

**TABLE 2.5-1 Summary of Impacts for Proposed Action and Other Alternatives by Resource Area<sup>a</sup>**

For the proposed action, that is, the granting of one or both of the Presidential permits and ROWs, for most resource areas, the analysis was bounded by calculating impacts as if both lines had been allowed. This serves two purposes. First, it demonstrates the maximum possible impacts; second, it clearly presents the combined impacts of the agencies' preferred alternative, that is, permitting both facilities. The only exceptions to this methodology are in the areas of air, water, and human health. Impacts to air, water, and human health attributable to permitting each transmission line separately are contained in Sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.11, respectively.

Resource	No Action	Proposed Action	Alternative Technologies	Mitigation Measures
Geology, Soils, and Seismicity (4.1)	No additional impacts are anticipated to geological resources or soils. Normal erosional forces would continue. Because the transmission lines would not be built, seismicity hazards would not be relevant.	<p><i>Geology</i> Minor disturbance of surface material resulting from construction but with minimal potential for slope failure.</p> <p><i>Seismicity</i> On the basis of the California Geological Survey's on-going evaluation of fault zones to date, surface fault rupture is not likely to occur along the proposed or alternative transmission line routes.</p> <p><i>Soils</i> Potential for impacts would increase as a result of vegetation removal, and grading and excavation during construction that could lead to increased erosion. Temporary increase in soil compaction resulting from vehicle usage of access roads.</p> <p>Temporary impacts due to soil disturbance total about 15.8 acres (6.4 ha); permanent impacts would be less than 3.6 acres (1.5 ha) since no new access road would be built.</p> <p>Temporary impacts would be about 18.0 acres (7.3 ha); permanent impacts about 13.1 acres (5.3 ha). The lower portion of the routes could cross prime farmland.</p> <p>Temporary impacts would be about 16.3 acres (6.6 ha); permanent impacts about 10.5 acres (4.2 ha).</p>	Impacts would be the same as those under the proposed action.	Impacts would be the same as those under the proposed action. In addition, with regard to soils, any paving of roads or construction activities could have short-term adverse impacts to soils due to soil disturbance. Overall, impact would be beneficial because dust emissions and soil erosion would be reduced over the long term.
<i>Applicants' Proposed Routes:</i>				
<i>Western Alternative Routes:</i>				
<i>Eastern Alternative Routes:</i>				

**TABLE 2.5-1 (Cont.)**

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Resource	No Action	Proposed Action	Alternative Technologies	Mitigation Measures
<p>Water Resources (4.2)</p>	<p><i>Transmission Lines</i> Under the no action alternative no transmission lines would be built and thus there would be no impacts.</p> <p><i>Water Consumption</i> The LRPC unit would consume up to 4,940 ac-ft/yr of water taken from the Zaragoza Oxidation Lagoons in Mexicali.</p> <p><i>Flow Reduction</i> The flow of the New River would be reduced by less than 4% (15.7% of the standard deviation for the flow at the Calexico gage).</p> <p><i>New River</i> The TDS concentration would be increased by less than 3.7% (31% of the standard deviation). TSS, BOD, COD, and phosphorus loads in the New River would be reduced.</p>	<p><i>Transmission Lines</i> Construction of two transmission lines along the proposed routes or alternative routes would have minimal impacts on surface waters. A maximum of two lattice towers for each line would be placed on the 100-yr floodplain for the Pinto Wash. This placement would have minimal impacts on floodplain function or values. Impacts to groundwater would be prevented during construction.</p> <p><i>Water Consumption</i> The LRPC and TDM power plants would consume 10,667 ac-ft/yr of water for cooling purposes. The water would be taken from the Zaragoza Oxidation Lagoons in Mexicali. (The LRPC power plant alone would consume 7,170 ac-ft/yr. The TDM power plant alone would consume 3,497 ac-ft/yr.)</p> <p><i>New River</i> Power plant operations would directly impact the New River by reducing the flow of water received from the Zaragoza Oxidation Lagoons and by modifying its quality. As a result, the average annual flow of the New River would be decreased by about 5.9% at the U.S.-Mexico border (Calexico gage). Decreases in flow would result in a decrease in average annual water depth of about 0.13 ft (3.9 cm) at the Calexico gage and 0.7 ft (2.1 cm) at the Westmorland gage near the Salton Sea. TDS concentrations would increase by 5.6%, or about 46% of its variability in the river at the Calexico gage, TDS, TSS, BOD, COD, phosphorus, and selenium loads would be reduced as a result of water treatment at the plants.</p>	<p><i>Dry Cooling</i> The plants would use about 5% of the water needed for wet cooling under the proposed action. BOD, TSS, and phosphorus and selenium concentrations in the New River would be essentially unchanged. COD would slightly decrease. Indirect impacts to the Salton Sea would be minimal.</p> <p><i>Wet-Dry Cooling</i> Impacts would be greater than those for dry cooling but less than those for wet cooling only, as described for the proposed action.</p> <p>Impacts to the New River, Salton Sea, Brawley Wetlands, and groundwater would be less than those for the no action and proposed action alternatives and would be proportional to the amount of wet-cooling used.</p>	<p>Impacts would be the same as for the proposed action. Measures to reduce air quality impacts could result in beneficial impacts to water resources over the long term, since surface runoff from unpaved surfaces would be reduced.</p>

