Construction of the pipeline within the Alternative T gas pipeline corridor is not expected to have significant impacts on the range condition of BLM grazing allotments. Total land disturbance within this corridor would be about 411 acres, but 366 acres would be reclaimed. Temporary impacts would neither degrade nor improve range conditions significantly.

No-Action Alternative

Under the No-Action Alternative, no impacts on grazing resources are expected. The Project would not be constructed and associated facilities including the natural gas pipeline would not be constructed. The groundwater production and monitoring wells and associated access roads completed on private land that were used to identify and test the lower aquifer would remain.

3.8.2.6 Mitigation and Residual Impacts

No significant impacts would result from the implementation of the Proposed Action with the actions incorporated to reduce or prevent impacts. As a result, no additional measures to mitigate significant impacts have been identified for grazing management and there would be no residual significant impacts.

3.9 RECREATION, WILDERNESS, AND VISUAL RESOURCES

This section identifies and describes the affected environment and environmental consequences as they apply to recreation, wilderness, and visual resources.

3.9.1 Recreation and Wilderness

The following sections describe the current recreation and wilderness environment; this represents the baseline for assessment of impacts and environmental consequences.

3.9.1.1 Affected Environment

Region of Influence

The region of influence for the inventory and assessment of potential significant impacts to recreation resources is the area within a 20-mile radius of Wikieup. For wilderness areas the region of influence is the area within 25 miles of the proposed power plant site. This would account for a substantial amount of recreation and wilderness resources, which are situated in all directions around the Wikieup area. Two special cases were included in the analysis to address potential recreation (visibility) impacts even though they were considered outside the region of influence. The special cases were the Grand Canyon National Park (approximately 80 miles north of the proposed power plant site) and Sycamore Canyon Wilderness (approximately 95 miles northeast of the proposed power plant site).

The evaluation of impacts on BLM-designated "suitable" wild and scenic rivers is not included in this Draft EIS since it was determined that the proposed Project would not affect resources within those sections of the Big Sandy River, Burro Creek, and Santa Maria River designated by BLM as "suitable" wild and scenic rivers. Therefore, the Project would not change the status as "suitable" for designation as a wild and scenic river. Refer to Section 3.5 for the analysis of potential effects on surface water including these rivers.

Existing Conditions

The region of influence offers diverse landscapes, views, historic resources, wildlife, and wilderness areas (three within the region of influence and nine total under the jurisdiction of the BLM Kingman Field Office). These elements combine to offer a wide range of recreation opportunities including camping, hiking, horseback riding, rockhounding, off-highway vehicle use, photography, and hunting. Visitors to the area can choose to take part in active or passive recreation opportunities,

including undeveloped (primitive) activities or developed recreation facilities such as campgrounds and trails. The majority of recreation opportunities in the region occur outside the region of influence, such as along the Colorado River, Grand Canyon, and several wilderness areas. The Burro Creek Recreation Area is the closest and most widely used (moderate to high use depending upon season) recreation facility in the area. This facility is located approximately 12 miles to the south of Wikieup and consists of campgrounds, trailheads, picnic tables, and an interpretive garden, and serves as an access to Burro Creek.

Recreation opportunities immediately surrounding the Wikieup area primarily consist of hiking, hunting, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, and off-highway vehicle use. There are no special designated trails, nor use areas for these activities, and use volumes are relatively low. These activities primarily are oriented around existing access roads (such as along the Mead-Phoenix Project 500-kV transmission line route (corridor segment T5), washes, foothills, and the Big Sandy River (corridor segments T5, R5, and R4). Additionally, the Coyote Canyon Country Club (a golf course facility) is located along the east side of Wikieup (corridor segment R5). This facility provides free access to the golf course for residents of Wikieup and is a relatively low-use activity.

There are no defined recreation uses at the proposed power plant site since it is located on private land zoned for industrial use. The proposed and alternative gas pipeline corridor cross the Carrow-Stephens Ranches ACEC within the US 93 right-of-way (corridor segment R4) and a BLM-designated utility corridor (corridor segment T4). This ACEC contains historic resources from late nineteenth century farming and ranching activities. This ACEC has the potential for future recreational and educational development as stated in the *Kingman Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (BLM 1993). If the ACEC is developed in the future, visitor use volumes likely would be moderate. The remaining areas crossed by the gas pipeline alternatives have no defined recreation uses and consist primarily of dispersed low-use activities such as off-highway vehicle use, hiking, horseback riding, and hunting.

