















































































































# Appendix B

Special-status Plant Species Evaluation of Potential to Occur

# LUGO-VICTORVILLE 500 KV TRANSMISSION LINE REMEDIAL ACTION SCHEME PROJECT 2021 SPECIAL-STATUS PLANT SURVEY REPORT APPENDIX B SPECIAL-STATUS PLANT SPECIES EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL TO OCCUR

Scientific Name Common Name	—S <sup>-</sup>	tatus—	Flowering Period <sup>1</sup>	Habitat and Elevation <sup>1</sup>	Potential to Occur and Analysis	Season
Agave utahensis var. nevadensis Clark Mountain agave	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  4.2	May-Jul	Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, Pinyon and juniper woodland; carbonate or volcanic. 2,950-5,200 ft.	Absent; conspicuous perennial not observed during surveys	Spring and Fall
Ageratina herbacea desert ageratina	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  2B.3	Jul-Oct	Pinyon and juniper woodland (rocky). 5,000-7,220 ft.	Absent; there are recent records within 2 miles, but the taxon was not observed during surveys	Fall
<i>Aloysia wrightii</i> Wright's beebrush	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  4.3	Apr-Oct	Joshua tree woodland, Pinyon and juniper woodland; rocky, often carbonate. 2,950-5,250 ft.	Absent; conspicuous perennial not observed during surveys	Spring and Fall
Androstephium breviflorum small-flowered androstephium	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  2B.2	Mar-Apr	Desert dunes, Mojavean desert scrub (bajadas). 685-2,920 ft.	Likely; there are recent (<25 years) records within 2 miles; poor spring conditions precluded surveys	Spring
Astragalus bernardinus San Bernardino milk-vetch	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	BLMS  1B.2 	Apr-Jun	Joshua tree woodland, Pinyon and juniper woodland; Often granitic or carbonate. 2,950-6,560 ft.	Occurs; three plants were mapped near the Cima substation	Spring
Astragalus cimae var. cimae Cima milk-vetch	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	BLMS  1B.2 CDCA	Apr-May	Great Basin scrub, Joshua tree woodland, Pinyon and juniper woodland; clay. 2,915- 6,070 ft.	Likely; there are recent (<25 years) records within 2 miles; poor spring conditions precluded surveys in all areas of suitable habitat	Spring
Astragalus lentiginosus var. borreganus Borrego milk-vetch	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  4.3 	Feb-May	Mojavean desert scrub, Sonoran desert scrub; sandy. 95-2,935 ft.	Unlikely; there are recent (<25 years) records within 5 miles; poor spring conditions precluded surveys	Spring



B-1 December 2021

Scientific Name	—S	-Status— Flowering		Habitat and Elevation <sup>1</sup>	Potential to Occur and Analysis	Season
Common Name		1	Period <sup>1</sup>			
Berberis fremontii Fremont barberry	Fed: State:		Mar-May	Joshua tree woodland, Pinyon and juniper woodland; Rocky, sometimes granitic. 3,755-	Absent; conspicuous perennial not observed during surveys	Spring
,	CRPR:	2B.3		5,645 ft.		
	REG:					
Blepharidachne kingii	Fed:		May	Great Basin scrub, usually carbonate. 3,495 –	Unlikely; there are recent (<25	Spring
King's eyelash grass	State:			7,005 ft.	years) records within 5 miles;	
	CRPR:	2B.3			poor spring conditions precluded	
	REG:				surveys	
Bouteloua eriopoda	Fed:		May-Aug	Joshua tree woodland, Pinyon and juniper	Absent; there are recent records	Spring and Fall
black grama	State:			woodland. 2,950-6,235 ft.	within 5 miles, but the taxon was	
	CRPR:	4.2			not observed during surveys	
	REG:					
Castela emoryi	Fed:		(Apr)Jun-Jul	Mojavean desert scrub, Playas, Sonoran	Occurs; six plants were mapped	Spring and Fall
Emory's crucifixion-thorn	State:		(Sep-Oct)	desert scrub; gravelly. 295-2,380 ft.	in the southern portion of	
	CRPR:	2B.2			Segment 2	
	REG:					
Coryphantha chlorantha	Fed:		Apr-Sep	Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert	Absent; conspicuous perennial	Spring and Fall
desert pincushion	State:			scrub, Pinyon and juniper woodland;	not observed during surveys	
	CRPR:	2B.1		carbonate, gravelly, rocky. 145-5,595 ft.		
	REG:					
Coryphantha vivipara var. rosea	Fed:		May-Jun	Mojavean desert scrub, Pinyon and juniper	Occurs; 92 plants were mapped	Spring
viviparous foxtail cactus	State:			woodland; carbonate. 4,100-8,860 ft.	near Cima in the Mojave National	
	CRPR:	2B.2			Preserve	
	REG:	CDCA				
Cryptantha clokeyi	Fed:	BLMS	Apr	Mojavean desert scrub. 2,380 – 4,480 ft.	Unlikely; there are recent (<25	Spring
Clokey's cryptantha	State:				years) records within 5 miles;	
	CRPR:	1B.2			poor spring conditions precluded	
	REG:		1		surveys	
Cuscuta californica var. apiculata	Fed:		Feb-Aug	Mojavean desert scrub, Sonoran desert	Unlikely; there are recent (<25	Spring and Fall
pointed dodder	State:			scrub; sandy. 0-1,640 ft.	years) records within 5 miles;	
	CRPR:	3			poor spring conditions precluded	
	REG:				surveys	



B-2 December 2021

Scientific Name Common Name	—St	—Status—		Habitat and Elevation <sup>1</sup>	Potential to Occur and Analysis	Season
Cymopterus multinervatus	Fed:		Period <sup>1</sup> Mar-Apr	Mojavean desert scrub, Pinyon and juniper	Occurs; 46 plants were mapped	Spring
purple-nerve cymopterus	State:		Ινιαι-Αρι	woodland; sandy or gravelly. 2,590-5,905 ft.	near Cima in the Mojave National	Spring
purple-herve cymopterus	CRPR:	2B.2		woodiand, sandy or graveny. 2,330-3,303 ft.	Preserve	
	REG:	20.2			Treserve	
Diplacus mohavensis	Fed:	BLMS	Apr-Jun	Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert	Unlikely; there are recent (<25	Spring
Mojave monkeyflower	State:	DLIVIS	Apr-Juli	scrub; sandy or gravelly, often in washes.	years) records within 2 miles;	Shillig
iviojave monkeynowei	CRPR:	1B.2		1,980-3,960 ft.	poor spring conditions precluded	
	REG:	DRECP		1,980-3,900 1t.	surveys	
Enneapogon desvauxii	Fed:		Aug-Sep	Pinyon and juniper woodland (rocky,	Occurs; about 551 plants were	Fall
nine-awned pappus grass	State:		Aug-seh	carbonate). 4,180-5,990 ft.	mapped in the northeastern	ı all
illie-awiieu pappus grass	CRPR:	2B.2		Carbonate). 4,180-3,330 ft.	portion of the Survey Area	
	REG:	ZD.Z 			portion of the survey Area	
Francethaus bacthii can bacthii	Fed:		A 10 10 C 0 10	Lachus two succedles of Discussions and invites a	Alexanti the me and meant meaning	Coning and Fall
Eremothera boothii ssp. boothii			Apr-Sep	Joshua tree woodland, Pinyon and juniper woodland. 2,670-7,875 ft.	Absent; there are recent records within 5 miles, but the taxon was	Spring and Fall
Booth's evening-primrose	State:	 2D 2		woodiand. 2,670-7,875 It.	·	
	CRPR:	2B.3			not observed during surveys	
	REG:					
Eriastrum harwoodii	Fed:	BLMS	Mar-Jun	Desert dunes. 410-3,000 ft.	Occurs; about 841 skeletons from	Spring
Harwood's eriastrum	State:				the spring of 2020 were mapped	
	CRPR:	1B.2			in the Devil's Playground portion	
	REG:				of the Mojave National Preserve	
Eriogonum heermannii var.	Fed:		Aug-Oct	Pinyon and juniper woodland (carbonate).	Absent; conspicuous perennial	Fall
floccosum	State:			2,950-7,875 ft.	not observed during surveys	
Clark Mountain buckwheat	CRPR:	4.3				
	REG:					
Erioneuron pilosum	Fed:		(Apr) May-	Pinyon and juniper woodland (rocky,	Likely; there are recent (<25	Spring
hairy erioneuron	State:		Jun	sometimes carbonate). 4,655-6,595 ft.	years) records within 2 miles.	
	CRPR:	2B.3			Poor spring conditions precluded	
	REG:				surveys	
Euphorbia abramsiana	Fed:		(Aug)Sep-	Mojavean desert scrub, Sonoran desert	Occurs; about 5,467 plants were	Fall
Abrams' spurge	State:		Nov	scrub; sandy15-4,300 ft.	mapped near the Pisgah lava flow	
	CRPR:	2B.2			of Segment 1	
	REG:					