**TABLE 2.5-1 (Cont.)**

For the proposed action, that is, the granting of one or both of the Presidential permits and ROWs, for most resource areas, the analysis was bounded by calculating impacts as if both lines had been allowed. This serves two purposes. First, it demonstrates the maximum possible impacts; second, it clearly presents the combined impacts of the agencies' preferred alternative, that is, permitting both facilities. The only exceptions to this methodology are in the areas of air, water, and human health. Impacts to air, water, and human health attributable to permitting each transmission line separately are contained in Sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.11, respectively.

Resource	No Action	Proposed Action	Alternative Technologies	Mitigation Measures
<p>Water Resources (4.2) (Cont.)</p>	<p><i>Salton Sea</i> The Salton Sea inflow would be reduced by 0.4%, or 6.3% of the standard deviation of total inflow. Salinity would increase by less than 0.17 mg/L/yr.</p> <p><i>Brawley Wetland</i> New River flow reductions would not interfere with withdrawal of water for wetland. Increases in TDS would not cause adverse impacts to the system.</p> <p><i>Groundwater</i> The flow reduction of 4% at the Calexico gage would have minimal effect on groundwater recharge to the Imperial Valley Groundwater Basin, from the New River.</p>	<p><i>Salton Sea</i> New River inflow to the Salton Sea would decrease, thus reducing its volume, lowering its elevation, and decreasing its surface area. The decrease in inflow of 10,667 ac-ft/yr would result in a elevation decrease of about 0.05 ft (0.6 cm), about 10% of the Sea's natural variability. Surface area would decrease by about 97 acres (39 ha), which is about 0.04% of its initial surface area and about 9% of its natural variability. Decreased water inflow would increase the TDS concentration (salinity) by 0.19 mg/L/yr. This rate of increase would cause the Salton Sea to reach a threshold of 60,000 mg/L only about 4 days earlier out of 36 years than it would with no plants operating. Phosphorus loads would be reduced by about 5.3%. Selenium loads would be reduced by about 38 lb/yr, or about 0.2% of the dissolved mass in the sea.</p> <p><i>Brawley Wetland</i> New River flow reductions would not interfere with withdrawal of water for wetland. Increases in TDS would not cause adverse impacts to the system. Changes in other parameters (i.e., BOD, COD, and pathogens) could have beneficial impacts. All changes would fall within the range of the parameter's variability.</p> <p><i>Groundwater</i> Indirect impacts to groundwater would occur as a result of decreasing flow in the New River since it is a recharge source for groundwater in the Imperial Valley Groundwater Basin. Impacts to the basin would be minimal because the New River is only one of many recharge sources, and the reduction in its flow is expected to be low.</p>		