There are three wilderness areas within the region of influence. The Upper Burro Creek Wilderness is located approximately 10 miles to the east of the proposed power plant site, Arrasta Mountain Wilderness is located approximately 13 miles south of the proposed power plant site, and Aubrey Peak Wilderness is located approximately 20 miles to the southwest of the proposed power plant site. These wilderness areas are characterized by rugged, mountainous terrain with a diversity of plants, wildlife, and riparian habitat. This diversity creates outstanding scenic and recreational opportunities throughout the wilderness areas (BLM 1993). The wilderness areas are remote and access difficult, resulting in relatively low visitor use volumes. However, these users are afforded the opportunity to take advantage of solitude and natural conditions by participating in undeveloped recreation activities including hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, and scenery and wildlife viewing.

The Grand Canyon National Park and Sycamore Canyon Wilderness are Class I areas of special national and/or regional value with respect to air quality (visibility). The Upper Burro Creek Wilderness, Arrasta Mountain Wilderness, and Aubrey Peak Wilderness are Class II areas (refer to Section 3.1 for additional details). Currently, these areas have good to excellent visibility overall, contributing to outstanding recreation opportunities (viewing landscape scenery). There are exceptions to this in the case of the Grand Canyon National Park, where there are days where visibility is reduced due to regional haze. Maintaining these high levels of visibility is a primary objective for management of the wilderness areas.

3.9.1.2 Environmental Consequences

Identification of Issues

The issues identified for use in evaluating potential impacts on recreation and wilderness areas included the following:

- potential increase in the demand for undeveloped and developed recreation activities due to the increase in population
- changes to the air quality or visibility in adjacent wilderness areas and national parks including the Burro Creek Wilderness, Arrasta Mountain Wilderness, Aubrey Peak Wilderness, Grand Canyon National Park, and Sycamore Canyon Wilderness

Significance Criteria

The effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives would be considered significant if the following were to occur:

- increased demand for recreation activities (i.e., due to the influx of people during construction and operation of the proposed power plant) would exceed capacity for that activity in a given area such as a campground, wilderness, and/or trail
- predicted air pollutant emissions would cause a change in visibility greater than 5 percent for any 24-hour period in a Class I area or Class II wilderness area within the region of influence

Impact Assessment Methods

The methods used for determining potential impacts on recreation resources consisted of evaluating current demand for recreation as well as estimating future demand as a result of increased population from construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed Project. If the future demand for recreation resources in the region of influence would not exceed existing capacities, then impacts on those resources would be low and less than significant. However, if future demand for recreation resources resulting from the Project would exceed capacity, impacts would be high and potentially significant, warranting mitigation measures. Additionally, evaluation of potential degradation of visibility for Class I areas and Class II wilderness areas (with respect to air quality) was derived from Section 3.1.

Actions Incorporated into the Proposed Action to Reduce or Prevent Impacts

The Proposed Action includes the following measures to reduce or prevent impacts on recreation:

- The private road portion of the proposed access road (within Section 5) would be posted to reduce unauthorized access.

Impact Assessment

Proposed Action

The work force required to construct the Project would average 350 employees with a peak of 650 employees during Phase 1 and 240 employees with a peak of 430 employees during Phase II. Operation and maintenance of the proposed Project would require approximately 25 people (refer to Section 3.16).

The demand for recreation resources within the region of influence as a result of these workers would not exceed current capacity. This would hold true for both developed and undeveloped recreation areas including adjacent wilderness areas. Therefore, impacts on recreation resources and wilderness areas are expected to be low and less than significant over the life of the Project.

The improved roads (paved) leading to the proposed power plant site would make adjacent landscapes more accessible. However, off-highway vehicle use is not expected to increase dramatically, since the amount of potential users during and after construction would be low. Therefore, impacts would remain low. Also, the

private road portion of the access road near the proposed power plant site would be posted to reduce unauthorized access to the Mead-Phoenix Project 500-kV transmission line access roads. Impacts would not be significant.

There would be no discernable change to visibility within Class I areas or Class II wilderness areas as a result of the Project's emissions. Details on the visibility analysis are in included in Section 3.1.

