

SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION

2.1 - Overview, Purpose, and Authority of the Draft EIR

2.1.1 - Overview

This DEIR has been prepared in accordance with CEQA to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of the County of Riverside's PSEC project (State Clearinghouse No. 2008021126).

The County of Riverside currently operates an 800-megahertz (MHz) radio system that is outdated and is lacking in both coverage and functionality to support the County's increasing need for reliable communication. The County's fire and law enforcement agencies currently utilize approximately 20 communication sites to provide voice and data transmission capabilities to assigned personnel in the field. As currently configured, the system provides coverage to only about 60 percent of the County. The communication system is at the end of its useful life, and is no longer adequate to meet the County's needs. Population growth within the County necessitates the expansion of the coverage footprint. Additionally, due to increases in the County's radio usage, additional traffic-carrying capacity is required to meet the needs of emergency services personnel as they serve the public. The proposed PSEC project is the expansion of the system's capabilities and its associated infrastructure.

The proposed project consists of the construction and operation of approximately 50 new telecommunication towers and related infrastructure at locations throughout Riverside County. Several proposed sites are also located in adjacent San Bernardino, Orange, and San Diego Counties. For a complete description of the project, see Section 3, *Project Description*.

2.1.2 - Purpose and Authority

The DEIR has been prepared in conformance with CEQA (California Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.), and is intended to serve as an informational document for agency decision-makers, interested organizations and the public regarding the construction of an expanded telecommunication network for County emergency service providers, including the County Sheriff and Fire departments.

The County has determined that a DEIR should be prepared to assess the potential environmental effects of the project at both a program and project level, depending on the amount of information available at this time on each possible tower site and proposed facility. The programmatic aspect of the document also applies to potential effects that could occur in the future if the project is expanded or modified. Section 15168(a) of the CEQA Guidelines states that a Program EIR is appropriate for projects which are "... a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either:

1. Geographically;
2. A logical part in the chain of contemplated actions;
3. In connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program; or
4. As individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulating authority and having generally similar environmental effects which can be mitigated in similar ways.”

Section 15168(b) of the CEQA Guidelines further states: “Use of a Program EIR can provide the following advantages. The Program EIR can:

1. Provide an occasion for a more exhaustive consideration of effects and alternatives than would be practical in an EIR on an individual action;
2. Ensure consideration of cumulative impacts that might be slighted in a case-by-case analysis;
3. Avoid duplicate consideration of basic policy considerations;
4. Allow the Lead Agency to consider broad policy alternative and program-wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts, and
5. Allow reduction in paperwork.”

Future actions, beyond those identified in the Project Description would require additional assessment to determine consistency with the analysis and mitigation provided in this DEIR. The potential future actions would be subject to the mitigation measures and the performance criteria established in this DEIR, or as determined in the subsequent environmental document if it is found that future actions could result in environmental impacts not foreseen in the Program DEIR.

2.1.3 - Lead Agency Determination

The County is the lead agency for the project. CEQA Guidelines Section 15367 defines the lead agency as “.....the public agency, which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.” Other public agencies may use the DEIR in the decision-making or permit process and consider the information in the DEIR along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process.

The EIR was prepared by a consultant under contract to the County’s Department of Facilities Management. Prior to public review, it was extensively reviewed and evaluated by County staff and reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the County as required by CEQA. A list of organizations and persons consulted and the report preparation personnel are provided in Section 8.

2.1.4 - Actions and Approvals

The County of Riverside has primary governmental authority for the approval of the proposed project. As such, the County is the Lead Agency and is responsible for completing the EIR to assess and disclose the environmental consequences associated with project implementation. Additional discretionary actions could also be required of other governmental entities. The EIR is intended to serve as the CEQA compliance document for any necessary approvals by the County and other agencies. Table 2-1 lists the actions and approvals that may be required. Sites on federal lands will also be required to undergo appropriate analysis required under NEPA as part of the approval process of the various federal agencies responsible for administration of land where the proposed sites are located. See Section 2.2.1, below, for a discussion of federal approval requirements and what that means for sites proposed on federal lands.