B-3 December 2021

Scientific Name Common Name	—St	—Status— Flo		Habitat and Elevation <sup>1</sup>	Potential to Occur and Analysis	Season
		I	Period <sup>1</sup>	14 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	0 20 1 1	r-II
Euphorbia exstipulata var.	Fed:		Sep	Mojavean desert scrub (rocky). 4,195-6,560	Occurs; 30 plants were mapped	Fall
exstipulata	State:			ft.	in Nevada	
Clark Mountain spurge	CRPR:	2B.1				
	REG:		ļ. <u>.</u>			
Euphorbia revoluta	Fed:		Aug-Sep	Mojavean desert scrub (rocky); 3,590-10,170	Occurs; 10 plants were mapped	Fall
revolute spurge	State:			ft.	in Nevada	
	CRPR:	4.3				
	REG:					
Funastrum utahense	Fed:		(Mar)Apr-	Mojavean desert scrub, Sonoran desert	Occurs; 91 plants were mapped	Spring and Fall
Utah vine milkweed	State:		Jun (Sep-	scrub; sandy or gravelly. 325-4,710 ft.	throughout the central portion of	
	CRPR:	4.2	Oct)		the Survey Area	
	REG:					
Grusonia parishii	Fed:		May-Jun	Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert	Occurs; 58 plants were mapped	Spring and Fall
Parish's club-cholla	State:		(Jul)	scrub, Sonoran desert scrub; sandy, rocky.	within the Mojave National	
	CRPR:	2B.2		980-5,000 ft.	Preserve	
	REG:					
Kallstroemia parviflora	Fed:		Aug-Nov	Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert	Occurs; about 4,234 plants were	Fall
warty caltrop	State:			scrub, Pinyon and juniper woodland;	mapped near the eastern end of	
, ,	CRPR:	4.2		Sometimes disturbed areas. 2,805-5,595 ft.	the Survey Area	
	REG:			, ,	,	
Lycium torreyi	Fed:		(Jan-Feb)	Mojavean desert scrub, Sonoran desert	Absent; conspicuous perennial	Spring and Fall
Torrey's box-thorn	State:		Mar-Jun	scrub; Sandy, rocky, washes, streambanks,	not observed during surveys	- 8
, o sex anom	CRPR:	4.2	(Sep-Nov)	desert valleys160-4,005 ft.		
	REG:		(35)	.,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,		
Menodora spinescens var.	Fed:	BLMS	Apr-May	Mojavean desert scrub; Andesite gravel,	Absent; conspicuous perennial	Spring
mohavensis	State:	DEIVIS	Aprilvidy	rocky hillsides, canyons. 2,260-6,560 ft.	not observed during surveys	Spring
Mojave menodora	CRPR:	1B.2		100ky 111131des, edity 0113. 2,200 0,300 ft.	Hot observed during surveys	
Mojave menodora	REG:					
Mentzelia puberula	Fed:		Mar-May	Mojavean desert scrub, Sonoran desert	Likely; there are recent (<25	Spring
Darlington's blazing star	State:		iviai-iviay	scrub; sandy or rocky. 295-4,200 ft.	years) records within 2 miles;	Shillik
Dai iii igtoff S Diazifig Staf	I			SCI UD, Sanity Of TOCKY. 295-4,200 It.		
	CRPR:	2B.2			poor spring conditions precluded	
	REG:				surveys	



B-4 December 2021

Scientific Name Common Name	—S	tatus—	Flowering Period <sup>1</sup>	Habitat and Elevation <sup>1</sup> Mojavean desert scrub; generally rocky . 2,310-3,875 ft.	Potential to Occur and Analysis  Does Not Occur; there are recent (<25 years) records within 2 miles, but no suitable talus habitat is present; poor spring conditions precluded surveys	Season Spring
<i>Mentzelia tridentata</i> creamy blazing star	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	BLMS  1B.3 	Mar-May			
<i>Mirabilis coccinea</i> red four o'clock	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  2B.3	May-Jul	Pinyon and juniper woodland. 3,510-5,905 ft.	Absent; there are recent records within 5 miles, but the taxon was not observed during surveys	Spring and Fall
<b>Muilla coronata</b> crowned muilla	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  4.2 	Mar-Apr (May)	Chenopod scrub, Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, Pinyon and juniper woodland. 2,195-6,430 ft.	Unlikely; there are recent (<25 years) records within 5 miles; poor spring conditions precluded surveys	Spring
Munroa squarrosa false buffalo-grass	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  2B.2	Oct	Pinyon and juniper woodland, gravelly or rocky. 4,920 -5,905 ft.	Absent; there are recent records within 5 miles, but the taxon was not observed during surveys	Fall
Nemacaulis denudata var. gracilis slender cottonheads	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  2B.2	(Mar)Apr- May	Coastal dunes, Desert dunes, Sonoran desert scrub160-1,310 ft.	Likely; there are recent (<25 years) records within 2 miles; poor spring conditions precluded surveys	Spring
<i>Opuntia xcurvispina</i> curved-spine beavertail	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  2B.2	Apr-Jun	Chaparral, Mojavean desert scrub, Pinyon and juniper woodland. 3,280-4,595 ft.	Occurs; 4 plants were mapped within the Mojave National Preserve	Spring
<i>Pediomelum castoreum</i> Beaver Dam breadroot	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	BLMS  1B.2 	Apr-May	Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub; sandy. 2,000-5,030 ft.	Likely; there are recent (<25 years) records within 2 miles; poor spring conditions precluded surveys	Spring
<i>Pellaea truncata</i> spiny cliff-brake	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  2B.3	Apr-Jun	Pinyon and juniper woodland (volcanic or granitic, rocky). 3,935-7,055 ft.	Unlikely; there are recent (<25 years) records within 5 miles; poor spring conditions precluded surveys	Spring



B-5 December 2021

Scientific Name	—Status—		Flowering	Habitat and Elevation <sup>1</sup>	Potential to Occur and Analysis	Season
Common Name		1	Period <sup>1</sup>			
Penstemon albomarginatus	Fed:	BLMS	Mar-May	Desert dunes (stabilized), Mojavean desert	Occurs; 4 plants were mapped	Spring
white-margined beardtongue	State:		(Jun)	scrub (sandy). 2,095-3,495 ft.	near the Pisgah substation	
	CRPR:	1B.1				
	REG:					
Penstemon pseudospectabilis ssp.	Fed:		Jan-May	Mojavean desert scrub, Sonoran desert	Likely; there are recent (<25	Spring
pseudospectabilis	State:			scrub; often sandy washes, sometimes rocky.	years) records within 2 miles;	
desert beardtongue	CRPR:	2B.2		260-6,350 ft.	poor spring conditions precluded	
	REG:				surveys	
Penstemon utahensis	Fed:		Apr-May	Chenopod scrub, Great Basin scrub,	Likely; there are recent (<25	Spring
Utah beardtongue	State:			Mojavean desert scrub, Pinyon and juniper	years) records within 2 miles;	
	CRPR:	2B.3		woodland; rocky. 3,490-8,200 ft.	poor spring conditions precluded	
	REG:				surveys	
Phacelia coerulea	Fed:		Apr-May	Mojavean desert scrub, Pinyon and juniper	Likely; there are recent (<25	Spring
sky-blue phacelia	State:			woodland. 4,590-6,560 ft.	years) records within 2 miles;	
	CRPR:	2B.3			poor spring conditions precluded	
	REG:				surveys	
Phacelia parishii	Fed:	BLMS	Apr-May	Mojavean desert scrub, Playas/clay or	Unlikely; there are recent (<25	Spring
Parish's phacelia	State:		(Jun), (Jul)	alkaline. 1,770 -3,935 ft.	years) records within 5 miles;	
	CRPR:	1B.1			poor spring conditions precluded	
	REG:				surveys	
Polygala acanthoclada	Fed:		May-Aug	Chenopod scrub, Joshua tree woodland,	Absent; conspicuous perennial	Spring and Fall
thorny milkwort	State:			Pinyon and juniper woodland. 2,490-7,495 ft.	not observed during surveys	
	CRPR:	2B.3				
	REG:					
Portulaca halimoides	Fed:		Sep	Joshua tree woodland (sandy). 3,280-3,935 ft.	Occurs; about 20,109 plants were	Fall
desert portulaca	State:				mapped near the eastern end of	
	CRPR:	4.2			the Survey Area	
	REG:					
Psorothamnus arborescens var.	Fed:		Apr-May	Mojavean desert scrub, Riparian scrub. 1,310	Absent; conspicuous perennial	Spring
arborescens	State:			-3,890 ft.	not observed during surveys	
Mojave indigo-bush	CRPR:	4.3			,	
-	REG:					



