. (Appendix C, p. 12.) Six (6) previously recorded resources were reidentified and rerecorded during the survey, one (1) indigenous resource, two (2) historic sites, two (2) historic road segments, and one (1) levee segment were reidentified. (Appendix C, p. 25.)

4.5a Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. Historical resources are resources generally associated with non-Native American resources. Five (5) built environmental (historic) resources were identified during the pedestrian survey and are located within the APE; P-13-005102, P-13-005103, P-33-20765, P-33-20767, and P-33-020758.

P-13-005102 is a historic site recorded in 1983 consisting of concrete house foundations, driveway, out-building, and trash scatter. Construction of the southbound lanes of Highway 86 since original recordation has impacted the western portion of the site although it appears that only impacts to the driveway occurred from this work as much of the site appeared to be intact. P-13-005103 is a historic site recorded in 1983 consisting of three rock square alignments/tent foundations, concrete slab and trash scatter. Construction of the southbound lanes of Highway 86 since original recordation has impacted the site and only the trash scatter could be reidentified. Per the 1986 SHPO occurrence letter, resources P-13-005102 (concrete house foundations, driveway, out-building, and trash scatter) and P-13-005103 (three rock square alignments/tent foundations, concrete slab and trash scatter) were found to be ineligible for the National Register/California Register and that evaluation remains valid. (Appendix C, pp. 31, 37.)

P-33-20765 is a historic east-west oriented dirt road known as 86th Avenue recorded in 2012, which intersects with Highway 86. The approach to Highway 86 is paved for approximately 150 feet which includes the portion of the resource within the APE. P-33-20767 is a historic east-west oriented asphalt-paved road known as 84th Avenue recorded in 2013 which intersects with Highway 86 and is present within the APE. Both of these resources are located within Caltrans ROW. (Appendix C, p. 28.)

P-33-20765 (dirt road known as 86th Avenue) and P-33-20767 (asphalt-paved road known as 84th Avenue) are linear resources that expand broadly beyond the scope of this Project. As a result, only relatively small segments of these resources occur within the Project's APE. These linear resources are part of a larger transportation and desert agricultural systems that remain undocumented. Based on available information generated during preparation of Appendix C, these resources may lack the potential to be found eligible as individual resources. This assessment is largely speculative, however, as full documentation of the system with which they interact is incomplete. Therefore, for purposes of this Project only, it is recommended P-33-20765 and P-33-20767 be considered eligible for listing in the National Register/California Register under Criterion A/Criterion 1 for their association with the development of the regional Salton Sea agricultural landscape as defined in 36 CFR § 60.4. As this recommendation is for this Project only, future projects would need to consider their eligibility. (Appendix C, p. 32.)

The Project would utilize trenchless construction methods (jack and bore) to install the Pipeline beneath Highway 86. Use of trenchless construction techniques would avoid any physical impacts to both P-33-20765 (dirt road known as 86th Avenue) and P-33-20767 (asphalt-paved road known as 84th Avenue) and would allow both resources to remain in their existing condition, use, and alignment. The Project would not result in conditions of neglect, nor would either resource be transferred, leased, or sold out of Federal ownership. Finally, as the proposed Pipeline would be installed beneath these resources, the Project would not introduce

any visual, atmospheric or audible elements that would affect the resources. Therefore, no adverse effect to the significance of these resources would occur. (Appendix C, p. 36.)

P-33-020758 is a levee segment of the U.S. Highway 99/State Route 86S levee system. While the levee system is associated with the development and use of an important early automobile route linking southern California to points north and south—U.S. Highway 99— it is merely a minor engineering structure of standard design and construction along the highway, not directly associated with any prominent historical figures, or with any important architects or engineers of the era. In addition, most of the levee system has been removed or altered by agriculture and other development over the last several decades. U.S. Highway 99 has been replaced by State Route 86, and the former two-lane highway has been expanded into a divided highway. The new highway construction removed portions of the levee system, and all of the original bridges were replaced with new construction in 1989. Therefore, this resource is not considered eligible for listing in either the National Register or the California Register due to its lack of historical integrity and extremely poor condition. (Appendix C, pp. 32-33, 37.)

Since P-13-005102 (concrete house foundations, driveway, out-building, and trash scatter), P-13-005103 (three rock square alignments/tent foundations, concrete slab and trash scatter), and P 33-020758 (segment of the U.S. Highway 99/State Route 86S levee system) are not considered eligible for listing in either the National Register or California Register, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5**.** Although P-33-20765 (dirt road known as 86th Avenue) and P-33-20767 (asphalt-paved road known as 84th Avenue) are considered eligible for listing in the National Register/California Register for this Project only, construction or operation of the Project would not impact these resources because construction would utilize directional boring to avoid impacts and the Pipeline would be beneath the resources. (Appendix C, p. 32.)

Due to the presence of previously recorded cultural resources within and adjacent to the APE, the buried archaeological site potential was considered to determine potential for resources to be impacted during construction of the Project. Visual inspection of the drainage cut banks, irrigation ditch walls, and exposed ground along the roadways was completed along with review of the past land uses and changes to the environment. During the survey, extensive disturbances caused by commercial, residential, and transportation corridor development were noted throughout the APE. Further, many of the previously recorded sites within the study buffer included indigenous fish weirs, located both west and east of the APE. As fish weirs were placed near the Lake Cahuilla/Salton Sea shoreline, they help mark the various expansions and retreats of Lake Cahuilla\Salton Sea. The existence of fish weirs both west and east of the APE thus indicates that the APE was often inundated. While inundation of the APE might suggest a depositional environment, the surface manifestation of the fish weirs indicates that insufficient soil accumulation occurred to bury these resources. This confirms that the APE is located in a stable desert environment with little to no soil accumulation. (Appendix C, pp. 37–38.)

The periodic inundation of the APE combined with extensive ground disturbances noted during the survey and lack of depositional environment results in a low potential for the presence of buried archaeological resources within the APE; however, as with all Projects, there is a potential for subsurface deposits due to the existence of previously recorded cultural resources. To mitigate any potential impacts to unknown significant cultural resources, mitigation measures **MM CR-1** and **MM CR-2** will be implemented. Mitigation measure **MM CR-1** requires cultural resource awareness and sensitivity training be provided to all construction crew members prior to working on the Project. Mitigation measure **MM CR-2** sets forth the procedures to be followed in the event an archaeological or tribal cultural resources is discovered. For the reasons set forth above, with implementation of mitigation measures **MM CR-1** and **MM CR-2**, potential impacts regarding the Project

causing a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 would be less than significant**.** (Appendix C, pp. 37–39.)

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact with mitigation: As discussed in the preceding paragraphs, two historical resources are located within Caltrans ROW; P-33-20765 and P-33-20767. These are linear resources whose boundaries expand broadly beyond the limits of this Project. As a result, only relatively small segments of these two recorded resources occur within the APE. These linear resources are part of a larger transportation and desert agricultural systems that remain undocumented. Based on available information generated during preparation of Appendix C, these resources may lack the potential to be found eligible as individual resources. This assessment is largely speculative, however, as full documentation of the system with which they interact is incomplete. Therefore, for this Project only, these resources are recommended considered eligible for listing in the National Register/California Register under Criterion A/Criterion 1 for their association with the development of the regional Salton Sea agricultural landscape as defined in 36 CFR § 60.4. As this recommendation is for this Project only, future Projects would need to consider their eligibility. (Appendix C, p. 32.)

The Project will utilize trenchless construction to install the Pipeline beneath Highway 86, which would avoid any physical impacts to both resources and will allow both resources to remain in their existing condition, use, and alignment. The Project would not result in conditions of neglect, nor will either resource be transferred, leased, or sold out of Federal ownership. Finally, as the proposed Pipeline would be installed beneath these resources, the Project would not introduce any visual, atmospheric, or audible elements that would affect the resources. Therefore, no adverse effect to the significance of these historical resources will occur. (Appendix C, p. 36.)

Due to the presence of previously recorded cultural resources within and adjacent to the APE, the buried archaeological site potential was considered to determine potential for resources to be impacted during construction of the Project. Visual inspection of the drainage cut banks, irrigation ditch walls, and exposed ground along the roadways was completed along with review of the past land uses and changes to the environment. During the survey, extensive disturbances caused by commercial, residential, and transportation corridor development were noted throughout the APE. Further, many of the previously recorded sites within the study buffer included indigenous fish weirs, located both west and east of the APE. As fish weirs were placed near the Lake Cahuilla/Salton Sea shoreline, they help mark the various expansions and retreats of Lake Cahuilla\Salton Sea. The existence of fish weirs both west and east of the APE thus indicates that the APE was often inundated. While inundation of the APE might suggest a depositional environment, the surface manifestation of the fish weirs indicates that insufficient soil accumulation occurred to bury these resources. This confirms that the APE is located in a stable desert environment with little to no soil accumulation. (Appendix C, pp. 37–38.)

The periodic inundation of the APE combined with extensive ground disturbances noted during the survey and lack of depositional environment results in a low potential for the presence of buried archaeological resources within the APE; however, as with all Projects, there is a potential for subsurface deposits due to the existence of previously recorded cultural resources. To mitigate any potential impacts to significant cultural resources, mitigation measures **MM CR-1** and **MM CR-2** would be implemented to reduce impacts to less than significant. Therefore, through implementation of mitigation measures **MM CR-1** and **MM CR-2**, potential impacts regarding the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW causing a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 would be less than significant**.** (Appendix C, pp. 37–39.)

4.5b Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

As discussed in the response to threshold 4.5a above, there were 22 previously recorded cultural resources found through the records search. Of those 22 previously recorded resources, six (6) previously recorded resources were reidentified and re-recorded during the Project survey which included one prehistoric (archaeological) resource. This resource, P-13-003675, is located within BIA jurisdictional land as well as the Caltrans ROW and is discussed below.

Less than significant impact with mitigation. The only recorded archaeological resource (P-13-003675) was previously determined not eligible for listing the National Register or California Register in consultation with the SHPO. P-13-003675 was first recorded in 1983 as extensive lithic, ground stone, and ceramic scatter located on either side of Highway 86. P-13-003675 (extensive lithic, ground stone, and ceramic scatter) was previously determined not to contain any characteristics that would make the site eligible for listing on the National Register/California Register; however, as the site boundary for this resource was extended after the SHPO concurrence and as the entirety of the site extends beyond the narrow confines of the APE, a formal evaluation of the entire P-13-003675 (extensive lithic, ground stone, and ceramic scatter) is beyond the scope of this Project. However, as previous surveys and excavations analyzed in Appendix C confirmed that resource P-13-003675 consists of noncontiguous surface only artifact scatters and as no artifact scatters were noted within the Project APE, the Project would avoid impacts to any remaining artifacts still present within the overall resource boundary; therefore, the Project would not impact this resource . For these reasons, the entirety of this site is recommended as considered eligible for listing on the National Register/California Register, for the purposes of this Project only, under Criterion D/Criterion 4 as they may yield information important to our understanding of the past. (Appendix C, pp. 31-32, 37.) As this recommendation is for this Project only, future projects would need to consider its eligibility.

Refer to the response to threshold 4.5a for a discussion of sites P-33-020758 (segment of the U.S. Highway 99/State Route 86S levee system), P-13-005102 (concrete house foundations, driveway, out-building, and trash scatter), and P-13-005103 (three rock square alignments/tent foundations, concrete slab and trash scatter).

In order to address whether there were any unrecorded or previously unknown archaeological sites, the buried archaeological site potential for the Project was addressed through visual inspection of the drainage cut banks, irrigation ditch walls, and exposed ground along the roadways. During the survey, extensive disturbances caused by commercial, residential, and transportation corridor development were noted throughout the APE. Further, many of the previously recorded sites within the study buffer included indigenous fish weirs, located both west and east of the APE. As fish weirs were placed near the Lake Cahuilla/Salton Sea shoreline, they help mark the various expansions and retreats of Lake Cahuilla\Salton Sea. The existence of fish weirs both west and east of the APE thus indicates that the APE was often inundated. While inundation of the APE might suggest a depositional environment, the surface manifestation of the fish weirs indicates that insufficient soil accumulation occurred to bury these resources. This confirms that the APE is located in a stable desert environment with little to no soil accumulation. The periodic inundation of the APE combined with extensive ground disturbances noted during the survey and lack of depositional environment results in a low potential for the presence of buried archaeological resources within the APE; however, as with all Projects, there is a potential for subsurface deposits due to the existence of previously recorded cultural resources. To mitigate for any potential impacts to significant cultural resources, the Project would implement mitigation measures **MM CR-1**, **MM CR-2** and **MM TCR-1**. These mitigation measures would include sensitivity training, monitoring, and preparation of a plan to address if archaeological resources are uncovered during construction. Thus, impacts regarding a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5 would be less than significant with mitigation.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact with mitigation: Archaeological resource P-13-003675, which was previously determined not eligible for listing the National Register or California Register in consultation with the SHPO is located within Caltrans ROW. P 13-003675 was first recorded in 1983 as extensive lithic, ground stone, and ceramic scatter located on either side of Highway P-13-003675 (extensive lithic, ground stone, and ceramic scatter) was previously determined not to contain any characteristics that would make the site eligible for listing on the National Register/California Register; however, as the site boundary for this resource was extended after the SHPO concurrence and as the entirety of the site extends beyond the narrow confines of the APE, a formal evaluation of the entire P-13-003675 (extensive lithic, ground stone, and ceramic scatter) is beyond the scope of this Project. However, as previous surveys and excavations confirmed that P-13-003675 consists of noncontiguous surface only artifact scatters and as no scatters were noted within the APE, the Project would avoid impacts to any remaining artifacts still present within the overall boundary; therefore, the Project would not impact this resource . For these reasons, the entirety of this site is recommended as considered eligible for listing on the National Register/California Register, for the purposes of this Project only, under Criterion D/Criterion 4 as they may yield information important to our understanding of the past. (Appendix C, pp. 31-32, 37.) As this recommendation is for this Project only, future projects would need to consider its eligibility.

Refer to the response to threshold 4.5a for a discussion of sites P-33-020758 (segment of the U.S. Highway 99/State Route 86S levee system), P-13-005102 (concrete house foundations, driveway, out-building, and trash scatter), and P-13-005103 (three rock square alignments/tent foundations, concrete slab and trash scatter).

In order to address whether there were any unrecorded or previously unknown archaeological sites, the buried archaeological site potential for the Project was addressed through visual inspection of the drainage cut banks, irrigation ditch walls, and exposed ground along the roadways. During the survey, extensive disturbances caused by commercial, residential, and transportation corridor development were noted throughout the APE. Further, many of the previously recorded sites within the study buffer included indigenous fish weirs, located both west and east of the APE. As fish weirs were placed near the Lake Cahuilla/Salton Sea shoreline, they help mark the various expansions and retreats of Lake Cahuilla\Salton Sea. The existence of fish weirs both west and east of the APE thus indicates that the APE was often inundated. While inundation of the APE might suggest a depositional environment, the surface manifestation of the fish weirs indicates that insufficient soil accumulation occurred to bury these resources. This confirms that the APE is located in a stable desert environment with little to no soil accumulation. The periodic inundation of the APE combined with extensive ground disturbances noted during the survey and lack of depositional environment results in a low potential for the presence of buried archaeological resources within the APE; however, as with all Projects, there is a potential for subsurface deposits due to the existence of previously recorded cultural resources. To mitigate for any potential impacts to significant cultural resources, the Project would implement mitigation measures **MM CR-1**, **MM CR-2,** and **MM TCR-1**. These mitigation measures would include sensitivity training, monitoring, and preparation of a plan to address if archaeological resources are uncovered during construction. Thus, impacts regarding a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5 would be less than significant with mitigation.

4.5c Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

Less than significant impact with mitigation. The APE in the northern portion is surrounded by agricultural fields, while the central and southern portions are largely barren with the exception of a few residential developments. No known cemetery has occurred within the Project area, so it is not expected to contain human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. However, the potential exists for previously unknown human remains to be discovered at the site during Project construction activities. Through implementation of **MM CR-3,** pursuant to California Health and Safety Code regulations Section 7050.5, 57051,

and 7054, and California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, in the unlikely event that suspected human remains are uncovered during construction, all activities in the vicinity of the remains shall cease and the contractor shall notify the proper authorities and standard procedures for the respectful handling of human remains will be adhered to. Thus, through regulatory compliance and **MM CR-3**, the Project would not disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact with mitigation: As discussed above, there is no known cemetery having occurred within the Project area, so it is not anticipated to contain human remains including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. However, the potential exits for previously unknown human remains to be discovered at the site during Project construction activities. Through implementation of **MM CR-3,** pursuant to California Health and Safety Code regulations Section 7050.5, 57051, and 7054, and California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, in the unlikely event that suspected human remains are uncovered during construction, all activities in the vicinity of the remains shall cease and the contractor shall notify the proper authorities and standard procedures for the respectful handling of human remains will be adhered to. Thus, through regulatory compliance and **MM CR-3**, the Project would not disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

Cultural Resources Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following mitigation measures, along with **MM TCR-1**, which is set forth in section 18 Tribal Cultural Resources, would reduce impacts to cultural resources to less than significant.

MM CR-1: Cultural Awareness Training. Prior to construction, a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior Standards in Archaeology shall prepare a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) which includes cultural resource awareness and sensitivity training. Prior to any Project-related construction or ground disturbance activities, the WEAP shall be provided to all construction crew members to ensure that the crew members are aware of the need for cultural resource monitoring, the monitoring protocol, and the work cessation and notification protocol. No individual shall be permitted to work at the Project site until they have completed WEAP training. In lieu of in-person training, the WEAP training may be recorded and presented to any contractor or crew member not present at the initial in-person training. This training may be conducted concurrently with other environmental (e.g. biological resources) or safety training.

MM CR-2: Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources Monitoring. All ground disturbing activities shall be monitored per the detailed protocols set forth in the Tribal Cultural Resources Monitoring and Discovery Plan prepared under mitigation measure **MM TCR-1**.

In the event any archaeological resource(s) or tribal cultural resource(s) are discovered, the resource(s) shall be subject to identification, treatment, disposition, and documentation standards set forth in the Tribal Cultural Resources Monitoring and Discovery Plan.

MM CR-3: Human Remains. If human remains are encountered on private or public-owned land, all ground disturbing activities shall cease within 100 feet of the discovery. State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner and CVWD must be notified of the find immediately.

CVWD must be on present on the site with the County Coroner. If the remains are identified as Human Indigenous, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and CVWD. The NAHC which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). CVWD will contact the TMDCI. With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC. The MLD may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive an analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials.

Should inadvertent discovery of human remains and objects subject to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) as defined in 43 CFR 10.2 be identified, all ground disturbing activities shall cease within 50 feet of the discovery, or a greater distance as determined by the archaeological monitor, and the County Coroner, CVWD, the BIA, and TMDCI shall be contacted immediately. The discovery will be handled by the BIA and the TMDCI under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act regulation at 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 7 and NAGPRA regulations at 43 CFR 10 as well as related BIA and TMDCI policy.

Cultural Resources Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Withing Caltrans ROW

Implementation of mitigation measures **MM CR-1** through **MM CR-3** above, and mitigation measure **MM TCR-1**, set forth in the response to thresholds 4.18a and 4.18b, would reduce impacts to biological resources for the portions of the Project within Caltrans ROW to less than significant.

4.6 ENERGY	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: Appendix A, Appendix D, Project Description)

4.6a Would the Project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

No Impact. As an infrastructure project, the majority of impacts would be short-term. As described in the AQ/GHG Analysis (Appendix A), the Project's short-term construction would last approximately 17 months. Project construction would require the use of construction equipment for pipeline trenching/installation, paving, and jack and bore construction operations, as well as construction workers and vendors traveling to and from the Project site. Construction equipment requires diesel as the fuel source and construction worker and vendor trips use both gasoline and diesel fuel. Project-related fuel consumption was estimated and is included in Appendix D – Energy Tables. Construction of the Project is estimated to use approximately 76,145 gallons of diesel fuel and 3,590 gallons of gasoline. (Appendix D.)

Fuel consumption from on-site heavy-duty construction equipment and construction would be temporary in nature and uses a limited number of equipment, which would represent a negligible demand on energy resources. Furthermore, there are no unusual Project site characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy-efficient than at comparable construction sites in other parts of the State.

For these reasons, the Project would not result in a potentially significant impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy during Project construction or operation. There are no impacts. No mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: As with the proposed Project, because the construction is temporary in nature and uses a limited number of equipment, there is no impact regarding wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during Project construction or operation. No mitigation is required.

4.6b Would the Project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

No Impact. The Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency because there are no applicable plans for water transmission pipelines. Thus, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. No impact would occur.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: As with the proposed Project, because there are no applicable plans for water transmission pipelines, there would be no impacts associated with the implementation of state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. No mitigation is required.

Energy Mitigation Measures

There will be no impacts to energy; therefore, no mitigation is required.

Energy Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

There will be no impacts to energy for the portions of the Project within Caltrans ROW; therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
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 risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

(Sources: Appendix E, Construction General Storm Water Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ, RCGP, ICGP, RCGP EIR, DOC-A, DOC-B)

A *Geotechnical Investigation Report, Highway 86 Water Transmission Main, Phases 3 & 4*, September 12, 2023, was prepared for the proposed Project by Converse Consultants. This report is included as Appendix E.

4.7a.(i) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving 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.

Surface rupture refers to the actual "tearing apart" of the ground surface along a fault trace resulting from an earthquake. The effects of surface rupture may be mitigated by placing structures a specific distance from the known fault trace. The Alquist-Priolo Act requires the State Geologist to establish regulatory zones (known as Earthquake Fault Zones) and to issue appropriate maps. Local agencies must then regulate most development projects within the zones.

Less than significant impact. The Project area is situated in a seismically active region. As is the case for most areas of Southern California, ground-shaking resulting from earthquakes associated with nearby and more distant faults may occur along the Pipeline Alignment. During the life of the Project, seismic activity associated

with active faults can be expected to generate moderate to strong ground shaking. Based on a review of recent seismological and geophysical publications by Converse Consultants, the seismic hazard for the Project is high; however, the potential for surface rupture from fault activity is considered to be low to moderate. (Appendix E, pp. 8, 10.)

No portion of the Pipeline Alignment is within or adjacent to an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone identified by the California Geological Survey for either of these faults. (Appendix E, p. 8; DOC-A; DOC-B.) There are 15 earthquake faults within 100 kilometers (km) or approximately 62 miles of the Project Alignment. The two closet faults are the South San Andreas Fault, approximately 19 km (12 miles) away and the San Jacinto Fault, approximately 24 km (15 miles) away. (Appendix E, p. 8.) Both of these faults traverse Riverside County and Imperial County. (DOC-A; DOC-B.) Although the Project would be subject to seismic activity from faults located in the vicinity, no habitable structures that would involve exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving earthquake rupture are proposed as part of the Project.

The construction activities associated with Pipeline replacement, including excavation, trenching, and installation of the new Pipeline, have the potential to induce minor ground disturbances and vibrations. Construction activities can generate localized ground vibrations, therefore through adherence to the applicable regulatory requirements and CVWD standards, impacts from construction activities would be minimized in their magnitude and duration. As discussed above, the nearest fault is 12 miles away, the Pipeline replacement would not contribute to an earthquake or introduce any new sources of seismic activity. The replacement and installation of the proposed Pipeline will not introduce new hazards and there would be no adverse impacts to the surrounding communities.

One of the potential risks associated with seismic activity is the rupture or breakage of underground pipes. In the event of a significant earthquake, ground shaking can induce stress on buried infrastructure, potentially leading to the failure of pipes. Currently, the underground utilities are constructed and maintained to current seismic design standards. Additionally, the Project includes measures to further reinforce critical infrastructure vulnerable to seismic events such as installing flexible connections, concrete slurry support beneath pipes where they exit the structures, overlaying the pipes with a few inches of compressible materials, and thrust blocks. (Appendix E, pp. 17-18.) While the rupture of a pipe during an earthquake could result in localized disruption to utility services and potential releases of water, the Project's design incorporates infrastructure and emergency response protocols such as manual mainline valves to minimize runoff. If in the unlikely event the roadway was flooded flows will likely be collected in the washes along the alignment and eventually discharge to the Salton Sea. Furthermore, the likelihood of a pipe breakage causing significant environmental harm, such as contamination of sensitive habitats or water bodies, is low due to the Project's location.

