SMUD®

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Date: Oct. 30, 2025

To: Agencies and Interested Parties

Lead agency: Sacramento Municipal Utility District
6201 S Street, MS B209
Sacramento, CA 95817
Contact: Rob Ferrera

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Solano 5 Wind Repower Project

Review period: Oct. 30, 2025 to Dec. 1, 2025

Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) is proposing to construct the Solano 5 Wind Repower Project (project). The project would repower SMUD's existing Solano Wind Project Phase 2. This would consist of removing 29 Vestas V90 Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) at the Solano 2 Wind site and constructing 21 new WTGs in the same general area as the previously used locations. The project would generate up to 94.5 MW of carbon-free electricity. The project site is dominated by non-native grasslands used for seasonal livestock grazing and dry crop farming. The project would consist of road improvements, WTG foundations, and an underground electrical collection system to transport electricity to the Russell Substation. In addition, two obsolete overhead electrical powerlines would be removed, two existing meteorological towers outside of the Solano 2 area would be replaced near their original locations, and a temporary water intake pump would be located at the Sacramento River to provide water for construction.

Power generated by the project would be transmitted to the existing Russell Substation through feeder lines, where it would be distributed via the Birds Landing Switching Station (BLSS) through the existing 230-kV Vaca-Dixon–Contra Costa transmission line (two circuits), running through the Solano County Wind Resource Area (WRA). The existing system provides the available distribution capacity. There would be upgrades to the Russell Substation, within the existing substation footprint.

SMUD plans to prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for the Project to satisfy the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.), and will serve as the lead agency for CEQA compliance.

Purpose of notice: In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] Section 15082), SMUD has prepared this notice of preparation (NOP) to inform agencies and interested parties that an EIR will be prepared for the above-referenced project. The purpose of an NOP is to provide sufficient information about the project and its potential environmental impacts to allow agencies and interested parties the opportunity to

provide a meaningful response related to the scope and content of the EIR, including mitigation measures that should be considered and alternatives that should be addressed (State CEQA Guidelines 14 CCR Section 15082[b]).

Project location: The project site is within the Solano County Wind Resource Area (WRA) in the southeastern corner of Solano County, California, near Collinsville. The WRA lies north of the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and southwest of the city of Rio Vista (Exhibit 1).

The repower project is proposed within approximately 1,525 acres (Exhibit 2) that is currently an operational wind project. Solano 5 is approximately 4 miles southwest of Rio Vista. State Route 12 provides regional access to the project area. Montezuma Hills Road via Birds Landing Road provides local access to the Solano 5 project site.