Table 2-1: Actions and Approvals

Lead Agency	Action
County of Riverside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of project
Responsible Agencies	Action
U.S. Forest Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of sites on National Forest System lands
Bureau of Land Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of sites on Bureau lands
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issuance of Take Authority permits (if needed)
Federal Communications Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issuance of license to use public airwaves
Federal Aviation Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of tower sites near airports and/or towers over 200 feet in height
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 404 Nationwide Permit (if needed)
Regional Water Quality Control Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issuance of Construction General Permit (99-08-DWQ) Section 401 Water Quality Certification (if needed)
California Department of Fish and Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement (if needed)
Riverside Conservation Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination of consistency with WRMSHCP
Coachella Valley Conservation Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination of consistency with CVMSHCP

2.1.5 - Additional Sites

The DEIR also addresses potential environmental impacts that could result from construction of up to a dozen additional sites along with those currently identified. Although the County has not identified any additional sites at this time, implementation of a communications network of this size and complexity may necessitate additional sites, or the modification of existing proposed sites, to provide adequate coverage throughout the County.

If such sites are subsequently identified, the County will evaluate the new or modified site relative to this EIR, and the potential environmental impacts identified herein for the proposed sites, based on the following criteria:

- New or modified sites will be evaluated for potential impacts including biological and cultural resources, aesthetics, etc. (i.e., all issues identified in the EIR).
- If the potential impacts of a site or sites, with implementation of the appropriate mitigation, would result in impacts equal to or less than those identified in this EIR, then the County will process an Addendum to the EIR to identify the new or modified sites and to document potential impacts and appropriate mitigation. This conclusion may include the application of mitigation measures or performance criteria that have been identified for and applied to existing proposed project sites.
- If impacts of the new or modified sites exceed or are significantly different than those identified in the EIR (e.g., new access road affecting listed species), then the County shall prepare a supplemental Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) or EIR document, depending on the extent of potential impacts, to adequately document how impacts will be effectively mitigated.

2.2 - Scope of the Draft EIR

The DEIR assesses the project and its foreseeable impacts to the environment. Where a potentially significant environmental impact has been identified, mitigation has been proposed that would reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels. If the analysis shows that an impact cannot be fully mitigated and that the impact will remain significant even with the implementation of feasible mitigation, the County will use the DEIR to determine if the project's benefits outweigh its associated impacts. Ultimately, the DEIR will be used by the Lead Agency and other responsible parties to determine if the project should be approved.

2.2.1 - Sites on Federal Lands

The PSEC project is the construction and operation of communication facilities on numerous sites on lands under the jurisdiction of various federal land management agencies, including the BLM, NPS, and USFS. The DEIR serves as the CEQA document to provide environmental analysis to support the discretionary actions of County decision-makers in approving the overall project, including those sites on federal lands. Sites on federal land will also be subject to analysis and approval by the appropriate federal agencies with oversight of lands where the sites will be located. These sites would be required to undergo analysis under NEPA, design review, and final approval by the federal agencies.

2.2.2 - Future Expansion and Modifications

Because the County population continues to grow into unoccupied areas of the County, the DEIR includes an analysis of the possibility of adding up to 12 additional communication sites into the overall system network later. Changes in coverage needs or other requirements may necessitate the requirement for additional sites in the future. A list of standard mitigation measures is provided in the DEIR that could be implemented to serve as environmental performance criteria for new sites that may be proposed. Any additional sites would receive some level of CEQA analysis depending on the specific action proposed, but the intention is for the analysis of these sites to be tiered from the Program DEIR to the extent possible and practical while meeting the requirements of CEQA.

Changes in technology or other requirements may require modifications to some of the communication sites from time to time over the life of the project. Minor alterations limited to specific criteria as defined in Sections 15300 to 15332 (Categorical Exemptions) of the CEQA Guidelines would be exempt from further analysis. Actions of a more than minor nature, or otherwise not meeting the exemption criteria in the CEQA Guidelines, would be subject to the mitigation measures and performance criteria provided in this EIR.