B-6 December 2021

Scientific Name Common Name	—S <sup>-</sup>	—Status— Flowering Period <sup>1</sup>		Habitat and Elevation <sup>1</sup>	Potential to Occur and Analysis	Season
Quercus turbinella shrub live oak	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  4.3	Apr-Jun	Chaparral, Cismontane woodland, Lower montane coniferous forest, Pinyon and juniper woodland. 3,935 -6,560 ft.	Absent; conspicuous perennial not observed during surveys	Spring
Sibara deserti desert winged-rockcress	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  4.3	Mar-Apr	Mojavean desert scrub. 1,140-4,290 ft.	Unlikely; there are recent (<25 years) records within 5 miles; poor spring conditions precluded surveys	Spring
Sphaeralcea rusbyi var. eremicola Rusby's desert-mallow	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	BLMS  1B.2 CDCA	Mar-Jun	Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub. 3,195-5,395 ft.	Occurs; about 807 plants were mapped in the central portion of the Mojave National Preserve	Spring
Xanthisma gracile annual bristleweed	Fed: State: CRPR: REG:	  4.3 	Apr-Jul (Sep)	Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub. 4,000-5,100 ft.	Absent; there are recent records within 5 miles, but the taxon was not observed during surveys	Spring and Fall

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> California Native Plant Society, Rare Plant Program. 2020. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (online edition, v8-03 0.39).

#### Sensitivity Status Key

#### CNPS Threat Ranks:

0.1 = Seriously threatened in California (over 80 percent of occurrences threatened, high degree and immediacy of threat)

0.2 = Moderately threatened in California (20 to 80 percent of occurrences threatened, moderate degree and immediacy of threat)

0.3 = Not very threatened in California (less than 20 percent of occurrences threatened, low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

#### Regional (REG):

CDCA = California Desert Conservation Area Covered

DRECP = Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plans Covered

-- = No Listing

#### State (California):

-- = No Listing

#### Federal (Fed):

BLMS = BLM Sensitive

-- = No Listing

#### California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR):

1A = Plants presumed extinct in California

1B = Plants rare and endangered in California and throughout their range

2A = Plants presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere

2B = Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere

3 = Plants about which more information is needed; a review list

4 = Plants of limited distribution; a watch list



B-7 December 2021

# Appendix C

Representative Photographs





Photo 1: San Bernardino milk-vetch observed in the MNP during spring surveys (4/22/2021).



Photo 2: Crucifixion thorn observed in Segment 2 (9/03/2021).



C-1 December 2021



Photo 3: Viviparous foxtail cactus observed in Segment 2 (4/08/2021).



Photo 4: Purple-nerve cymopterus observed in Segment 2 (4/12/2021).

C-2 December 2021



Photo 5: Nine-awn pappusgrass in the far eastern portion of the Survey Area (9/20/2021).



Photo 6: Harwood's eriastrum remains observed in Segment 2 (9/27/2021).

C-3 December 2021



Photo 7: Abrams' spurge observed in Segment 1 (9/01/2021).



**Photo 8**: Clark Mountain spurge in the far eastern Nevada portion of the Survey Area (9/09/2021).



C-4 December 2021



Photo 9: Revolute spurge observed in Segment 2 (8/24/2021).



Photo 10: Utah vine milkweed observed in Segment 2 (9/02/2021).



C-5 December 2021



Photo 11: Matted cholla observed in Segment 2 (9/22/2021).



Photo 12: Warty caltrop observed in Segment 2 (9/21/2021).



C-6 December 2021



Photo 13: Curved-spine beavertail within the MNP (9/30/2021).



Photo 14: White-margined beardtongue remains observed in Segment 1 (9/02/2021).



C-7 December 2021



Photo 15: Desert portulaca observed in Segment 2 (9/21/2021).



Photo 16: Rusby's desert-mallow observed in Segment 2 (4/09/2021).



C-8 December 2021



Photo 17: Black grama observed near Segment 2 during a reference check (8/24/2021).



Photo 18: Abram's spurge observed near Segment 1 during a reference check (8/24/2021).



C-9 December 2021



Photo 19: Utah vine milkweed observed in Segment 1 during a reference check (8/24/2021).



Photo 20: Warty caltrop observed near Segment 2 during a reference check (8/24/2021).



C-10 December 2021



<u>Photo 21</u>: Desert portulaca (left) and purslane (right) observed near Segment 2 during a reference check (8/24/2021).

C-11 December 2021

# Appendix D

Plant Species Observed



### LUGO-VICTORVILLE 500 KV TRANSMISSION LINE REMEDIAL ACTION SCHEME PROJECT SPECIAL-STATUS PLANT SURVEY

### APPENDIX D PLANT SPECIES OBSERVED

Family	Scientific Name	Common Name	Status		
Agavaceae	Hesperocallis undulata	desert lily			
Agavaceae	Yucca baccata var. baccata	banana yucca			
Agavaceae	Yucca brevifolia	Joshua tree			
Agavaceae	Yucca schidigera	Mojave yucca			
Aizoaceae	Trianthema portulacastrum	desert horsepurslane			
Amaranthaceae	Amaranthus albus*	prostrate pigweed			
Amaranthaceae	Amaranthus fimbriatus	fringed amaranth			
Amaranthaceae	Tidestromia suffruticosa var. oblongifolia	honeysweet			
Apiaceae	Cymopterus multinervatus	purple-nerve cymopterus	2B.2		
Apocynaceae	Asclepias erosa	desert milkweed			
Apocynaceae	Asclepias subulata	rush milkweed			
Apocynaceae	Funastrum hirtellum	trailing townula			
Apocynaceae	Funastrum utahense	Utah vine milkweed	4.2		
Asteraceae	Acamptopappus sphaerocephalus	rayless goldenhead			
Asteraceae	Adenophyllum cooperi	Cooper's dogweed			
Asteraceae	Adenophyllum porophylloides	San Felipe dogweed			
Asteraceae	Ambrosia ×platyspina	hybrid bursage			
Asteraceae	Ambrosia acanthicarpa	annual bursage			
Asteraceae	Ambrosia dumosa	white bursage			
Asteraceae	Ambrosia eriocentra	woolly bursage			
Asteraceae	Ambrosia salsola	cheesebush			
Asteraceae	Amphipappus fremontii	Fremont's chaffbush			
Asteraceae	Baccharis brachyphylla	shortleaf baccharis			
Asteraceae	Baileya multiradiata	desert marigold			
Asteraceae	Bebbia juncea var. aspera				
Asteraceae	Brickellia atractyloides	spearleaf brickellbush			
Asteraceae	Brickellia incana	woolly brickellbush			
Asteraceae	Chaenactis carphoclinia var. carphoclinia	pebble pincushion			
Asteraceae	Chaenactis fremontii	Fremont pincushion			
Asteraceae	Chaenactis stevioides	desert pincushion			
Asteraceae	Dieteria canescens var. leucanthemifolia	hoary aster			
Asteraceae	Encelia farinosa	brittlebush			
Asteraceae	Encelia frutescens	button brittlebush			
Asteraceae	Encelia virginensis	Virgin River brittlebush			
Asteraceae	Ericameria cooperi var. cooperi	Cooper's goldenbush			
Asteraceae	Ericameria linearifolia	interior goldenbush			
Asteraceae	Ericameria paniculata	black-banded rabbitbrush			
Asteraceae	Ericameria teretifolia	green rabbitbrush			
Asteraceae	Eriophyllum wallacei	Wallace's woolly daisy			
Asteraceae	Geraea canescens	desert sunflower			