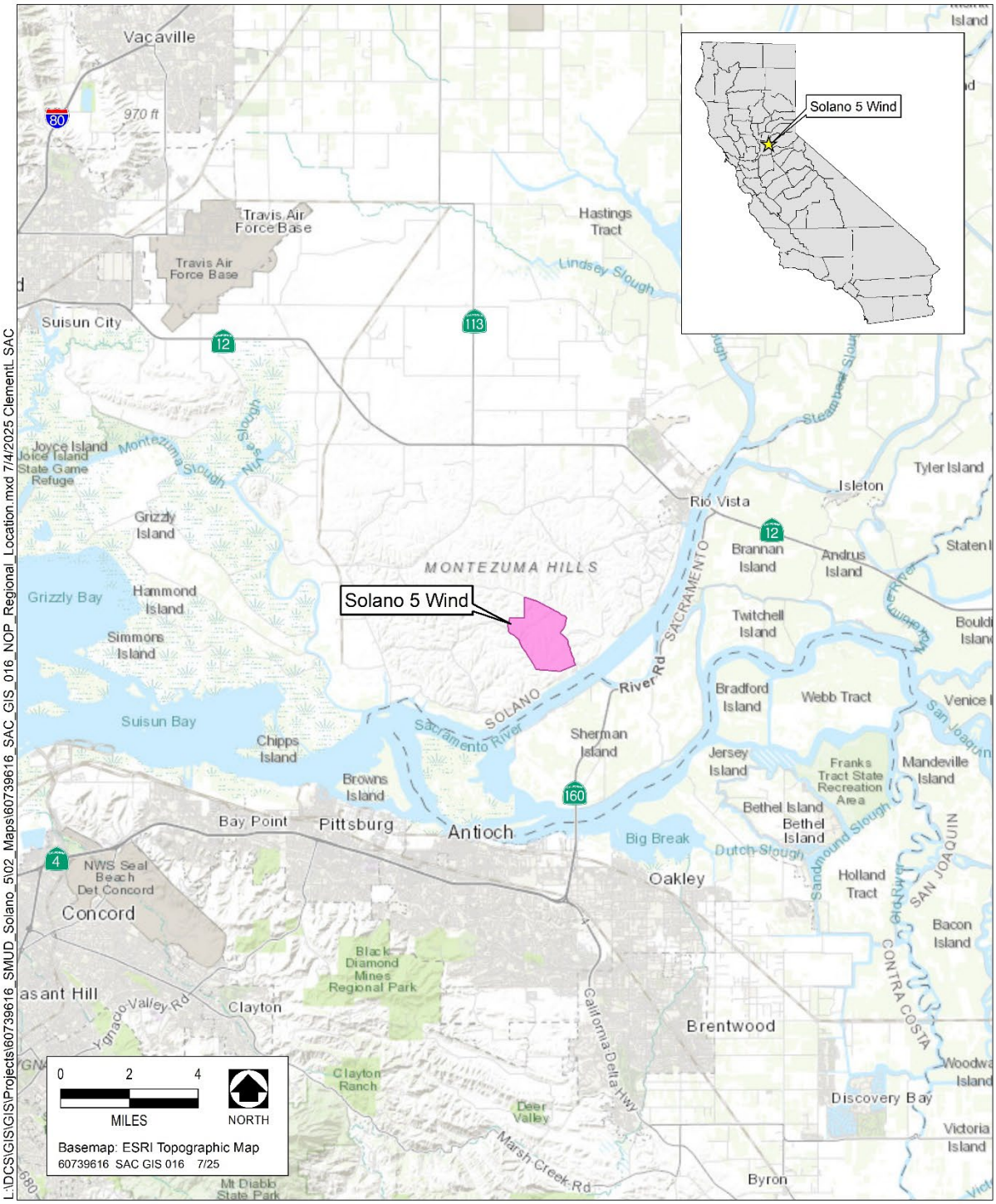

Exhibit 1 – Regional Location Map

AECOM

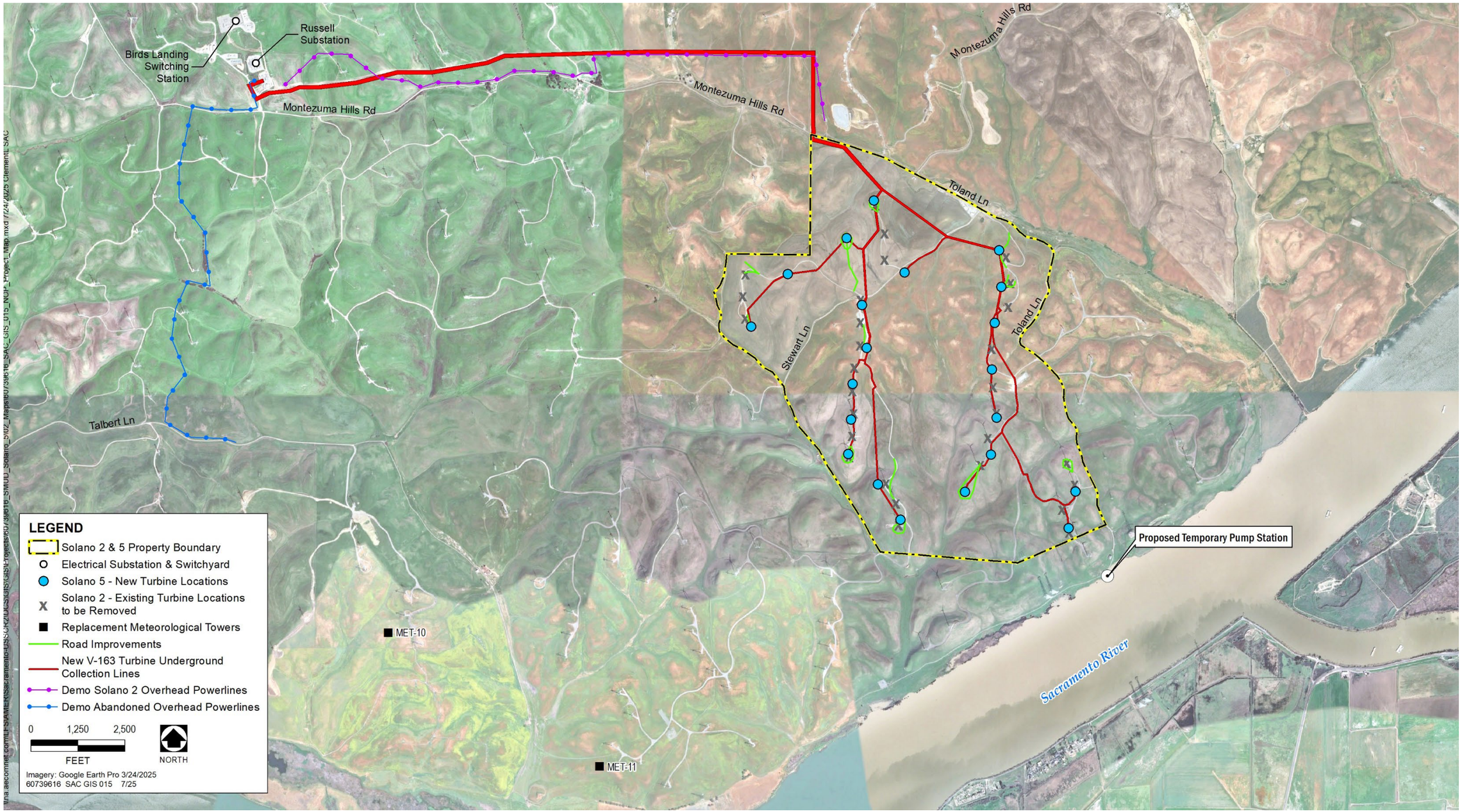

Exhibit 2. Project Component Map

Environmental setting: The project area is located within the 35,700 acres WRA. 10 separate wind energy facilities (including SMUD's existing Solano 2, 3, and 4 Wind Projects currently operate in the WRA. The WRA has a long and continued history of farming and ranching.

The project area is designated for agricultural use and leased for dryland farming, grazing, and the existing Solano Wind Project. The water-dependent industrial zoning of the WRA and the properties' covenants, conditions, and restrictions preclude most types of development in the WRA.

The project is in a rural setting of rangeland and utility wind farms which support grassland, wetland, vernal pool, and stream habitats. The elevation ranges from 6 to 258 feet above mean sea level. Grasslands on the project site are mostly treeless. Ephemeral drainages and seasonal wetlands are present in low lying areas. Marsh vegetation is present along the Carquinez Straight where the temporary water intake would be.

The Solano 5 project site (current Solano 2 site) currently includes 29 V90 Vestas WTGs, associated gravel and concrete pads, gravel access roads, overhead and underground electrical collection lines, and one meteorological tower.

Project objectives: The Solano 5 Wind Project would repower renewable wind resources within the WRA to generate and deliver the maximum feasible quantity of renewable energy to the electric grid to achieve the objectives listed below:

- Contribute to a diversified renewable energy portfolio that will aid in the continued improvement of air quality in the Sacramento Valley Air Basin by decreasing reliance on fossil fuel combustion for the generation of electricity and reduce SMUD's exposure to price volatility associated with electricity and natural gas..
- Provide a renewable power resource to support the SMUD Board of Directors' 2030 Zero Carbon Plan, approved in 2021, which establishes a flexible pathway for SMUD to eliminate carbon emissions from its power supply by 2030 by developing and procuring dependable renewable resources.
- Develop a project that will deliver a reliable, long-term supply of economically feasible project that will produce up to 94.5 megawatts (MW) of electrical capacity.
- Site the project to avoid wetlands and other sensitive habitat areas as feasible within the available property.
- Promote the long-term viability of agricultural use within the Montezuma Hills.
- Optimize the delivery of wind-produced energy and minimize the geographic extent of impacts by locating the facility near existing electrical infrastructure with available capacity.
- Design a wind project that is capable of utilizing the best available, efficient, cost-effective, and proven wind power technology.