2.2.3 - NOP Comments

The County issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the project on February 25, 2008. Copies of the NOP were provided to the Office of Planning and Research (State Clearinghouse) for issuance to state agencies. The NOP was also mailed to the recorded property owners of parcels located in the vicinity of the proposed sites (approximately 2,500 persons). The NOP was also mailed to relevant federal state and local agencies, responsible and trustee agencies, local governments, private organizations, and other interested parties based on the standard mailing list compiled for such purposes by the County of Riverside Planning Department. This list was comprised of approximately 700 addresses.

The public comment period on the NOP began on February 28, 2008 and ended March 31, 2008. During that time period, comments were received via written letters (23 total), email (32 total), and phone calls (8 total). In all, a total of 63 comments were received. A summary of the comments is provided below, in Table 2-1. Copies of the comments can also be found in Appendix D.

In addition to the written comments summarized in Table 2-2, the County also received 34 email comments and 8 phone calls. Issues and concerns raised in these comments generally involved potential impacts to aesthetics and property values for properties located in the vicinity of the proposed towers. Several others inquired about the potential health impacts of the towers, and some of the respondents wished to express their opposition to the project. In general, each of the emailed and phone comments addressed issues that were already under consideration by the County for analysis in the EIR.

Issues raised by the commentors have been addressed in the DEIR. The public will have an additional opportunity to comment on the project during the public review period of the DEIR. Information on that process can be found at this introduction in Section 2.5.

Table 2-2: NOP Comments Received

Number	Commentor	Comment Type	Date Received	Summary of Comment
1	United States Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	Letter	March 14, 2008	Confirmed receipt of the NOP and provided information on when the FAA should be notified if sites are to be located in areas where they could become a hazard to aviation.
2	Federal Emergency Management Agency	Letter	March 24, 2008	Provided direction in regards to construction activities in flood plains.
3	United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service	Letter	March 31, 2008	Provided comments in regards to placement of a tower at the Cottonwood Visitor Center in Joshua Tree National Park, and indicated that the Park will continue to consult with the County on the placement of communication facilities within the Park's boundaries.
4	State Clearinghouse, Office of Planning and Research	Letter	February 26, 2008	Confirmed receipt of the NOP and that other agencies had been notified.
5	California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics	Letter	March 10, 2008	Confirmed receipt of the NOP and provided guidance on the placement of towers in areas where they could become a hazard to aviation.
6	South Coast Air Quality Management District	Letter	March 7, 2008	Provided recommendations on methodology to be used during the air quality analysis.
7	Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District	Letter	March 4, 2008	Confirmed receipt of the NOP and notification that any generators over 50 HP to be installed as part of the project are subject to permitting requirements.
8	Ramona Band of Cahuilla Indians	Letter	April 15, 2008	Confirmed receipt of the NOP, and expressed the Tribe's desire to consult with the County on construction activities that may occur within their aboriginal homelands.
9	Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians	Letter	March 12, 2008	Confirmed receipt of the NOP, and expressed the Tribe's desire to consult with the County on construction activities that may occur within their aboriginal homelands, and also to have a Native American monitor present when appropriate.
10	Morongo Band of Mission Indians	Letter	March 8, 2008	Confirmed receipt of NOP and requested a change in contact name for future correspondence.