The proposed Pipeline would be designed to incorporate standard seismic design criteria, including those set forth by the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and CVWD. The Project would follow design recommendations for resistance to lateral loads, pipe design parameters, bearing pressures, and soil corrosivity. With implementation of design recommendations and AWWA and CVWD standards potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving 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 would be reduced to less than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: The portions of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW are in proximity to the San Jacinto and San Andreas Faults; however, no

portion of the Pipeline is within the within or adjacent to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone identified by the California Geological Survey for either of these faults. (DOC-A, DOC-B.)

Although the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would be subject to seismic activity from faults located in the vicinity, no habitable structures that would involve exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving earthquake rupture are proposed as part of the Project.

The construction activities associated with Pipeline replacement, including excavation, trenching, and installation of the new Pipeline, have the potential to induce minor ground disturbances and vibrations. Construction activities can generate localized ground vibrations, through adherence to the applicable regulatory requirements and CVWD standards, impacts from construction activities will be minimized in their magnitude and duration. As discussed above, the nearest fault is 12 miles away, the Pipeline replacement would not contribute to an earthquake or introduce any new sources of seismic activity. The replacement and installation of the proposed Pipeline will not introduce new hazards and there would be no adverse impacts to the surrounding communities.

One of the potential risks associated with seismic activity is the rupture or breakage of underground pipes. In the event of a significant earthquake, ground shaking can induce stress on buried infrastructure, potentially leading to the failure of pipes. Currently, the underground utilities are constructed and maintained to current seismic design standards. Additionally, the Project includes measures to further reinforce critical infrastructure vulnerable to seismic events such as installing flexible connections, concrete slurry support beneath pipes where they exit the structures, overlaying the pipes with a few inches of compressible materials, and thrust blocks. (Appendix E, pp. 17–18.) While the rupture of a pipe during an earthquake could result in localized disruption to utility services and potential releases of water, the Project's design incorporates infrastructure and emergency response protocols such as manual mainline valves to minimize runoff. If in the unlikely event the roadway was flooded flows will likely be collected in the washes along the alignment and eventually discharge to the Salton Sea. Furthermore, the likelihood of a pipe breakage causing significant environmental harm, such as contamination of sensitive habitats or water bodies, is low due to the Project's location.

The proposed Pipeline would be designed to incorporate standard seismic design criteria, including those set forth by the American Water Works Association, CVWD, and the *Geotechnical Investigation Report.* The Project would follow design recommendations for resistance to lateral loads, pipe design parameters, bearing pressures, and soil corrosivity. With implementation of design recommendations and AWWA and CVWD standards potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving 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 would be reduced to less than significant for the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW.

4.7a.(ii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking

Given the proximity of known faults, the Project area is susceptible to potential intense seismic ground shaking. The effects of ground shaking on structures and underground pipelines are difficult to predict, and depend on the intensity of the quake, the distance from the epicenter to the site, the composition of soils and bedrock, construction design, and other physical criteria. Based on these factors, ground shaking may cause no, little, or major structural damage or destruction.

Less than significant impact. As discussed in the response to threshold 4.7a.(i) the Project would be subject to seismic activity from faults located in the vicinity, however no habitable structures that would involve exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving earthquake rupture are proposed. Further, through compliance with the design and construction recommendations set forth in the *Geotechnical Investigation Report* and by CVWD such as pipe bedding, thrust blocks, and flexible connections, hazards associated with strong seismic ground shaking would be reduced to less than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: As discussed in the response to threshold 4.7a.(i) the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would be subject to seismic activity from faults located in the vicinity, however no habitable structures that would involve exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving earthquake rupture are proposed. Further, through compliance with the design and construction recommendations set forth in the *Geotechnical Investigation Report* and by CVWD such as pipe bedding, thrust blocks, and flexible connections, hazards associated with strong seismic ground shaking for the portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW would be reduced to less than significant.

4.7a.(iii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Liquefaction commonly occurs in loose, saturated, fine- to medium-grained soils in areas where the ground water table is within approximately 50 feet of the surface. Shaking causes the soils to lose strength and behave as liquid. Liquefaction-related effects include loss of bearing strength, ground oscillations, lateral spreading and flow failures or slumping. (COR, p. S-34.)

Less than significant impact. The proposed Project area is not located within a zone designated as susceptible to liquefaction by the State of California. (Appendix E, p. 11.) Nonetheless, Project design and construction would incorporate the recommendations set forth in the *Geotechnical Investigation Report* and adhere to design and construction standards set by CVWD. The final subgrade surface should be level, firm, uniform, free from loose materials and properly graded to provide uniform bearing and support to the entire section of the pipe placed on bedding material. Any loose or unsuitable materials encountered at the pipe sub-grade should be removed and replaced with adequate material. Pipe bedding, backfill materials, and trench backfills shall follow the CVWD standards. (Appendix E, pp. 13-14.) Hazards associated with liquefaction would be reduced to less than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: The portion of the Project Alignment within Caltrans ROW, is not located within a zone designated as susceptible to liquefaction by the State of California. (Appendix E, p. 11.) Nonetheless, Project design and construction would incorporate the recommendations set forth in the *Geotechnical Investigation Report* and adhere to design and construction standards set by CVWD. The final subgrade surface should be level, firm, uniform, free from loose materials and properly graded to provide uniform bearing and support to the entire section of the pipe placed on bedding material. Any loose or unsuitable materials encountered at the pipe sub-grade should be removed and replaced with adequate material. Pipe bedding, backfill materials, and trench backfills shall follow the CVWD standards. (Appendix E, pp. 13-14.) Hazards associated with liquefaction for the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would be reduced to less than significant.

4.7.a.(iv) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

Strong ground motions can result in landslides, rock slides, and rock falls, particularly where saturated ground conditions exist. During an earthquake, groundwater conditions also have an influence in the development of seismically induced slope failures, as well as landslides and mudflows. Lateral spreading is a type of landslide that can occur on gentle to steep slopes where seismic-induced liquefaction occurs in saturated soils.

Less than significant impact. While the Project runs parallel to mountain ranges, these mountain ranges are not located within close proximity to the Project area. Riverside County General Plan EIR *Figure 4.12.4: Steep Slopes* depicts the Project Alignment within an area with a slope angle of less than 15 percent. (COR EIR, p. 4.12-17.) Portions of western Imperial County have potentially significant landslide activity, and areas such as Jacumba, Coyote, Fish Creek and Santa Rosa Mountains have moderate landslide activity. (ICEIR, p. II-227.) The proposed Project area is adjacent to hillsides but is not designated in a State of California landslide area. In the absence of significantly steep ground slopes, the potential for seismically induced landslides that would affect the proposed Project Alignment is considered low. (Appendix E, p. 11.) Therefore, impacts associated with the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides would be less than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: The portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW is distant from mountain ranges. The Riverside County portion of the Project withing Caltrans ROW is within an area with slopes less than 15 percent. (COR EIR, p. 4.12-17.) The majority of the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW is within Imperial County, and not located within a significant or moderate landslide area. The portion of the Project area within Caltrans ROW is adjacent to hillsides but is not designated in a State of California landslide area. In the absence of significantly steep ground slopes, the potential for seismically induced landslides to affect the portion of the Project Alignment within Caltrans ROW is considered to be low. (Appendix E, p. 11.) Additionally, the Project would implement any conditions associated with the encroachment permit issued by Caltrans. Therefore, impacts regarding risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides within Caltrans ROW would be less than significant.

4.7b Would the Project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less than significant impact. Construction of the proposed Project would not result in changes to existing topography, or require grading. However, excavation may occur during the rainy season and unstable soil conditions and soil erosion may occur. Compliance with current regulations for utility trench excavations and implementation of a SWPPP that incorporates effective erosion and sediment control measures would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Construction of the portion of the proposed Project within the Caltrans ROW would not result in changes to existing topography, or require grading. However, excavation may occur during the rainy season and unstable soil conditions and soil erosion may occur. Compliance with current regulations for utility trench excavations, implementation of a SWPPP that incorporates effective erosion and sediment control measures, and compliance with conditions associated with the encroachment permit issued by Caltrans would reduce these impacts to less than significant.

4.7c Would the Project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

Less than significant impact. Impacts related to landslide and lateral spreading are addressed in threshold 4.7a.iv above; impacts related to liquefaction are addressed in threshold 4.7a.iii above. This analysis addresses impacts related to unstable soils, as a result of lateral spreading, subsidence, or collapse.

The majority of the Pipeline Alignment traverses through sand with silt and gravel and silty sand soil types which are considered unstable soils (Appendix E, p. 65.) However, geological hazards resulting from construction on unstable soils, would be reduced to less than significant through implementation of the design and construction recommendations set for in the *Geotechnical Investigation Report.* The Project would follow recommendations such as temporary shoring to protect workers and any adjacent structures. Temporary shoring will be required where open sloped excavations will not be feasible due to unstable soils or due to nearby existing structures or facilities. Temporary open-cut trenches may be constructed, if soft and wet fine-grained soils, dry loose, cohesionless soils, or loose fill from trench backfill is encountered a flatter gradient may be used. (Appendix E, pp. 23-26.)

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Impacts related to landslide and lateral spreading for the portion of the Project Within Caltrans ROW are addressed in threshold 4.7a.iv above; impacts related to liquefaction are addressed in threshold 4.7a.iii above. This analysis addresses impacts related to unstable soils, as a result of lateral spreading, subsidence, or collapse.

Segments of the portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW may traverse unstable soils. However, geological hazards resulting from construction on unstable soils, would be reduced to less than significant through implementation of the design and construction recommendations set forth in the *Geotechnical Investigation Report.* The Project would follow recommendations such as temporary shoring to protect workers and any adjacent structures. Temporary shoring will be required where open sloped excavations will not be feasible due to unstable soils or due to nearby existing structures or facilities. Temporary open-cut trenches may be constructed, if soft and wet fine-grained soils, dry loose, cohesionless soils, or loose fill from trench backfill is encountered a flatter gradient may be used. (Appendix E, pp. 23-26.) Implementation of design and construction recommendations and compliance with conditions associated with the encroachment permit would reduce hazards associated with construction on unstable soils for the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW to less than significant.

4.7d Would the Project 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?

This question makes specific reference to a definition from the Uniform Building Code (1994), which has been replaced by the California Building Code (2016) and the definition of expansive soil provided in section 1803.5.3. Expansive soils are those that contain a significant amount of clay particles that have a high shrink (dry) and swell (wet) potential. The upward pressures induced by the swelling of expansive soils under moist conditions can damage structures.

Less than significant impact. According to the *Geotechnical Investigation Report,* the boring logs indicate expansive soils are present below 15 ft. For the purposes of this Project, that level of depth will not be reached and therefore impacts from expansive soil are less than significant. However, compliance with the design and construction recommendations set forth in the *Geotechnical Investigation Report* would reduce hazards associated with expansive soils to less than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Portions of the Project Alignment may traverse through areas that contain expansive soils, but are present below 15 ft. For the purposes of this Project, that level of depth will not be reached and therefore impacts from expansive soils are less than significant. However, compliance with design and construction recommendations set forth in the *Geotechnical Investigation Report* and any conditions associated with the Caltrans encroachment permit would reduce hazards associated with expansive soils for the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW to less than significant.

4.7e Would the Project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No impact. The proposed Project does not include the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. The Project does not propose to dispose of any wastes by applying to soil. Thus, there would be no impact in terms of having soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW does not include the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. There would be no impact in regarding soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems within Caltrans ROW.

4.7f Would the Project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Paleontological resources include fossils of plant and animal remains from prehistoric eras. The portion of the Pipeline Alignment that traverses through Riverside County is designated as (U) Undetermined Potential according to Riverside County General Plan – Open Space Element. This area has not been studied for paleontological sensitivity.

The majority of the Pipeline Alignment is within Imperial County. Imperial County can generally be divided into three geomorphic provinces: the Peninsular Range, the Salton Trough, and the Mojave Desert. The Salton Trough is the most significant of the three provinces, as it underlays a majority of Imperial County. The Salton Trough is a northwestern landward continuation of the Gulf of California rift, which was formed by gradual settling in association with uplift of the surrounding mountains during the Miocene, Pliocene and Pleistocene epochs. Much of the land surface within this province is below sea level, and the Trough extends from the southeast to the northwest. It is bounded on the northeast and east by the Chocolate Mountains and Cargo Muchacho Mountains, and on the southwest and west by the Jacumba, Coyote, Fish Creek and Santa Rosa Mountains. The Salton Trough has experienced continual in-filling with both marine and non-marine sediments since its formation in the Miocene epoch (30 million years before present). The specific stratigraphy incorporates Middle and/or Lower Pliocene marine, undivided Pliocene marine, and Quaternary non-marine terrace deposits. (ICGP EIR, p. III-215–III-216.)

According to the Department of Conservation's California Regional Geologic Maps Santa Ana Sheet (DOC-C), the region is underlain by Holocene age mostly recent to quaternary deposits including recent dune sand (Qs), unconsolidated stream, river channel, and alluvial fan deposits (Qai), and deposits of Lake Cahuilla (Qi). A small portion near the county line is underlain by Mesozoic age pre-cretaceous metasedimentary rocks (ms). (DOC-D) Late Quaternary-age lacustrine deposits derived from ancient Lake Cahuilla have been proven to yield scientifically significant mollusk shells within the Salton Trough. Fossil specimens of diatoms, spores, pollen,

land plants, sponges, ostracods, freshwater gastropods, fresher bivalves, fish, and small terrestrial vertebrate have been recovered from the Pleistocene-age Lake Cahuilla beds. In addition, Holocene-age, non-mineralized (non-fossil) mollusk shells are also found in the Lake Cahuilla silt deposits; their recovery and subsequent dating have helped researchers with studies in archaeology, geology, and seismology.

Qs-Qi have a low potential to contain intact paleontological resources because they are typically too young to contain fossilized remains. However, these quaternary deposits may be underlain at certain depths by older deposits which yield significant paleontological findings. Therefore, by implementing mitigation measure **MM GEO-1**, which implements a paleontological resource impact mitigation and monitoring plan, impacts to paleontological resources will be less than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant with mitigation incorporated: According to the Department of Conservation's California Regional Geologic Maps Santa Ana Sheet (DOC-C), the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW is underlain by Holocene age mostly recent to quaternary deposits including recent dune sand (Qs), unconsolidated stream, river channel, and alluvial fan deposits (Qai), and deposits of Lake Cahuilla (Qi). A small portion near the county line is underlain by Mesozoic age pre-cretaceous metasedimentary rocks (ms). (DOC-D) Late Quaternary-age lacustrine deposits derived from ancient Lake Cahuilla have been proven to yield scientifically significant mollusk shells within the Salton Trough. Fossil specimens of diatoms, spores, pollen, land plants, sponges, ostracods, freshwater gastropods, fresher bivalves, fish, and small terrestrial vertebrate have been recovered from the Pleistocene-age Lake Cahuilla beds. In addition, Holocene-age, non-mineralized (non-fossil) mollusk shells are also found in the Lake Cahuilla silt deposits; their recovery and subsequent dating have helped researchers with studies in archaeology, geology, and seismology.

Qs-Qi have a low potential to contain intact paleontological resources because they are typically too young to contain fossilized remains. However, these quaternary deposits may be underlain at certain depths by older deposits which yield significant paleontological findings. Therefore, by implementing mitigation measure **MM GEO-1**, which implements a paleontological resource impact mitigation and monitoring plan, impacts to paleontological resources will be less than significant.

Geology and Soils Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce impacts to geology and soils, specifically paleontological resources, to less than significant.

> **MM GEO-1: Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program:** Construction activities that extend below the depth of artificial fill and below road pavement may impact significant paleontological resources throughout the Project area. Therefore, prior to the issuance of grading permits and consistent with Riverside County General Plan policies (i.e., Open Space Element Policy 19.6), a Paleontological Resource Impact Mitigation Program (PRIMP) shall be prepared by a qualified professional paleontologist as defined by mitigation paleontology industry standards and/or the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. The PRIMP will include a Worker's Environmental Awareness Program training prepared prior to the start of Project-related ground disturbance and presented in person to all field personnel to describe the types of paleontological resources that may be found and the procedures to follow if any are encountered; the monitoring plan will indicate where construction monitoring should occur and the frequency of required monitoring (e.g., full-time, spot-checks, etc.); the monitoring plan will also provide details about fossil collection, analysis, and preparation for permanent curation at an approved repository; and lastly, the monitoring plan will describe the different reporting

standards to be used, such as monitoring with negative findings versus monitoring resulting in fossil discoveries.

Geology and Soils Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

Implementation of mitigation measure **MM GEO-1** above would reduce impacts to geology and soils for the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW to less than significant.

4.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: Project Description, Appendix A)

4.8a Would the Project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Greenhouse gases (GHG) are not presented in pounds per day (lbs/day) like criteria pollutants; they are typically evaluated on an annual basis using the metric system. Several agencies, at various levels, have proposed draft GHG significance thresholds for use in CEQA documents. SCAQMD has worked on GHG thresholds for development projects. In December 2008, the SCAQMD Governing Board adopted the staff proposal for an *Interim CEQA GHG Significance Threshold for Stationary Sources, Rules and Plans,* the SCAQMD adopted a threshold of 10,000 metric tonnes per year of carbon dioxide equivalents ($MTCO_2E$/yr) for stationary source projects where SCAQMD is the lead agency. (SCAQMD 2008.) The most recent draft proposal was in September 2010 and included screening significance thresholds for residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects at 3,500, 1,400, and 3,000 $MTCO_2E$/yr, respectively. Alternatively, a lead agency has the option to use 3,000 $MTCO_2E$/yr as a threshold for all non-industrial projects. Although both options are recommended by SCAQMD, a lead agency is advised to use only one option and to use it consistently. The ICAPCD has not adopted a GHG significance threshold; therefore, the SCAQMD significance threshold of 3,000 MTCO2E/yr s was utilized for evaluation of the entire Project Alignment. SCAQMD guidance also recommends amortizing construction emission over an expected project life of 30 years.

Less than significant impact. The AQ/GHG Analysis prepared for the Project (Appendix A) estimated GHG emissions from fuel usage by construction equipment and construction-related activities, such as construction worker trips. Model results, shown in Appendix A, indicate that an estimated 758.83 $MTCO_2E$ would occur from Project construction equipment over the course of the estimated construction period, as shown in **Table I – Project Construction Equipment GHG Emissions**.

Table I – Project Construction Equipment GHG Emissions

Year	Metric Tons per year (MT/yr)			
	Total CO_2	Total CH_4	Total N_2O	Total CO_2E
2023	161.25	0.02	0.01	164.02
2024	545.36	0.08	0.02	554.37
2025	39.71	0.01	0.00	40.44
Total	746.32	0.11	0.03	758.83
			Amortized[1]	**25.29**

Long-term emissions, as discussed in the response to threshold 4.3b, Air Quality, from the proposed Project would primarily be in the form of mobile source emissions from infrequent maintenance. Therefore, GHG emissions from operation would be negligible.

The proposed Project does not fit into the categories provided (industrial, commercial, and residential) in the draft thresholds from SCAQMD. The Project's emissions were compared to whichever threshold is more conservative. Since the draft SCAQMD GHG threshold Guidance document released in October 2008 recommends that construction emissions be amortized for a project lifetime of 30 years, the total GHG emissions from Project construction were annually and amortized and found to be less than the lowest SCAQMD recommended screening level of 3,000 $MTCO_2E$/yr. (Appendix A.) Due to the lack of adopted emissions thresholds, the estimated amount of emissions from Project construction and negligible operational emissions from infrequent maintenance vehicles, the proposed Project would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment and impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: As with the proposed Project, because the construction emissions are estimated to be below thresholds, impacts would be less than significant regarding greenhouse gas emissions. No mitigation is required.

4.8b Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

The *Coachella Valley Water District Climate Action & Adaption Plan* (CVWD CAAP), adopted September 2021, provides a comprehensive assessment of CVWD's current operations and water supplies, and identifies the measures, policies, and projects that have been developed to reduce operational GHG emissions. Thus, the Project's GHG construction emissions would not be subject to this plan. To move CVWD towards their established GHG targets, the CVWD CAAP includes 12 measures, each with their own supporting actions. **Table J** presents each measure and the Project's applicability.

Table J – Project Consistency with CVWD Climate Action & Adaptation Plan Measures

ID	Measure	Would the Project Conflict with the measure?
Scope 1 – Activities directly controlled by CVWD		
DC-1	Phase out natural gas combustion at CVWD facilities, such that 50% of natural gas combustion equipment is replaced with electric equivalents by 2030.	No. The Project does not include or require natural gas combustion.
FL-1	Replace vehicle fleet with zero-emission vehicles as technology allows in alignment with the Advanced Clean Fleet Rule, such that by 2030 40% of vehicle fleet are zero emissions vehicles and by 2045 100% of the vehicle fleet are zero emissions.	This measure is not applicable to the proposed Project.
FL-2	Use alternative fuels to bridge the technology gap to zero emission vehicles and off-road equipment by achieving 100% replacement of #2 diesel with 100% renewable diesel by 2030.	No. If available, CVWD could use alternative-fueled vehicles for maintenance.
FL-3	Reduce vehicle miles traveled and fuel use for non-ZEV/EV fleet vehicles.	No. Replacement of the existing aging pipeline with the proposed Pipeline would likely require less maintenance.

Table J – Project Consistency with CVWD Climate Action & Adaptation Plan Measures

ID	Measure	Would the Project Conflict with the measure?
WW-1	Reduce GHG process emissions associated with wastewater treatment.	This measure is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Scope 2 – Activities associated with the consumption of purchased electricity		
E-1	Utilize low-carbon and carbon-free electricity.	This measure is not applicable to the proposed Project.
EE-1	Improve energy efficiency at CVWD facilities and buildings.	This measure is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Scope 3 – All other activities not covered under scope 2 that are not directly controlled by CVWD but are fundamental to CVWD's operation		
WG-1	Increase organic waste diversion to achieve 75% reduction in landfilled organic waste by 2025 and zero-waste by 2045.	This measure is not applicable to the proposed Project.
TR-1	Incentivize more sustainable commutes.	This measure is not applicable to the proposed Project.
WC-1	Increase water conservation and local water supply.	This measure is not applicable to the proposed Project.
CS-1	Investigate and implement carbon capture and sequestration opportunities.	This measure is not applicable to the proposed Project.
CR-1	If available and feasible, reduce construction-related GHG emissions by CVWD through emissions reduction controls and/or equipment requirements, such as: • The use of Tier 3 off-road diesel-powered construction equipment greater than 50 hp • The use of construction equipment that is outfitted with BACT devices certified by CARB	No, CVWD could require contractors use reduced emission vehicles.

Source: CVWD CAAP. Table ES-2. page 34.