D-1 December 2021

Family	Scientific Name	Common Name	Status		
Asteraceae	Gutierrezia microcephala	sticky snakeweed			
Asteraceae	Gutierrezia sarothrae	matchweed			
Asteraceae	Layia glandulosa	white layia			
Asteraceae	Logfia depressa	hierba limpia			
Asteraceae	Malacothrix coulteri	snake's-head			
Asteraceae	Malacothrix glabrata	desert dandelion			
Asteraceae	Palafoxia arida	desert palafox			
Asteraceae	Pectis papposa var. papposa	chinchweed			
Asteraceae	Perityle emoryi	Emory's rockdaisy			
Asteraceae	Peucephyllum schottii	Schott's pygmycedar			
Asteraceae	Pleurocoronis pluriseta	bush arrowleaf			
Asteraceae	Porophyllum gracile	slender poreleaf			
Asteraceae	Psilostrophe cooperi	whitestem paperflower			
Asteraceae	Rafinesquia neomexicana	New Mexico plumeseed			
Asteraceae	Senecio flaccidus var. monoensis	smooth threadleaf ragwort			
Asteraceae	Stephanomeria exigua	small wire-lettuce			
Asteraceae	Stephanomeria pauciflora	wire-lettuce			
Asteraceae	Stylocline sp.	neststraw			
Asteraceae	Tetradymia stenolepis	Mojave cottonthorn			
Asteraceae	Trichoptilium incisum	yellowdome			
Asteraceae	Trixis californica var. californica	California trixis			
Asteraceae	Xylorhiza tortifolia var. tortifolia	Mojave aster			
Bignoniaceae	Chilopsis linearis ssp. arcuata	desert willow			
Boraginaceae	Amsinckia tessellata	bristly fiddleneck			
Boraginaceae	Cryptantha angustifolia	narrow-leaved cryptantha			
Boraginaceae	Cryptantha circumscissa var. circumscissa	cushion cryptantha			
Boraginaceae	Cryptantha dumetorum	scrambling cryptantha			
Boraginaceae	Cryptantha maritima	Guadalupe cryptantha			
Boraginaceae	Cryptantha micrantha	redroot cryptantha			
Boraginaceae	Cryptantha nevadensis var. nevadensis	Nevada cryptantha			
Boraginaceae	Cryptantha pterocarya var. cycloptera	Tuscon cryptantha			
Boraginaceae	Pectocarya heterocarpa	mixed-nut pectocarya			
Boraginaceae	Pectocarya platycarpa	wide-toothed pectocarya			
Boraginaceae	Pectocarya recurvata	arched-nut pectocarya			
Boraginaceae	Pectocarya setosa	round-nut pectocarya			
Boraginaceae	Phacelia crenulata	notch-leaf scorpion-weed			
Boraginaceae	Phacelia distans	distant phacelia			
Boraginaceae	Phacelia fremontii	Fremont's phacelia			
Boraginaceae	Phacelia vallis-mortae	Death Valley phacelia			
Boraginaceae	Plagiobothrys arizonicus	Arizona popcornflower			
Boraginaceae	Tiquilia plicata	fan-leaved tiquilia			
Brassicaceae	Brassica tournefortii*	Saharan mustard			
Brassicaceae	Caulanthus cooperi	Cooper's wild cabbage			
Brassicaceae Caulanthus lasiophyllus		California mustard			
Brassicaceae Descurainia pinnata		western tansymustard			
Brassicaceae	Lepidium fremontii	desert pepperweed			



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Family	Scientific Name	Common Name	Status			
Brassicaceae	Lepidium lasiocarpum ssp. lasiocarpum	shaggyfruit pepperweed				
Brassicaceae	Sisymbrium irio*	London rocket				
Brassicaceae	Streptanthella longirostris	longbeak streptanthella				
Brassicaceae	Thysanocarpus curvipes	rpus curvipes sand fringepod				
Cactaceae	Coryphantha vivipara var. rosea	viviparous foxtail cactus	2B.2			
	Cylindropuntia acanthocarpa var.					
Cactaceae	acanthocarpa	buckhorn cholla				
Cactaceae	Cylindropuntia echinocarpa	silver cholla				
Cactaceae	Cylindropuntia ramosissima	pencil cholla				
Cactaceae	Echinocactus polycephalus var. polycephalus	cottontop cactus				
Cactaceae	Echinocereus engelmannii	Engelmann's hedgehog cactus				
Cactaceae	Echinocereus mojavensis	Mojave kingcup cactus				
Cactaceae	Ferocactus cylindraceus	California barrel cactus				
Cactaceae	Grusonia parishii	matted cholla	2B.2			
Cactaceae	Mammillaria tetrancistra	common fishhook cactus				
Cactaceae	Opuntia basilaris var. basilaris	beavertail pricklypear				
Cactaceae	Opuntia chlorotica	pancake pricklypear				
Cactaceae	Opuntia curvispina	curved-spine beavertail	2B.2			
Cactaceae	Opuntia engelmannii var. engelmannii	Engelmann pricklypear				
Cactaceae	Opuntia phaeacantha	brown-spined pricklypear				
Cactaceae	Opuntia polyacantha var. erinacea	Mojave pricklypear				
Caryophyllaceae	Eremogone macradenia	Mojave sandwort				
Chenopodiaceae	Atriplex canescens	fourwing saltbush				
Chenopodiaceae	Atriplex confertifolia	shadscale				
Chenopodiaceae	Atriplex hymenelytra	desertholly				
Chenopodiaceae	Atriplex polycarpa	allscale saltbush				
Chenopodiaceae	Grayia spinosa	spiny hopsage				
Chenopodiaceae	Krascheninnikovia lanata	winterfat				
Chenopodiaceae	Salsola paulsenii*	barbwire Russian thistle				
Chenopodiaceae	Salsola sp.*	Russian thistle				
Chenopodiaceae	Suaeda nigra	bush seepweed				
Cleomaceae	Peritoma arborea	bladderpod				
Convolvulaceae	Cuscuta sp.	dodder				
Crassulaceae	Dudleya saxosa ssp. aloides	Panamint liveforever				
Cucurbitaceae	Cucurbita palmata	coyote melon				
Cupressaceae	Juniperus osteosperma	Utah juniper				
Ephedraceae	Ephedra californica	California jointfir				
Ephedraceae	Ephedra funerea	Death Valley jointfir				
Ephedraceae	Ephedra nevadensis	Nevada jointfir				
- Euphorbiaceae	Ditaxis neomexicana	New Mexico ditaxis				
Euphorbiaceae	Euphorbia abramsiana	Abrams' spurge	2B.2			
 Euphorbiaceae	Euphorbia albomarginata	rattlesnake sandmat				
 Euphorbiaceae	Euphorbia exstipulata var. exstipulata	Clark Mountain spurge	2B.1			
Euphorbiaceae	Euphorbia micromera	Sonoran sandmat				
Euphorbiaceae Euphorbia parishii		Parish's sandmat				
 Euphorbiaceae	Euphorbia polycarpa	smallseed sandmat				



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Family	Scientific Name	Common Name	Status		
Euphorbiaceae	Euphorbia revoluta	revolute spurge	4.3		
Euphorbiaceae	Euphorbia serpillifolia	thyme-leaved spurge			
Euphorbiaceae	Euphorbia setiloba	Yuma sandmat			
Euphorbiaceae	Stillingia spinulosa	annual toothleaf			
Fabaceae	Astragalus bernardinus	San Bernardino milk-vetch	1B.2		
Fabaceae	Astragalus layneae	Layne milkvetch			
Fabaceae	Astragalus lentiginosus var. fremontii	Fremont's milkvetch			
Fabaceae	Dalea mollissima	soft prairie clover			
Fabaceae	Lupinus concinnus	bajada lupine			
Fabaceae	Prosopis glandulosa var. torreyana	honey mesquite			
Fabaceae	Psorothamnus arborescens var. simplicifolius	Mojave indigo-bush			
Fabaceae	Psorothamnus fremontii var. fremontii	Fremont's indigo-bush			
Fabaceae	Psorothamnus spinosus	smoketree			
Fabaceae	Senegalia greggii	catclaw acacia			
abaceae	Senna armata	desert senna			
Geraniaceae	Erodium cicutarium*	redstem filaree			
Geraniaceae	Erodium texanum	Texas filaree			
Krameriaceae	Krameria bicolor	white ratany			
Krameriaceae	Krameria erecta	littleleaf ratany			
Lamiaceae	Salvia columbariae	chia			
Lamiaceae	Salvia dorrii	Dorr's sage			
Lamiaceae	Scutellaria mexicana	bladdersage			
Loasaceae	Eucnide urens	desert stingbush			
Loasaceae	Mentzelia albicaulis	whitestem blazingstar			
Loasaceae	Mentzelia involucrata	bracted blazingstar			
Loasaceae	Petalonyx thurberi	Thurber's sandpaper plant			
Malvaceae	Eremalche rotundifolia	desert fivespot			
Malvaceae	Sphaeralcea ambigua	desert globemallow			
Malvaceae	Sphaeralcea rusbyi var. eremicola				
Molluginaceae	Mollugo cerviana*	threadstem carpetweed			
Nyctaginaceae	Allionia incarnata var. incarnata	trailing windmills			
Nyctaginaceae	Boerhavia coulteri var. palmeri	Coulter's spiderling			
Nyctaginaceae	Boerhavia triquetra var. intermedia	slender spiderling			
Nyctaginaceae	Boerhavia wrightii	largebract spiderling			
Nyctaginaceae	Mirabilis laevis	desert wishbone-bush			
Nyctaginaceae	Mirabilis multiflora	Colorado four o'clock			
Oleaceae	Menodora spinescens var. spinescens	spiny menodora			
Onagraceae	Camissonia campestris ssp. campestris	Mojave suncup			
Onagraceae	Chylismia brevipes	yellow cups			
Onagraceae	Chylismia claviformis	browneyes			
Onagraceae	Eremothera boothii	Booth's evening primrose			
Onagraceae	Eremothera refracta	narrow leaved primrose			
Onagraceae	Oenothera californica ssp. avita	California evening primrose			
Orobanchaceae	Castilleja chromosa	desert paintbrush			
Papaveraceae	Argemone sp.	pricklypoppy			
' Papaveraceae	Eschscholzia minutiflora	pygmy poppy			