The proposed pipeline corridor would generally follow major rights-of-way including US 93 (corridor segment R5), the Mead-Phoenix Project transmission line (corridor segmentsT4, C3, and T3) and Hackberry Road (corridor segment C1 and R1). This would not change existing access or encourage off-highway vehicle use beyond what currently exists. Therefore, the proposed pipeline corridor would result in no impacts on recreation resources.

Communication Facilities

Installation of the OPGW would not have any substantial impact on recreation and wilderness resources. The addition of microwave dishes on existing towers would have an insignificant impact on recreation and wilderness resources.

Alternative R and T Gas Pipeline Corridors

The alternative pipeline corridors would have the same impacts on recreation and wilderness areas as the Proposed Action.

No-Action Alternative

There would be no impacts on recreation resources and wilderness areas associated with the No-Action Alternative.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts

No significant impacts would result from the implementation of the Proposed Action with the actions incorporated to reduce or prevent impacts. No additional measures to mitigate adverse impacts have been identified for recreation and wilderness. There would be no residual significant impacts.

3.9.2 Visual Resources

The following sections describe the current visual resources; this assessment represents the baseline for the assessment of impacts and environmental consequences.

The visual resources inventory and assessment of potential impacts included the evaluation of landscape scenic quality, views from key observation points (KOPs), and BLM Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classes. The methods used for the visual resources study were based upon guidelines established by the BLM's 8400 series manual (Visual Resource Inventory and Contrast Rating System, 1986) and tailored to address specific issues related to the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed Project. Data were collected from several sources including previous environmental studies conducted for this Project, the *Kingman Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (BLM 1993), aerial photography, numerous maps, various environmental documents for other projects occurring in the vicinity, and field review.

3.9.2.1 Affected Environment

The following sections describe the current visual conditions. The description of current conditions represents the baseline for the assessment of impacts.

Region of Influence

The visual region of influence represents the landscapes within which construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed Project potentially could result in significant impacts on visual resources. The visual region of influence was determined to be the area within a 5-mile radius of the proposed power plant site (Figure 3.9-1) and a 2-mile-wide area (1 mile on either

side of the assumed centerline) for the proposed and alternative gas pipeline routes. The 5-mile radius was established to account for height and potential visibility of the plant HRSG stacks (130 feet high) and other vertical facilities at the plant site (e.g., tanks, transmission line structures), as well as vapor plumes emanating from the HRSG stacks and cooling towers. There are locations (e.g., higher elevations in the Hualapai and Aquarius mountains and the Carrow-Stephens Ranches ACEC) beyond these distances where the proposed power plant could be seen under ideal conditions (i.e., no intervening terrain or vegetation and clear visibility). However, at distances beyond 5 miles significant impacts are not expected (refer to Section 3.9.2.2).

The region of influence for the required communication facilities at Hayden Peak and the Phoenix and Perkins Substations would consist of the area within 2 miles of the facilities. Beyond 2 miles the proposed modifications would not be recognizable.

Existing Conditions

Scenic Quality

The region of influence falls within the Basin and Range Physiographic Province (Fennemen 1931). The Basin and Range landscape is characterized by isolated, roughly parallel, north-south trending mountain ranges separated by basins and/or drainages. The mountains can be steep-sloped with jagged ridgelines or smooth-sloped with rounded peaks. The higher elevation mountain slopes have a sparse to moderate cover of vegetation (e.g., juniper, piñon, globe mallow, barberry, banana yucca) due to the rocky outcrops and soils. The lower elevation mountain slopes have a sparse cover of Arizona Upland Sonoran Desertscrub vegetation (e.g., paloverde, mesquite, saguaro, ocotillo, cholla, yucca). The drainages are primarily ephemeral with a moderate to dense cover of xeroriparian vegetation (e.g., paloverde, mesquite, creosote, desert willow) along the edges of the channels. The vegetation in the drainages adds color and distinctly contrasts with the surrounding desert landscape. There is limited landscape diversity in the basins consisting mainly of flat to gently rolling terrain with sparse Arizona Upland Sonoran Desertscrub or Semi-Desert Grassland (e.g., bush muhly, black grama, creosote, snakeweed, yucca) vegetation types.