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Resource	No Action	Proposed Action	Alternative Technologies	Mitigation Measures
Air Quality (4.3)	<p><i>Primary Emissions</i> Plant emissions would be somewhat greater for no action than for the proposed action for CO and NO<sub>x</sub> because of the inclusion of the Mexico units at LRPC. However, emissions would still result in impacts in the United States below EPA SLs for all pollutants. Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions would be about 3.9 million tons/yr, or about 0.066% of total U.S. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.</p> <p><i>Secondary Air Pollutants</i> Increases or decreases of ambient ozone concentrations resulting from plant emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and volatile organic compounds (VOC) would be minor. Secondary PM<sub>10</sub> (particulate matter with a mean aerodynamic diameter of 10 μm or less) production from plant emissions would also be minor and be similar to that under the proposed action.</p> <p><i>Fugitive Dust</i> There would be no fugitive dust emissions from construction as transmission lines would not be built.</p>	<p><i>Primary Emissions</i> The impacts from operation of export turbines at the TDM and LRPC power plants are considered as effects of the transmission line projects. Plant emissions of PM<sub>10</sub>, nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), and ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) all would result in increases in air concentrations that are below EPA SLs used here as thresholds of significant deterioration of air quality. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions would be about 5.1 million tons/yr, or about 0.088% of total U.S. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.</p> <p><i>Secondary Air Pollutants</i> Characterization of the air chemistry in the region suggests that plant emissions of NO<sub>x</sub> and VOC could result in slight (less than 3 ppb) increases or decreases in the concentration of ambient ozone levels. Secondary production of PM<sub>10</sub> in the atmosphere resulting from plant emissions of NH<sub>3</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> is expected to be no more than 1 μg/m<sup>3</sup>. The SL for PM<sub>10</sub> is not expected to be exceeded with the addition of secondary PM<sub>10</sub>.</p> <p><i>Fugitive Dust Emissions</i> Temporary emissions from transmission line construction would include those from fugitive dust, PM<sub>10</sub> (construction, vehicular traffic, and helicopter operations), and fuel combustion. Construction-related PM<sub>10</sub> emissions over the construction period would be about 11.4 tons (10.3 t) for the proposed routes, 14.4 tons (13.1 t) for the western alternative routes, and 12.3 tons (11.2 t) for the eastern alternative routes.</p> <p>The emission rate of fugitive dust (PM<sub>10</sub>) from exposed shoreline resulting from the reduction in the surface area of the Salton Sea would be at most 100 tons/yr (91 t/yr).</p>	<p><i>Emission Controls</i> CO emissions would be up to 80% less than those under the proposed action. HAPs emissions are assumed to be reduced by 50%. Emissions of other pollutants would be as for the proposed action.</p> <p>Secondary O<sub>3</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> impacts would be the same as those for the proposed action.</p> <p><i>Dry cooling or wet-dry cooling</i> Plant emissions of PM<sub>10</sub> would be reduced without wet-cooling tower use. Other emissions would increase 10–15% as a result of reductions in plant efficiency.</p> <p><i>Fugitive Dust Emissions</i> Emissions from transmission line construction would be the same as for the proposed action.</p>	<p><i>Primary Emissions</i> Plant emissions would be the same as for the proposed action. Impacts of plant emissions on air quality would be offset by reductions in emissions of the same pollutants from other sources in the air basin.</p> <p><i>Secondary Air Pollutants</i> Secondary O<sub>3</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> impacts from plant emissions could be reduced as compared to those for the proposed action with the use of emission offsets.</p> <p><i>Fugitive Dust Emissions</i> In addition to emissions from transmission line construction, mitigation activities such as road paving could produce temporary fugitive dust emissions but long term improvement.</p>