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Family	Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	
Plantaginaceae	Penstemon albomarginatus	white-margined beardtongue	1B.1	
Plantaginaceae	Plantago ovata	desert indianwheat		
Poaceae	Aristida adscensionis	sixweeks threeawn		
Poaceae	Aristida californica	California threeawn		
Poaceae	Aristida purpurea var. longiseta	red threeawn		
Poaceae	Bouteloua aristidoides var. aristidoides	needle grama		
Poaceae	Bouteloua barbata var. barbata	sixweeks grama		
Poaceae	Bromus rubens*	red brome		
Poaceae	Bromus tectorum*	cheatgrass		
Poaceae	Dasyochloa pulchella	fluff grass		
Poaceae	Elymus elymoides	squirreltail		
Poaceae	Enneapogon desvauxii	nine-awn pappusgrass	2B.2	
Poaceae	Eragrostis cilianensis*	stinkgrass		
Poaceae	Eragrostis lehmanniana*	Lehmann's love grass		
Poaceae	Hilaria rigida	big galleta		
Poaceae	Hordeum sp.	barley		
Poaceae	Muhlenbergia porteri	bush muhly		
Poaceae	Panicum urvilleanum	silky panic grass		
Poaceae	Poa secunda	Nevada blue grass		
Poaceae	Schismus spp.*	Mediterranean grass		
Poaceae	Sporobolus contractus	spike dropseed		
Poaceae	Sporobolus cryptandrus	sand dropseed		
Poaceae	Sporobolus flexuosus	mesa dropseed		
Poaceae	Stipa hymenoides	sand rice grass		
Poaceae	Stipa speciosa	desert needlegrass		
Polemoniaceae	Eriastrum harwoodii	Harwood's eriastrum	1B.2	
Polemoniaceae	Eriastrum sp.	woollystar		
Polemoniaceae	Gilia sp.	gilia		
Polemoniaceae	Linanthus dichotomus	evening snow		
Polemoniaceae	Linanthus filiformis	yellow gilia		
Polygonaceae	Centrostegia thurberi	red triangles		
Polygonaceae	Chorizanthe brevicornu	brittle spineflower		
Polygonaceae	Chorizanthe rigida	Devil's spineflower		
Polygonaceae	Eriogonum brachypodum	Parry's wild buckwheat		
Polygonaceae	Eriogonum deflexum	skeleton weed		
Polygonaceae	Eriogonum fasciculatum var. polifolium	Eastern Mojave buckwheat		
Polygonaceae	Eriogonum inflatum	desert trumpet		
Polygonaceae	Eriogonum nidularium	birdnest wild buckwheat		
Polygonaceae	Eriogonum palmerianum	Palmer's wild buckwheat		
Polygonaceae	Eriogonum plumatella	Yucca wild buckwheat		
Polygonaceae	Eriogonum pusillum	yellow turbans		
Polygonaceae	Eriogonum trichopes	little desert trumpet		
Polygonaceae	Eriogonum wrightii	bastard-sage		
Polygonaceae	Oxytheca perfoliata	roundleaf puncturebract		
Polygonaceae Rumex hymenosepalus		canaigre dock		
Portulacaceae	Portulaca halimoides	desert purselane	4.2	



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Family	Scientific Name	Common Name	Status	
Portulacaceae	Portulaca oleracea*	purslane		
Pteridaceae	Myriopteris parryi	Parry's lipfern		
Ranunculaceae	Delphinium parishii	desert larkspur		
Resedaceae	Oligomeris linifolia	lineleaf whitepuff		
Rosaceae	Coleogyne ramosissima	blackbrush		
Rosaceae	Prunus fasciculata	desert almond		
Rosaceae	Purshia stansburyana	cliffrose		
Rubiaceae	Galium stellatum	starry bedstraw		
Rutaceae	Thamnosma montana	turpentine broom		
Simaroubaceae	Castela emoryi	crucifixion thorn	2B.2	
Solanaceae	Datura wrightii	jimsonweed		
Solanaceae	Lycium andersonii	Anderson's box thorn		
Solanaceae	Lycium cooperi	Cooper's box thorn		
Solanaceae	Nicotiana obtusifolia	desert tobacco		
Solanaceae	Physalis crassifolia	thick-leaved groundcherry		
Tamaricaceae	Tamarix aphylla*	athel		
Tamaricaceae	Tamarix ramosissima*	saltcedar		
Viscaceae	Phoradendron californicum	desert mistletoe		
Zygophyllaceae	Kallstroemia californica	California caltrop		
Zygophyllaceae	Kallstroemia parviflora	warty caltrop	4.2	
Zygophyllaceae	Larrea tridentata	creosote bush		
Zygophyllaceae	Tribulus terrestris*	puncturevine		

<sup>\*</sup> Non-native species

#### Notes:

#### CNPS Rare Plant Ranks (CRPR):

- 1A = Plants Presumed Extirpated in California and Either Rare or Extinct Elsewhere
- 1B = Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California and Elsewhere
- 2A = Plants Presumed Extirpated in California, but More Common Elsewhere
- 2B = Plants Rare, Threatened, or Endangered in California, but More Common Elsewhere
- 3 = Plants about Which More Information is Needed
- 4 = Plants of Limited Distribution

#### **CNPS Threat Ranks:**

- 0.1 = Seriously threatened in California (over 80 percent of occurrences threatened; high degree and immediacy of threat)
- 0.2 = Moderately threatened in California (20 to 80 percent of occurrences threatened; moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
- 0.3 = Not very threatened in California (less than 20 percent of occurrences threatened; low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)



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### **Appendix D-8**

Focused Survey for Desert Tortoise Report



# DRAFT FOCUSED SURVEY FOR DESERT TORTOISE

# LUGO-VICTORVILLE 500-KV TRANSMISSION LINE REMEDIAL ACTION SCHEME PROJECT

### SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Southern California Edison IO # 333300 & 333301

Prepared For: Southern California Edison

6040 N. Irwindale Avenue Irwindale, CA 91702 Contact: Lori Charpentier Lori.Charpentier@sce.com

(626) 815-5681

Prepared By: Environmental Intelligence

1590 South Coast Highway, Suite 17

Laguna Beach, CA 92651 Contact: Travis Kegel

TravisKegel@enviro-intel.com

(949) 497-0931

Date: November 2016

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Environmental Intelligence, LLC (EI) was retained by Southern California Edison (SCE) to conduct a focused survey for desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) in support of the proposed Lugo-Victorville 500-kV Transmission Line Remedial Action Scheme Project (Project) located in San Bernardino County, California. The results of these focused surveys will (1) support the Mojave National Preserve's (MNP) review of SCE's Special Use Permit application; (2) support the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) review of SCE's Right-of-Way (ROW) application; and (3) assist in SCE's consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Desert tortoise population densities in the region have been declining since at least 1980. The Mojave National Preserve (MNP) includes the Goffs Permanent Study Plot (a square mile plot in southeastern MNP), established in 1977 and sampled for tortoises through 2000 (Berry 2000). Population density estimates across all size classes (tortoises per square mile, with 95 percent confidence intervals) declined from 440 (370-522) in 1980 to 88 (34-230) in 2000; sub-adult and adult size class declined from 195 (162-234) in 1980 to 18 (6-54) in 2000. The 2011 Recovery Plan estimated 2007 adult/sub-adult densities (per square mile) at 12.2 in the Western Mojave Recovery Unit, 12.9 in the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit, and 11.9 in the Northern Colorado Recovery Unit. Surveys for the Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System Project in 2011 estimated densities at 18.0 adult/sub-adult tortoises per square mile (Sundance Biology 2011). The USFWS range-wide monitoring efforts determined 2014 densities (per square mile) of adult/sub-adult tortoises were 6.2 and 9.3 within the Superior-Cronese Critical Habitat Unit and Ord-Rodman Critical Habitat Unit, respectively, of the Western Mojave Recovery Unit, 6.0 within the Ivanpah Critical Habitat Unit of the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit, and 12.4 and 7.3 within the Fenner Critical Habitat Unit and Chemehuevi Critical Habitat Unit, respectively, of the Colorado Desert Recovery Unit (USFWS 2015).