Distinctive landscapes in the region of influence include the Hualapai Mountains on the west, Aquarius Mountains on the east, and Big Sandy Valley in between the mountains.

Scenic Quality

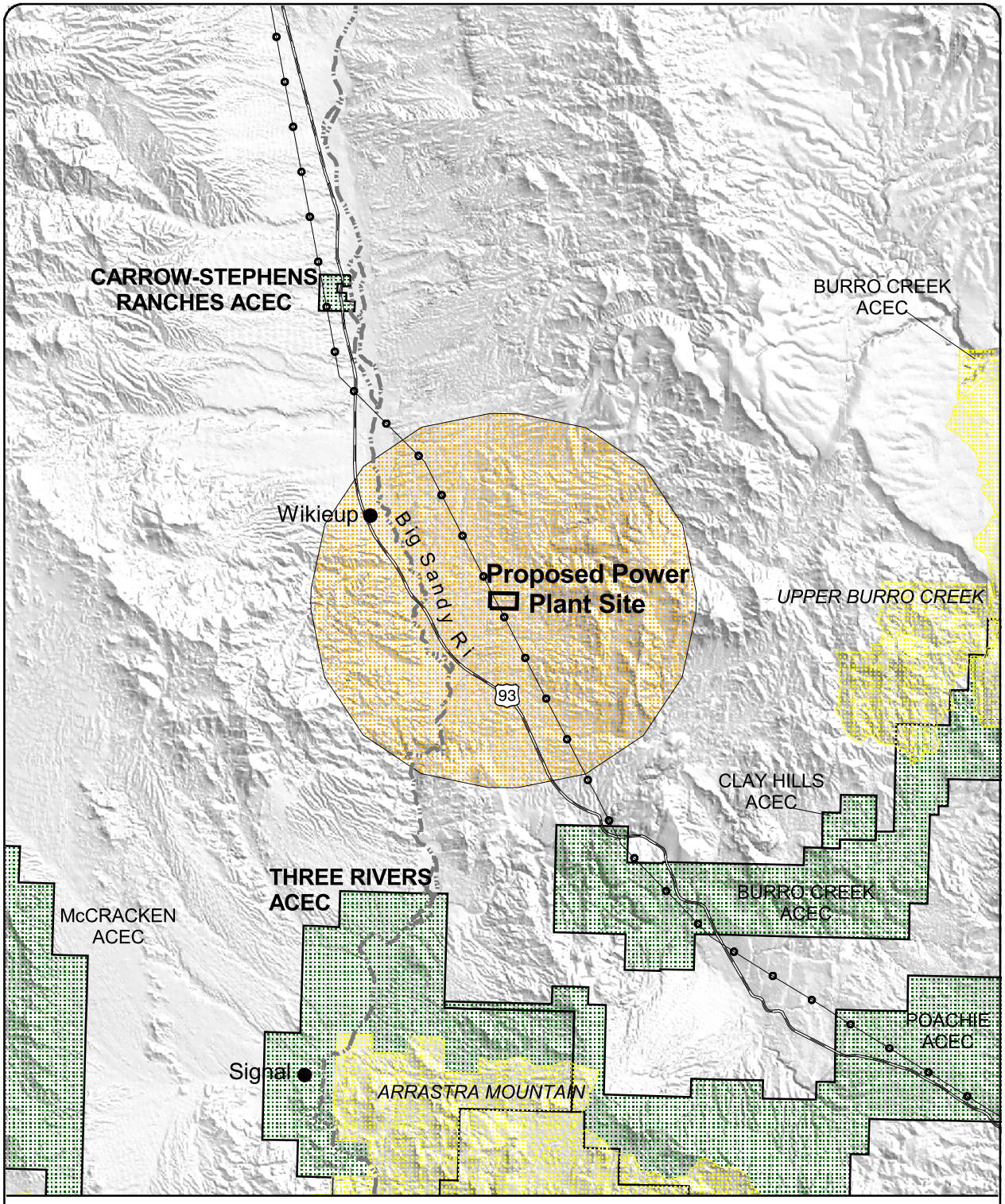
Scenic quality is determined by evaluating the overall character and diversity of landform vegetation, water, color, and cultural or manmade features in a given landscape. Typically, more complex or diverse landscapes have higher scenic quality. The landscapes in the region of influence were assigned one of the following three scenic quality classifications based on these elements:

Class A – landscapes of outstanding or distinctive diversity or interest

Class B – landscapes of common or average diversity or interest

Class C – landscapes of minimal diversity of interest.