Table 2-2 (Cont.): NOP Comments Received

Number	Commentor	Comment Type	Date Received	Summary of Comment
11	Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District	Letter	March 14, 2008	Confirmed receipt of the NOP and noted that the District has concerns with El Cariso, Estelle Mountain, Lake Elsinore, Quail Valley, and Menifee sites. Other concerns noted included PSEC radio frequency interference with District frequency band, wind loads, and utilization of District sites and antenna heights.
12	Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District	Letter	March 27, 2008	Confirmed receipt of the NOP and provided direction for project implementation in regards to MSHCP compliance, floodplains, stormwater flow, and placement of sites in or near District facilities.
13	Coachella Valley Unified School District	Letter	March 31, 2008	Confirmed receipt of the NOP and informed the County that the project may be subject to the District's fair-share fee assessment.
14	SunLine Transit Agency	Letter	March 7, 2008	Provided comments on transit services in the vicinity of the Mecca Landfill site, and indicated that the Agency did not anticipate a need for additional transit amenities made necessary by the project.
15	City of Riverside, Community Development Department	Letter	April 1, 2008	Provided comments on the proposed Arlington site location, and indicated a desire that the County pursue alternative radio tower design possibilities to avoid negative aesthetic impacts.
16	City of Corona, Community Development Department	Letter	March 24, 2008	Provided comments on the Cajalco, Corona, Green River, and Temescal sites. Requested that the County analyze the aesthetic impacts of the proposed sites, and also requested that the County analyze the potential impact of the Corona site in regards to the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for the Corona Municipal Airport.
17	City of Moreno Valley	Letter	March 13, 2008	Provided comments on topics the City desires to be included in the DEIR, specifically relating to the Timoteo site. Topics include aesthetic impacts, geology and soils, hazardous materials, fire hazards, noise, traffic, and provision of utilities.
18	City of Calimesa	Letter	March 4, 2008	Provided notice from the City that they received the NOP and would be sending comments for the DEIR.

Table 2-2 (Cont.): NOP Comments Received

Number	Commentor	Comment Type	Date Received	Summary of Comment
19	San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society	Letter	March 30, 2008	Provided comments and concerns regarding the following specific sites: Timoteo, Ranger Peak, Santa Rosa Peak, El Cariso, Santiago Peak, Cottonwood, and Black Eagle. Stated concerns included impacts to wildlife and habitat, aesthetic impacts, and access roads. Raised specific concerns regarding the Cottonwood site and the potential impacts to aesthetics and the overall park user's experience.
20	Coachella Valley Archaeological Society	Letter	March 31, 2008	Expressed a desire to be kept informed as the project moves forward.
21	Brent Chase, Rancho Carrillo Community Association	Letter	March 17, 2008	Expressed the Association's opposition to placement of a tower within the Community.
22	Brent Chase, Rancho Carrillo Community Association	Letter	March 31, 2008	Expressed the Association's opposition to placement of a tower within the Community. Specific concerns included aesthetic and traffic impacts, as well as an overall lack of need for the project.
23	Rosalyn J. Hall	Letter	April 15, 2008	Expressed concern regarding visual and property value impacts associated with the Timoteo site. Asked to be kept informed as the project moves forward.
24	Russ Patras	Email	February 28, 2008	Suggested that the County purchase the existing AT&T site on Redondo Mesa as a substitute for the new site proposed in the vicinity. Additional concerns raised included diminishment of property values and potential health risks from radio frequency radiation (RFR).
25	Kerri Walsh	Email	February 28, 2008	Stated support for the project.
26	John Sarkissian	Email	February 28, 2008	Stated support for the project.
27	Patricia Stephens and Kelly Stephens	Email	February 29, 2008	Raised concerns regarding aesthetic impacts and potential to effect property values in Rancho Carrillo community.
28	Paul K. Silva	Email	February 29, 2008	Asked to be kept informed about project and prospects for purchase of his property at the Quail Valley site.
29	Elgas Ron	Email	February 29, 2008	1st Email: Raised concern about tower location and aesthetic impacts at Avocado Flats site. Stated he was not impressed with the website due to lack of information about project. Asked to be kept informed regarding the progress of the project. Asked if the project will help cellular phone coverage in the area.