No Impact. As shown above in **Table J**, the Project would not conflict with any of the measures in the CVWD CAAP. Construction and operation of the proposed water transmission Pipeline would not generate GHG emissions such that a significant impact on the environment would result. Refer to the response to threshold 4.8a, above. Further, these facilities would not obstruct implementation of any future plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would not conflict with any of the measures in the CVWD CAAP. Construction and operation of the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would not generate GHG emissions such that a significant impact on the environment would result. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures

Greenhouse gas impacts are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

Greenhouse gas impacts are less than significant for the portions of the Project within Caltrans ROW; therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
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 Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(Sources: Cal Fire; IC EOP; RC EOP; ICSDM; Spring; CVUSD; Cortese List; Google Earth; IC ALUC, Project Description)

4.9a Would the Project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Construction activities would include the transport and use of fuels, lubricants, and various other liquids for operation of construction equipment. These materials would be transported to the Project site by equipment service trucks. In addition, workers will commute to the Project via private vehicles and would operate construction vehicles and equipment on public ROW. The transportation of hazardous materials can result in accidental spills, leaks, toxic releases, fire, or explosion. Project Construction is not expected to create the need for quantities of hazardous materials in excess of any permit requirement being used on-site for construction. The existing ACP pipeline is proposed to be abandoned in place and filled with inert material, such as slurry or sand, to prevent further erosion. However, a small portion of the ACP pipe within Coolridge Springs Road may require removal. All removal, transport, and disposal of any portion of the ACP pipe shall be in accordance with all applicable local and state laws and mitigation measure **MM HAZ-1**, which requires the Project specifications and contract documents to include language that requires the contractor to dispose of any ACP pipe in a landfill licensed to accept asbestos containing material. The closest landfill accepting asbestos containing material is Azuza Land Reclamation. Once the new Pipeline is installed, it would be flushed, pressure tested, and chlorinated. This entails filling the Pipeline with water, which would be disposed of in accordance **MM HYD-1.**

A number of federal and state agencies prescribe strict regulations for the safe transportation of hazardous materials. Hazardous material transport, storage and response to upsets or accidents are primarily subject to federal regulation by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Hazardous Materials Safety in accordance with Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). California regulations applicable to hazardous material transport, storage, and response to upsets or accidents are codified in Title 13 (Motor Vehicles), Title 8 (Cal/OSHA), Title 22 (Management of Hazardous Waste), Title 26 (Toxics) of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), and the Chapter 6.95 of the Health and Safety Code (Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory). These hazardous materials regulations were established at the state level to ensure compliance with federal regulations intended to reduce the risk to human health and the environment from the routine use of hazardous substances. Compliance with the measures is intended to significantly reduce a project's risk to the environment. To ensure that workers and others are not exposed to unacceptable levels of risk associated with the use and handling of hazardous materials, CVWD is required to implement existing hazardous materials regulations, with compliance monitored by state (e.g., OSHA in the workplace or DTSC for hazardous waste) and local jurisdictions. Compliance with applicable federal and state laws related to the transportation, use, storage, disposal, and response to upsets or accidents that may involve hazardous materials, in addition to mitigation measure **MM HAZ-1** would reduce the likelihood and severity of upsets and accidents during transit and storage. Additionally, construction and operation of the Project is not expected to result in the use of large amounts of hazardous materials that would create a hazard to the public or environment. Therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Construction of the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would include the transport and storage of the same hazardous materials, such as fuels, lubricants, and various other liquids for the construction equipment as the rest of the Project. The transportation of hazardous materials within Caltrans ROW can result in accidental spills, leaks, toxic releases, fire, or explosion. However, construction within Caltrans ROW would be required to comply with the same hazardous materials regulations as the portion of the Project Alignment outside of Caltrans ROW. The existing ACP pipeline is proposed to be abandoned in place and filled with inert material, such as slurry or sand, to prevent further erosion. The portion of the existing ACP pipeline that may require removal is outside of Caltrans ROW. If any portion of the existing ACP pipeline within Caltrans ROW must be removed, all removal, transport, and disposal of the ACP pipe shall be in accordance with all applicable local and state laws. For these reasons, construction of the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW is not expected to result in the need for an excess of hazardous materials being used on-site for construction. Therefore, potential impacts associated with construction within Caltrans ROW would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

4.9b Would the Project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less than significant impact. As discussed in the response to threshold 4.9a, above, construction of the Project would involve the use of hazardous materials during construction and operation but shall be required to comply with all applicable federal and state laws pertaining to the transport, use, disposal, handling, and storage of hazardous materials. Given the nature of the Project, it is not anticipated that any hazardous materials used during construction would exceed the permit limits of any regulating agency. Through compliance with applicable regulations, impacts would be less than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: As discussed in the response to threshold 4.9a, above, construction of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would involve the use of hazardous materials during construction and operation but shall be required to comply with all applicable

federal and state laws pertaining to the transport, use, disposal, handling, and storage of hazardous materials. Given the nature of the Project, it is not anticipated that any hazardous materials used during construction within Caltrans ROW would exceed the permit limits of any regulating agency. Through compliance with applicable regulations and any conditions of the encroachment permit, impacts would be less than significant.

4.9c Would the Project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

Less than significant impact. The Project area is located within the Coachella Unified School District. (ICSDM) The four nearest schools along the Project Alignment are Oasis Elementary School, Sea View Elementary School, West Shores High School, and Springs Charter School Venture Center. (CVUSD, Spring.) However, none of these schools are located within one-quarter mile of the Project Alignment. Distance from the Project Alignment to the schools listed above ranges from approximately 1.4 miles to 5.5 miles. (Google Earth.)

Construction and installation of the Project would not require atypical chemicals associated with construction methods and equipment. Fuels, lubricants and solvents can be anticipated but would not create a route of hazardous exposure to students at nearby schools because construction activities would be limited to the Pipeline Alignment and transient as construction progresses. In addition, the Project construction would comply with state and federal regulations governing the use and transport of hazardous materials. Therefore, the proposed Project would not expose nearby schools to hazardous materials, substances, or waste and impacts would be than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact:. The portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW is located within the Coachella Unified School District. (ICSDM.) The four nearest schools along the portion of the Project Alignment within Caltrans ROW are Oasis Elementary School, Sea View Elementary School, West Shores High School, and Springs Charter School Venture Center. (CVUSD, Spring.) However, none of these schools are located within one-quarter mile of any portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW.

Construction and installation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would use the same chemicals as the Project and would not require atypical chemicals associated with construction methods and equipment. Fuels, lubricants and solvents can be anticipated but would not create a route of hazardous exposure to students at nearby schools because construction activities would be limited to the portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW and transient as construction progresses. In addition, Project construction within Caltrans ROW would comply with state and federal regulations governing the use and transport of hazardous materials and any conditions associated with the encroachment permit. Therefore, implementation of the portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW would not expose nearby schools to hazardous materials, substances, or waste and impacts would be than significant. No mitigation is required.

4.9d Would the Project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No impact. There are no sites on the list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 within, along or adjacent to the Project Alignment. There would be no impacts regarding a significant hazard to the public or the environment. No mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: There are no sites on the list compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 within, along or adjacent to the portion of the Project Alignment within

Caltrans ROW. There would be no impacts regarding a significant hazard to the public or the environment. No mitigation is required.

4.9e 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?

No impact. Salton Sea Airport is the closest airport to the Project Alignment located approximately 3.3 miles south of the CVWD 1092 Reservoir site. (Google Earth.) Salton Sea Airport is a privately owned public use airport. According to *Figure 3F-Salton Sea Airport Compatibility Map* of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) of Imperial County Airport the Project Alignment lies outside of the land use compatibility zone boundaries of the Salton Sea Airport. (IC ALUC, p. 3-1, 3-13.) Upon completion of construction the Pipeline would be underground and none of the Project components would create an aircraft safety hazard or expose residents or workers to excessive aircraft noise. There would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The Salton Sea Airport is a privately owned public use airport. The portion of the Project Alignment within Caltrans ROW closest to the Salton Sea Airport is the intersection of Highway 86/Golden Avenue, approximately 3.1 miles to the north. The entire portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW is outside of the land use compatibility zone boundaries of the Salton Sea Airport. (IC ALUC, p. 3-1, 3 13.) Upon completion of construction the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW, would be underground and none of the Project components within Caltrans ROW would create an aircraft safety hazard or expose residents or workers to excessive aircraft noise. There would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

4.9f Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Both Imperial County and Riverside County have approved Emergency Operation Plans (EOPs) that addresses how each city would respond to emergency situations ranging from minor incidents to large-scale disasters. These plans provide the concept of operations and strategic activities for responding to any type of emergency incident impacting the County. (IC EOP, p. 12., RC EOP, p. 1.) These plans do not identify evacuation routes. However, the Riverside County General Plan has identified Interstate 10, Highway 86, State Route 111, Box Canyon Road/66th Avenue Harrison Street as potential evacuation routes for the Eastern Coachella Valley Area (Arabia, Mecca, Oasis, Salton, etc.) (RC GP, p. S-59.)

Less than significant impact. Project construction may cause traffic delays if lane closures are required, which may affect response times for emergency vehicles or travel time for evacuees. However, lane closures would not occur on Highway 86, which is identified in the Riverside County General Plan as a potential evacuation route for residential communities. The Pipeline would be constructed within the ROW of 84th Avenue and Johnson Street in Riverside County and Lesser Drive, Golden Avenue, and Diamond Avenue in Imperial County. None of these streets are identified as evacuation routes. As part of the Project's final design, traffic control plan(s) shall be prepared and shall be approved by each jurisdiction for which a lane closure or encroachment permit is required. The traffic control plan(s) shall provide adequate pass-by features for emergency vehicles. Through compliance with required traffic control plan(s) and encroachment permit(s), the details of which would be dictated by each affected county and Caltrans, the ability of emergency vehicles to pass by the construction site(s) safely, efficiently, and quickly would not be limited. Therefore, impacts related to the interference with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: Although portions of the Pipeline would be constructed within Caltrans ROW, Project construction would not entail any work within the travel lanes of Highway 86, which is identified in the Riverside County General Plan as a potential evacuation route. Because Project implementation would not require land closure of Highway 86, there would be no interference with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan resulting from construction of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW. There would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

4.9g Would the Project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

Less than significant impact. Approximately 13 miles of the 15.4 mile Pipeline Alignment would be located within Highway 86 ROW which, as shown on **Figure 9 – Fire Hazard Severity Zones**, is not located within a very high fire severity zone (VHFHSZ). (Cal Fire.) The Project Alignment does not contain and is not adjacent to wildlands. Once construction is completed, the proposed Project would be located underground and as such would not expose people or structures to a significant level of risk from wildland fires. Additionally, the Project does not include the construction of residential structures that would expose people or structures to a significant risk from wildland fires. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: The portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW is not located within a very high fire severity zone. Once construction is completed, this portion of the Pipeline would be located underground. Additionally, the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW does not include the construction of residential structures that would expose people or structures to a significant risk from wildland fires. For these reasons, impacts would be less than significant.

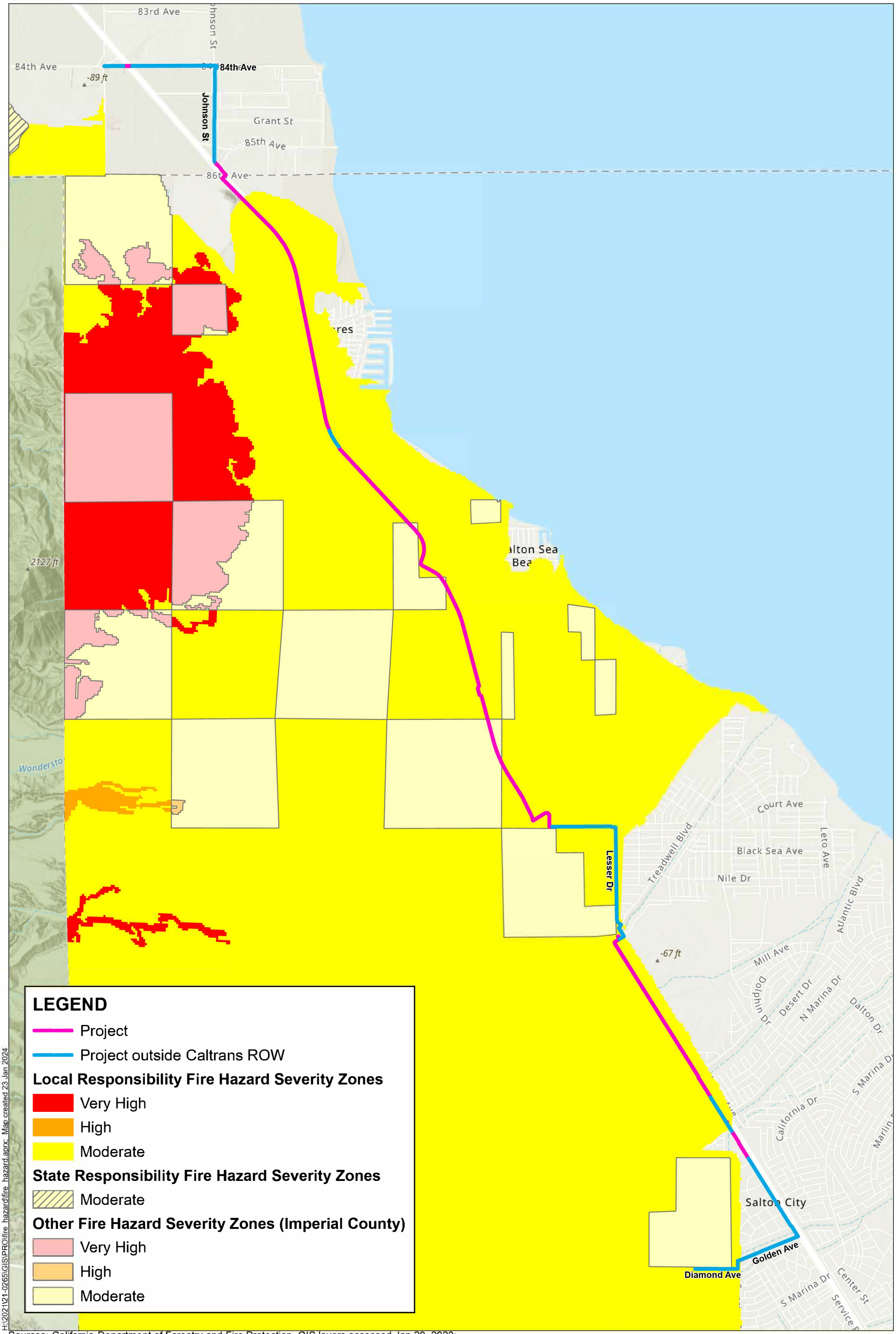
Hazards and Hazardous Materials Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce impacts to hazards and hazardous materials to less than significant.

> **MM HAZ-1: Disposal of ACP Pipe:** The specifications and contract documents for the proposed Project shall include a provision or provisions that require the contractor to dispose of any ACP removed as part of the Project at a landfill that has sufficient capacity and is licensed to accept asbestos containing materials.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

Implementation of mitigation measure **MM HAZ-1** above would reduce impacts to hazards and hazardous materials for the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW to less than significant.



Sources: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, GIS layers accessed Jan 20, 2023; Esri imagery, 2023.

Figure 9 - Fire Hazard Severity Zone

Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phase 3 and Phase 4 Project

ALBERT A. WEBB ASSOCIATES

4.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	☐	☐	☒	☐
i. result in 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: Appendix E, SMGA Portal, Order 2009-0009-DWQ, Order No. R8-2015-0004, UWMP, IID-A, CVWD-B, California DWR, Indio Basin Alternative GSP)

4.10a Would the Project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

Water quality standards are the combination of water quality objectives (i.e. numeric and narrative thresholds) that are established to protect the beneficial uses of downstream receiving waters.

Less than significant impact. The Project would replace aging 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP pipelines that currently convey potable water for domestic purposes with a 24-inch diameter DIP pipeline. Construction activities associated with the Project have the potential to result in the degradation of downstream water bodies from the release of polluted stormwater runoff from Pipeline construction and from the discharge of water used to flush the pipeline as part of construction. The specific location of where the water used to flush the pipeline will be determined by the construction contractor as set forth in **MM HYD-1**. Further, the Project operation is likely to include some activities such as line flushing that can discharge water to downstream water bodies. These construction and operational activities are regulated with NPDES permits containing waste discharge requirements for project proponents to meet in order to protect downstream water bodies and ensure that surface and groundwater water quality standards are not violated. Construction-phase stormwater quality is regulated by a statewide NPDES permit with waste discharge requirements (the Construction General Permit, Order 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002). The Construction General Permit requires the development of a SWPPP by a certified Qualified SWPPP Developer (QSD) and onsite implementation by a Qualified SWPPP Practitioner (QSP) for the duration of construction. During operation of the Pipeline, fresh

water may be released periodically. Such releases originating from drinking water pipelines are regulated by Order No. R8-2015-0004 (NPDES No. CAG998001), *General Waste Discharge Requirements for Insignificant Threat Discharges to Surface Waters* and Order WQ 2014-0194-DWQ (NPDES No. CAG140001), *Drinking Water System Discharges to Waters of the United States*. Through compliance with existing regulations to protect surface and groundwater quality and implementation of mitigation measure **MM HYD-1**, impacts resulting from construction and operation of the Project would be reduced to less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Construction and operation of the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would be covered under the same SWPPP as the portions of the Pipeline outside of Caltrans ROW and subject to the same NPDES permit requirements. Through compliance with the requirements of the NPDES permits and including implementation of a SWPPP, impacts regarding the violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrading surface or groundwater quality would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

4.10b Would the Project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Less than significant impact. The Project lies within two groundwater basins, the Indio Subbasin, and the West Salton Sea Basin. (SGMA Portal.) CVWD obtains groundwater from both Indio and Mission Creek Subbasins of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin. According to the 2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan (RUWMP), CVWD and Desert Water Agency (DWA) replenish the basin with water imported from outside of the basin. (UWMP, p . 1-3.) Due to the Project, being a replacement to an existing pipeline, the Project would not result in the depletion of groundwater supplies in and of itself. Nor would the Project interfere with groundwater recharge due to the limited impervious footprint being mostly within existing paved and impervious roadways. Because installation and operation of the Project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or substantially interfere with groundwater management activities, impacts are less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: The portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW also lies within the Indio Subbasin and the West Salton Sea Basin. (SGMA Portal.) Because the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW is a replacement pipeline, construction and operation of this portion of the Pipeline will not result in the depletion of groundwater supplies. Nor would this portion of the Pipeline interfere with groundwater recharge because no new impervious surfaces would be introduced in Caltrans ROW as the ground surface would be returned to its original condition. For these reasons installation or operation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or substantially interfere with groundwater management activities, impacts are less than significant and no mitigation is required.

4.10c.i. Would the Project 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 result in substantial erosion or siltation on-or-off-site?

4.10c.ii. Would the Project 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 substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or-off-site?

4.10.c.iii. Would the Project 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 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?

4.10c.iv. Would the Project 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 create or contribute runoff water which would impede or redirect flood flows?

Less than significant impact. The Project is an underground water transmission main. Construction of the Project would occur mostly within road ROWs that are either paved or highly disturbed. Where the Pipeline crosses drainages, waterways, and Highway 86, the Pipeline would be constructed with trenchless methods (jack and bore) in order to avoid impacting these resources. The ground surface where trenching occurs would be returned to its original line and grade. With implementation of the SWPPP and dewatering/de minimus permits, as well as Project design to avoid watercourses and return the ground surface to its original condition, Project construction and operation would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the Project Alignment or surrounding area or exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Approximately 13 miles of the Pipeline would be constructed and operated within the ROW of Highway 86. Where the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW crosses drainages, waterways, and Highway 86, the Pipeline would be constructed with trenchless methods (jack and bore) in order to avoid impacting these resources. The ground surface within Caltrans ROW where trenching occurs would be returned to its original line and grade. Through implementation of the same SWPPP and dewatering/de minimus permits as the rest of the Project, Project design to avoid watercourses, and compliance with conditions of the encroachment permit, construction and operation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the Project Alignment or surrounding area or exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

4.10d In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the Project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Less than significant impact. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as shown on **Figure 10 – FEMA Flood Hazard Zones**, portions of the Pipeline Alignment are crossed by 100-year and 500-year Special Flood Hazard Areas and a Regulatory Floodway. The proposed Project area is not located in a designated State of California Dam Inundation Zone. (Appendix E, p. 11.) The Salton Sea is less than one mile east of portions of the Project Alignment. Due to the enclosed water body near the proposed Project area, seiches may pose a hazard to the proposed Project. (Appendix E, p. 11.) Because the proposed Project is located underground and not within a dam inundation zone, therefore, the risk of pollutant release during inundation would be less than significant.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Portions of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW are crossed by 100-year and 500-year Special Flood Hazard Areas and a Regulatory Floodway. The portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW is not located in a designated State of California Dam Inundation Zone. (Appendix E, p. 11.) The Salton Sea is less than one mile east of portions of the Project Alignment. Due to the enclosed water body near the portion of the Project Alignment within Caltrans ROW,

seiches may pose a hazard, (Appendix E, p. 11.) However, because the portions of the Project within Caltrans ROW would be located underground, the risk of pollutant release during inundation would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

4.10e Would the Project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

No impact. The Project lies within two groundwater basins, the Indio Subbasin (7-021.01) and the West Salton Sea Basin (7-022). CVWD has been designated an "exclusive Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) over its service area by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) within the Indio Subbasin. (CVWD-B.) Pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA), an Alternative Plan, *(SGMA Alternative GSP Bridge Document for the Indio Subbasin,* dated December 2016) that addresses long-term sustainable management of the Indio Subbasin has been approved by DWR. The Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the West Salton Sea Basin is co-led by the County of Imperial and Imperial Irrigation District (County of Imperial GSA). Because the West Salton Sea Basin is a "very low" priority basin according to DWR's SGMA Basin Prioritization project, DWR does not require a Groundwater Sustainability Plan and one has not been prepared for this basin. However, because the Project proposes to replace an existing aging pipeline underground within ROW and easements across private property, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. There would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW lies within the Indio Subbasin and the West Salton Sea Basin groundwater basins.) An Alternative Plan, (*SGMA Alternative GSP Bridge Document for the Indio Subbasin*, dated December 2016) that addresses long-term sustainable management of the Indio Subbasin has been approved by DWR. Because the West Salton Sea Basin is a "very low" priority basin according to DWR's SGMA Basin Prioritization project, DWR does not require a Groundwater Sustainability Plan and one has not been prepared for this basin. Because the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would replace an existing aging pipeline implementation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. There would be no impacts and no mitigation is required for the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW.

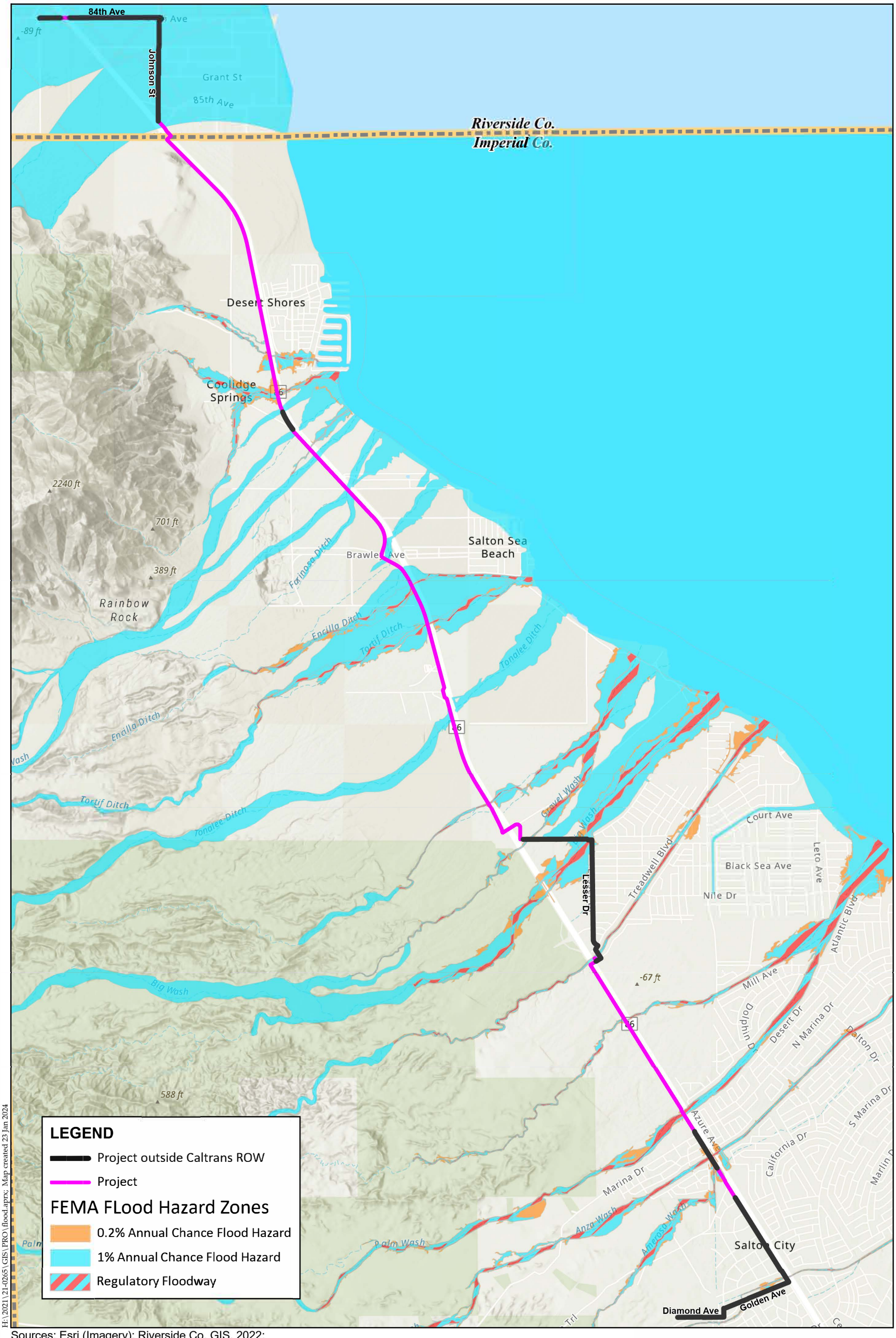
Hydrology and Water Quality Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measure would reduce impacts to hydrology and water quality to less than significant.