Project description: With the Solano 5 Wind Repower Project, SMUD would construct 21 new WTGs in the same general areas where the 29 Solano 2 V90 WTGs will be removed. The remaining 8 pads will be taken out of use and natural landscape contours will be restored. Individual WTGs would have a height of 640 feet (195 meters) and a rotor diameter of 535 feet (163 meters). Existing access roads would be upgraded to support construction, and collection lines would be installed to support the new WTGs (Exhibit 2).

The total Solano Wind Project generation capacity will increase from 300.2 MW to 307.7 MW, a 7.5 MW increase. The net generation capacity of the 21 repowered turbines will be 94.5 MW. Power generated by the new V163 WTGs would be transmitted to the existing Russell Substation on Montezuma Hills Road through a new, underground electrical collection system feeders placed adjacent to the existing underground alignment used for the Solano 4 project to connect to Russell Substation. The power would be distributed from the substation via the adjacent Birds Landing Switching Station into the existing 230 kilovolts (kV) Vaca–Dixon–Contra Costa transmission line (two circuits), which run through the WRA (Exhibit 2). The trenching for the collecton system feeder is approximately 3.5 miles from the Russell Substation to the WTG area. Foundations of the 8 retired WTG locations will be excavated to up to 10 feet below ground surface, then backfilled with onsite soils, graded to restore topography, and revegetated with grasses. The proposed project also includes replacing two meteorolgical towers (MET towers) outside of the Solano 5 project boundary, as shown on Exhibit 2, removing two obsolete overhead powerlines, and upgrades to the existing Russell Substation including grading, foundations, and transformer installation within the developed footprint of the existing substation. A 10-foot expansion of the fencline may be required on the west side of the substation.

Existing public and private roads would be used to transport equipment and WTG components to the project site, and to provide access to the WTGs and other facilities for routine operation and maintenance (O&M). WTG components would be transported to the region by ship or rail, offloaded to a yard and loaded on flatbed trucks. The WTG components would be transported to the project site from the Stockton area via State Route 4, Interstate 680, and State Route 12. Trucks delivering smaller WTG components and materials to the project site will take Birds Landing Road south to Montezuma Hills Road to reach the project (Exhibit 3). To transport the larger WTG components, an alternative route to Montezuma Hills Road from Birds Landing Road will be used which consists of a road through private land (NextEra Energy's Wind Project) adjacent to the Solano Wind Project (Exhibit 3). The intersection of State Route 113 and State Route 12 would be temporarily improved to accomodate the turn of long trucks. The footprint of these improvements would be the same as previously improved and restored during and after the construction of Solano 4. Project construction staging and equipment laydown will occur within the turbine areas and the staging areas previously used for the nearby Solano 4 Wind Project.

Potential environmental effects: The EIR will describe the significant direct and indirect environmental impacts of the project. The EIR also will evaluate the cumulative impacts of the project, defined as impacts that could be exacerbated when considered in conjunction with other related present and reasonably foreseeable future projects. SMUD anticipates that the project could result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following resource areas, which will be further evaluated in the EIR:

- **Aesthetics:** Temporary and long-term changes in scenic views or visual character of the project site as viewed by motorists on nearby roads.
- **Air quality:** Temporary increases in air pollutant emissions associated with construction and operation associated with mobile-source emissions from maintenance worker trips and operation of the emergency backup generator.
- **Biological resources:** Temporary disturbances or permanent losses of habitats and wildlife corridors, temporary disturbances or permanent losses of state or federally protected wetlands, temporary disturbances or permanent losses of special-status plant species, and construction disturbances or take of special-status terrestrial and aquatic species.