There are five distinct scenic quality units located in the region of influence, including mountains, foothills, rivers/drainages, juniper plains, and desert scrub. The Hualapai Mountains (west of the proposed power plant site and along corridor segments R5, T4, C3, and T3) and Aquarius Mountains (east of the proposed power plant site along corridor segments T5, R4, C3, and R3) are Class A landscapes that dominate the setting due to their size and diversity of characteristics. These mountains are characterized by jagged ridgelines (3,500 to 7,000 feet) and dissected slopes leading into major drainages. There are little to no visible manmade modifications in the mountains with the exception of some minor



Legend

Resource Components
- Five-mile Region of Influence (Plant Site)
- Wilderness Areas
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Proposed Power Plant

General Reference
- Mead-Liberty/Mead-PhoenixTransmission Lines
- 40 Interstate
- 93 U.S. Route

Region of Influence for Visual Resources

Big Sandy Energy Project EIS

0 5 10

Scale in Miles

Universal Transverse Mercator Projection
1927 North American Datum
Zone 12

N

Figure 3.9-1

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roads (e.g., Chicken Springs Road). Vegetation on the mountain slopes consists of a mixture of saguaro cactus, paloverde trees, ocotillo, prickly pear cactus, and creosote, which adds contrasting colors to the landscape.

The Big Sandy River (along or near corridor segments R5, T5, and R4) also is a Class A landscape and a unique feature within the region of influence. The moderate to dense xeroriparian and riparian vegetation along the river exhibits colors and textures that contrast with the surrounding desert landscape. These features make the river one of the most recognizable landscapes in the region of influence. The river extends from central portion of the region of influence through the southern portion. The river is north-south trending and parallels the east side of US 93 until it crosses under the highway west of the proposed power plant site.

The Class B foothills (along corridor segments R5, R4, R3, T5, T4, and T3) are an extension of the mountain landscapes with no distinctive ridgelines (2,000 to 3,500 feet) and smooth, rounded slopes. Vegetation is primarily Arizona Upland Sonoran Desertscrub and adds to the visual quality of these landscapes. Foothill areas occur near the proposed power plant site at the southern end of the region of influence and near the northern end of the Big Sandy River midway between Wikieup and I-40.

The Class B juniper plains (along corridor segments T2 and T1) occur near the northern end of the region of influence on the south side of I-40. This landscape is characterized by rolling to relatively flat grassland terrain. There is a moderate cover of juniper dispersed throughout the grasslands, which adds contrasting colors and textures to the landscape. Small drainages with areas of eroded slopes and exposed soils add to the visual quality of the area.

The majority of the landscape within the region of influence is Class C desert scrub (along corridor segments R5, R4, T4, C3, R3, T3, R2, R1, C2, and C1). These areas are characterized by relatively flat to rolling terrain with a low to moderate density cover of vegetation including creosote, cacti, and grasses. There are numerous small drainages cutting through the terrain adding slightly to the visual quality of this landscape. A unique feature found in this landscape is the Carrow-Stephens Ranches ACEC. This historic ranch setting is located approximately 7 miles north of Wikieup and is characterized by the presence of an 1880s two-story ranch house, a pioneer cemetery, and a 1930s Depression-era cannery. This site is indicative of the late nineteenth century farming and ranching lifestyle as stated in the *Kingman Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (BLM 1993). Management efforts emphasize maintaining and improving the "historic feel" or "sense of place" at the ranch.

Residential and commercial development occurs throughout Wikieup. This development occurs in a linear pattern along US 93. The residential areas consist of low-density, large-lot development with primarily native vegetation throughout the area (along corridor segments R5 and T5). The commercial areas are located immediately adjacent to US 93 and consist of restaurants, convenience stores/gas stations, gift shops, and machine/maintenance shops, as well as numerous signs and lights (along corridor segment R5). Development lacks definition in terms of architectural or planning themes. However, this lack of definition contributes to the unique character and "small town" feel in Wikieup. Dispersed residential development (e.g., single-family homes and small ranches) occurs in the region of influence outside of Wikieup.