> **MM HYD-1: Construction Water Discharge Plan**. A Construction Water Discharge Plan that identifies the locations of where construction water would be discharged shall be prepared and approved by CVWD prior to the relevant construction implementation step. The Construction Water Discharge Plan shall prohibit the discharge of any construction-related water into any waters that are considered waters of the US or waters of the state. The plan shall identify open space or agricultural fields where water would be discharged and allowed to percolate into the ground during construction.

Hydrology and Water Quality Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

Implementation of mitigation measure **MM HYD-1**, above, would reduce impacts to hydrology and water quality within Caltrans ROW.



Sources: Esri (Imagery); Riverside Co. GIS, 2022;
FEMA NFHL, 2022.

Figure 10 - Flood Zones

Highway 86 Alignments

ALBERT A. WEBB ASSOCIATES

4.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: Google Earth, Project Description)

4.11a Would the Project physically divide an established community?

The physical division of an established community typically refers to the construction of a physical feature (such as a wall, interstate highway, or railroad tracks) or the removal of a means of access (such as a local road or bridge) that would impair mobility.

No impact. The proposed Project is an underground water transmission pipeline that would be constructed within road ROWs and utility easements across private property and as such does not include any feature that would physically divide an established community. For these reasons there would be no impacts regarding physically dividing an established community and no mitigation is needed.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: Approximately 13 miles of the proposed Pipeline would be constructed within the ROW of Highway 86. Construction within Caltrans ROW would not entail closure of Highway 86. Additionally, the portion of the Pipeline to be constructed within Caltrans ROW does not include any feature that would physically divide an established community. For these reasons there would be no impacts regarding physically dividing an established community resulting from implementation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW and no mitigation is needed.

4.11b Would the Project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No impact. CVWD is the agency with jurisdiction over the Project. However, CVWD does not have land use jurisdiction along the Pipeline Alignment. The proposed Project would replace the existing aged 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP pipelines. Because the Project is replacing existing facilities, the Project would not conflict with any CVWD plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. There would be no impact in this regard and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: Construction and operation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would require issuance of an encroachment permit by Caltrans. Through compliance with the conditions of the encroachment permit, implementation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would not conflict with any Caltrans plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. There would be no impact in this regard and no mitigation is required.

Land Use Mitigation Measures

There are no impacts regarding land use; therefore, no mitigation is required.

Land Use Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

There are no impacts regarding land use within Caltrans ROW; therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.12 MINERAL RESOURCES	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: ICGP, RCGP)

4.12a Would the Project 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?

4.12b Would the Project 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?

Mineral resources are naturally occurring chemicals, elements, or compounds formed by inorganic processes or organic substances. Riverside County has extensive deposits of clay, limestone, iron, sand and aggregates. (RCGP, p. OS-37.) Imperial County has the following mineral resources; gold, gypsum, sand, gravel, lime, clay, stone, kyanite, limestone sericite, mica, tuff, salt, potash and manganese. (ICGP, p. COSE-23.)

No impact. According to the Riverside County's General Plan, *Figure OS-6 Mineral Resource Zones*, the Project segments within Riverside County would be located within unstudied areas that have not been given a Mineral Resources Zone classification based on State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB). (RCGP, p. OS-41.) The Imperial County General Plan, *Figure 8 - Imperial County Existing Mineral Resources*, shows active mines and processing plants throughout the Imperial County. (ICGP, p. COSE-25.) The Project Alignment does not traverse any of these facilities. For these reasons, Project implementation would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resources of value to the region and state or loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. There would be no impact and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: Construction and operation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW does not traverse a known mineral resource or a known active mine or processing plant. Through compliance with the conditions of the encroachment permit, implementation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would not conflict with any Caltrans plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. There would be no impact in this regard and no mitigation is required.

Mineral Resources Use Mitigation Measures

There are no impacts regarding mineral resources; therefore, no mitigation is required.

Mineral Resources Mitigation Measures for the Portion of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

There are no impacts regarding mineral resources within Caltrans ROW; therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.13 NOISE	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project result in:				
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 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: FHWA, FTA, RCMC; IC ALUC, Caltrans 2020)

4.13a Would the Project result in the 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?

Once construction is complete, the underground Pipeline would not generate noise. Since CVWD is already maintaining and repairing the existing 16-inch and 18-inch diameter water treatment mains that the proposed Pipeline would replace, there would be no additional maintenance noise that would result from Project implementation. Therefore, this analysis focuses on construction noise.

Temporary increases to ambient noise levels would occur during Project construction. Noise would result from the use of various types of construction equipment such as drills, saws, excavators, pavers, rollers, tractors, loaders and backhoes, and from a worker-related traffic increase in the vicinity of the Project Alignment. As shown in **Table K – Construction Equipment Noise Levels**, maximum noise levels (L_{max}) associated with the construction equipment expected to be used ranges from 84 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet to 90 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet.

Table K – Construction Equipment Noise Levels[a]

Equipment	Typical Noise Levels (dBA L_{max} at 50 feet)	Impact Device
Bore/Drill Rig	84	No
Concrete/Industrial Saw	90	No
Excavators	85	No
Pavers	85	No
Rollers	85	No
Tractors /Loaders/Backhoes	84	No

Notes:

[a] Federal Highway Administration, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, September 2018. Table 9.1

Noise from trenchless construction operations are similar to cut-and-cover pipeline construction; however, rather than the noise progressing linearly, it would be confined to entry and exit locations. Thus, noise impacts could last for several weeks rather than a few days at the areas adjacent to jack and bore pits.

The Project entails construction within the unincorporated area of Riverside and Imperial County. Construction noise standards for these jurisdictions are summarized below.

- Riverside County Code of Ordinances Chapter 9.52 Noise Regulations. According to Section 9.52.020, sound emanating from facilities owned or operated by or for a governmental agency or capital improvement projects of a governmental agency are exempt. (RCO.)
- Imperial County General Plan Noise Element. Construction noise, from a single piece of equipment or a combination of equipment, shall not exceed 75 dB L_{eq}, when averaged over an eight (8) hour period, and measured at the nearest sensitive receptor. This standard assumes a construction period, relative to an individual sensitive receptor of days or weeks.

  Construction equipment operations are required to be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday. No commercial construction operations are permitted on Sunday or holidays. In cases of a person constructing or modifying a residence for himself/herself, and if the work is not being performed as a business, construction equipment operations may be performed on Sundays and holidays between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Such non-commercial construction activities may be further restricted where disturbing, excessive, or offensive noise causes discomfort or annoyance to reasonable persons of normal sensitivity residing in an area.

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The nearest sensitive receivers to the Pipeline Alignment are the residences located in the communities of Desert Shores, Salton Sea Beach, and Salton City. The nearest sensitive receiver in Desert Shores is approximately 620 feet east of the Pipeline Alignment. The nearest sensitive receiver in Salton Sea Beach is approximately 335 feet east of the Pipeline Alignment. The nearest sensitive receiver in Salton City is a residence on Lesser Drive approximately 35 feet from the Pipeline Alignment. **Table L**, shows the expected maximum noise level from Project construction at the three sensitive receivers identified above.

Table L – Predicted Construction Noise Levels at Sensitive Receivers

Sensitive Receiver Distance from Pipeline Alignment	Typical Noise Level of Concrete/Industrial Saw[a] (dBA L_{max} at 50 feet)	L_{max} at Sensitive Receiver
Salton City – 620 feet east of Highway 86	90	68.1
Salton Sea Beach – 335 feet east of Highway 86	90	73.5
Salton City – 35 feet from Lesser Drive	90	93.1

Notes:

[a] Based on the typical L_{max} for Concrete/Industrial Saw from **Table K – Construction Equipment Noise Levels**.

As indicated in the above table, Project construction is expected to result in maximum construction noise of 93.1 dBA L_{max} at a sensitive receptor. Construction noise would be 75 dBA L_{max} or less at distances of 280 feet from Project construction.

The Imperial County construction noise threshold is 75 dB L_{eq}, when averaged over an eight hour period, and measured at the nearest sensitive receptor. Noise generated by construction equipment can reach high levels. Typical operating cycles for the type of construction equipment that would be used during Project construction may involve one or two minutes of full power operation followed by three to four minutes at lower power settings. Thus, it is likely that the actual construction noise experienced at the sensitive receivers in Salton City would be less than 93.1 dBA over an 8-hour period. In order to reduce construction noise. Since construction noise may exceed 75 dBA L_{eq} at a distance of less than 280 feet[4] from where construction equipment is operating, mitigation measure **MM NOI-1** shall be implemented when Project construction occurs within 280 feet of a sensitive receiver. With implementation of mitigation measure **MM NOI-1, construction noise impacts** would be reduced to less than significant.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: The nearest sensitive receiver to the portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW is a residence in Salton City approximately 335 feet east of Highway 86. As shown in **Table L – Predicted Construction Noise Levels at Sensitive Receivers**, the expected construction noise at this location is 73.5 dBA L_{max}, which is below Imperial County's threshold of 75 dBA L_{eq} when averaged over an eight hour period. Impacts would be less than significant and no mitigation is required.

[4] Distance calculated for R_2 using the formula $SPL_2 = SPL_1 - 20 \log(R_2/R_1)$ where SPL_1 = 90 dBA L_{max}; SPL_2 = 75 dBA L_{max};; R_1 = 50 feet. Result rounded down to the nearest 10 feet.

4.13b Would the Project result in the generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Construction projects can generate ground-borne vibration, and in general, demolition of structures preceding construction generates the highest vibrations. However other construction equipment such as vibratory compactors or rollers, pile drivers and pavement breakers can generate perceptible vibration during construction activities. Heavy trucks can also generate ground-borne vibrations that vary depending on vehicle type, weight and pavement conditions.

Typically, ground-borne vibration generated by man-made activities attenuates rapidly with distance from the source of vibration. Man-made vibration issues are therefore, usually confined to short distances (i.e., 500 feet or less) from the source. Sensitive receptors for vibration include structures (especially older masonry structures), people (especially residents, the elderly, and the sick), and vibration sensitive equipment. Ground vibrations from construction activities do not often reach the levels that can damage structures, but they can achieve the audible and feelable ranges in buildings very close to the site.

Various types of construction equipment have been measured under a wide variety of construction activities with an average of source levels reported in terms of velocity as shown in **Table M – Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment**. Although the table gives one level for each piece of equipment, it should be noted that there is a considerable variation in reported ground vibration levels from construction activities. The data provide a reasonable estimate for a wide range of soil conditions.

Table M – Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	PPV at 25 feet (inches/second)
Large Bulldozer	0.089
Caisson Drill	0.089
Loaded Truck	0.076
Small Bulldozer	0.003

Notes:

[a] Federal Transit Administration, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, September 2018, Table 7-4

The County of Imperial does not regulate vibrations associated with construction. However, a discussion of construction vibration is included for full disclosure purposes. For comparison purposes, the Caltrans *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual* recommended standard of 0.2 inch per second PPV with respect to the prevention of structural damage for older residential buildings is used as a threshold. This is also the level at which vibrations may begin to annoy people in buildings.

Less than significant impact. Project construction would entail the use of equipment that may result in ground-borne vibration. Based on the representative vibration levels presented for various construction equipment types in **Table M** and the equation published in the FTA's *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, **Table N** presents the estimated Project construction vibration levels for the sensitive receiver at 35 feet from the Pipeline Alignment in Lesser Drive.

Table N – Construction Vibration Levels at 35 Feet

Equipment	Receiver PPV[b] Levels at 35 Feet (inches/second)[a]	Threshold (inches/second)	Exceeds Threshold
Large Bulldozer	0.0537	0.2	No
Caisson Drill	0.0537	0.2	No
Loaded Truck	0.0459	0.2	No
Small Bulldozer	0.0018	0.2	No

Notes:

[a] Calculated use the equation PPVreceiver = PPVref x (25/Distance to the Receiver)$^{1.5}$

Project operation would not generate new sources of ground-borne vibration. Because Project construction and operation would not result in vibration above 0.2 inches/second, impacts regarding the exposure and generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels would be less than significant.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Construction of the Portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would entail the use of equipment that may result in ground-borne vibration. Based on the representative vibration levels presented for various construction equipment types in **Table M** and the equation published in the FTA's *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, **Table O** presents the estimated Project construction vibration levels for the sensitive receiver at 360 feet, which is the closest sensitive receiver to the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW from the Pipeline Alignment in Lesser Drive.

Table O – Construction Vibration Levels at 360 Feet

Equipment	Receiver PPV[b] Levels at 35 Feet (inches/second)[a]	Threshold (inches/second)	Exceeds Threshold
Large Bulldozer	0.0018	0.2	No
Caisson Drill	0.0018	0.2	No
Loaded Truck	0.0015	0.2	No
Small Bulldozer	0.0015	0.2	No

Notes:

[a] Calculated using the equation $PPV_{receiver} = PPV_{ref}$ x (25/Distance to the Receiver)$^{1.5}$

Project operation within the Caltrans ROW would not generate new sources of ground-borne vibration. Because Project construction and operation within Caltrans ROW would not result in vibration above 0.2 inches/second, impacts regarding the exposure and generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels within Caltrans ROW would be less than significant.

4.13c For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No impact. As discussed in the response to threshold 4.9e, the Salton Sea Airport is the closest airport to the Project area about 3.3 miles south of the CVWD 1092 Reservoir site. The Project Alignment lies outside of the zone boundaries of the Salton Sea airport compatibility concern. (IC ALUC, p. 3-1, 3-13.) The noise exposure from the Salton Sea Airport or other sources would not change as a result of the Project. Therefore, Project implementation would not expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive airport or aircraft noise levels. There would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No Impact: As discussed in the response to threshold 4.9e, the Salton Sea Airport is the closest airport to the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW, at approximately 3.3 miles south of the CVWD 1092 Reservoir site. The portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW is outside of the zone boundaries of the Salton Sea airport compatibility concern. (IC ALUC, p. 3-1, 3-13.) The noise exposure from the Salton Sea Airport or other sources would not change as a result of the Project. Therefore, Project implementation within the Caltrans ROW would not expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive airport or aircraft noise levels. There would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

Noise Mitigation Measures

To reduce construction noise impacts mitigation measure **MM NOI-**1 shall be implemented during Project construction within 280 feet of a sensitive receiver.

> **MM NOI-1: Noise Control During Construction.** To reduce construction noise to an acceptable level, CVWD shall incorporate into the construction contract specifications the following noise control measures to be implemented by the construction contractor.
>
> a. Prior to construction, the Construction Contractor shall provide CVWD-approved written notification to residents within 300 feet of the Pipeline Alignment. This notification shall identify the type, duration, and frequency of construction activities. Notification materials shall be provided in English/Spanish translation and identify a mechanism for residents to contact CVWD's Project Manager regarding construction noise concerns.
>
> b. During construction within 280 feet of a sensitive receptor, the Construction Contractor shall use, to the extent feasible, equipment which is hydraulically or electrically powered to avoid noise associated with compressed air exhaust from pneumatically powered tools. Where use of pneumatically powered tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air exhaust would be used. This muffler can lower noise levels from the exhaust by up to 10 dBA. External jackets on the tools themselves would be used where feasible, and this could achieve a reduction of 5 dBA. Quieter procedures will be used such as drilling rather than impact equipment whenever feasible.
>
> c. All equipment and trucks used by the Construction Contractor for Project construction within 280 feet of a sensitive receptor shall use the best available noise control techniques (including mufflers, use of intake silencers, ducts, engine enclosures and acoustically attenuating shields or shrouds) and be maintained in good operating condition to minimize construction noise impacts. All internal combustion engine-drive equipment shall be fitted with intake and exhaust mufflers which are in good condition.

d. During construction anywhere along the Project Alignment, the Construction Contractor shall prohibit unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines. In practice, this would mean turning off equipment if it would not be used for five or more minutes.

e. During construction within 280 feet of a sensitive receptor, the Construction Contractor shall locate stationary noise-generating construction equipment, such as air compressors and generators, as far as possible from homes and businesses.

f. Along the entire Project Alignment the Construction Contractor shall locate staging areas as far as feasibly possible from sensitive receivers.

Noise Mitigation Measures for the Portion of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

Noise impacts within Caltrans ROW are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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

(Source: Project Description)

4.14a Would the Project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

No impact. The proposed Project is the replacement of 14.5 miles of existing 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP water transmission mains with approximately 15.4 miles of 24-inch diameter DIP water transmission main to serve the communities of Salton Sea Beach, Desert Shores, Salton City, and unincorporated areas in Riverside and Imperial Counties on the west side of the Salton Sea. The Project does not include any residential or non-residential uses that would directly induce unplanned population growth. The existing pipeline is undersized and does not have the capacity to transmit effectively the amount of water that CVWD needs in order to serve existing residents and planned future growth in the Project Area. The proposed Pipeline is sized to accommodate planned future growth and does not extend water service into any areas not currently served, the Project would not indirectly induce unplanned population growth. Because the Project would not directly or indirectly induce unplanned population growth there would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The replacement of the existing 13 miles of water transmission main within Caltrans ROW does not include any component that would directly or indirectly induce unplanned population growth, in and of itself. The existing pipeline is undersized and does not have the capacity to transmit effectively the amount of water that CVWD needs in order to serve existing residents and planned future growth in the Project Area. Because the replacement of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW would not directly or indirectly induce unplanned population growth there would be no impact in this regard and no mitigation is required.

4.14b. Would the Project displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No impact. Construction and operation of the Project would not necessitate the demolition or relocation of existing housing units. Since no housing would be displaced, no people would be displaced as a result of Project implementation and no impacts would occur.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: Construction and operation of the Project would not necessitate the demolition or relocation of existing housing units. Since no housing would be displaced within Caltrans ROW, no people would be displaced as a result of Project implementation and no impacts would occur.

Population and Housing Mitigation Measures

There are no impacts to population and housing; therefore. no mitigation is required.

Population and Housing Mitigation Measures for the Portion of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

There are no impacts to population and housing within Caltrans ROW; therefore. no mitigation is required.

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

(Sources: Project Description)

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

4.15a Fire Protection?
4.15b Police Protection?
4.15c Schools?
4.15d Parks?
4.15e Other Public Facilities?

No impact. The proposed Project would not change existing demand for any public services because the proposed Project is the replacement of existing water lines that serve existing communities and customers. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Project would not 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 in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for public services. No mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: Implementation of the portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW would not change existing demand for any public services because the proposed Project is the replacement of existing water lines that serve existing communities and customers. Therefore, implementation of the portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW would not 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 in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for public services. No mitigation is required.

Public Services Mitigation Measures

There are no impacts to public services; therefore, no mitigation is required.

Public Services Mitigation Measures for the Portion of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

There are no impacts to public services within Caltrans ROW; therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.16 RECREATION	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Source: Project Description)

4.16a 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?

No impact. There are no parks within the Pipeline Alignment. The proposed Project is the construction of a new 24-inch diameter water transmission pipeline that would replace aging 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP pipelines to serve existing and planned growth within the communities in the vicinity of Oasis and Salton City. Once the 24-inch diameter Pipeline is constructed and operating, the existing 16-inch and 18-inch diameter pipelines would be taken out of service. Because the Project is replacing existing pipelines and not increasing the capacity of CVWD's water system, Project implementation would not cause or contribute to an increase in the population or otherwise result in an increase in the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed Project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. No impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

Portions of the Project Withing Caltrans ROW – No impact: The portion of the new 24-inch diameter DIP water transmission pipeline within Caltrans ROW would replace existing and aging 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP pipelines, which would be taken out of service when the new Pipeline is operational. Because the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW is replacing existing pipelines and not increasing the capacity of CVWD's water system, implementation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would not cause or contribute to an increase in population. Therefore, the portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. No impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

4.16b 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?

No impact. The Project does not include new public recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. There would be no impact in this regard and no mitigation is required.

Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The portions of the Project within Caltrans ROW does not include new public recreational facilities or required the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. There would be no impact in this regard and no mitigation is required.

Recreation Mitigation Measures

There would be no impacts to parks or recreational facilities resulting from Project construction and operation; therefore, no mitigation is required.

Recreation Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

There would be no impacts to parks or recreational facilities resulting from construction and operation of the portions of the Project within Caltrans ROW; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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

(Sources: Project Description)

Construction of the proposed Project would involve temporary trips associated with workers, delivery of construction supplies and equipment, hauling materials to and from the site, and removal of excess soil material. These trips would be temporary over the approximately one year and 17 month construction period. No new trips associated with operation and maintenance are anticipated because CVWD is already maintaining the water pipeline that would be replaced by the proposed Project.

4.17a Would the Project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. Construction of the Project may result in traffic congestion as work progresses along the Project Alignment. Construction of the approximately 13 miles of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW would not entail any land closure of Highway 86. Approximately 5 miles of the Pipeline Alignment is within local roads and easements across private property. Depending upon final design, it may be necessary to close at least one lane of traffic in 84th Avenue, Johnson Street, Lesser Drive, Golden Avenue, or Diamond Avenue during construction. Depending upon the conditions of the encroachment permits issued by Riverside County and Imperial County, work may be required to take place at night. The determination regarding street closure, lane modification, and/or night work would be made by Riverside County and Imperial County as part of the encroachment permit process. Project construction would not conflict with an established circulation performance measure because the work would be temporary and would be in compliance with encroachment permits. Additionally, as part of the final design for the Project to ensure the appropriate traffic controls are implemented and potential traffic impacts related to lane closures are less than significant **MM TRA-1** shall be implemented. **MM TRA-1** identifies traffic control plans shall be prepared and shall be approved by Riverside County and Imperial County and CVWD construction inspector, so that construction would be consistent with local traffic ordinances and policies. Therefore, through compliance with the conditions of the required encroachment permits and **MM TRA-1**, impacts would be less than significant.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Construction of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would not occur within the travel lanes of Highway 86. Because construction and operation of the Project within Caltrans ROW would be subject to the conditions of an encroachment permit issued by Caltrans and implement a traffic control plan, Project implementation would not conflict with a Caltrans program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, Impacts would be less than significant.

4.17b Would the Project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(a) describes specific considerations for evaluating a project's transportation impacts and states "Generally, vehicle miles traveled is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts." As stated in CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(b)(2), "projects that reduce, or have no impact on, vehicle miles traveled should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact."

Less than significant impact. Construction of the Project would temporarily increase traffic in the area as a result of construction-related trips. CVWD is already maintaining and repairing the water transmission line that the Project would replace; therefore there would be no net increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMTs) or new or additional maintenance trips during operation. In fact, the new pipeline is reasonably expected to require less repairs than the existing facility. The Project will not indirectly induce population growth as it replaces existing infrastructure. Project implementation would not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3. subdivision (b); therefore, there would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Construction of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would temporarily increase traffic as a result of construction-related trips CVWD is already maintaining and repairing the water transmission line that the Project would replace; therefore, there would be no net increase in VMTs or new or additional maintenance trips during operation. In fact, the new pipeline is reasonably expected to require less repairs than the existing facility. Project implementation within the Caltrans ROW would not conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3. subdivision (b); therefore, there would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

4.17c Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No impact. The proposed Project would not change roadway configurations. There would be no impacts in this regard and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW would not change roadway configurations. There would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

4.17d Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than significant impact. The proposed Project would not reconfigure current roadways. Through compliance with the conditions of the required encroachment permits and traffic control plan(s) prepared as part of the final design process, access would be maintained throughout the construction period and impacts would be less than significant. Also refer to the response to threshold 4.9f.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: The proposed Project would not reconfigure current roadways within Caltrans ROW. Through compliance with the conditions of the Caltrans encroachment permit and traffic control plan(s) prepared as part of the final design process, access would be maintained throughout the construction period and impacts would be less than significant. Also refer to the response to threshold 4.9f.

Transportation Mitigation Measures

To reduce traffic impacts mitigation measure **MM TRA-1** shall be implemented during Project construction.