- **Cultural resources:** Temporary or permanent disturbances of known or unknown historical or archaeological resources.
- **Environmental justice:** Potential to create or worsen existing adverse conditions that would negatively impact communities within SMUD's service area, especially those identified as having a high sensitivity on the Sustainable Communities Resources Priorities Map.
- **Geology, soils, paleontological resources:** Potential soil erosion or loss of topsoil during construction, and potential impacts related to unstable soils, earthquakes, unique geological features, and expansive soils at the project site, and potential impacts on paleontological resources.
- **Greenhouse gas emissions:** Temporary increases in greenhouse gas emissions associated with mobile-source exhaust from construction worker commute trips, truck haul trips, and equipment (e.g., excavators, graders), with much greater long-term decreases in greenhouse gas emissions due to replacement of electrical generation by fossil fuel power plants.
- **Hazards and hazardous materials:** Potential spills of hazardous materials during construction, potential hazard related to airports, potential exposure of workers to hazardous materials during construction, and increased exposure to wildland fire risk during construction.
- **Hydrology and water quality:** Potential temporary and permanent alterations of local drainage patterns and increases in stormwater peak flow and volumes and potential downstream runoff effects, temporary effects on water quality during construction, including spills of fuel or other hazardous materials, and potential impacts to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplains along the 69 kV powerlines.
- **Noise:** Temporary increases in noise (including off-site, truck traffic noise) and vibration levels during construction
- **Transportation and traffic:** Temporary increases in traffic and traffic hazards on local roadways (including State Route 12 and Birds Landing Road) during construction.
- **Tribal cultural resources:** Potential substantial adverse changes to tribal cultural resources.
- **Utilities and service systems:** Potential increase in demand for additional water, wastewater, or solid waste treatment or disposal facilities, and its potential impacts on utility services.
- **Wildfire:** Potential increased exposure to wildland fire risk during construction.

These potential impacts will be assessed and discussed in detail in the EIR, and feasible and practicable mitigation measures will be recommended to reduce any identified significant or potentially significant impacts. The discussion in the EIR will also include an alternative analysis.