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Resource	No Action	Proposed Action	Alternative Technologies	Mitigation Measures
Biological Resources (4.4)	<p><i>Transmission Lines</i> No additional impacts to desert habitat or wildlife are expected since no transmission lines would be built.</p> <p><i>New River</i> Impacts to biological resources would occur from changes in water quality and volume in the New River, due to power plant operation.</p> <p>Impacts to aquatic organisms would be in proportion to the water resource impacts under the proposed alternative in accordance with relative water consumption.</p> <p><i>Wetlands</i> No impacts would occur to wetlands because the transmission lines would not be built. The Brawley Wetland would not be adversely impacted by a decrease in New River water depth or an increase in salinity.</p>	<p><i>Transmission Lines</i> Permanent impacts to Sonoran creosote bush scrub and desert wash habitat would occur during construction of the transmission lines. Construction may adversely impact small mammals and reptiles with low mobility during construction. No Federal-listed threatened or endangered species would be impacted by the proposed action; however, some sensitive plant species could be disturbed. Protective measures would be taken to minimize impacts to the flat-tailed horned lizard, the western burrowing owl, and other sensitive species.</p> <p><i>New River</i> Water quality changes would have a minor adverse impact on fish and aquatic invertebrates. Riparian vegetation would not be impacted by a decrease in water depth or an increase in salinity.</p> <p><i>Wetlands</i> No wetlands would be impacted by transmission line construction and operation. Desert wash areas [about 0.2 ac (0.08 ha)] could be adversely impacted. Brawley Wetland would not be adversely impacted by a decrease in New River water depth or an increase in salinity.</p>	<p><i>Transmission Lines</i> The effects on desert habitat would be the same as those for the proposed action.</p> <p><i>New River</i> The use of alternative cooling technologies at the power plants would reduce the adverse impacts associated with slight water depth and water quality changes to the New River and Salton Sea (though all these impacts would be small).</p> <p><i>Wetlands</i> Impacts would be less to the Brawley wetland than under the proposed action for dry cooling or wet-dry cooling systems.</p>	<p><i>Transmission Lines</i> Impacts would be the same as under proposed action.</p> <p><i>New River</i> Impacts would be the same as for proposed action.</p> <p><i>Wetlands</i> Impacts would be the same as for proposed action.</p> <p><i>Salton Sea</i> Impacts would be the same as for proposed action.</p> <p><i>Mitigation Measures</i> <i>Impacts</i> Prior to implementation an evaluation of potential impacts to special status species would be conducted.</p>

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Resource	No Action	Proposed Action	Alternative Technologies	Mitigation Measures
<p>Biological Resources (4.4) (Cont.)</p> <p><i>Applicants' Proposed Routes:</i></p> <p><i>Western Alternative Routes:</i></p> <p><i>Eastern Alternative Routes:</i></p>	<p><i>Salton Sea</i> No additional impacts to aquatic invertebrates and fish.</p>	<p><i>Salton Sea</i> Reduction in New River inflow would increase salinity (e.g., increase of 0.19 mg/L/yr) and could cause small adverse impacts to biological resources. A decrease in phosphorus load could reduce eutrophication, resulting in fewer episodic fish kills and improving the food base for some bird species. Impacts to habitat for waterfowl and wading birds would be small.</p> <p>Permanent impact to 3.1 acre (1.3 ha) of Sonoran creosote bush scrub and 0.3 acre (0.1 ha) of desert wash habitat.</p> <p>Permanent impacts would be about 30% greater due to greater length relative to the proposed routes.</p> <p>Permanent impacts would be about 8% greater due to greater length relative to the proposed routes.</p>	<p><i>Salton Sea</i> The use of alternative cooling technologies at the power plants would reduce the adverse impacts associated with slight water depth and water quality changes to the New River and Salton Sea (though all these impacts would be small).</p>	
<p>Cultural Resources (4.5)</p> <p><i>Applicants' Proposed Routes:</i></p>	No additional impacts expected.	<p>Cultural resources would be impacted by the construction and operation of the transmissions lines. Impacts to cultural resources would be mitigated.</p> <p>Construction of the transmission lines in the proposed routes would impact four archaeological sites. Adverse impacts from transmission line construction to these archaeological sites would be mitigated in consultation with the California SHPO.</p>	Impacts would be the same as those identified for the proposed action.	Any measures involving road paving or construction may require evaluation for NRHP eligibility status and protection in consultation with California SHPO to mitigate impacts.