> **MM TRA-1: Traffic Control Plan** Prior to construction, CVWD shall require its construction contractor to implement an approved Traffic Control Plan, to the satisfaction of the CVWD construction inspector and Riverside and Imperial Counties. The components of the Traffic Control Plan shall include:
>
> - Identification of construction staging site locations and potential road closures,
> - Alternate routes of traffic detours, including emergency response contact information,
> - Planned routes for construction-related vehicle traffic (haul routes), and
> - Identification of alternative safe routes to maintain pedestrian safety during construction.
>
> CVWD's Project Manager shall coordinate with the police, fire, and other emergency services to alert these entities about potential construction delays, project alignment, and construction schedule. CVWD shall minimize the duration of disruptions/closures to roadways and critical access points for emergency services. The Traffic Control Plan shall provide for traffic control measures including flag persons, warning signs, lights, barricades, and cones to provide safe passage of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic and access by emergency responders. The Traffic Control Plan shall be submitted to CVWD's Project Manager and construction inspector for review and approval prior to construction.
>
> CVWD's construction inspector shall have the construction schedule and Traffic Control Plan reviewed by the County of Riverside and County of Imperial to ensure construction of the proposed project does not conflict with construction activities associated with other construction projects that may be occurring at the same time in the vicinity.

Transportation Mitigation Measures for the Portions of the Project Within Caltrans ROW

Transportation impacts within Caltrans ROW would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure **MM TRA-1** and any conditions placed upon the Caltrans encroachment permit.

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

(Sources: AB 52 Consultation Process, Appendix C)

4.18a Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. As discussed in response to threshold 4.5b, archeological resource, P-13-003675, which is in the Project APE, was previously determined not eligible for the National Register or California Register in consultation with the SHPO. However, as the site boundary for this resource was extended after the SHPO concurrence and as the entirety of the site extends beyond the narrow confines of the APE, a formal evaluation of the entire site could not be completed as part of this Project. Because previous surveys and excavations confirmed that the resource consists of noncontiguous surface only artifact scatters and as no scatters were noted within the APE, the Project would avoid impacts to any remaining artifacts still present within the overall APE. For these reasons and for purposes of this Project only, the entirety of the site is recommended as considered eligible for listing on the National Register/California Register. (Appendix C, pp. 31-32, 37.) As noted in the response to threshold 4.5b, due to the extensive disturbances within the APE, little soil accumulation, and periodic inundation of the APE for long periods of time, the overall potential to encounter surface or buried archaeological deposits is considered to be low. (Appendix C, p. 29.) Nonetheless, the existence of a previous archaeological site within the APE indicates the area is considered sensitive for tribal cultural resources.

CVWD has participated in coordination with the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians on the significance of impacting tribal cultural resources with the Project. Numerous meetings and information was shared with and discussed with this Tribe, as outlined in detail below. During these meetings, the Tribe indicated that even though the Cultural Resources Survey results determined that no significant archaeological resources would be significantly impacted during construction, they still required further test pit excavations in specific areas along the alignment in order to fully understand their ancestorial resource limits in this area. The specific areas were agreed to by the TMDCI and CVWD and are confidential. The implementation of **MM TCR 1** will ensure that there are measures taken to allow the TMDCI more information.

Thus, there is a potential that tribal cultural resources may be impacted during Project construction. Through implementation of mitigation measure **MM TCR-1** below, and mitigation measures **MM CR-1** through **MM CR-3** as set forth in Threshold 4.5 Cultural Resources, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources would be reduced to less reduced to than significant.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant with mitigation incorporated: As discussed in response to threshold 4.5b, archeological resource P-13-003675, which is in the Project APE and Caltrans ROW, was previously determined not eligible for the National Register or California Register in consultation with the SHPO. However, as the site boundary for this resource was extended after the SHPO concurrence and as the entirety of the site extends beyond the narrow confines of the APE, a formal evaluation of the entire site could not feasibly be completed as part of this Project. Because previous surveys and excavations confirmed that the resource consists of noncontiguous surface only artifact scatters and as no scatters were noted within the APE, the Project would avoid impacts to any remaining artifacts still present within the overall APE. For these reasons and for purposes of this Project only, the entirety of the site is recommended as considered eligible for listing on the National Register/California Register. (Appendix C, pp. 31-32, 37.) As noted in the response to threshold 3.5b, due to the extensive disturbances within the APE, little soil accumulation, and periodic inundation of the APE for long periods of time, the overall potential to encounter surface or buried archaeological deposits is considered to be low. (Appendix C, p. 29.) Nonetheless, the existence of a previous archaeological site within the APE indicates the area is considered sensitive for tribal cultural resources.

CVWD has participated in coordination with the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians on the significance of impacting tribal cultural resources with the Project. Numerous meetings and information was shared with and discussed with this Tribe, as outlined in detail below. During these meetings, the Tribe indicated that even though the Cultural Resources Survey results determined that no significant archaeological resources would be significantly impacted during construction, they still required further test pit excavations in specific areas along the alignment in order to fully understand their ancestorial resource limits in this area. The specific areas were agreed to by the TMDCI and CVWD and are confidential. The implementation of mitigation measure **MM TCR-1** will ensure that there are measures taken to allow the TMDCI more information.

Thus, there is a potential that tribal cultural resources may be impacted during Project construction. Through implementation of mitigation measure **MM TCR-1** below, and mitigation measures **MM CR-1** through **MM CR-3** as set forth in Threshold 4.5 Cultural Resources, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources would be reduced to less reduced to than significant.

4.18b A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

CVWD provided "Notification of Tribal Consultation Opportunity" on March 27, 2023 pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) to Tribes that have previously requested such a notice from CVWD. Notification was sent to seven (7) Tribes: Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (ACBMI), Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, Cabazon Band of Mission Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, and Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians.

In a letter dated April 5, 2023, the ACBMI stated that the Project area was not located within the ACBCI Traditional Use Area. ACBMI deferred to the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians and stated the April 5, 2023 letter concluded their consultation efforts. As of May 18, 2023, no responses were received from any of the other six (6) notified tribes and CVWD has concluded the consultation process.

On March 14, 2024, the TMDCI sent an email to CVWD requesting to consult on the Project. The email also provided ethnographic information and requested a "Phase 3 data recovery Plan (Monitoring plan)" to address discoveries during construction and "Phase 2 testing (1X1 meter Test Units) to assist in determining if any

Cultural content remains underneath the undisturbed/disturbed soil and to assist in proper mitigation of impacts to any potential Tribal Cultural Resources." However, this March 14, 2024 response was received more than 30 days after the March 23, 2023 initial consultation notification was sent. The formal consultation under AB-52 is with TMDI was not required since TMDCI did not meet its statutory requirements for responding per AB-52.

Based on CVWD's *Cultural Resources Inventory Report – Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4 Project* (the "CRIR"), which was prepared by Dokken Engineering (Dokken) in May 2024, a records search at the Eastern Information Center (EIC) and the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC), literature and historical map review, and consultation with Native Americans was conducted. (Appendix C, p. 12.) No indigenous resources were identified that would warrant Phase II archaeological evaluation testing. Phase II archaeological evaluation testing is completed to define the boundaries of an identified/recorded archaeological site and to evaluate the recorded site's National Register/California Register eligibility, per the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines on Identification and Evaluation. Due to the low potential for buried archaeological resources, based on the research and analysis conducted by Dokken, Presence/Absence Testing was also determined as unwarranted. (Appendix C, p. 24.)

However, CVWD will continue to coordinate with the TMDCI outside of the formal AB 52 process. On December 12, 2024, CVWD met with TMDCI to discuss their request for further investigations. Although not warranted by substantial evidence as outlined in the CRIR, CVWD will work with the TMDCI to obtain more information that the Tribe seeks. Mitigation measure **MM TCR-1** responds to the TMDCI's request for further investigations which they seek to obtain further information. With the incorporation of **MM TCR-1**, along with implementation of the mitigation measures from the section 5 Cultural Resources, impacts with regard to tribal cultural resources would be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

Tribal Cultural Resources Mitigation Measures

Implementation of mitigation measure **MM TCR-1**, in addition to Cultural Resources mitigation measures **MM CR-1, MM CR-2**, and **MM CR-3**, would reduce impacts to tribal cultural resources to less than significant.

> **TCR-1: Tribal Cultural Resources Investigations, Monitoring and Discovery Plan.** At TMDCI request, CVWD shall enter into an agreement with TMDCI, prior to the start of construction to conduct investigations affecting two specific areas of the proposed Project alignment in areas where the TMDCI indicated on December 12, 2024 that they would like further investigation. CVWD will honor that request. The agreement will allow the TMDCI to be present during any site investigations. Additionally, prior to the initiation of Project-construction activities, CVWD, in coordination with the TMDCI, shall prepare a Tribal Cultural Resources Monitoring and Discovery Plan which will provide detailed protocol on construction monitoring, assessment of potential Tribal Cultural Resources, and treatment/mitigation options for impacts to identified Tribal Cultural Resources.

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

(Sources: CVWD UWMP, Project Description, RCGP EIR, ICGP EIR, CalRecycle-A, CalRecycle-B)

4.19a Would the Project require or result in the construction of new water or expanded wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities or the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less than significant impact. The proposed Project is the replacement of an aging water transmission main with the proposed Pipeline. The project does not propose or require new or expanded storm water drainage, electrical, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities. As part of the final design and prior to construction, existing utilities will be field verified and potholed. If any utility relocations are required, CVWD will coordinate with the affected provider and attempt to relocate the utilities within existing streets or Caltrans ROWs. Potential impacts associated with the relocation of utilities within the Project footprint have been evaluated in this Initial Study. Project construction would require water for dust control as well as potable water for the construction crews. As discussed below in the response to threshold 4.19b, CVWD has sufficient water supplies to serve these temporary needs. Impacts associated with construction of the proposed Pipeline are evaluated in this Initial Study and all impacts have been determined to be less than significant. Because there are sufficient water supplies to serve the Project and any utility relocations would be coordinated with Caltrans and the appropriate providers, impacts regarding relocation or construction of new water or expanded wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities would be less than significant.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: As with the proposed Project, the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW is the replacement of an aging water transmission main with the proposed Pipeline and new or expanded storm water drainage, electrical, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities are not proposed or required. As part of the final design and prior to construction within Caltrans ROW, existing utilities will be field verified and potholed. If any utility relocations are required, CVWD will coordinate with Caltrans and the affected provider and attempt to relocate the utilities within existing streets or Caltrans ROWs. Because there are sufficient water supplies to serve the Project and any utility relocations within Caltrans ROW would be coordinated with Caltrans and the appropriate providers and compliance with the

Caltrans encroachment permit, impacts regarding relocation or construction of new water or expanded wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities would be less than significant.

4.19b Would the Project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?

According to CVWD's 2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan (RUWMP), water supplied to the CVWD service area is mostly from groundwater production from the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin (basin). (CVWD UWMP, p. 1-3.) The basin is used by six agencies as their primary source of supply for meeting municipal water demands. In a typical year, groundwater pumping is more than the amount of local rain and mountain snowmelt. CVWD and Desert Water Agency (DWA) replenish the basin with water imported from outside the basin. The basin is separated into four subbasins; the Indio Subbasin, Mission Creek Subbasin, Desert Hot Springs Subbasin, and San Gorgonio Pass Subbasin. (CVWD UWMP, p. 3.1) The six agencies anticipate being able to meet all demands through 2045, even throughout a five-year dry period. Due to the storage capacity of the basin, supplies are reliable from year to year, allowing agencies to pump enough groundwater to meet demands. (CVWD UMWP, pp. 1-3 – 1-4.)

According to the *2020 Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan* (RUWMP), CVWD has a reliable water supply to meet demands during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years as shown below in **Table P**, **Table Q**, and **Table R**, the RUWMP demonstrates that CVWD has sufficient water supplies to meet the normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years scenarios for the years 2025, 2030, 2035, 2040, and 2045. (RUWMP, pp. 4-32–4-33.)

Table P – CVWD Normal Year Supply and Demand Comparison

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Supply Totals (AFY)[a, b]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
Total Projected Demand (AFY)[c]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
Difference	0	0	0	0	0

Source: *Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan, DWR 7-2R Normal Year Supply and Demand Comparison*

Notes:

[a] The RUWMP participating agencies (CVWD, Coachella Water Authority, Desert Water Agency, Indio Water Authority, Mission Springs Water District, and Myoma Dunes Mutual Water Company) collaborate on groundwater management plans for long-term sustainability. During a normal year, single-dry year, or five-dry year period, the agencies could produce additional groundwater if demands exceeded the estimates shown here.

[b] Supply Totals includes groundwater (non desalinated) and recycled water sources.

[c] Demand Totals includes potable water and recycled water demand

Table Q – CVWD Single Dry Year Supply and Demand Comparison

	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Supply Totals (AFY)[a, b]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
Total Projected Demand (AFY)[c]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
Difference	0	0	0	0	0

Source: *Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan, DWR 7-3R Single Dry Year Supply and Demand Comparison*

Notes:

[a] The RUWMP participating agencies (CVWD, Coachella Water Authority, Desert Water Agency, Indio Water Authority, Mission Springs Water District, and Myoma Dunes Mutual Water Company) collaborate on groundwater management plans for long-term sustainability. During a normal year, single-dry year, or five-dry year period, the agencies could produce additional groundwater if demands exceeded the estimates shown here.

[b] Supply Totals includes groundwater (non desalinated) and recycled water sources.

[c] Demand Totals includes potable water and recycled water demand

Table R – CVWD Multiple Dry Years Supply and Demand Comparison

		2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
First Year	Supply Totals[a, b]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Demand Totals[c]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Difference	0	0	0	0	0
Second Year	Supply Totals[a, b]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Demand Totals[c]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Difference	0	0	0	0	0
Third Year	Supply Totals[a, b]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Demand Totals[c]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Difference	0	0	0	0	0
Fourth Year	Supply Totals[a, b]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Demand Totals[c]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Difference	0	0	0	0	0

Table R – CVWD Multiple Dry Years Supply and Demand Comparison

		2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Fifth Year	Supply Totals[a, b]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Demand Totals[c]	137,061	144,982	152,729	158,981	164,966
	Difference	0	0	0	0	0

Source: *Coachella Valley Regional Urban Water Management Plan, DWR 7-2R Normal Year Supply and Demand Comparison*

Notes:

[a] The RUWMP participating agencies (CVWD, Coachella Water Authority, Desert Water Agency, Indio Water Authority, Mission Springs Water District, and Myoma Dunes Mutual Water Company) collaborate on groundwater management plans for long-term sustainability. During a normal year, single-dry year, or five-dry year period, the agencies could produce additional groundwater if demands exceeded the estimates shown here.

[a] Supply Totals are in AFY and includes groundwater (non desalinated) and recycled water sources.

[b] Demand Totals are in AFY and includes potable water and recycled water demand

Given that the Project is the relocation of an existing water transmission pipeline and does not propose (1) residential development of more than 500 dwelling units; (2) commercial development of more than 250,000 square feet of floor space; (3) a retail center with more than 500,000 square feet of floor space; (4) a hotel or motel having more than 500 rooms; (5) an industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or industrial park planned to house more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or having more than 650,000 square feet of floor area; (6) a mixed-use project that includes one or more of the projects specified above; or (7) a project that will demand an amount of water equal to, or greater than, the amount of water required by 500 dwelling units a Water Supply Assessment per SB 60 is not required. (CVWD-C.)

No impact. The replacement of the aging water transmission main by the proposed Pipeline, in and of itself, does not include any component that would result in a need for increased water supplies. The Pipeline has been sized to accommodate future planned growth within this portion of CVWD's service area. Water will be used during Project construction; however, these requirements are temporary and minimal. As shown above in **Table P**, **Table Q**, and **Table R**, CVWD's projected total water demand does not exceed the total projected water supply. CVWD would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project construction needs and reasonably foreseeable future development within CVWD's water service area during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. There would be no impact and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The replacement of the aging water transmission main within Caltrans ROW by the proposed Pipeline, in and of itself, does not include any component that would result in a need for increased water supplies. The Pipeline has been sized to accommodate future planned growth within this portion of CVWD's service area. CVWD would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the construction needs of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW and reasonably foreseeable future development within CVWD's water service area during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. There would be no impact and no mitigation is required.

4.19c Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

The wastewater treatment providers within the Project area include CVWD and Salton Community Service District (SCSD). (ICGP EIR, p. III-167.)

No impact. Construction and operation of the proposed Project would not generate wastewater. There would be no impacts to wastewater treatment and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: Construction and operation of the portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW would not generate wastewater. There would be no impacts to wastewater treatment and no mitigation is required.

4.19d 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?

According to the Imperial County General Plan EIR, there are three different types of landfill sites within the County. Class I is wholly for dumping hazardous waste, Class II is for dumping designated and or special waste, and a Class III landfill site is for dumping non-hazardous wastes such as municipal waste. (ICGP EIR, p.II-155.) According to the Riverside County General Plan EIR, all active landfills currently located in Riverside County are rated as Class III landfills. The Riverside County Waste Management Department (RCWMD) is responsible for active landfills, transfer stations, diversion and recycling programs that serve the unincorporated area's solid waste disposal service needs. (RCGP EIR, p. 4.17-36.) The two closest Class III landfills to the Project area are the Oasis Sanitary Landfill located within Riverside County and Salton City Solid Waste Site within Imperial County. Both Class III facilities accept construction/demolition waste types. Oasis Sanitary Landfill has an estimated close date in 2055, while Salton City Sanitary Land fill has an estimated close date in 2038. (CalRecycle-A, CalRecycle-B.)

Less than significant impact. Construction and operation of the proposed Pipeline is not anticipated to generate a significant amount of solid waste. To the extent feasible, excavated soil would be reused along the Pipeline Alignment and no soil export is anticipated. Standard conditions in CVWD construction specifications, require the contractors to dispose of construction waste in facilities licensed to accept such waste. The ACP pipe will be removed and disposed of in accordance with all applicable local and state laws and mitigation measure **MM HAZ-1**. A permit for removing ACP pipe will be required during construction. The disposal and removal of the ACP will be the responsibility of the Contractor. County of Riverside landfills do not accept asbestos containing materials. Due to the composition of the ACP, the nearest landfill accepting this type of waste is the Salton City Solid Waste Site. Solid waste generation would be limited to construction-related activities and would not affect available solid waste disposal capacity in the region. No long-term solid waste generation would result from the proposed Project. Given that both landfills in close proximity to the Project site have estimated closure dates in excess of 16 years and because the Project would not 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, impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: Construction and operation of the portion of the proposed Pipeline within Caltrans ROW is not anticipated to generate a significant amount of solid waste. To the extent feasible and allowable by the Caltrans encroachment permit, excavated soil would be reused along the Pipeline Alignment. Standard conditions in CVWD construction specifications, require the contractors to dispose of construction waste in facilities licensed to accept such waste. Solid waste generation

would be limited to construction-related activities and would not affect available solid waste disposal capacity in the region. No long-term solid waste generation would result from implementation of the portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW. Given that both landfills in close proximity to the Project site have estimated closure dates in excess of 16 years and because the Project would not 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, impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

4.19e Would the Project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulation related to solid waste?

Federal, State, and local statutes and regulations regarding solid waste generation, transport, and disposal are intended to decrease solid waste generation through mandatory reductions in solid waste quantities (e.g., through recycling and composting of green waste) and the safe and efficient transport of solid waste.

No impact. The proposed Project would adhere to all federal, state, and local regulations related to solid waste during construction and operation. During construction, the proposed Project would dispose of construction waste in permitted facilities and would not conflict with any existing regulations. During operation the proposed Project would not produce solid waste. Because the proposed Project would comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste there would be no impact and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: Construction and operation of the portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW would adhere to all federal, state, and local regulations related to solid waste. All construction waste resulting from construction within Caltrans ROW would be disposed of in permitted facilities in accordance with existing regulations and conditions of the Caltrans encroachment permit. During operation the portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW would not produce solid waste. Because construction and operation of the portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW would comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste there would be no impact and no mitigation is required.

Utilities and Service Systems Mitigation Measures

Impacts to utilities and service systems are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

Utilities and Service Systems Mitigation Measures for the Portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW

Impacts to utilities and service systems within the Caltrans ROW are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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

(*Sources: Cal Fire, RC GP, Project Description)*

4.20a Would the Project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

As shown on **Figure 8 – Fire Hazard Severity Zones**, the Project is not within a State Responsibility Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The Pipeline Alignment transverses through Local Responsibility Area (LRA) and Federal Responsibility Area (FRA). (Cal Fire) The portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Imperial County is within traverses through Imperial County's Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone and adjacent to and through Moderate Other Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Less than significant impact. No portion of the Pipeline Alignment is within or adjacent to a State Responsibility Area Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. As discussed in threshold 4.9f, Riverside County has identified Highway 86 as a potential evacuation route for the Eastern Coachella Valley. (RC GP, p. S-59.) Project construction along the Highway 86 ROW would take place outside of the travel lanes and no lane closures would occur. Imperial County has not designated evacuation routes. As part of the final design process for the Project, traffic control plans would be prepared to provide adequate pass-by features for emergency and other vehicles. Once construction is complete the ground surface would be returned to its original condition. Through compliance with required traffic control plans and encroachment permits from Riverside County, Imperial County, and Caltrans, temporary construction impacts regarding impairing an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan would be less than significant.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: No portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW is within or adjacent to a State Responsibility Area Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Project construction within Caltrans ROW would not require lane closures as construction would take place outside of the travel lane and the ground surface returned to its original condition. Through compliance with required traffic control plans and encroachment permits from Riverside County, Imperial County, and Caltrans, temporary construction impacts regarding impairing an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan would be to less than significant.

4.20b Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, would the Project exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Less than significant impact. The Project is located in Local Responsibility and Other Fire Responsibility Areas in Moderate Hazard Zones. (**Refer to Figure 9**.) Construction activities, particularly those involving heavy machinery and excavation equipment have the potential to ignite fires, especially in areas with flammable vegetation or dry conditions. The Pipeline Alignment is mostly within and adjacent to Highway 86 which has previously been disturbed. The operation of construction equipment and accidental ignition from construction materials could result in fire incidents. Construction equipment would be properly maintained and turned off when not in use to avoid idling in accordance with mitigation measure **MM NOI-1.** Additionally, the Project will implement a Traffic Control Plan as required by mitigation measure **MM TRA-1** as to not prevent emergency response. This would be a temporary impact during construction, as the Pipeline will be underground and does not include any component designated or intended for human occupancy. Further, Project operation is not likely to result in fires and would not include prohibited activities pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 4421-4446.) As stated in the repose to threshold 4.7a(iv), the Project area is not located within a potentially significant landslide area. Construction of the Pipeline would not entail grading that would create new or change existing slopes or otherwise exacerbate wildfire risks in the area. The Project would be installed underground within and adjacent to paved roadways and the ground surface returned to its original condition and grade. Therefore, Project implementation would not expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations form a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. There would be no impacts and no mitigation is required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW is located in Local Responsibility and Other Fire Responsibility Areas in Moderate Hazard Zones. (Refer to **Figure 9**.) The portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW does not include any component designated or intended for human occupancy. As stated in threshold 4.7a(iv), the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would not be located within a significant landslide area. The Project would be installed underground within Caltrans ROW adjacent to Highway 86 and the ground surface returned to its original condition and grade. Therefore, implementation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would not expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations form a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. There would be no impacts and no mitigation would be required.

4.20c 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?

No impact. The Project is replacing approximately 14.5 miles of 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP water transmission mains with a new 24-inch diameter DIP water transmission main. The proposed Project would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. Operations and maintenance activities associated with the new Pipeline may decrease as less frequent maintenance may be required. Operations and maintenance of underground pipelines do not entail activities that would exacerbate fire risk. Therefore, no impacts would occur, and no mitigation would be required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: Replacement of the portion of the existing water transmission mains within Caltrans ROW with the proposed Pipeline would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. Operations and maintenance activities associated with the portion of the new Pipeline within Caltrans ROW may decrease as less frequent maintenance may be required. Operations and

maintenance of underground pipelines do not entail activities that would exacerbate fire risk. Therefore, no impacts would occur, and no mitigation would be required.

4.20d Would the Project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

No impact. The proposed Project does not include habitable structures, nor would it substantially alter existing drainage patterns. Project implementation would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes; therefore, there would be no impacts and no mitigation would be required.

Portion of Project within Caltrans ROW – No impact: The portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW does not include habitable structures, nor would it substantially alter existing drainage patterns. Implementation of the portion of the proposed Project within Caltrans ROW would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes; therefore, there would be no impacts and no mitigation would be required.