There are numerous cultural and manmade modifications present in the region of influence. There is a BLM-designated utility corridor, which has 500-kV, 345-kV, and 69-kV transmission lines (along corridor segment T5, T4, C3, T3, T2, and T1) crossing the region of influence from the proposed power plant site to I-40. The transmission lines are a noticeable to dominant feature in the landscape depending on

their location in the landscape (e.g., proximity, skylined, backdropped). Additional infrastructure in the area consists of the US 93 (along corridor segments R5, R4, C3, and R3) and several non-paved roads. The highway corridor runs the full length of the region of influence from north to south. This corridor is well traveled and is a distinct feature in the landscape. The non-paved roads include Chicken Springs Road (along corridor segment R5) and numerous unnamed roads throughout the region of influence. These roads provide access to many sites, allowing people to experience different levels of scenic quality. In some cases, the roads have left "scars" in the soil surface that contrast with the adjacent conditions allowing them to be visible from distant areas. In areas with scenic quality Class A and B landscapes, these roads can detract from the natural qualities and appeal of the landscape.

Additionally, the Hayden Peak and Phoenix and Perkins Substations have numerous modifications including large towers, buildings, transformers, electrical equipment, and fences present which are dominant features in the landscape.

Key Observation Points and Other Viewing Areas

KOPs are viewing locations that are representative of the most sensitive viewers that would view the proposed Project. The inventory of KOPs included the following three components:

- identification of KOPs
- viewer sensitivity
- Project visibility (seen areas and distance zones).

KOPs were identified based on review of available land use data, field review, public and agency review, and previous environmental studies in the region of influence. Additionally, a general inventory of other sensitive viewing areas was documented to account for distant viewers who see the Project facilities, but would not be significantly impacted.

Viewer sensitivity is a measure of the degree of concern for change in the visual character of a landscape. Viewer sensitivity is determined by evaluating type of use, user attitude, volume of use, influence of adjacent land use, and viewing duration. Two levels of sensitive views were evaluated for this Project—high and moderate. Low sensitivity views were not evaluated since they would not result in significant visual impacts.

Visibility reflects how the proposed Project would be seen and what distance it is from a particular KOP or viewing area. There were three distance zones defined within the region of influence, as follows:

- Foreground views: 0 to 1 mile
- Middleground views: 1 to 3 miles
- Background views: 3 to 5 miles (views beyond 5 miles are considered outside the zone of influence)

There were five KOPs identified for this Project (Figure 3.9-2). The following descriptions characterize the viewing conditions relative to the proposed Project for each of the KOPs. Two of these KOPs are outside the region of influence for the plant site, but are within the region of influence for the proposed and alternative pipeline corridors.

KOP #1 - Community of Wikieup (High Sensitivity) ¾Wikieup has the highest concentration of residential views within the region of influence. There would be background views (approximately 4 miles away) of the proposed power plant site from these residences.

Corridor segment R5 would be visible from this KOP since it would parallel US 93 bisecting Wikieup.

Alternative Terminus

Proposed Terminus

T1

R1

C2

C1

T2

R2

T3

R3

C3

T4

R4

Carrow-Stephens Ranches ACEC

T5

R5

Wikieup

Proposed Power Plant Site

Proposed Well Field and Agricultural Area

40

93

1

2

3

4

5

T. 21 N.

T. 20 N.

T. 19 N.

T. 18 N.

T. 17 N.

T. 16 1/2 N.

T. 16 N.

T. 15 N.

R. 15 W.

R. 14 W.

R. 13 W.

R. 12 W.

R. 11 W.

Legend

Resource Components

- Key Observation Points
- Visual Resource Management Class II
- Visual Resource Management Class III
- Visual Resource Management Class IV

Project Components

- Pipeline Corridor Segments
- Proposed Pipeline Corridor - R1,C1,T3,C3,T4,R5
- Alternative R Corridor - R1,R2,R3,C3,R4,R5
- Alternative T Corridor - T1,T2,T3,C3,T4,T5
- Proposed Plant Facilities

General Reference

- Existing Pipelines
- Mead-Liberty/Mead-PhoenixTransmission Lines
- Stream/River
- Interstate
- U.S. Route

Visual Resources
KOPs and VRM Classifications
Big Sandy Energy Project EIS

0 5

Scale in Miles

Universal Transverse Mercator Projection
1927 North American Datum
Zone 12

N

Figure 3.9-2

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There would not be views from this KOP of corridor segment T5 due to distance and relatively low profile.