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Resource	No Action	Proposed Action	Alternative Technologies	Mitigation Measures
<p>Cultural Resources (4.5) (Cont.)</p> <p><i>Western Alternative Routes:</i></p> <p><i>Eastern Alternative Routes:</i></p>		<p>Portions of the western alternative routes have not been surveyed for cultural resources. While these routes would avoid the larger concentrations of archaeological sites found along the proposed routes, the routes would likely impact cultural resources. Any adverse effects would be mitigated prior to construction.</p> <p>Portions of the eastern alternative routes have not been surveyed for cultural resources. While these routes would avoid the larger concentrations of archaeological sites found along the proposed routes, the routes would likely impact cultural resources. Any adverse effects would be mitigated prior to construction.</p>		
<p>Land Use (4.6)</p> <p><i>Applicants' Proposed Routes:</i></p> <p><i>Western Alternative Routes:</i></p> <p><i>Eastern Alternative Routes:</i></p>	No additional impacts expected.	<p>Land use in the projects area is limited due to its status as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Vehicle use is confined to roads, and camping is limited to designated areas only. No farming or mining is currently allowed in the area.</p> <p>Permanent impacts would be less than 3.6 acres (1.5 ha) since no new access roads would be built. No alteration of current land use plans is required.</p> <p>Permanent impacts would be greater than those of the proposed and eastern routes: about 13.1 acres (5.3 ha). Routes would partially run outside of the utility corridor and would require alteration of land use designation.</p> <p>Permanent impacts would be greater than those of the proposed routes: about 10.5 acres (4.2 ha). No alteration of current land use plans would be required.</p>	Impacts would be the same as those under the proposed action.	Impacts would depend on mitigation measure (e.g., paving roads could result in adverse impacts if access to remote areas is increased).

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Resource	No Action	Proposed Action	Alternative Technologies	Mitigation Measures
Transportation (4.7)	No additional impacts expected.	Traffic in the projects area would increase during the transmission line construction period. Given the current levels of service on State Route 98 and low traffic volumes associated with projects, no impacts on existing levels of service are expected for the proposed or alternative routes.	Impacts would be same as those under the proposed action.	Impacts would depend on mitigation measures. In the short-term, adverse impacts could result from increased local traffic.
Visual Resources (4.8)	No additional impacts expected.	Construction and operation of the transmission lines would not alter the Class III Visual Resource Management rating for the project area. Transmission lines would not be a prominent addition to the existing landscape. Location of the lines in the Eastern routes would be closer to the nearest residence and a larger aspect of the landscape than in the other routes.	Impacts would be the same as those under the proposed action.	Impacts would depend on mitigation measure used (e.g., a compressed natural gas station would not cause a visual contrast, since its height would be similar to that of a gasoline service station).
Noise Impacts (4.9)	No additional impacts expected.	No adverse impacts are expected during transmission line construction or operation. Noise levels would be below EPA guideline values for the proposed and western alternative routes. For the eastern alternative routes, construction noise would be above EPA guidelines, but only for a short period of time (8-hr daytime shift, less than 1 week).	Impacts would be the same as those under the proposed action.	Impacts would depend on mitigation measures (e.g., paving roads would cause short-term adverse noise impacts due to equipment use near residential areas, but retiring old automobiles would have a beneficial impact).
Socioeconomics (4.10)	No additional impacts expected.	Temporary, small beneficial impacts on the local economy would occur during construction of the transmission lines as a result of wage expenditures and material procurement. Local tax revenues and lease payments to the Federal government from the proposed action are expected be minimal.	Impacts would be the same as those under the proposed action.	Impacts would depend on the mitigation measure (e.g., wage and salary spending and material procurement to implement a measure would have a beneficial impact to the local economy).