Wildfire Mitigation Measures

Impacts regarding wildfires would be less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

Wildfire Mitigation Measures for the Portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW

Impacts to wildfires within Caltrans ROW would be less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

4.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or an 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?	☐	☒	☐	☐

(Source: Above Initial Study, Appendix B, Appendix C)

4.21a Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or an endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Potential to Degrade the Quality of Environment: Construction and operation of the proposed Project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment. As indicated in the foregoing analysis, either no impacts, less than significant impacts, or less than significant impacts with mitigation incorporated would occur with respect to each of the environmental issues analyzed in this Initial Study.

Potential to Impact Biological Resources: As discussed in threshold 4.4, Biological Resources, implementation of the proposed Project would not:

- substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species;
- cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; or
- threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community.

The results of the BRTR, included as Appendix B, and the analysis in response to thresholds 4.4a-4.4d indicate that with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-6** impacts to biological resources would be less than significant.

Potential to Eliminate Important Examples of the Major Periods of California History or Prehistory: The results of the CRIR, included as Appendix C and the analysis in responses to thresholds 4.5a and 4.5b, indicate there are five historic-period built environmental resources and one archaeological resources present within the APE. There is potential for an inadvertent discovery of significant cultural resources within the Pipeline Alignment. Therefore, through implementation of mitigation measures **MM CR-1, MM CR-2,** and **MM TCR-1,** impacts are

not anticipated to eliminate an important example of California History or Prehistory and would be reduced to less than significant.

Portions of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant with mitigation incorporated:
Potential to Degrade the Quality of Environment: Construction and operation of the proposed Project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment. As indicated in the foregoing analysis, either no impacts, less than significant impacts, or less than significant impacts with mitigation incorporated would occur with respect to each of the environmental issues analyzed in this Initial Study.

Potential to Impact Biological Resources: As discussed in threshold 4.4, Biological Resources, implementation of the proposed Project would not:

- substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species;
- cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; or
- threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community.

The results of the BRTR, included as Appendix B, and the analysis in response to thresholds 4.4a-4.4d indicate that with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-6** impacts to biological resources would be less than significant.

Potential to Eliminate Important Examples of the Major Periods of California History or Prehistory: The results of the CRIR, included as Appendix C, and the analysis in responses to thresholds 4.5a and 4.5b, indicate there are five historic-period built environmental resources and one archaeological resources present within the APE. There is potential for an inadvertent discovery of significant cultural resources in the Project area. Therefore, through implementation of mitigation measures **MM CR-1**, **MM CR-2**, and **MM TCR-1** impacts are not anticipated to eliminate an important example of California History or Prehistory and would be reduced to less than significant.

4.21b Does the Project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

Less than significant impact. The Project would replace aging water transmission mains with a new 24-inch diameter DIP water pipeline. The Project is consistent with local and regional plans, and the Project's mitigated air quality emissions do not exceed established thresholds of significance. The Project adheres to all other land use plans and policies with jurisdiction in the Project area, and would not increase VMTs within the Project area. The Project is not considered growth-inducing as defined by *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.2(d) and would not induce, either directly or indirectly, population and/or housing growth beyond what is envisioned by the Riverside County General Plan and the Imperial County General Plan. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Portions of Project within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant impact: The portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW would replace aging water transmission mains with a new 24-inch diameter DIP water pipeline. The Project, which includes the portion of the Pipeline within Caltrans ROW is consistent with local and regional plans, and the Project's mitigated air quality emissions do not exceed established thresholds of significance. The Project adheres to all other land use plans and policies with jurisdiction in the Project area, and would not increase VMTs within the Project area. The Project is not considered growth-inducing as defined by *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.2(d) and would not induce, either directly or indirectly, population and/or housing

growth beyond what is envisioned by the Riverside County General Plan and the Imperial County General Plan. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

4.21c Does the Project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Effects on human beings were evaluated as part of the aesthetics, air quality, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, population and housing, and transportation thresholds sections of this initial study and found to be less than significant for each of the above sections with implementation of mitigation measures **MM AQ-1**, **MM GEO-1**, **MM HAZ-1,** and **MM NOI-1**. Based on the analyses and conclusions in this initial study, the proposed Project would not cause substantial adverse effects directly or indirectly to human beings. Therefore, potential direct and indirect impacts on human beings that result from the proposed Project would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Portion of Project Within Caltrans ROW – Less than significant with mitigation incorporated: Effects on human beings resulting from implementation of the portion of the Project within Caltrans ROW were evaluated as part of the aesthetics, air quality, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, population and housing, and transportation thresholds sections of this initial study and found to be less than significant for each of the above sections with implementation of mitigation measures **MM AQ-1**, **MM GEO-1**, and **MM HAZ-1** and conditions of the encroachment permit. Based on the analyses and conclusions in this initial study, the proposed Project would not cause substantial adverse effects directly or indirectly to human beings. Therefore, potential direct and indirect impacts on human beings that result from the proposed Project would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

5. FEDERAL CROSS-CUTTING ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS EVALUATION

CVWD received a planning grant from the State Water Resources Control Board that is partially funding preliminary design (30 percent plans) and environmental compliance documents for the proposed Project. The planning has a federal funding component; therefore, to assist in compliance with the federal environmental requirements, this document includes analysis pertinent to several federal cross-cutting regulations (also referred to as federal cross-cutters or CEQA-Plus). The basic rules for complying with cross-cutting federal authorities are set-out in the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund regulations at 40 CFR §35.3575 and the USDA Environmental Policies and Procedures at 7 CFR §1970.

This section describes the status of compliance with relevant federal laws, executive orders, and policies, and the consultation that has occurred or will occur in the near future. The topics are based on the USDA environmental policies and procedures and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Program Federal Cross-cutting Environmental Regulations Evaluation Form for Environmental Review and Federal Coordination. The DWSRF Program is partially funded by the USEPA. Therefore, the SRWCB must document that projects meet the federal cross-cutters requirements.

5.1 Federal Endangered Species Act

Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) requires federal agencies, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat of these species. Under Section 7, a project that could result in incidental take of a listed threatened or endangered species must consult with the USFWS to obtain a Biological Opinion (BO). If the BO finds that the project could jeopardize the existence of a listed species ("jeopardy opinion"), the agency cannot authorize the project until it is modified to obtain a "nonjeopardy" opinion.

For the purpose of the proposed project, the SWRCB and/or USDA would act as the federal lead or responsible agency. The information contained within the IS/MND and the *Biological Resources Technical Report for Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phases 3 and 4* (Appendix B) may be used to support project compliance with FESA and MBTA.

Section 5.1 of Appendix B identifies the eight federally listed species that were returned via database searches and the effect determinations for each species. As shown below in **Table S**, no federally listed species are anticipated to occur within the BSA; therefore, consultation with the USFWS regarding federally listed species is not required. (Appendix B, p. 60)

Table S – Federally Listed Species Determinations

Common Name	Scientific Name	Potential to Occur	Federal Status	Determination
Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard	*Uma inornata*	Absent	Threatened	No Effect
Desert pupfish	*Cyprinodon macularius*	Absent	Endangered	No Effect
Desert tortoise	*Gopherus agassizii*	Absent	Threatened	No Effect
Least Bell's vireo	*Vireo bellii pusillus*	Absent	Endangered	No Effect

Table S – Federally Listed Species Determinations

Common Name	Scientific Name	Potential to Occur	Federal Status	Determination
Peninsular bighorn sheep	*Ovis canandensis pop.*	Absent	Endangered	No Effect
Razorback sucker	*Xyrauchen texanus*	Absent	Endangered	No Effect
Western snowy plover	*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*	Absent	Threatened	No Effect
Yuma Ridgeway's rail	*Rallus obsoletus obsoletus*	Absent	Endangered	No Effect
Source: Appendix B, Table 4. Federally Listed Species Determinations				

As discussed in the response to Biological Resources threshold 4.4a, of the 34 wildlife species with the potential to occur within the region, six (6) sensitive special-status wildlife species have the potential to occur within the BSA. These consist of two (2) bird species, burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*) and LeConte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*), two (2) mammal species, Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsi*) and western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*), and two (2) reptile species, Colorado Desert fringe-toed lizard (*Uma nonata*) and flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*). These species' potential to occur is due to the presence of disturbed desert scrub and desert wash habitat. These habitats would be impacted as a result of construction activities. Through implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-6,** any temporary impacts to special status wildlife and habitats from construction activities would be less than significant. The Pipeline would be installed underground via open trench and subsurface boring; as such, no permanent impacts to habitat or special status wildlife are anticipated to result following the completion of this Project. Therefore, the proposed Project is not expected to result in direct or indirect impacts to this special-status plant or wildlife species and the proposed Project would not jeopardize any listed species and CVWD would be in compliance with FESA.

5.2 National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106

The purpose of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) is to protect, preserve, rehabilitate, or restore significant historical, archaeological, and cultural resources. Section 106 requires federal agencies to take into account effects on historic properties. Section 106 review involves a step-by-step procedure described in detail in the implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800).

As described in the responses to Cultural Resources thresholds 4.5a through 4.5c, a cultural resource assessment for the proposed project was conducted, and is provided in Appendix C. The analysis includes a Section 106 evaluation for the proposed Project and can be submitted as part of the consultation process with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Concurrence by SHPO would ensure compliance with the NHPA.

A total of 22 cultural resources have been previously recorded within the APE and 178 cultural resources within the 1,000-foot search buffer. Thirteen of the previously recorded resources within the APE could not be reidentified and three were linear resources with no components within the APE. Therefore, only six cultural resources were reidentified within the APE. These include one indigenous resource, two historic sites, two historic road segments, and one levee segment. The two historic road segments and the one indigenous resource are considered eligible for listing on the National Register and the California Register for the purposes of this Project only. The Project will utilize directional drilling to install the pipeline, so there will be direct or indirect impacts to any of these resources. Through implementation of mitigation measures **MM CR-1** through

MM CR-3 and **MM TCR-1,** impacts to historical resources under CEQA would be less than significant and no effects to historic properties under NHPA for the proposed project are expected.

5.3 Clean Air Act

U.S. Congress adopted general conformity requirements as part of the Clean Air Act (CAA) Amendments in 1990 and the USEPA implemented those requirements in 1993 (Sec. 176 of the FCAA (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] § 7506) and 40 CFR Part 93, Subpart B). General conformity requires that all federal actions "conform" with the State Implementation Plan as approved or promulgated by USEPA. The purpose of the general conformity program is to ensure that actions taken by the federal government do not undermine State or local efforts to achieve and maintain the national ambient air quality standards. Before a federal action is taken, it must be evaluated for conformity with the State Implementation Plan. All "reasonably foreseeable" emissions predicted to result from the action are taken into consideration. These include direct and indirect emissions and must be identified as to location and quantity. If it is found that the action would create emissions above de minimis threshold levels specified in USEPA regulations (40 CFR § 93.153(b)), or if the activity is considered "regionally significant" because its emissions exceed 10% of an area's total emissions, the action cannot proceed unless mitigation measures are specified that would bring the proposed Project into conformance.

As described in the responses to the Air Quality thresholds 4.3a and 4.3b, the Project is located in the Salton Sea Air Basin (Basin) and extends through the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) jurisdictions. The results of the air quality modeling showed that pollutant emissions would not exceed federal General Conformity de minimis thresholds. (Appendix A.)

5.4 Coastal Zone Management Act

The Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), passed by Congress in 1972 and managed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, is designed to balance competing land and water issues in coastal zones. It also aims to "preserve, protect, develop, and where possible, to restore or enhance the resources of the nation's coastal zone." Within California, the CZMA is administered by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the California Coastal Conservancy, and the California Coastal Commission.

No portion of the proposed Project is within the coastal zone. The Project is located approximately 78 miles east of the Pacific Coast. Therefore, the CMZA does not apply to the proposed Project.

5.5 Farmland Protection Policy Act

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) requires a federal agency to consider the effects of its actions and programs on the nation's farmlands. The FPPA is intended to minimize the impact of federal programs with respect to the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. It assures that, to the extent possible, federal programs are administered to be compatible with State, local, and private programs and policies to protect farmland.

As described in the responses to the Agriculture and Forestry Resources thresholds 4.2a, 4.2b, and 4.2e, the portions of the Pipeline Alignment within Imperial County are designated by the California Department of Conservation as Other Land. (See **Figure 6 – Important Farmland.**) Portions of the Pipeline within Riverside County traverse through land designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Other Land as shown in **Table C – Designated Farmland within Riverside County**. Of the 5.0 acres of Farmland within the Project's disturbance area, there are 3.1 acres of Prime Farmland and 1.9 acres of Unique Farmland. Although the Project Alignment would be constructed within or adjacent to Farmland, the Pipeline would be constructed

underground within Caltrans or other road ROWs, and utility easements and the ground surface would be restored to its pre-Project condition. The proposed Project would not result in land use changes and would, therefore, not impact important farmland, conflict with agricultural zoning regulations, or result in other changes that would indirectly result in conversion of nearby farmland to nonagricultural use. Therefore, the proposed project would not adversely affect any farmland areas and CVWD would be in compliance with the FPPA.

5.6 Executive Order 11988 – Floodplain Management

Executive Order (EO) 11988 requires federal agencies to recognize the values of floodplains and to consider the public benefit from restoring and preserving floodplains.

As shown on **Figure 10 – FEMA Flood Hazard Zones**, portions of the Pipeline Alignment are crossed by 100-year and 500-year SFHAs. The proposed Project is the construction and operation of a new 24-inch diameter DIP water transmission main that would not interfere with floodplain management or floodplain function or expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding. As such, CVWD would be in compliance with this EO.

5.7 Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and Executive Order 13168

The MBTA and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act prohibit the take of migratory birds (or any, nest, or eggs of any such bird) and the take and commerce of eagles. EO 13168 (Sep 22, 2000) requires that any project with federal involvement address impacts of federal actions on migratory birds.

As described in the response to Biological Resources threshold 4.14a and Appendix B *Section 4.3 Special-Status Wildlife Species*, the proposed Project would have less than significant impact on nesting birds with implementation of mitigation measure **MM BIO-4**, which requires preconstruction nesting bird surveys if construction can not be avoided during nesting season. This mitigation measure also sets forth buffer areas in the event nesting birds are present. Thus, the Project and CVWD would be in compliance with this EO.

5.8 Executive Order 11990 – Protection of Wetlands

Under EO 11990 (May 24, 1977), federal agencies must avoid affecting wetlands unless it is determined that no practicable alternative is available.

As described in the response to Biological Resources 14.c and Appendix B *Section 2.1,* there are no federally protected wetlands as defined by Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 within the BSA. (Appendix B, p. 50.) Therefore, there would be no impacts to wetlands and the CVWD would be in compliance with EO 11990.

5.9 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was passed in 1968 to preserve and protect designated rivers for their natural, cultural, and recreational value.

There are no designated Wild and Scenic Rivers within the Project area, nor will any designated rivers be adversely affected by the proposed Project. As a result, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act does not apply to the proposed Project.

5.10 Safe Drinking Water Act – Source Water Protection

Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act established the USEPA's Sole Source Aquifer Program. This program protects communities from groundwater contamination from federally-funded projects.

Within USEPA's Region 9, which includes California, there are nine sole source aquifers. None of these sole source aquifers are located within the project area. Therefore, the Sole Source Aquifer Program does not apply to the proposed Project, and the lead agency would be in compliance with Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

5.11 Executive Order on Trails for America in the 21st Century

The EO on Trails for America (January 18, 2001) requires federal agencies to protect, connect, promote, and assist trails of all types throughout the United States.

The portion of the Pipeline Alignment within Riverside County is within the Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (ECVAP). According to EVCAP *Figure 9, Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan Trails & Bikeways System*, a Regional Trail: Urban/Suburban is shown on both sides of Highway 86. (ECVAP.) There are no trails in proximity to the portion of the Pipeline Alignment in Imperial County. (ICGP EIR, pp. III-141, III-143–III-146, III-171–III-172.) Therefore this EO is not applicable to the proposed Project.

5.12 Executive Order 13007 – Indian Sacred Sites

Sacred sites are defined in Executive Order 13007 (May 24, 1996) as "any specific, discrete, narrowly delineated location on federal land that is identified by an Indian tribe, or Indian individual determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion, as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance to, or ceremonial use by, an Indian religion; provided that the tribe or appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion has informed the agency of the existence of such a site."

As discussed in Tribal Cultural Resources threshold 4.18 and the *Cultural Resources Inventory Report* (Appendix C), *Section 3.2.2*, pursuant to CEQA Statue 21080.3.1, referred to as AB 52, formal consultation notification letters were sent to seven Native American Tribes due to their potential interest in the Project area. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians responded and differed to TMDCI. No other contacted tribe responded to CVWD within 30 days of receipt of the formal notification. Outside of the AB 52 consultation window, the TMDCI requested to consult. CVWD will continue to coordinate with the TMDCI outside of the formal AB 52 process. As of the July 31, 2024, the TMDCI have not requested designation of or identified a Tribal Cultural Landscape, TCR, or Traditional Cultural Property. Through implementation of mitigation measures **MM CR-1** through **MM CR-3** and **MM TCR-1**, potential impacts to any Indian sacred sites would be reduced to a less than significant level and the CVWD would be in compliance with this EO.

5.13 Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) of 1976 as amended (16 U.S.C. § 1801 et seq.), is the primary act governing federal management of fisheries in federal waters, from the 3-nautical-mile state territorial sea limit to the outer limit of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. It establishes exclusive U.S. management authority over all fishing within the Exclusive Economic Zone, all anadromous fish throughout their migratory range except when in a foreign nation's waters, and all fish on the continental shelf. The Act also requires federal agencies to consult with NMFS on actions that could damage Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), as defined in the 1996 Sustainable Fisheries Act (Public Law 104-297).

The proposed Project would not be located in or impact any U.S. federal waters regulated under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. As described in the responses to Biological Resources thresholds 4.4c and 4.4d, the proposed Project is not expected to have adverse effect on resident or migratory fish, or fish habitat in the proposed Project area.

5.14 Environmental Justice

This section describes the existing socioeconomic resources in the proposed Project area and the regulatory setting pertaining to environmental justice-related issues. This section also evaluates the potential for the proposed Project to disproportionately affect minority or low-income groups. The USEPA defines environmental justice as:

> *The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or economic groups should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, State, local, and tribal programs and policies" (USEPA, 2016.)*

According to USEPA guidelines, a minority population is present in a study area if the minority population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent, or if the minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis. The majority of the Project Alignment would be located in unincorporated Imperial County and would serve the communities of Salton Sea Beach, Desert Shores, Salton City, and unincorporated areas of Riverside and San Bernardino County. According to the USEPA's Environmental Screening and Mapping Tool (EJScreen), the majority of the Project area is within the 80-90 percentile for People of Color.[5] (EPA 2024-A.) Therefore, the Project area is composed of a minority population exceeding 50 percent.

USEPA guidelines recommend that analyses of low-income communities consider the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty level definitions, as well as applicable State and regional definitions of low-income and poverty communities.

The Department of Water Resources defines a Disadvantaged Community (DAC) as a community with a median household income (MHI) less than 80 percent of the California MHI and a Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC) is a community with an MHI less than 60 percent of the California MHI. According to the Department of Water Resources Disadvantages Communities Mapping Tool (DWR 2024), the Project area west of Highway 86 (Desert Shores) is a DAC and the Project Area east of Highway 86 (Salton Sea Beach and Salton City) is a SDAC.

Impact Analysis

For the purposes of this analysis, an impact related to environmental justice would be significant if the proposed Project would cause impacts to minority or low-income populations that are disproportionately high and adverse, either directly, indirectly, or cumulatively.

The proposed Pipeline would replace an existing aged pipeline, which would increase the reliability of the water supplied to the Project area. Although construction of the proposed Pipeline has the potential for short-term environmental effects as described in this document, (e.g. short term impacts on air quality and noise), Project

[5] The US EPA socioeconomic indicator People of Color means the percent of individuals in a block group who list their racial status as a race other than white alone and/or list their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino. That is, all people other than non-Hispanic white-alone individuals. The word "alone" in this case indicates that the person is of a single race, not multiracial. (EPA 2024-B.)

implementation would have the long-term benefit of continuing to provide a reliable and safe potable water source for these communities.

Although construction has the potential for resulting in additional noise and dust, this would be intermittent and temporary, and would cease upon completion of work activities. Therefore, with the consideration of the benefits provided to these communities through implementation of the proposed Project and mitigation identified in this initial study, the proposed Project would not result in any disproportionately high adverse impacts on minority or low-income communities. Thus, no adverse environmental justice impacts would occur.

6. ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

6.1 Alternatives Evaluated

Two alternatives to the Project are evaluated in this section: Alternative 1 and the No Project/No Action Alternative.

As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 would replace approximately 14.5 miles of existing 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP water transmission mains with approximately 14 miles of 24-inch diameter DIP water transmission main to serve the communities of Salton Sea Beach, Desert Shores, Salton City, and unincorporated areas in Riverside and Imperial Counties on the west side of the Salton Sea. Approximately 13 miles of the Alternative 1 Alignment would be located within Caltrans ROW, of which approximately one (1) mile traverses through land owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM); and approximately two (2) miles of the Alternative 1 Pipeline would be located within existing street ROW or newly obtained utility easements across private property outside of Caltrans ROW.

The Alternative 1 Pipeline would connect to the existing water distribution system via connection to an existing 30-inch diameter DIP west of Highway 86 at the intersection of Lincoln Street/84th Avenue in Riverside County. The Alternative 1 Alignment would follow 84th Avenue east for approximately one mile before turning southward where it would run roughly parallel to southbound Highway 86 in Caltrans ROW, near Postmile 61, approximately one mile south of the Red Earth Casino, the Alternative 1 Alignment crosses BLM land, and continues parallel to southbound Highway 86 to Golden Avenue where the Alternative 1 Pipeline would turn west and terminate at CVWD's existing Reservoir No. 1092 at the end of Diamond Avenue in Salton City in Imperial County. (**Figure 11 – Alternative 1**.) The Alternative 1 Pipeline would connect to existing water mains in Service Road and Golden Avenue.

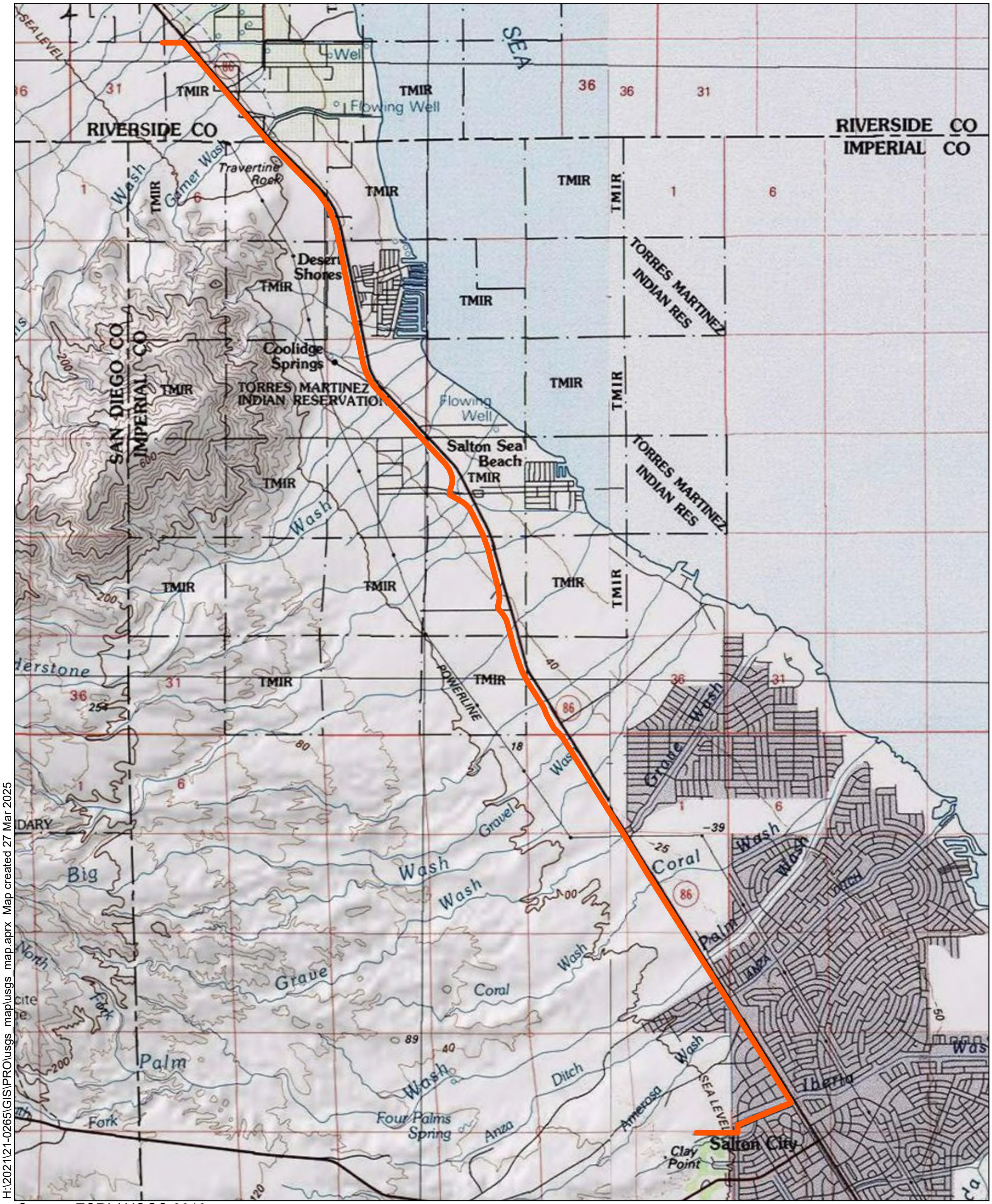
Under the No Project/No Action Alternative the proposed 24-inch diameter DIP water transmission pipeline (Pipeline) would not be constructed and the existing 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP water transmission mains would remain in use. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not replace the existing aged transmission mains, which already require frequent maintenance by CVWD personnel.