A total of thirteen (13) live desert tortoises were observed within Survey Areas; an additional two (2) sub-adults were incidentally observed on an access road outside of the Survey Area and are not included in population calculations. The thirteen (13) live tortoises observed within Survey Areas included ten (10) adult/sub-adult tortoises with a maximum carapace length (MCL) greater than 160mm and one (1) juvenile tortoise with a MCL less than or equal to 160mm; two (2) tortoises were deep in burrows and unable to be measured (assumed to be adult/sub-adult for population calculations). Eleven (11) of the thirteen (13) live tortoises observed were associated with a burrow (in burrow or at entrance); two (2) tortoises were observed in the open, one of which was an adult with an identification tag (#N92043).

Other desert tortoise sign observed included two hundred fifteen (215) tortoise burrows and an additional twenty-eight (28) burrows with tortoise tracks, one hundred eighty-five (185) pallets and an additional seven (7) pallets with tortoise tracks, one hundred forty (140) tortoise scat, thirty-five (35) tortoise carcasses, and five (5) locations with tortoise eggshell fragments.

The live desert tortoises and numerous sign observed along the Project alignment are a strong indication that this area provides high quality desert tortoise habitat. Of the tortoises encountered where surveyors could clearly see the animal's eyes, nares, and carapace, one (1) tortoise exhibited indications of possible respiratory infection (*i.e.*, wet nares and swollen/inflamed eyes).

In the Western Mojave Recovery Unit, four (4) adult/sub-adult desert tortoises were observed during transects within the Survey Area. The estimated number of adult/sub-adult tortoises (with 95 percent confidence interval) within the Action Area contained within the Western Mojave Recovery Unit is 8.9 (2.7 – 28.8) tortoises. The population density is approximately 20.6 adult/sub-adult tortoises per square mile. The estimated density of 20.6 adult/sub-adult desert tortoises per square mile is higher than the 2014 USFWS estimates of 6.2-9.3 tortoises per square mile for the Superior-Cronese and Ord-Rodman Critical Habitat Units.

In the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit, eight (8) adult/sub-adult desert tortoises were observed during transects within the Survey Area. The estimated number of adult/sub-adult tortoises (with 95 percent confidence interval) within the Action Area contained within the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit is 14.5



(6.1 – 34.6) tortoises. The population density is approximately 17.5 adult/sub-adult tortoises per square mile. The estimated density of 17.5 adult/sub-adult desert tortoises per square mile is higher than the 2014 USFWS estimates of 6.0-12.4 tortoises per square mile for the Ivanpah, Fenner, and Chemehuevi Critical Habitat Units, but similar to Ivanpah Solar's estimate of 18.0 tortoises per square mile.

Discrepancies in densities from various studies could be a result of habitat quality, variation between regional populations, survey time of year, and/or yearly weather fluctuations.





#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Environmental Intelligence, LLC (EI) was retained by Southern California Edison (SCE) to conduct a focused survey for desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) in support of the proposed Lugo-Victorville 500-kV Transmission Line Remedial Action Scheme Project (Project) located in San Bernardino County, California. The results of these focused surveys will (1) support the Mojave National Preserve's (MNP) review of SCE's Special Use Permit application; (2) support the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) review of SCE's Right-of-Way (ROW) application; and (3) assist in SCE's consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

#### 2.0 PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The Project is located entirely within San Bernardino County, California, extending from Pisgah Substation (near Ludlow, CA) to the California-Nevada border (near Nipton Road) (Exhibit 1). The Project alignment passes through the following United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangles: Hector, Sleeping Beauty, Broadwell Lake, West of Broadwell Mesa, Broadwell Mesa, Soda Lake South, Cowhole Mountain, Old Dad Mountain, Indian Spring, Marl Mountains, Cima, Cima Dome, Joshua, Ivanpah, Nipton, and Crescent Peak; material/laydown yards are located in Dunn and Baker USGS quadrangles. Land use along the Project alignment is primarily undisturbed desert scrub habitat. The Project alignment crosses lands owned by the BLM, private landowners, the State, and the National Park Service.

SCE proposes to install a new 84-mile telecommunication path consisting of Optical Ground Wire (OPGW) fiber optic cable. The Project is required to reliably interconnect and integrate multiple renewable generation projects in the Southern Nevada / Eastern California area onto the electric grid. The primary function of this Project will be to prevent thermal overloading on the jointly owned Lugo-Victorville 500-kV Transmission Line, a major power transfer path between SCE and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP). All work will occur within the existing SCE ROW and will include bucket truck work on disturbed areas at approximately 408 transmission tower locations, installation of guard poles at 14 locations, establishment of helicopter landing zones at 72 locations, pulling/tensioning activities at 27 locations, and establishment of several laydown yards.

#### 3.0 DESERT TORTOISE BACKGROUND

The desert tortoise is a long-lived, terrestrial land turtle with a domed carapace (upper shell), which is oblong with rounded sides due to the joining of the carapace to the plastron (lower shell). The front limbs are flattened and heavily scaled for digging, and the hind limbs are rounded and stumpy. The front and hind feet are about equal in size and the tail is of short length. The scutes are often yellowish in the middle and have grooved, parallel, concentric growth rings that form outward with age toward the scute margins. The plastron is typically yellowish, becoming brown around the scute margins. The head is relatively small and rounded in front with reddish-tan coloring, and the iris is greenish-yellow.

The desert tortoise occupies a variety of desert habitats from sea level to over 7,000 feet, most commonly on gently sloping terrain with sandy-gravel soils and herbaceous plants. Desert tortoises feed on a variety of herbaceous annual forbs and grasses. They retreat into their horizontal burrow to avoid surface temperature extremes and to escape from predators. Desert tortoises are known to utilize an average of 7 to 12 burrows at any given time. Multiple tortoises are also known to occasionally share a single burrow (BLM 2006).

The Mojave population of the desert tortoise was listed as threatened by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) on August 3, 1989 and USFWS on April 2, 1990 (USFWS 1990). A desert tortoise recovery plan was prepared in 1994 (USFWS 1994a), which proposed the establishment of recovery units and Desert Wildlife Management Areas (DWMAs) to provide recovery strategies and actions for the long-term persistence of viable desert tortoise populations and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Critical habitat was also designated in 1994 (USFWS 1994b). The recovery plan was revised in 2011 (USFWS 2011), which updated the recovery unit boundaries. Reasons for its protection include loss and degradation of habitat by development, off-road vehicles, military training maneuvers, mining,



illegal dumping, livestock grazing and invasion of exotic grasses and forbs, predation by an increasing common raven (*Corvus corax*) population, illegal collecting (poaching) and intentional killing and harassment by an increasing human population, and a serious and fatal upper respiratory disease. These factors, coupled with delayed sexual maturity (13 to 20 years of age), low reproductive rates, and high mortality early in life, make recovery of the species difficult.

#### 4.0 METHODS

#### 4.1 Database Search and Literature Review

Prior to the initiation of field work, a review of pertinent literature was performed to verify known and reported desert tortoise occurrences in the vicinity of the Project and the location of the site relative to designated desert tortoise critical habitat and other conservation lands. This included a review of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) RareFind application (CDFW 2016), the 1994 and 2011 Desert Tortoise Recovery Plans (USFWS 1994a & 2011), Biological Assessment for the 2004 Fire Management Plan for the Mojave National Preserve (Dingman 2004), and other pertinent desert tortoise documents.

#### 4.2 Desert Tortoise Focused Surveys

Desert tortoise focused surveys were conducted on October 10-15, 17-22 & 24-26 by EI qualified biologists Jim Buffington, Ben DeLancey, Scott Duff, Paul Flores, Mikaila Negrete, and Susan Seville. The survey was conducted in accordance with the 2010 Field Season Survey Protocol (USFWS 2010). Ten-meter belt transects were surveyed over 100 percent of the proposed disturbance areas as well as a 200-foot buffer (Survey Area). This Survey Area acts as the Project's Action Area, defined as the areas to be affected directly or indirectly and not merely the immediate area involved in the Project's disturbance area. Access roads and other areas between the Survey Areas were not included in the Project's Action Area.