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Resource	No Action	Proposed Action	Alternative Technologies	Mitigation Measures
Human Health Impacts (4.11)	No additional impacts from EMF would occur since the transmission lines would not be constructed. Impacts due to plant emissions would be minimal since they would be below EPA SLs. Secondary production of ozone and PM <sub>10</sub> from plant emissions of precursors (NO <sub>x</sub> , NH <sub>3</sub> , and VOCs) would pose minimal health impacts.	<p>No health impacts to residents, workers, or recreationalists due to EMF exposure would be expected from the proposed action. Emissions of NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, and PM<sub>10</sub> would result in air concentration increases to levels that would be below EPA SLs and therefore unlikely to adversely impact the health of residents in the air basin. Secondary production of ozone and PM<sub>10</sub> from plant emissions of precursors (NO<sub>x</sub>, NH<sub>3</sub>, and VOCs) would pose minimal health impacts.</p> <p>Estimated incremental (above no action) cancer risks from exposure to HAPs are below the one per million significance threshold. Noncancer risks for HAPs and NH<sub>3</sub> are below the significance threshold for both acute and chronic exposure.</p>	<p>EMF impacts would be as for the proposed action. Emission controls (oxidizing catalysts) would reduce CO and HAPs emissions relative to the proposed action. Only minimal benefits to residents of the air basin would be expected.</p> <p>The use of alternative cooling technologies at the power plants would increase air emissions up to 15%, but health impacts would be minimal.</p>	<p>EMF impacts would be as for the proposed action. Mitigation measures would result in beneficial impacts by improving the air quality in the region.</p> <p>Road paving would produce long-term reductions in PM<sub>10</sub> emissions. Fuel conversions would produce short- and long-term reductions in NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, and VOC emissions.</p>

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Environmental Justice	No additional impacts expected.	<p>Temporary impacts from noise and dust emissions and the more long-term impacts from noise and EMF in the vicinity of the transmission lines would not contribute to high and adverse impacts on the general population or to disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations in any block group.</p> <p>Increases in air pollution due to emissions of PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> were found to be below new source significance levels used as a benchmark for negligible impacts; therefore, these emissions would not contribute to high and adverse impacts on the general population or to disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations in any block group.</p> <p>Adverse impacts to biological resources as a result of increases in Salton Sea salinity could result in minor impacts on the general population that fishes recreationally at the Sea. These impacts attributable to the proposed action would not be disproportionately high and adverse for any populations that might rely on the Sea for subsistence fishing, because the same minor effects on biological resources are estimated as under no action.</p>	Installation of dry cooling or wet-dry cooling systems at the power plants would not contribute to impacts.	Mitigation measures to compensate for power plant emissions would have a beneficial impact on low-income and minority populations by improving air quality in the region. (Because of uncertainties related to the location of mitigation measures, an impact assessment at the census-block level was not conducted.)

a Abbreviations: BOD = biochemical oxygen demand; CO = carbon monoxide; COD = chemical oxygen demand; EMF = electric and magnetic fields; EPA = U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; HAPs = hazardous air pollutants; LRPC = La Rosita Power Complex; metric ton = 2,206 lb; NH<sub>3</sub> = ammonia; NO<sub>x</sub> = nitrogen oxides; NRHP = National Register of Historic Places; O<sub>3</sub> = ozone; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter; PM<sub>10</sub> = particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter; ROW = right-of-way; SHPO = State Historic Preservation Office; SL = significance level; TDS = total dissolved solids; TSS = total suspended solids; VOC = volatile organic compound(s).