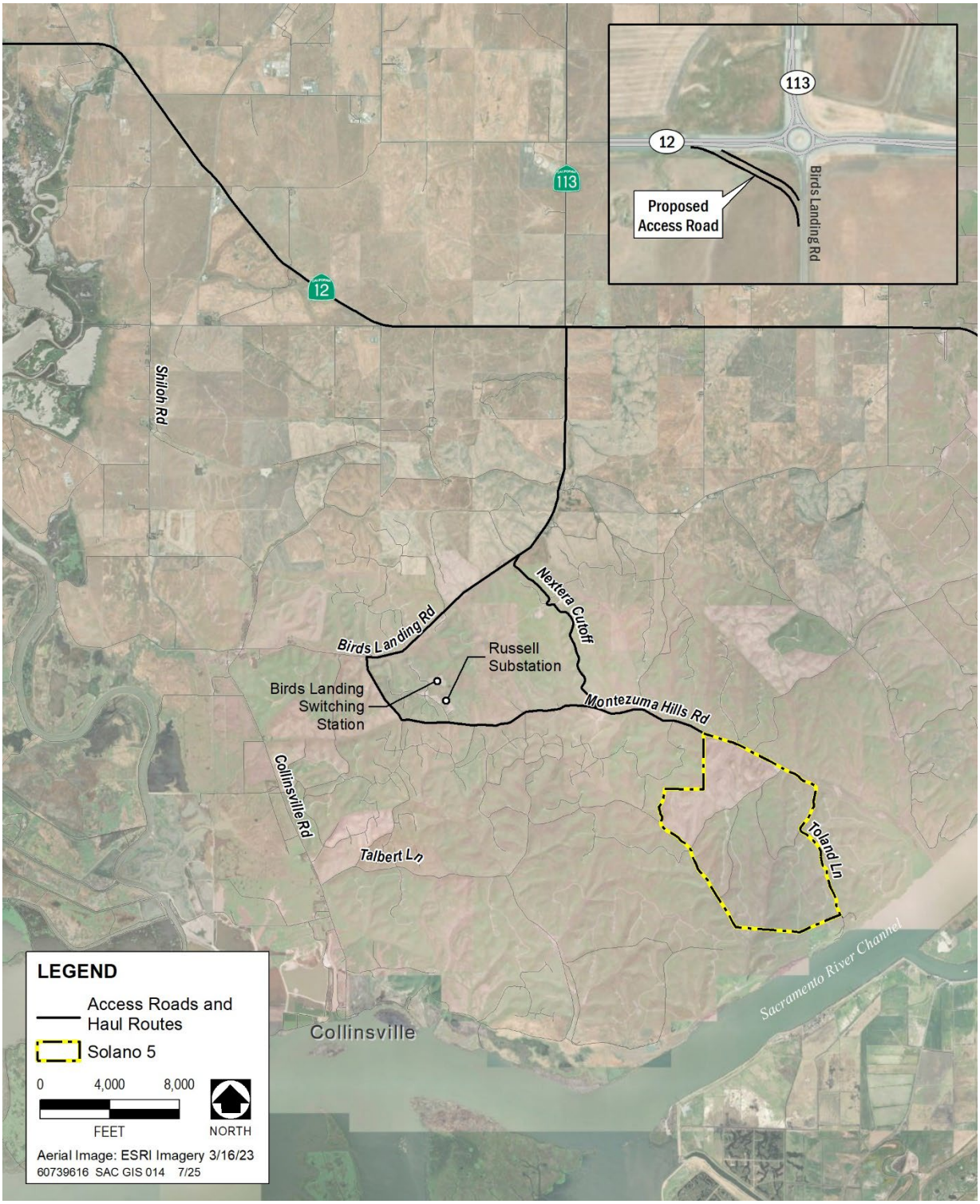

Exhibit 3. Access Roads and Transport Routes

The EIR would contain a brief analysis of topic areas where impacts on the physical environment from implementing the proposed project are clearly less than significant or no impact would occur. This section will provide sufficient information to avoid the need for further environmental review for all topics where impacts are less than significant or less than significant with mitigation. SMUD anticipates that the project will not result in significant environmental impacts in the following resource areas:

- Agriculture and forest resources
- Energy
- Land use and planning
- Mineral resources
- Population and housing
- Public services
- Recreation

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

Federal

- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)**: Compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) for discharge of fill to Waters of the U.S.
- **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**: Compliance with Section 7 of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) (as part of USACE CWA Section 404 permit).
- **State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO):** Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (required in support of CWA Section 404 permit, if required).
- **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA):** Compliance with Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) Part 77 for Obstruction Evaluation and Airport Airspace Analysis.

State

- **California Department of Fish and Wildlife**: Compliance with the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), potential amendment to Solano Phase 2-4 Section 2081 ITP of the Fish and Game Code for Swainson's Hawk to include Solano 5, and Section 1602 streambed alteration agreement if any construction activities occur within the bed or bank of local waterways.
- **California Department of Transportation**: Encroachment permit and/or transportation management plan for transport of oversized equipment.
- **California State Office of Historic Preservation**: Compliance with Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act (in coordination with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [USACE] CWA Section 404 permit).
- **State Water Resources Control Board**: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) construction stormwater permit (Notice of Intent to proceed under General Construction Permit) for disturbance of more than 1 acre, discharge permit for stormwater, and Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification or waste discharge requirements.

Document availability: The NOP is available for public review on SMUD's website: smud.org/CEQA. Printed copies may be viewed during normal business hours at these locations:

SMUD
Customer Service Center
6301 S Street
Sacramento, CA 95817

SMUD
East Campus Operations Center
4401 Bradshaw Road
Sacramento, CA 95827

Public scoping meeting: A public scoping meeting will be conducted by SMUD to inform interested parties about the project, and to provide agencies and the public with an opportunity to provide comments on the scope and content of the EIR. The meeting time and location are as follows:

Thursday, Nov. 13
Time: 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Location: Rio Vista Library
Address: 44 South 2nd Street, Rio Vista, CA 94571

Comment period: Agencies and interested parties may provide SMUD with written comments on topics to be addressed in the EIR for the project. Comments can be provided anytime during the NOP review period, but must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Dec. 1, 2025. Please send all comments, with appropriate contact information, to the following address:

Rob Ferrera
SMUD Environmental Services
6201 S Street, MS B209
Sacramento, CA 95817

All comments on environmental issues received during the public comment period will be considered and addressed in the Draft EIR, which is anticipated to be available for public review in Winter 2026.