KOP #2 - Chicken Springs Road (Moderate Sensitivity) ¾This road is located on the northwest side of Wikieup. The road serves as an access from the Wikieup area to Dutch Flat on the west side of the Hualapai Mountains. This road has open panoramic views of the entire region of influence. The westernmost portions of the road increase in elevation providing unique viewing opportunities of the entire valley and surrounding mountain landscapes when traveling east. The proposed power plant site would be visible in the distant background (approximately 7 miles away) and is considered to be outside the 5-mile region of influence.

Corridor segment R5 would be visible in the foreground to middleground (approximately 0.25 to 2 miles away) from this KOP.

Corridor segment T5 along the Mead-Phoenix Project 500-kV transmission line route would not be visible from this KOP due to distance (approximately 2.5 to 6 miles away depending upon location on the road) and low profile.

KOP #3 - US 93 (High Sensitivity) ¾There are several locations along US 93 where the proposed power plant site would be visible in the background distance zone. A section of US 93 in the southern portion of the region of influence has been designated scenic by the ADOT Parkways, Historic, and Scenic Roads Advisory Committee (ADOT 1993). The first location where the power plant may be visible is within this designated scenic section of the highway along a hilltop approximately 3.5 miles south (background views) of the proposed power plant site. The second location is the section of US 93 near Wikieup where viewing conditions are the same as those described for KOP #1. The third section is located 5 miles north of Wikieup.

The proposed gas pipeline corridor and corridor segments R5, R4, and R3 would be visible (within approximately 150 feet) for the entire length of US 93. Corridor segments R1 and R2 would be visible where they parallel Hackberry Road.

Portions of the Alternative T gas pipeline corridor would be visible from two locations along US 93. The remaining areas would not be visible due to distance and low profile. Corridor segment T5would be visible where the corridor crosses US 93 approximately 2.5 miles south of the Carrow-Stephens Ranches ACEC. Corridor Segment C3 would be visible approximately 10 miles north of the Carrow-Stephens Ranches ACEC where the corridor would be within 0.25 mile along the west side of US 93. Corridor segment C1 would be visible from a location approximately 3.5 miles south of I 40 where the corridor crosses US 93.

KOP #4 - Carrow-Stephens Ranches ACEC (High Sensitivity) ¾The proposed power plant site would be viewed in the distant background (approximately 9 to 10 miles away) and is considered to be outside the 5-mile region of influence. There are very few viewers currently visiting the Carrow-Stephens Ranches ACEC. However, future plans for developing the ACEC as an “interpretive site” for cultural resources likely will increase the number of potential viewers.

Corridor segment T4) would be visible in the foreground where it crosses through the ACEC boundaries. Corridor segment R4 would be visible where it crosses through the southwest corner of the Carrow-Stephens Ranches ACEC.

KOP #5 - Nettie’s Place Residence (High Sensitivity) ¾This residence is the closest viewer to the proposed power plant site (less than 1 mile). The existing transmission line corridor (consisting of 500-kV, 345-kV, and 69-kV transmission line structures) is partially visible crossing in front of the proposed power plant site.

Corridor segment R5 would be visible in the foreground where it would parallel the proposed access road leading to the proposed power plant

site. Corridor segment T5 would not be visible from this KOP due to distance and low profile.

Other Viewing Areas ¾ There are other locations with potential views of the proposed Project facilities, including Hackberry Road, I-40, several rural residences, and dispersed recreation areas. Corridor segment R1 would be visible in the foreground where it parallels Hackberry Road near the northern end of the region of influence. Hackberry Road is a low-use, non-paved road providing access to dispersed rural residences in the area. Views of corridor segment R1) and corridor segment T1 would be visible in the foreground where they intersect I-40.

There are middleground views (approximately 1.5 miles west) of the proposed power plant site from several rural residences. Additionally, there are middleground views (approximately 2.5 miles southwest) of the proposed power plant site from two residences. There are several dispersed rural residences near the central and northern portions of the region of influence along the proposed and alternative pipeline corridors. These residences have foreground to middleground views from less than 100 feet to more than 1 mile away.