6.2 Selected Alternative

Alternative 1 would have similar impacts as the proposed Project and achieve the Project's purpose to eliminate and reduce pipeline failures and leaks by replacing the existing 16-inch and 18-inch diameter ACP and DIP water transmission mains with a new 24-inch diameter DIP pipeline. Alternative 1 would provide domestic water service to the existing approximately 2,760 services, which serves approximately 7,400 residents. As discussed under the Land Use heading in **Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics**, Alternative 1 would potentially conflict with the *California Desert Conservation Plan* and the *Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment.* To avoid the potential conflict, these plans must be amended to allow a 24-inch diameter pipeline.

The No Project/No Action Alternative would not replace the existing water transmission mains.

The proposed Project is the recommended alternative because it will replace the existing water transmission mains and does not require amendment of the *California Desert Conservation Plan* and the *Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment.*



H:\2021\21-0265\GIS\PRO\usgs_map\usgs_map.aprx Map created 27 Mar 2025

Source: ESRI / USGS 2013.

Figure 11 - Alternative 1

Highway 86 Water Transmission Main Phase 3 and Phase 4 Project

0 1 2 3 Miles

ALBERT A. WEBB ASSOCIATES

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics provides a comparison between the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project, Alternative 1, and the No Project/No Action alternatives with regard to the resource topics addressed in Section 3 of this initial study.

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
Aesthetics			
Scenic vistas; Light and glare	LTS	LTS	NI
Scenic resources along a State Scenic Highway; Visual character and quality	NI	NI	NI
The proposed Project is the construction of an underground Pipeline, which would not be visible after the completion of construction. There are no scenic highways in proximity to the Project Alignment. Construction would occur primarily during daytime hours and any lighting necessary for construction would be directed towards installation activities and away from adjacent land uses. During construction, aesthetics would be temporarily impaired by construction equipment; however, once construction is complete, the proposed Pipeline would not be visible and would not result in permanent changes to scenic vistas, visual quality, or light and glare. Alternative 1 would have similar impacts as the proposed Project in that there would be temporary visual impact during construction; visible after construction is complete. There are no scenic highways in proximity to the Alternative 1 Alignment; thus there would be no impact in that regard. The No Project/ No Action alternative would not involve construction of new structures that would impede views, change visual character, or add new substantial sources of light, and thus would not result in aesthetic impacts.			
Agriculture and Forestry			
Convert Farmland	LTS	LTS	NI
Conflict with existing agricultural zoning or Williamson Act contract; Conflict with or cause rezoning of forest land or timberland; Loss or conversion of forest land; Conversion of Farmland or forest land	NI	NI	NI
There is a total of 5 acres of Farmland within the Project's disturbance area. Although the Pipeline would be constructed within or adjacent to Farmland, the Pipeline would be constructed underground within Caltrans or other road ROWs, and utility easements and the ground surface would be restored to its pre-Project condition. The proposed Project would not result in the conversion of Farmland or the loss of forest land. Alternative 1 would have similar impacts as the proposed Project since there is a total of 5 acres of Farmland within Alternative 1's disturbance area. As with the proposed Project, although the Alternative 1 Pipeline would be constructed within or adjacent to Farmland, Alternative 1 would be constructed underground within Caltrans or other road ROWs, and utility easements and the ground surface would be restored to its pre-Project condition. There is no Farmland within the portion of the Alternative 1 alignment that traverses through BLM-owned land. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not impact agricultural or forest land.			

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
Air Quality			
Conflict with AQMP	NI	NI	NI
Net increase of non-attainment criteria pollutants; Expose sensitive receptors; Objectionable odors	LTSM	LTSM	NI

The proposed Project would replace existing aged water transmission mains and as such would not result in any changes to the existing land use patterns in the Project area. The analysis in the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Analysis* (provided in Appendix A) concluded Project construction emissions are less than the applicable daily thresholds established by SCAQMD and ICAPCD for all the criteria pollutants. In addition, the short-term estimated emissions do not exceed SCAQMD's LSTs for the portion of Project that would be constructed in Riverside County and therefore SCAQMD's jurisdiction. The long-term emissions from Project operation are primarily mobile source emissions, with no stationary sources of emissions present. The closest sensitive receptor to the Riverside County portion of the Project is a residence that is approximately one mile north of the Pipeline Alignment, near the intersection of Johnson Street/82nd Avenue. The nearest sensitive receptors in Imperial County include scattered existing residential homes adjacent to the Project Alignment. Construction and operation emissions would be less than significant; therefore, Project implementation would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Pipeline construction presents the potential for generation of odors in the form of diesel exhaust in the immediate vicinity of the segment of Pipeline under construction. Additionally, the Project would implement mitigation measure **MM AQ-1** and prepare a Dust Control Plan for review and approval by CVWD. Odors generated during construction would be short-term and would move along the Pipeline Alignment as construction takes place; thus, Project construction would not result in the long-term creation of other emissions or odors.

As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 would replace existing aged water transmission mains and as such would not result in any changes to the existing land use patterns in the area. Because the Alternative 1 alignment varies only slightly from the proposed Project and will be constructed with the same equipment, the analysis and conclusions from the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Analysis* are applicable to Alternative 1. As with the proposed Project, construction emissions resulting from Alternative 1 would be than the applicable daily thresholds established by SCAQMD and ICAPCD for all the criteria pollutants. In addition, the short-term estimated emissions would not exceed SCAQMD's LSTs for the portion of Alternative 1 that would be constructed in Riverside County and therefore SCAQMD's jurisdiction. The long-term emissions from operation of Alternative 1 are primarily mobile source emissions, with no stationary sources of emissions present. The closest sensitive receptor to the Riverside County portion of the Alternative 1 is a residence that is approximately one mile north of the Alternative 1 Alignment, near the intersection of Johnson Street/82nd Avenue. The nearest sensitive receptors in Imperial County include scattered existing residential homes adjacent to the Alternative 1 Alignment. Construction and operation emissions would be less than significant; therefore, implementation of Alternative 1 would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. As with the proposed Project, construction of Alternative 1 presents the potential for generation of odors in the form of diesel exhaust in the immediate vicinity of the segment of Alternative 1 under construction. As with the Project, Alternative 1 would implement mitigation measure **MM AQ-1** and prepare a Dust Control Plan for review and approval by CVWD. Odors generated during construction would be short-term and would move along Alternative 1 as construction takes place; thus, Alternative 1 construction would not result in the long-term creation of other emissions or odors.

The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not generate any construction emissions and would not result in any changes to operational emissions.

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
Biological Resources			
Sensitive or candidate species	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Sensitive habitat	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Federally protected wetlands	NI	NI	NI
Wildlife corridors	NI	NI	NI
Local policies and ordinances	NI	NI	NI
Habitat Conservation Plans for Natural Community Conservation Plans	LTS	LTS	NI
The proposed Project has potentially suitable habitat for special status wildlife. Mitigation would reduce potential construction impacts on birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to less than significant. The proposed Project would cross 38 ephemeral washes which are considered Waters of the State. The crossing at the washes along the Project Alignment would be constructed using trenchless technology. The proposed Project has the potential to impact the sensitive desert wash habitat and disturbed desert scrub habitat. Compliance with mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-6** would reduce impacts to sensitive habitats and species to less than significant. About 14.4 acres of the Project is located within the planning area boundaries of the *Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan* (CVMSHCP) and does not occur within any of the designated Conservation Areas. The Project qualifies as a Covered Activity and would comply with the CVMSHCP guidelines. Therefore, through implementation of mitigation measures impacts to biological resources will be less than significant. As with the proposed Project, the Alternative 1 alignment has potentially suitable habitat for special status wildlife, would cross ephemeral washes considered Water of the State, and has the potential to impact sensitive desert wash habitat and disturbed desert scrub habitat. These impacts which would be reduced to less than significant through the use of trenchless construction techniques, such as jack and bore, and with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-6.** As with the proposed Project, approximately 14.4 acres of Alternative 1 located within the planning area boundaries of the CVMSHCP and does not occur within any of the designated Conservation Areas. Alternative 1 qualifies as a Covered Activity and would comply with the CVMSHCP guidelines. Therefore, through implementation of mitigation measures impacts to biological resources for Alternative 1 will be less than significant. The No Project/No Action Alternative would involve no construction and therefore would not have the potential to result in impacts on biological resources.			
Cultural Resources			
Historical resources	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Archaeological resources	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Human remains	LTSM	LTSM	NI
The records search indicated that six cultural resources were within the APE. Five of those resources were identified as historical resources. One resource was identified as an archaeological resource. The archaeological resource (P-13-003675) and two historical resources (P-33-20765 and P-33-20767) were recommended to be eligible for listing for the purposes of this Project only. As the Project would construct the pipeline beneath the roadways through directional drilling, neither of these resource would be impacted. There is a possibility of identifying unanticipated cultural resources during ground disturbing activities associated with the proposed Project. Implementation of mitigation measures **MM CR-1** and **MM CR-2** including archaeological resource monitoring and practices for unanticipated discovery of cultural resources would reduce potential impacts to less than significant, in addition to mitigation measure **MM TCR-1**, which requires coordination with the TMDCI to prepare a Tribal Cultural Resources			

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
Monitoring and Recovery Plan. The potential for encountering human remains is low; however, compliance with mitigation measure **MM CR-3** for the unanticipated discovery of human remains would ensure less than significant impacts. Except for where Alternative 1 crosses BLM land, the Alternative 1 footprint is identical to the Project footprint. Thus, there is the possibility of identifying unanticipated cultural resources during ground disturbing activities associated with the proposed Project. With implementation of mitigation measures **MM CR-1, MM CR-2, MM CR-3** and **MM TCR-1**, potential impacts to cultural resources resulting from Alternative 1 would be less than significant. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not involve construction and therefore would not have the potential to disturb previously unknown cultural resources or human remains.			
Energy			
Wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources	NI	NI	NI
Conflict with state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency	NI	NI	NI
The majority of the Project's energy impacts would occur during Project construction. Fuel consumption from on-site heavy-duty construction equipment would be temporary in nature and the limited amount of equipment used would represent a negligible demand on energy resources. There are no unusual Project site characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy-efficient than at comparable construction sites in other parts of the State. The Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any state or local plans for renewable energy or energy. As with the proposed Project, the majority of Alternative 1's energy impacts would occur during construction. Alternative 1 would be constructed using the same equipment as the Project. Fuel consumption would be temporary in nature and the limited amount of equipment used would represent a negligible demand on energy resources. There are no unusual characteristics of the Alternative 1 alignment that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy-efficient than the Project and at comparable construction sites in other parts of the State. The portion of Alternative 1 that crosses BLM-owned property would have to be consistent with *The California Desert Area Conservation Plan* and the *Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment*. These plans do not allow pipelines over 12-inches in diameter outside of designated utility corridors. (CDCP, p. 93; DRECP, p. 129.) Since Alternative 1 proposes a 24-inch diameter pipeline, it would conflict with the *California Desert Conservation Plan* and the *Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment* unless these plans are amended. However, because *The California Desert Area Conservation Plan* and the *Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment* are federal plans; therefore Alternative 1 would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency The No Project/No Action Alternative would not use energy for construction and energy used during operations and maintenance would remain the same as the existing condition.			

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
Geology and Soils			
Geological hazards (earthquake faults, seismic ground shaking, liquefaction); Unstable soils; Expansive soils	LTS	LTS	NI
Erosion and topsoil loss; Landslides	LTS	LTS	NI
Septic tank or alternative wastewater systems	NI	NI	NI
Paleontological Resources	LTSM	LTSM	NI
No portion of the Project Alignment is within or adjacent to an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The proposed Pipeline would be subject to seismic activity from faults located in the vicinity; however, the Project does not include habitable structures and would not expose people or structures to seismically induced risks. Final design and construction of the proposed Project would comply with the design and construction recommendations set forth in the *Geotechnical Investigation Report, Highway 86 Water Transmission Main, Phases 3 & 4*, September 12, 2023, prepared by Converse Consultants and included as Appendix E. Soil erosion and loss of topsoil would be minimized through compliance with current regulations and implementation of a SWPPP that incorporates effective erosion and sediment control measures. The Project Alignment is not located in an area subject to landslides. The Project does not involve the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater systems. According to the Department of Conservation's California Regional Geologic Maps Santa Ana Sheet (DOC-C), the region is underlain by Holocene age mostly recent to quaternary deposits including recent dune sand (Qs), unconsolidated stream, river channel, and alluvial fan deposits (Qai), and deposits of Lake Cahuilla (Qi). A small portion near the county line is underlain by Mesozoic age pre-cretaceous metasedimentary rocks (ms). (DOC-D) Late Quaternary-age lacustrine deposits derived from ancient Lake Cahuilla have been proven to yield scientifically significant mollusk shells within the Salton Trough. Qs-Qi soils have a low potential to contain intact paleontological resources because they are typically too young to contain fossilized remains. However, these quaternary deposits may be underlain at certain depths by older deposits which yield significant paleontological findings. Therefore, by implementing mitigation measure **MM GEO-1**, which implements a paleontological resource impact mitigation and monitoring plan, impacts to paleontological resources would be less than significant. No portion of the Alternative 1 alignment is within or adjacent to an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. As with the proposed Project, the Alternative 1 Pipeline would be subject to seismic activity from faults located in the vicinity; however, Alternative 1 does not include habitable structures and would not expose people or structures to seismically induced risks. As with the proposed Project, the Alternative 1 footprint is in an area that may yield significant paleontological findings; however, potential impacts would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure **MM GEO-1**. The No Project/No Action Alternative would involve no construction and thus is not expected to result in impacts related to geologic hazards, septic systems, or paleontological resources.			
Greenhouse Gas Emissions			
GHG Emissions	LTS	LTS	NI
Conflict with GHG reduction Plans	NI	NI	NI

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
The proposed Project does not fit into the categories provided (industrial, commercial, and residential) in the draft GHG thresholds from SCAQMD. Project emissions were compared to the more conservative thresholds. Since the draft SCAQMD GHG threshold Guidance document recommends that construction emissions be amortized for a project lifetime of 30 years, the total GHG emissions from Project construction were amortized and found to be less than the lowest SCAQMD recommended screening level of 3,000 MTCO2E/yr. The CVWD CAAP, adopted September 2021, provides a comprehensive assessment of CVWD's current operations and water supplies, and identifies the measures, policies, and projects that have been developed to reduce operational GHG emissions. Although the Project's GHG construction emissions would not be subject to this plan, as shown above in **Table J – Project Consistency with CVWD Climate Action & Adaptation Plan Measures**, the Project would not conflict with any of the measures in the CVWD CAAP. Construction and operation of the proposed water transmission Pipeline would not generate GHG emissions such that a significant impact on the environment would result. As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 does not fit into the categories provided (industrial, commercial, and residential) in the draft GHG thresholds from SCAQMD. Since Alternative 1 is so similar to the proposed Project, the analysis and conclusions of the proposed Project are applicable to this alternative. As with the proposed Project, expected emissions from Alternative 1 are expected to be less than the lowest SCAQMD recommended screening level of 3,000 MTCO2E/yr. The CVWD CAAP, adopted September 2021, provides a comprehensive assessment of CVWD's current operations and water supplies, and identifies the measures, policies, and projects that have been developed to reduce operational GHG emissions. Although Alternative 1's GHG construction emissions would not be subject to this plan, the findings shown above in **Table J – Project Consistency with CVWD Climate Action & Adaptation Plan Measures**, are applicable to Alternative 1 and Alternative 1 would not conflict with any of the measures in the CVWD CAAP. Construction and operation of the Alternative 1 Pipeline would not generate GHG emissions such that a significant impact on the environment would result. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not involve construction and GHG impacts of operation would not change from the existing condition.			
Hazards and Hazardous Emissions			
Routine handling of hazardous materials; Accidental release of hazardous materials; Hazardous materials near schools; Emergency response or evacuation plan; Wildland fires	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Cortese List; Airport safety hazard	NI	NI	NI
Construction of the proposed Project would temporarily increase the routine transport and use of hazardous materials, but transport and use of hazardous materials would not be needed for Pipeline operation. The existing ACP pipeline is proposed to be abandoned in place and filled with inert material, such as slurry or sand, to prevent further erosion. However, a small portion of the ACP pipe within Coolridge Springs Road may require removal. All removal, transport, and disposal of any portion of the ACP pipe shall be in accordance with all applicable local and state laws and mitigation measure **MM HAZ-1**, which requires the Project specifications and contract documents to include language that requires the contractor to dispose of any ACP pipe in a landfill licensed to accept asbestos containing material. There are no active hazardous materials sites in the project area. The Project Alignment is outside of the Salton Sea Airport land use compatibility zone and would not result in an airport safety hazard. The Project Alignment is not in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Hazardous materials would be used during construction. However, these materials would not be present in large quantities and compliance with applicable federal and state laws related to the transportation, use, storage, and response to upsets or accidents that may involve hazardous materials would reduce the likelihood and severity of upsets and accidents during transit and storage. As part of the Project's final design, traffic control plan(s) shall be prepared and shall be approved by each jurisdiction for which a lane closure or encroachment permit is required. The traffic control plan(s) shall provide adequate pass-by features for emergency vehicles. Through compliance with required traffic control plan(s) per mitigation measure **MM TRA-1** and encroachment permit(s), the details of which would be dictated by each affected county and Caltrans, the ability of emergency vehicles to pass by the construction site(s) safely, efficiently, and quickly would not be limited. There are no schools present near the Project Alignment.			

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
As with the proposed Project, construction of Alternative 1 would temporarily increase the routine transport and use of hazardous materials, but transport and use of hazardous materials would not be needed operation. The existing ACP pipeline is proposed to be abandoned in place and filled with inert material, such as slurry or sand, to prevent further erosion. However, a small portion of the ACP pipe within Coolridge Springs Road may require removal. Alternative 1 would implement all applicable local and state laws in addition to mitigation measure **MM HAZ-1**, which requires the specifications and contract documents to include language that requires the contractor to dispose of any ACP pipe in a landfill licensed to accept asbestos containing material. There are no active hazardous materials sites in the Alternative 1 area. Alternative 1 is outside of the Salton Sea Airport land use compatibility zone and would not result in an airport safety hazard. Alternative 1 is not in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. As with the proposed Project, hazardous materials would be used during construction. However, these materials would not be present in large quantities and compliance with applicable federal and state laws related to the transportation, use, storage, and response to upsets or accidents that may involve hazardous materials would reduce the likelihood and severity of upsets and accidents during transit and storage. Alternative 1 will implement traffic control plans as required by mitigation measure **MM TRA-1**. The traffic control plan(s) shall provide adequate pass-by features for emergency vehicles. Through compliance with required traffic control plan(s) and encroachment permit(s), the details of which would be dictated by each affected county and Caltrans, the ability of emergency vehicles to pass by the construction site(s) safely, efficiently, and quickly would not be limited. There are no schools present near the Project Alignment. The No Project/No Action alternative would involve no construction and would have no impacts associated with hazardous materials or other hazards.			
Hydrology and Water Quality			
Water quality standards or otherwise degrade water quality; Groundwater supply and recharge; Alter drainage patterns; Risk of release of pollutants in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones;	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Conflict or obstruct water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan	NI	NI	NI

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
Construction activities associated with the Project have the potential to result in the degradation of downstream water bodies from the release of polluted stormwater runoff from Pipeline construction. To confirm water used to flush the pipeline during construction is discharged in an appropriate location, the Project would implement mitigation measure **MM HYD-1**. Further, operation of the Project is likely to include some activities such as line flushing that can discharge water to downstream water bodies. These construction and operational activities are regulated with NPDES permits containing waste discharge requirements for project proponents to meet in order to protect downstream water bodies and ensure that surface and groundwater water quality standards are not violated. Construction-phase stormwater quality is regulated by a statewide NPDES permit with waste discharge requirements. Through compliance with existing regulations to protect surface and groundwater quality, impacts resulting from construction and operation of the Project would be less than significant. The Construction General Permit requires the development of a SWPPP by a certified Qualified SWPPP Developer (QSD) and onsite implementation by a Qualified SWPPP Practitioner (QSP) for the duration of construction. Construction and operation of the Project would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or substantially interfere with groundwater management activities. Where the Pipeline crosses drainages, waterways, and Highway 86, the Pipeline would be constructed with trenchless methods (jack and bore) in order to avoid impacting these resources. The ground surface where trenching occurs would be returned to its original line and grade. With implementation of the SWPPP and dewatering/de minimus permits, as well as Project design to avoid watercourses and return the ground surface to its original condition, Project construction and operation would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the Project Alignment or surrounding area or exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems. Due to the Project proximity to Salton Sea segments of the Pipeline Alignment are located within special Flood Hazard Area Zone A, and a Regulatory Floodway. (Refer to **Figure 10 – FEMA Flood Hazards Zones**.) Because the Project proposes to replace an existing aging pipeline underground within ROW and easements across private property, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. As with the proposed Project, construction activities associated with Alternative 1 have the potential to result in the degradation of downstream water bodies from the release of stormwater runoff from Pipeline construction. To confirm water used to flush the pipeline during construction is discharged in an appropriate location, Alternative 1 would implement mitigation measure **MM HYD-1**. Operation of Alternative 1 would include the same activities as the Project, such as line flushing that can discharge water to downstream water bodies. These construction and operational activities are regulated with NPDES permits containing waste discharge requirements for project proponents to meet in order to protect downstream water bodies and ensure that surface and groundwater water quality standards are not violated. Construction-phase stormwater quality is regulated by a statewide NPDES permit with waste discharge requirements. Through compliance with existing regulations to protect surface and groundwater quality, impacts resulting from construction and operation of Alternative 1 would be less than significant. A SWPPP would be prepared by a certified QSD and implemented by a QSP for the duration of construction. Construction and operation of Alternative 1 would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or substantially interfere with groundwater management activities. Where the Alternative 1 crosses drainages, waterways, and Highway 86, Alternative 1 would be constructed with trenchless methods (jack and bore) in order to avoid impacting these resources. The ground surface where trenching occurs would be returned to its original line and grade. With implementation of the SWPPP and dewatering/de minimus permits, as well as Alternative 1 being designed to avoid watercourses and return the ground surface to its original condition, construction and operation of Alternative 1 would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the Alternative 1 Alignment or surrounding area or exceed the capacity of existing stormwater drainage systems. Due to the proximity to Salton Sea segments of the Alternative 1 alignment are located within special Flood Hazard Area Zone A, and a Regulatory Floodway. Because Alternative 1 proposes to replace an existing aging pipeline underground within ROW and easements across private property, Alternative 1 would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not involve construction of new facilities and would not have construction or operational impacts on water quality or drainage patterns, and there would be no impact related to flooding risks, or seiche, tsunami, or mudflows.			