Handheld Global Positioning System (GPS) units, digital cameras, binoculars and field forms/notes were used to aid in recording tortoise sign and other biological resources. A handheld weather meter was used to record temperatures at the start and end of each transect. Daily focused surveys were ceased if temperatures in the shade at 5cm above the ground reached 40° Celsius (C) (104° Fahrenheit [F]). All desert tortoise sign, as well as required survey and weather data was recorded on USFWS 2010 Desert Tortoise Pre-Project Survey Data Sheets (Appendix B). General health of live desert tortoises encountered was assessed when the head and carapace were visible to surveyors without stressing the animal. Binoculars were usually used to inspect the eyes, nares, and shell conditions of the tortoises for clinical signs of disease without handling or approaching the animals too closely. Desert tortoises encountered were not touched or handled at any time during the survey, and biological samples were not taken to assist in the assessments of health of the encountered tortoises. All flora and fauna observed were recorded on the field forms or in personal field notes.

#### **4.3** Desert Tortoise Population Size and Density Estimates

The 2010 Field Season Survey Protocol provides an equation that accounts for the likelihood that not all tortoises on a particular site are above ground at the time of the performance of focused surveys. It also takes in account that desert tortoises are cryptic and thus may be overlooked. Other factors included in this equation include the amount of rainfall that was received in the area during the previous winter season. The equation to estimate the number of adult/sub-adult tortoises is as follows:

Estimated number of tortoises observed above ground 
$$\frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Action Area }(N)} = \frac{\text{Number of tortoises observed}}{\text{above ground}} = \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Probability that a tortoise}} \times \frac{\text{Probability of detecting a tortoise}}{\text{if above ground }[Pd]} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the area surveyed}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the action area}} \times \frac{\text{Size of the action area}}{\text{Size of the$$



The probability that a tortoise is above ground (Pa) is determined by the amount of rainfall that was recorded in the area during the preceding fall/winter months (October through March). If less than 40mm (~1.57 inches) of rainfall was recorded during the preceding winter months, the Pa is assigned a value of 0.64 with a variance of 0.08. If greater than 40mm (~1.57 inches) of rainfall was recorded during the preceding winter months, the Pa is assigned a value of 0.80 with a variance of 0.05. The probability of detecting a tortoise if above ground (Pd) is 0.63 with a variance of 0.011 (USFWS established that trained surveyors detect an average of 63 percent of model tortoises within 5 meters of either side of the transect center-line). Appendix 1 of the 2010 Field Season Protocol (USFWS 2010) provides a detailed description of the formulas used to calculate abundance and confidence interval estimation.

#### 5.0 RESULTS

#### 5.1 Database Search and Literature Review

Desert tortoise conservation areas include desert tortoise habitat within critical habitat, DWMAs, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument, Desert National Wildlife Refuge, National Park Service lands, Red Cliffs Desert Reserve, and other conservation areas or easements managed for desert tortoises (USFWS 2011). The Project is located within the Western Mojave and Eastern Mojave Recovery Units as described in the Revised Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan (USFWS 2011), and it passes through the Ivanpah Valley Critical Habitat Unit (Exhibit 2). The Colorado Desert Recovery Unit is located southeast of the Project. CNDDB records have been reported throughout the region (Exhibit 2).

In the Western Mojave Recovery Unit, most rainfall occurs in fall and winter and produces winter annuals, which are the primary food source of tortoises. Above-ground activity occurs primarily (but not exclusively) in spring, associated with winter annual production. Thus, tortoises are adapted to a regime of winter rains and rare summer storms. Here, desert tortoises occur primarily in valleys, on alluvial fans, bajadas, and rolling hills. Desert tortoises in the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit are generally found in creosote bush scrub communities of flats, valley bottoms, alluvial fans, and bajadas, but they occasionally use other habitats such as rocky slopes and blackbrush scrub. Desert tortoises are often active in this recovery unit in late summer and early fall, in addition to spring, reflecting the fact that this region receives up to about 40 percent of its annual rainfall in summer and supports two distinct annual floras on which tortoises can feed. They typically eat summer and winter annuals, cacti, perennial grasses, and herbaceous perennials. In the Colorado Desert Recovery Unit, desert tortoises are found in the valleys, on bajadas, desert pavements, rocky slopes, and in the broad, well-developed washes (especially to the south). Vegetation is characterized by relatively species-rich succulent scrub, creosote bush scrub, and blue paloverde-ironwood-smoke tree communities. Tortoises feed on both summer and winter annuals, because this region receives about one-third of its annual rainfall in summer and supports two distinct annual floras on which they can feed. The climate is somewhat warmer than in other recovery units, with very few freezing days per year.

Desert tortoise population densities in the region have been declining since at least 1980. The Mojave National Preserve (MNP) includes the Goffs Permanent Study Plot (a square mile plot in southeastern MNP), established in 1977 and sampled for tortoises in 1977, 1980, 1983-86, 1990, 1994, and 2000 (Berry 2000). Population density estimates across all size classes (tortoises per square mile, with 95 percent confidence intervals) declined from 440 (370-522) in 1980 to 88 (34-230) in 2000; sub-adult and adult size class declined from 195 (162-234) in 1980 to 18 (6-54) in 2000. The 2011 Recovery Plan estimated 2007 adult/sub-adult densities (per square mile) at 12.2 in the Western Mojave Recovery Unit, 12.9 in the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit, and 11.9 in the Northern Colorado Recovery Unit. Surveys in 2011 for the Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System Project, approximately 13 miles northwest of the Project, estimated densities at 18.0 adult/sub-adult tortoises per square mile (Sundance Biology 2011). The USFWS range-wide monitoring efforts determined 2014 densities (per square mile) of adult/sub-adult tortoises were 6.2 and 9.3 within the Superior-Cronese Critical Habitat Unit and Ord-Rodman Critical Habitat Unit, respectively, of the Western Mojave Recovery Unit, 6.0 within the Ivanpah Critical Habitat Unit of the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit, and 12.4 and 7.3 within the Fenner Critical Habitat



Unit and Chemehuevi Critical Habitat Unit, respectively, of the Colorado Desert Recovery Unit (USFWS 2015).

#### 5.2 Weather

Temperatures ranged from a low of 14°C (57°F) to a high of 37°C (99°F) during the surveys. Skies were primarily clear to partly cloudy, with one day of overcast skies (October 24). Winds ranged from calm to breezy, estimated to be between 0 and 10 miles per hour (mph). Rainfall (approximately 0.4 inch) was recorded on-site on October 24.

Precipitation recorded at the Twentynine Palms Expeditionary Air Field station (southwest end of alignment) and the Laughlin-Bullhead International station (northeast end of alignment), the nearest weather stations relative to the Project, from October 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016 (the preceding fall/winter months) was 1.14 and 2.09 inches, respectively; from April 1 to September 30, 2016 (the preceding spring/summer months), precipitation was 0.56 and 2.12 inches, respectively.

#### 5.3 Topography

The Project traverses the Mojave Desert through the Western Mojave and Eastern Mojave Recovery Units, with elevations along the alignment ranging from 1,100 to 4,600 feet. Topography consists of valleys, flats, alluvial fans, bajadas, rolling hills, and rocky slopes.

#### 5.4 Vegetation Communities / Land Cover Types and Flora

Twenty-one vegetation communities, including eight sensitive vegetation communities and thirteen non-sensitive vegetation communities, were identified and mapped during separate habitat and resource assessment surveys (Exhibit 3). A list of the vegetation communities and their California Natural Community Codes are presented in Table 1. Descriptions of the communities can be found in the Manual of California Vegetation, 2nd Edition (Sawyer et al. 2009). Two land cover types were identified and mapped; they are described below. Site photographs are presented in Appendix C.

