

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the following information:

- Description of the Proposed Action
- Actions incorporated into the Proposed Action to reduce or prevent environmental impacts
- Description of alternatives, including alternative gas pipeline routes and the No-Action alternative
- Alternatives considered but eliminated from further analysis
- Comparative summary of environmental impacts

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508) require that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Western Area Power Administration (Western) use the review process established by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as amended to evaluate not only the Proposed Action, but also to identify and review reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Action, as well as a “No-Action” Alternative. The No-Action Alternative means the proposed Project would not take place. The No-Action Alternative provides an environmental baseline against which impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives can be compared. CEQ (1981) states that reasonable alternatives include those that are practical or feasible from a common sense, technical, and economic standpoint. CEQ requires this document to identify those alternatives that have been eliminated from further analysis, and briefly discuss the reasons why they have been eliminated (40 CFR 1502.14(a)).

The BLM and Western decision-makers must consider all the alternatives discussed in this

document. This comprehensive review ensures that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and before actions are taken. BLM and Western will identify the preferred alternative in the final environmental impact statement (EIS), after considering public and agency comments on this document.

2.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The Proposed Action is to construct, operate, and maintain a baseload 720-megawatt (MW) natural gas-fired, combined-cycle power plant and ancillary facilities, as described further in this section. The proposed power plant would interconnect with the regional electric transmission grid through an existing 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line.

The Proposed Action would be located in the southeastern portion of Mohave County, Arizona, in the Big Sandy Valley (Figures 2-1 and 2-2). The primary components of the Proposed Action include the following:

- power plant and associated facilities and operations, including the plant cooling system, waste management operations, lighting, and fire protection and other safety systems
- 500-kV substation, with associated transmission line modifications and communications facilities
- water supply system consisting of deep groundwater wells and associated pipelines
- new county access road
- natural gas supply pipeline and interconnection facilities