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
Land Use and Planning			
Divide an established community; conflict with applicable plan, policy or regulation	NI	PS	NI
The Project would not divide an established community and would not change land use, so it would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation with jurisdiction over the Project. To construct the portion of Alternative 1 that crosses BLM-owned property, CVWD would need to obtain ROW from the BLM, which is considered an action for purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for which an environmental assessment would be required. Additionally, the portion of Alternative 1 that crosses BLM-owned property would have to be consistent with *The California Desert Area Conservation Plan* and the *Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment*. These plans do not allow pipelines over 12-inches in diameter outside of designated utility corridors. (CDCP, p. 93; DRECP, p. 129.) Since Alternative 1 proposes a 24-inch diameter pipeline, it would conflict with the *California Desert Conservation Plan* and the *Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment* unless these plans are amended. Since Alternative 1 may be in conflict with the *California Desert Conservation Plan* and the *Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Land Use Plan Amendment,* impacts regarding conflicts with an applicable plan may be potentially significant. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not divide an established community and would not change land use; thus, no impact would occur.			
Mineral Resources			
Loss of availability of a known valuable mineral resource or mineral resource recovery site	NI	NI	NI
There would be no impacts to mineral resources because the Project Alignment does not traverse any known mineral recovery site. Under Alternative 1 there would be no impacts to mineral resources because the Alternative 1 alignment does not traverse any known mineral recovery site. Under the No Project/ No Action Alternative, no construction would occur thus no impacts would occur.			
Noise			
Excessive noise; Permanent increase in noise levels; temporary increase in noise levels	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Groundborne vibration	LS	LS	NI
Aircraft Noise	NI	NI	NI

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
Construction noise from the proposed Project would be temporary and exposure of any single receiver would be limited to a few days at most. However, construction occurring within 280 feet of a sensitive receptor could exceed Imperial County's construction noise threshold of 75 dBA Leq over an eight (8) hour period. Since this impact is considered potentially significant, noise control measures as required by mitigation measure **MM NOI-1** would be employed to reduce impacts to less than significant. Construction impacts from groundborne vibration are less than significant. The proposed Project Alignment site is outside the noise impact area for the Salton Sea Airport and would not expose residents or workers to airport or aircraft noise. Project operation would not generate perceptible noise. As with the proposed Project, construction noise from Alternative 1 would be temporary and exposure of any single receiver would be limited to a few days at most. Alternative 1 would use the same types of construction equipment as the Project and entail construction within 280 feet of a sensitive receptor; therefore, construction of Alternative 1 could exceed Imperial County's construction noise threshold of 75 dBA Leq over an eight (8) hour period. To reduce this potentially significant noise impact to less than significant, Alternative 1 implement noise control measures as required by mitigation measure **MM NOI-1**. As with the proposed Project, construction impacts from groundborne vibration are less than significant. The Alternative 1 alignment site is outside the noise impact area for the Salton Sea Airport and would not expose residents or workers to airport or aircraft noise. Operation of Alternative 1 would not generate perceptible noise. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not entail construction of new facilities and would have no temporary or permanent noise impacts.			
Population and Housing			
Population growth; Displacement of housing or people	NI	NI	NI
The proposed Pipeline would replace existing aged water transmission mains and as such would not directly induce population growth, as it would serve the existing communities of Salton Sea Beach, Desert Shores, Salton City, and unincorporated areas in Riverside and Imperial Counties on the west side of the Salton Sea. The Project does not include any residential or non-residential uses that would directly induce unplanned population growth. As a replacement to an existing water transmission main, the Project would not extend water service into any areas not currently served and as such would not indirectly induce unplanned population growth. Construction and operation of the Project would not necessitate the demolition or relocation of existing housing units. Alternative 1 would replace existing aged water transmission mains and as such would not directly induce population growth, as it would serve the existing communities of Salton Sea Beach, Desert Shores, Salton City, and unincorporated areas in Riverside and Imperial Counties on the west side of the Salton Sea. As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 does not include any residential or non-residential uses that would directly induce unplanned population growth. As a replacement to an existing water transmission main, Alternative 1 would not extend water service into any areas not currently served and as such would not indirectly induce unplanned population growth. Construction and operation of Alternative 1 would not necessitate the demolition or relocation of existing housing units. The No Project/No Action Alternative would displace housing or people and would not include new facilities that could induce population growth.			

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
Public Services			
Fire protection services; police protection services; Schools; Parks; Other public facilities	NI	NI	NI
Project implementation would not require additional or unusual fire or police protection resources or change existing demand for public services. There would be no impact on public services. As with the proposed Project, implementation of Alternative 1 would not require additional or unusual fire or police protection resources or change existing demand for public services. There would be no impact on public services. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not result in any change to public services.			
Recreation			
Increase use of parks or other recreational facilities; New recreational facilities	NI	NI	NI
There are no parks within the Pipeline Alignment. Project implementation would not increase the use or require new parks or recreational facilities. There would be no impact on parks or recreation facilities. There are no parks within the Alternative 1 alignment. As with the proposed Project, implementation of Alternative 1 would not increase the use or require new parks or recreational facilities. There would be no impact on parks or recreation facilities. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not result in any change to park or recreation facilities.			
Transportation			
Circulation system programs, plans, or policies; Emergency access	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Conflict with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b) (VMT); Traffic hazards	NI	NI	NI
Construction of the Project may result in traffic congestion as work progresses along the Pipeline Alignment. Construction of the approximately 13 miles of the Pipeline Alignment within Caltrans ROW would not entail any lane closure of Highway 86. Approximately 5 miles of the Pipeline Alignment is within local roads and easements across private property. Depending upon final design, it may be necessary to close at least one lane of traffic in 84th Avenue, Johnson Street, Lesser Drive, Golden Avenue, or Diamond Avenue during construction. As required by mitigation measure **MM TRA-1**, traffic control plans shall be prepared and shall be approved by Riverside County and Imperial County, so that construction would be consistent with local traffic ordinances and policies. Through compliance with the conditions of the required encroachment permits and traffic control plans, impacts would be less than significant. The proposed Project would not change roadway configurations. As with the proposed Project, construction of Alternative 1 may result in traffic congestion as work progresses along the Alternative 1 alignment. Construction of the approximately 14 miles of Alternative 1 within Caltrans ROW would not entail any lane closure of Highway 86. Approximately 4 miles of the Alternative 1 Alignment is within local roads and easements across private property. Depending upon final design, it may be necessary to close at least one lane of traffic in 84th Avenue, Johnson Street, Golden Avenue, or Diamond Avenue during construction. Alternative 1 would implement mitigation measure **MM TRA-1**, so that construction would be consistent with local traffic ordinances and policies. Through compliance with the conditions of the required encroachment permits and traffic control plans, impacts would be less than significant. Alternative 1 would not change roadway configurations.			

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
The No Project/ No Action Alternative involves no construction and would not impact traffic circulation, emergency access, VMT, alternative transportation facilities, or create traffic hazards.			
Tribal Cultural Resources			
Substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Although no TCRs have been identified along the Project Alignment through the AB 52 consultation process, the existence of a previous archaeological site within the APE indicates the area is considered sensitive for tribal cultural resources. Potential impacts to tribal cultural resources would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM TCR-1** and **MM CR-1** through **MM CR-3**. Although no TCRs have been identified along the portion of the Alternative 1 Alignment through the AB 52 consultation process outside of BLM-owned land, the existence of a previous archaeological site within the APE indicates the area is considered sensitive for tribal cultural resources. Consultation specific to the portion of Alternative 1 within BLM land has not taken place. Potential impacts to tribal cultural resources resulting from construction and operation of Alternative 1 would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures **MM TCR-1** and **MM CR-1** through **MM CR-3**. The No Project/ No Action Alternative involves no construction and would not result in a substantial change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource.			
Utilities and Service Systems			
Construction of new utilities causing environmental effects	LTSM	LTSM	NI
Sufficient water supply; Solid waste capacity	LTS	LTS	NI
Wastewater treatment capacity; Solid waste compliance	NI	NI	NI

Table T – Alternative Analysis – Environmental Checklist Topics

Issue Areas	Significance Determination		
	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/ No Action
Notes: NI = No impact; LTS = Less than significant impact; LTSM = Less than significant with mitigation incorporated; PS = Potentially significant impact			
The proposed Project is construction and operation of a replacement water line and would not result in any significant environmental effects. No new wastewater, stormwater, power, or telecommunications facilities would be required for Project implementation. The Project would not require wastewater treatment capacity. Construction would generate a minimal amount of excess soil that would be reused onsite to the extent feasible; there would be no long-term solid waste generated by the proposed project so impacts would be less than significant. As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 is construction and operation of a replacement water line and would not result in any significant environmental effects. No new wastewater, stormwater, power, or telecommunications facilities would be required to implement Alternative 1. Alternative 1 would not require wastewater treatment capacity. Construction would generate a minimal amount of excess soil that would be reused onsite to the extent feasible; there would be no long-term solid waste generated by Alternative 1 so impacts would be less than significant. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not include construction of any facilities and would have no additional demands for water, wastewater or solid waste facilities.			
Wildfire			
Impair adopted emergency response or evacuation plan	LTS	LTS	NI
Exacerbate wildfire risk due to slope, prevailing winds, or other factors	NI	NI	NI
Exacerbate wildfire risk due to installation or maintenance of infrastructure	NI	NI	NI
Expose people or structures to risks resulting from runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes	NI	NI	NI
No portion of the Project Alignment is within or adjacent to a State Responsibility Area Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. As part of the design process for the Project, traffic control plans would be prepared to provide adequate pass-by features for emergency and other vehicles. Through compliance with required traffic control plans and encroachment permits from Riverside County, Imperial County, and Caltrans, impacts would be less than significant. The Project area is not located within or adjacent to a potentially significant landslide area. Project construction would not entail grading that would create new or change existing slopes. The proposed Project would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure. For these reasons the Project would not exacerbate wildfire risk. The Project does not include habitable structures and would not substantially alter existing drainage patterns. No portion of Alternative 1 is within or adjacent to a State Responsibility Area Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. As with the proposed Project, traffic control plans would be prepared as part of the design process to provide adequate pass-by features for emergency and other vehicles. Through compliance with required traffic control plans and encroachment permits from Riverside County, Imperial County, and Caltrans, impacts would be less than significant. Alignment 1 is not located within or adjacent to a potentially significant landslide area. Construction of Alternative 1 would not entail grading that would create new or change existing slopes. Alternative 1 would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure. For these reasons implementation of Alternative 1 would not exacerbate wildfire risk. Alternative 1 does not include habitable structures and would not substantially alter existing drainage patterns. The No Project/No Action alternative would involve no construction and would thus have no impacts associated with exacerbation of wildfire risk and would not impact emergency response or evacuation plans.			

Table U presents the alternative analysis for the applicable federal cross-cutters.

Table U – Alternative Analysis – Federal Cross Cutters

Federal Cross Cutter	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/No Action
Federal Endangered Species Act	Comply	Comply	No Impact
The proposed Project site contains potentially suitable habitat for special status wildlife species. All trenching would be completed through trenchless methods; therefore, the proposed Project is not expected to result in direct or indirect impacts on special-status species. Mitigation would minimize potential impacts on protected nesting birds. The proposed Project would not jeopardize listed species and would be in compliance with the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). (BRTR, p. 61.) The Alternative 1 site contains potentially suitable habitat for special status wildlife species. As with the proposed Project, all trenching would be completed through trenchless methods; therefore, Alternative 1 is not expected to result in direct or indirect impacts on special-status species. Alternative 1 would implement the same biological resources mitigation measure as the proposed Project to minimize potential impacts on protected nesting birds. Alternative 1 would not jeopardize listed species and would be in compliance with the Federal ESA. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would involve no construction and thus would not impact sensitive species.			
National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106	Comply	Comply	No Impact
The *Cultural Resources Inventory Report* (Appendix C) prepared for the proposed Project would be submitted as part of the consultation process with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Concurrence by SHPO would ensure compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Three cultural resources are assumed eligible for listing, P-33-20765, P-33-20767, and P-13-003675. P-33-20765 and P-33-20767 are assumed eligible for listing on the National Register for this Project only. These are linear resources that expand broadly beyond the scope of this Project and as a result, only relatively small segments of these resources occur within the Project's APE. These linear resources are part of a larger transportation and desert agricultural systems that remain undocumented. Based on available information generated during preparation of Appendix C, these resources may lack the potential to be found eligible as individual resources. This assessment is largely speculative, however, as full documentation of the system with which they interact is incomplete. Therefore, for purposes of this Project only, it is recommended P-33-20765 and P-33-20767 be considered eligible for listing in the National Register/California Register under Criterion A/Criterion 1 for their association with the development of the regional Salton Sea agricultural landscape as defined in 36 CFR § 60.4. (Appendix C, p. 32.) Since P-33-20765 and P-33-20767 are being identified as eligible for listing for this Project only, as well as the potential for inadvertent discovery within the APE the Project will implement mitigation measures **MM CR-1**, which requires WEAP training, and **MM CR-2**, which sets forth the procedures to be followed in the event an archaeological or tribal cultural resources is discovered. The Project will utilize trenchless construction methods to install the pipeline beneath existing roads which will avoid any physical impacts to both resources and will allow both resources to remain in their existing condition, use, and alignment (criteria i, ii, iii, iv). The Project will not result in conditions of neglect, nor will either resource be transferred, leased, or sold out of Federal ownership (criteria vi, vii). Finally, as the proposed pipeline will be installed beneath the resources, the Project will not introduce any visual, atmospheric or audible elements that would affect the resources (criteria v). As such, a finding of no adverse effect or significant effect to either P-33-20765 or P-33-20767 is recommended. (Appendix C, p. 36.) P-13-003675 is located within BIA/TMDCI jurisdictional land. This site extends west and east of Highway 86. The western portion of the site is located within the APE. The northwestern portion of the site was previously determined not to contain any characteristics that would make the site eligible for listing on the National Register. This previous evaluation was reviewed as part of this Project as well as associated site records, excavation reports, and survey reports completed at various times over a two-decade period. As noted in Section 3.4 of Appendix C, the site boundary was extended during subsequent site updates after the SHPO concurrence. The expansion of the boundary included several nearby noncontiguous artifact scatter concentrations previously recorded as separate sites as these surface scatters appear to have constituted use of a former Lake Cahuilla shoreline. The site records and reports determined that these artifact scatters consisted of surface only components as no indication of subsurface components were ever noted. The Project would be constructed within the portion of the site previously determined not eligible. No components of the surface scatter previously noted in this area remain today, due to off-road vehicle (ORV) use, construction of Highway 86, expansion of Highway 86, construction of several buried and aerial utility corridors, agricultural practices, erosion, authorized collection (as part of previous evaluation studies), and unauthorized collection. Further, the proposed alignment would avoid all previously recorded artifact concentrations. As the site consists of surface components only, as no artifact concentrations were identified within the APE, and as the alignment would avoid impacting any remaining artifact concentrations, there will be no physical destruction to the site. As the proposed alignment would be installed below ground, there are also no permanent impacts to			

Table U – Alternative Analysis – Federal Cross Cutters

Federal Cross Cutter	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/No Action
the visual or auditory characteristics of the overall site. For these reasons, a finding of no adverse effect or significant effect to P-13-003675 is recommended. As with the proposed Project, three cultural resources are assumed eligible for listing, P-33-20765, P-33-20767, and P-13-003675. P-33-20765 and P-33-20767 would be assumed eligible for listing on the National Register for Alternative 1 only. These are linear resources that expand broadly beyond the scope of Alternative 1 and as a result, only relatively small segments of these resources occur within the Alternative 1 APE. These linear resources are part of a larger transportation and desert agricultural systems that remain undocumented. Based on available information generated during preparation of Appendix C, these resources may lack the potential to be found eligible as individual resources. This assessment is largely speculative, however, as full documentation of the system with which they interact is incomplete. Therefore, for purposes of Alternative 1 only, it would be recommended P-33-20765 and P-33-20767 be considered eligible for listing in the National Register/California Register under Criterion A/Criterion 1 for their association with the development of the regional Salton Sea agricultural landscape as defined in 36 CFR § 60.4. (Appendix C, p. 32.) Since P-33-20765 and P-33-20767 would be identified as eligible for listing for Alternative 1 only, as well as the potential for inadvertent discovery within the APE, As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 will implement mitigation measures **MM CR-1** and **MM CR-2**. As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 will utilize trenchless construction methods to install the pipeline beneath existing roads which will avoid any physical impacts to both resources and will allow both resources to remain in their existing condition, use, and alignment (criteria i, ii, iii, iv). Alternative 1 will not result in conditions of neglect, nor will either resource be transferred, leased, or sold out of Federal ownership (criteria vi, vii). Finally, since Alternative 1 will be installed beneath the resources, Alternative 1 will not introduce any visual, atmospheric or audible elements that would affect the resources (criteria v). As such, a finding of no adverse effect or significant effect to either P-33-20765 or P-33-20767 is recommended. (Appendix C, p. 36.) P-13-003675 is located within BIA/TMDCI jurisdictional land. This site extends west and east of Highway 86. The western portion of the site is located within the APE for Alternative 1. As stated in the discussion regarding the Project, the northwestern portion of the site was previously determined not to contain any characteristics that would make the site eligible for listing on the National Register. This previous evaluation along with associated site records, excavation reports, and survey reports completed at various times over a two-decade period, were reviewed as part of the *Cultural Resources Inventory Report* (Appendix C). As noted in Section 3.4 of Appendix C, the site boundary was extended during subsequent site updates after the SHPO concurrence. The expansion of the boundary included several nearby noncontiguous artifact scatter concentrations previously recorded as separate sites as these surface scatters appear to have constituted use of a former Lake Cahuilla shoreline. The site records and reports determined that these artifact scatters consisted of surface only components as no indication of subsurface components were ever noted. As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 would be constructed within the portion of the site previously determined not eligible. No components of the surface scatter previously noted in this area remain today, due to ORV use, construction of Highway 86, expansion of Highway 86, construction of several buried and aerial utility corridors, agricultural practices, erosion, authorized collection (as part of previous evaluation studies), and unauthorized collection. Further, Alternative 1 would avoid all previously recorded artifact concentrations. As the site consists of surface components only, no artifact concentrations were identified within the APE, and since Alternative 1 would avoid impacting any remaining artifact concentrations, there will be no physical destruction to the site. Since Alternative 1 would be installed below ground, there are also no permanent impacts to the visual or auditory characteristics of the overall site. For these reasons, a finding of no adverse effect or significant effect to P-13-003675 is recommended. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not affect undisturbed soils or historical resources.			
Clean Air Act	Comply	Comply	No Impact
The Project is located in the Salton Sea Air Basin (Basin) and extends through the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) jurisdictions. The results of the air quality modeling showed that pollutant emissions would not exceed federal General Conformity de minimis thresholds. Alternative 1 is located in the Basin and extends through the SCAQMD and ICAPCD jurisdictions. Because the Alternative 1 alignment varies only slightly from the proposed Project and will be constructed with the same equipment, the analysis and conclusions from the *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Analysis* (Appendix A) are applicable to Alternative 1. The results of the air quality modeling showed that pollutant emissions would not exceed federal General Conformity de minimis thresholds. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not change existing emissions and air quality.			

Table U – Alternative Analysis – Federal Cross Cutters

Federal Cross Cutter	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/No Action
Coastal Zone Management Act	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	No Impact
No portion of the proposed Project area, the Alternative 1 area, or the No Project/No Action Alternative area are within the coastal zone. Therefore, the Coastal Zone Management Act does not apply.			
Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPAA)	Comply	Comply	No Impact
Portions of the Pipeline Alignment within Riverside County traverses through approximately 3.1 acres of land Prime Farmland and 1.9 acres of Unique Farmland. (Refer to **Table C – Designated Farmland within Riverside County.**) Although the Pipeline would be constructed within or adjacent to Farmland, the Pipeline would be constructed underground within Caltrans or other road ROWs, and utility easements and the ground surface would be restored to its pre-Project condition. The proposed Project would not result in land use changes, conflict with agricultural zoning regulations, or result in other changes that would indirectly result in conversion of nearby Farmland to nonagricultural use. Therefore, the proposed Project would not adversely affect any farmland areas and the Project would be in compliance with the FPPA. The portion of the Alternative 1 alignment within Riverside County is identical to the proposed Project Alignment and traverses through approximately 3.1 acres of land Prime Farmland and 1.9 acres of Unique Farmland. (Refer to **Table C – Designated Farmland within Riverside County.**) Although Alternative 1 would be constructed within or adjacent to Farmland, Alternative 1 would be constructed underground within Caltrans or other road ROWs, and utility easements and the ground surface would be restored to its previous condition. As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 would not result in land use changes, conflict with agricultural zoning regulations, or result in other changes that would indirectly result in conversion of nearby Farmland to nonagricultural use. Therefore, Alternative 1 would not adversely affect any farmland areas and as such would be in compliance with the FPPA. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not affect Farmland.			

Table U – Alternative Analysis – Federal Cross Cutters

Federal Cross Cutter	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/No Action
EO 11988 – Floodplain Management	Comply	Comply	No Impact
The proposed Pipeline would be located underground and would not interfere with floodplain management or expose people or structures to a significant flooding risk. As such, the Project would be in compliance with Executive Order 11988. The Alternative 1 Pipeline would also be located underground and would not interfere with floodplain management or expose people or structures to a significant flooding risk. As such, Alternative 1 would be in compliance with Executive Order 11988. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not expose people or structures to significant flood-related risk.			
Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and EO 13168	Comply	Comply	No Impact
The proposed Project would have less than significant impact on protected birds with implementation of mitigation if construction cannot be avoided during the nesting season. Alternative 1 would have less than significant impact on protected birds with implementation of mitigation if construction cannot be avoided during the nesting season. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would involve no construction and would not be expected to affect protected birds.			
EO 11990 – Protection of Wetlands	Comply	Comply	No Impact
The proposed Project does not involve construction within federally protected wetlands as defined by Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404. The proposed Project would utilize trenchless methods when crossing the ephemeral washes which are considered Waters of the State in order to avoid direct impacts to wetlands. The Project would be in compliance. Alternative 1 does not involve construction within federally protected wetlands as defined by CWA Section 404. As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 would utilize trenchless methods when crossing the ephemeral washes which are considered Waters of the State in order to avoid direct impacts to wetlands. Alternative 1 would be in compliance The No Project/No Action Alternative would not involve construction and would not impact federally protected wetlands.			
Wild and Scenic Rivers Act	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
There are no designated Wild and Scenic Rivers within the Project or Alternative 1 areas, nor will any designated rivers be adversely affected by the proposed Project or Alternative 1. As a result, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act does not apply to the proposed Project.			
Safe Drinking Water Act – Source Water Protection	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
There are no sole source aquifers in the Project or Alternative 1 areas. Therefore, the Sole Source Aquifer Program does not apply to the proposed Project.			
EO on Trails for America in the 21st Century	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
There are no trails along the Pipeline Alignment or Alternative 1 Alignment. Therefore, the EO on Trails for America in the 21st Century does not apply to the proposed Project.			

Table U – Alternative Analysis – Federal Cross Cutters

Federal Cross Cutter	Proposed Project	Alternative 1	No Project/No Action
EO 13007 – Indian Sacred Sites	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Neither the proposed Project, Alternative 1, or the No Project/ No Action Alternative, would be located on or impact any federal land that is identified as an Indian sacred site.			
Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
The proposed Project would not be located in or impact any U.S. federal waters regulated under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The proposed Project is not expected to have adverse effect on resident or migratory fish, or fish habitat in the proposed Project area. Alternative 1 would not be located in or impact any U.S. federal waters regulated under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Alternative 1 is not expected to have adverse effect on resident or migratory fish, or fish habitat in the Alternative 1 area. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would have no effects on resident or migratory fish or fish habitat.			
Environmental Justice	Comply	Comply	No Impact
The proposed Pipeline Alignment would be located in unincorporated Riverside and Imperial County and serve the communities of Desert Shores, Salton Sea Beach, Salton City, and unincorporated areas in Riverside County and Imperial County west of the Salton Sea. This area is considered to be low income or disadvantaged. The proposed Project would have short-term construction impacts but would achieve the long-term goal of supplying a safer, more reliable water supply to this disadvantaged area. Alternative 1 would be located in unincorporated Riverside and Imperial County and serve the communities of Desert Shores, Salton Sea Beach, Salton City, and unincorporated areas in Riverside County and Imperial County west of the Salton Sea. This area is considered to be low income or disadvantaged. As with the proposed Project, Alternative 1 would have short-term construction impacts but would achieve the long-term goal of supplying a safer, more reliable water supply to this disadvantaged area. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would have no impacts but would result in no benefits to the community.			

7. REFERENCES

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