TABLE 1. VEGETATION COMMUNITY / LAND COVER TYPE AND LOCATION

Vegetation Community / Land Cover Type
Sensitive Vegetation Communities
Chilopsis linearis (Desert willow woodland) Alliance 61.550.00
Ericameria paniculata (Black-stem rabbitbrush scrub) Alliance 35.340.00
Panicum urvilleanum (Desert panic grass patches) Alliance 42.095.00
Pleuraphis rigida (Big galleta shrub-steppe) Alliance 41.0303.00
Prunus fasciculata (Desert almond scrub) Alliance 33.300.00
Psorothamnus spinosus (Smoke tree woodland) Alliance 61.570.00
Rhus trilobata (Basket bush thickets) Provisional Alliance 37.802.00
Yucca brevifolia (Joshua tree woodland) Alliance 33.170.00
Non-Sensitive Vegetation Communities
Acacia greggii (Catclaw acacia thorn scrub) Alliance 33.040.00
Ambrosia dumosa (White bursage scrub) Alliance 33.060.00
Ambrosia salsola (Cheesebush scrub) Alliance 33.200.00
Atriplex hymenelytra (Desert holly scrub) Alliance 36.330.00
Atriplex polycarpa (Allscale scrub) Alliance 36.340.00
Bromus (diandrus, hordeaceus) - Brachypodium distachyon (Annual brome grasslands) Semi-natural Stands 42.026.00
Bromus rubens - Schismus (arabicus, barbatus) (Red brome or Mediterranean grass grasslands) Semi-natural
Stands 42.024.00
Encelia farinosa (Brittle bush scrub) Alliance 33.030.00
Ephedra nevadensis (Nevada joint fir scrub) Alliance 33.280.00
Larrea tridentata (Creosote bush scrub) Alliance 33.010.00
Larrea tridentata - Ambrosia dumosa (Creosote bush - white burr sage scrub) Alliance 33.140.00



TABLE 1. VEGETATION COMMUNITY / LAND COVER TYPE AND LOCATION

Vegetation Community / Land Cover Type
Salazaria mexicana (Bladder sage scrub) Alliance 33.310.00
Yucca schidigera (Mojave yucca scrub) Alliance 33.070.00
Land Cover Types
Barren-Not Developed
Developed

#### Barren-Not Developed

Barren-not developed lands include cleared areas devoid of vegetation (e.g., ROW/easement, private property, roadside margin).

#### Developed

Developed lands include urban or built-up areas with much of the land covered by structures. Such areas include cities, transportation, power and communications facilities, mills, shopping centers, and other buildings that may, in some cases, be separate from urban areas. Urban or built-up land may contain a wide variety of native and non-native, ruderal, and ornamental plant species.

#### 5.5 Vertebrate Fauna

Thirty-three (33) vertebrates, including the desert tortoise, were either directly observed or detected through presence of sign during surveys. These included four (4) reptiles, twenty-one (21) birds, and eight (8) mammals. Some of these are resident, common species in the Mojave Desert, while others (i.e., birds) are seasonal migrants passing through the area. Representative common wildlife species detected included, but were not limited to, southern desert horned lizard (*Phrynosoma platyrhinos calidiarum*), greater roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), rock wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*), Bell's sparrow (*Artemisiospiza belli*), desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*). The full list of vertebrate species observed during surveys is included in Appendix D.

#### **5.6** Desert Tortoise

#### 5.6.1 DESERT TORTOISE SIGN

A total of thirteen (13) live desert tortoises were observed within Survey Areas (Table 2; Exhibit 3); an additional two (2) sub-adults were incidentally observed on an access road outside of the Survey Area and are not included in population calculations. The thirteen (13) live tortoises observed within Survey Areas included ten (10) adult/sub-adult tortoises with a maximum carapace length (MCL) greater than 160mm and one (1) juvenile tortoise with a MCL less than or equal to 160mm; two (2) tortoises were deep in burrows and unable to be measured (assumed to be adult/sub-adult for population calculations). Eleven (11) of the thirteen (13) live tortoises observed were associated with a burrow (in burrow or at entrance); two (2) tortoises were observed in the open, one of which was an adult with an identification tag (#N92043).

Other desert tortoise sign observed included two hundred fifteen (215) tortoise burrows and an additional twenty-eight (28) burrows with tortoise tracks, one hundred eighty-five (185) pallets and an additional seven (7) pallets with tortoise tracks, one hundred forty (140) tortoise scat, thirty-five (35) tortoise carcasses, and five (5) locations with tortoise eggshell fragments (Table 2; Exhibit 3).



TABLE 2. DESERT TORTOISE SIGN OBSERVED

Sian Tyna	Class <sup>1</sup>						
Sign Type	1	2	3	4	5	Unclassified	Totals
Live Desert Tortoises	8	2	1	0	0	2	13
Burrows	11	53	97	53	1	0	215
Burrows with Tracks	5	21	2	0	0	0	28
Pallets	185						185
Pallets with Tracks	7						7
Scat	0	2	0	2	6	130	140
Tracks not associated with burrow	0					0	
Carcasses/Shell Remains	0	0	0	0	22	13	35
Drinking Depressions with Tracks	0					0	
Locations with Eggshell Fragments	5					5	

#### <sup>1</sup>Desert Tortoise Sign Classification:

Live Desert Tortoises (Maximum Carapace Length)

Class 1 – Adult (≥215mm)

Class 2 – Sub-Adult (161-214mm)

Class 3 – Juvenile (101-160mm)

Class 4 – Very Young (61-100mm)

Class 5 – Hatchling (≤60mm)

Unclassified - Completely in burrow, unable to measure

#### Burrows

Class 1 – Currently active with tortoise or recent sign

Class 2 – Good condition (definitely tortoise), but no evidence of recent use

Class 3 – Deteriorated condition (definitely tortoise)

Class 4 – Deteriorated condition (possibly tortoise)

Class 5 – Good condition (possibly tortoise)

#### Scat

Class 1 – Wet or moist (not from rain or dew) or dried with obvious odor

Class 2 – Dry, dark brown, has a glaze and some odor

Class 3 – Dry, light brown, slightly bleached, no glaze or odor, plant fibers tightly packed

Class 4 – Dry, light brown to pale yellow, somewhat bleached, no glaze or odor, plant fibers not tightly packed, scaly appearance

Class 5 – Dry, white/bleached, no glaze or odor, consists only of plant fibers

Unclassified – Class not recorded (advised by client)

#### Carcasses/Shell Remains

Class 1 – Fresh or putrid

Class 2 – Not fresh or putrid, is of normal color, and scutes adhere to bone

Class 3 – Scutes peeling from the bone

Class 4 – Shell bone is falling apart and growth rings on scutes are peeling

 $Class\ 5-Disarticulated\ and\ scattered$ 

Unclassified - Class not recorded

#### 5.6.2 ESTIMATED DESERT TORTOISE POPULATION SIZE AND DENSITY

Using the calculations provided in the 2010 Field Season Protocol (USFWS 2010), desert tortoise abundance and confidence interval as well as densities were estimated. The Action Area was split into two sections based on the Recovery Unit boundaries.

In the Western Mojave Recovery Unit, four (4) adult/sub-adult desert tortoises were observed during transects within the Survey Area (Exhibit 3). Precipitation for the previous winter months (and summer months) was less than 40mm (~1.57 inches), so the Pa was assigned a value of 0.64 with a variance of 0.08. The estimated number of adult/sub-adult tortoises (with 95 percent confidence interval) within the Action Area contained within the Western Mojave Recovery Unit is 8.9 (2.7 – 28.8) tortoises. The population density is approximately 20.6 adult/sub-adult tortoises per square mile.

In the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit, eight (8) adult/sub-adult desert tortoises were observed during transects within the Survey Area, all within the Ivanpah Critical Habitat Unit (Exhibit 3). Precipitation for the previous winter months (and summer months) was greater than 40mm (~1.57 inches), so the Pa was assigned a value of 0.80 with a variance of 0.05. The estimated number of adult/sub-adult tortoises (with



95 percent confidence interval) within the Action Area contained within the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit is 14.5 (6.1 - 34.6) tortoises. The population density is approximately 17.5 adult/sub-adult tortoises per square mile.

#### 6.0 DISCUSSION

The thirteen (13) live desert tortoises, four hundred (400) burrows (including pallets), one hundred forty (140) tortoise scat, thirty-five (35) locations with tortoise tracks (including those observed at burrows and pallets), thirty-five (35) tortoise carcasses, and five (5) locations with tortoise eggshell fragments observed along the Project alignment are a strong indication that this area provides high quality desert tortoise habitat. Of the tortoises encountered where surveyors could clearly see the animal's eyes, nares, and carapace, one (1) tortoise exhibited indications of possible respiratory infection (*i.e.*, wet nares and swollen/inflamed eyes).

In the Western Mojave Recovery Unit, the estimated density of 20.6 adult/sub-adult desert tortoises per square mile is higher than the 2014 USFWS estimates of 6.2-9.3 tortoises per square mile for the Superior-Cronese and Ord-Rodman Critical Habitat Units. In the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit, the estimated density of 17.5 adult/sub-adult desert tortoises per square mile is higher than the 2014 USFWS estimates of 6.0-12.4 tortoises per square mile for the Ivanpah, Fenner, and Chemehuevi Critical Habitat Units, but similar to Ivanpah Solar's estimate of 18.0 tortoises per square mile. Discrepancies in densities from various studies could be a result of habitat quality, variation between regional populations, survey time of year, and/or yearly weather fluctuations.



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