Additionally, there are potential views from dispersed use recreation areas (undefined viewpoints) such as hunting or hiking areas along the Big Sandy River and in the adjacent mountains. Views from these areas are difficult to define and quantify. However, it is likely that use volume is low and views would be intermittent and short term.

Potentially, the region of influence, including the Wikieup area, may see future growth. However, no specific future plans for residential development, recreation, commercial development, and roads were identified. Therefore, this study does not attempt to characterize future viewing conditions.

BLM Visual Resource Management Guidelines

VRM Classes establish guidelines for determining the acceptable level of change to visual resources on BLM lands. Private, state, and county lands within the region of influence do not have formal guidelines for the management of visual resources. Although the VRM guidelines strictly apply only to BLM-managed public lands, to be consistent, the VRM classification guidelines were used for all lands within the region of influence. VRM classes in the region of influence were identified from the *Kingman Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (BLM 1993).

Visual Resource Management Classes

Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classes are determined by evaluating three components – scenic quality, visibility from sensitive viewpoints, and sensitivity of viewpoints. The following is a summary of the VRM Classes.

Class I – The objective of this class is to preserve the existing character of the landscape. Changes to the landscape character must be low and should not be evident.

Class II – The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. Changes to the landscape character may attract slight attention, but should be subordinate to the visual setting.

Class III – The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. Changes to the landscape character may begin to attract attention, but should not dominate the visual setting.

Class IV – The objective of this class is to allow for activities that modify the existing character of the landscape. Changes to the landscape character may attract attention and dominate the visual setting. However, these activities should minimize changes to the landscape where possible.

VRM Class II, III, and IV landscapes were identified in the region of influence. Class IV lands are predominant and consist of landscapes

along the proposed gas pipeline corridor (corridor segments T4, C3, T3, C1, and R1); Alternative T gas pipeline corridor (corridor segments T4, C3, T3, T2, and T1); and Alternative R gas pipeline corridor (corridor segments R5, R4, R3, R2, and R1) located in areas of Class C scenic quality which are seen by a low to moderate number of sensitive viewers (primarily from US 93 and dispersed residences). These alternatives follow a BLM-designated utility corridor and US 93.

Class III landscapes occur near the eastern and southern boundaries of the region of influence surrounding the proposed power plant site. These landscapes consist of Class B scenic quality which is seen by a low to moderate number of sensitive viewers (primarily US 93 and dispersed residences). The Class III landscapes are found along the proposed gas pipeline corridor (corridor segment R5); Alternative T gas pipeline corridor (corridor segment T5); and Alternative R gas pipeline corridor (corridor segment R5).

Class II landscapes occur along the Big Sandy River from the southern to central portions of the region of influence. These landscapes consist of Class A scenic quality areas seen by a moderate to high number of sensitive viewers (primarily from US 93, Wikieup, and dispersed residences). The proposed and alternative gas pipeline routes cross the Class II Big Sandy River north and south of Wikieup. The Class II landscapes are found along the proposed gas pipeline corridor (corridor segment R5); Alternative T gas pipeline corridor (corridor segment T5); and Alternative R gas pipeline corridor (corridor segments R5 and R4).

The proposed power plant site is located on private land. Therefore, it is not specifically subject to BLM VRM guidelines. It is surrounded by Class III landscapes and the closest Class II landscapes are approximately 1 to 1.5 miles away.

3.9.2.2 Environmental Consequences

Identification of Issues

Impacts on visual resources resulting from the proposed Project would be both short term and long term. Issues relative to evaluating impacts on visual resources are listed below.

Short-term Issues:

- presence of construction vehicles and equipment (e.g., cranes, trucks, bulldozers, scaffolding)
- dust and emissions from construction equipment
- construction lighting

Long-term Issues:

- terrain and vegetation disturbance at the proposed power plant site (approximately 56 acres), as well as along the pipeline and access roads
- presence of aboveground facilities at the proposed power plant site including the following:
- combustion turbine generators (CTGs), approximately 60 feet high
- HRSG, approximately 93 feet high
- HRSG exhaust stacks, approximately 130 feet high
- steam turbine generator (STG), approximately 37 feet high
- cooling tower (CT), approximately 40 feet high
- water storage tanks, approximately 43 feet high