Table 2-2 (Cont.): NOP Comments Received

Number	Commentor	Comment Type	Date Received	Summary of Comment
30	Terri Love	Email	March 1, 2008	Raised concerns regarding aesthetic impacts and potential to effect property values at the Homeland site.
31	David L. Hale	Email	March 1, 2008	Raised concerns about tower's proximity to his home in San Bernardino County, and the negative effects on community and health (NOTE: Blue Mountain site).
32	Elgas Ron	Email	March 3, 2008	2nd Email: Raised concerns about Avocado Flats site. Asked to know where to voice a complaint and where he could get better-detailed information. Asked why if the project is for Riverside County, then why is a tower being built in San Diego County. Indicated he may contact his elected officials.
33	Elgas Ron	Email	March 3, 2008	3rd Email: Expressed concerns about lack of response to his emails and his desire for more information about the project.
34	Stephen G. DelSordo, Federal Preservation Officer, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Federal Communications Commission (FCC)	Email	March 5, 2008	Advised County that it is required to comply with all FCC environmental regulations. At a minimum, the County or its contractor should coordinate this project with the California State Historic Preservation Office. An FCC Form 620 Submission Packet is required for each new tower project. Also, stated that the County is required to notify any Indian Tribes that might have an interest in the area. Indicated that the Tribes may be contacted by using the Commission's Tower Construction Notification System (TCNS). Based on the information sent to the Commission, the County may already have started the compliance process.
35	Mohammad H. Izadpanah	Email	March 5, 2008	Raised concerns about how close the tower is to his home how it will effect his property. Stated he is the owner of the parcel the tower is being placed upon (NOTE: Lake Riverside site, the County has since determined that locating a tower on this parcel is not feasible for environmental reasons).
36	Dan Felix	Email	March 6, 2008	Rancho Carrillo homeowner- has several questions about the tower, location, coverage, other proposed sites, etc.
37	Joe Wulff	Email	March 10, 2008	Raised concerns regarding the effects to his property, and his future plans to develop (Lake Elsinore site).

Table 2-2 (Cont.): NOP Comments Received

Number	Commentor	Comment Type	Date Received	Summary of Comment
38	Anna M. Hoover, Cultural Analyst, Pechanga Cultural Resources Department	Email	March 19, 2008	Acknowledged receipt of NOP and requested continuing participation with the project. Requested evaluation of cultural sites and appropriate mitigation, as well as consultation with the tribe.
39	John A. Gomez, Jr. Cultural Resources Coordinator, Ramona Band of Cahuilla Indians	Email	March 19, 2008	Acknowledged receipt of NOP and requested continuing participation with the project. Asked that any surveys, reports, or investigations prepared be forwarded to the tribe to review and provide feedback. Also requested a meeting to consult with the project proponents and lead agency to address issues of importance to the tribe.
40	Steve Wroblicky	Email	March 19, 2008	Raised concerns about proximity of the tower and how it will affect his property. Recommended fixing or modernizing the existing tower on Bradford Hill (NOTE: Redondo Mesa site, and the County has inquired regarding the abandoned AT&T site. The tower will not meet the County's needs and the owner is not willing to sell).
41	Anthony N. Wilson	Email	March 19, 2008	Advised he is the owner of APN 373-101-003. Indicated a desire to build a house in the future and wanted to know the impacts of the proposed tower (NOTE: Lake Elsinore site).
42	Klaus Topbjerg, Senior Communications Technician, Santa Clara County	Email	March 21, 2008	Expressed a desire to speak with someone from Riverside County on dealing with Motorola and what has been said about the new VHF/700 MHz radios.
43	John B. Rogers	Email	March 24, 2008	Expressed support for the project. Inquired about the Vaquero Site. Noted that there is already a large lattice tower and an existing wood pole on the site and asked that the County consider adding its facility to the existing tower, if feasible (NOTE: The existing tower is an AM broadcast facility and is not adequately sized to meet the County's needs).
44	Sandy Hesnard, Aviation Environmental Specialist, Dept. of Transportation/Division of Aeronautics	Email	March 25, 2008	Duplicate letter sent by FAA on March 14, 2008 (see above).

Table 2-2 (Cont.): NOP Comments Received

Number	Commentor	Comment Type	Date Received	Summary of Comment
45	Aaron Brandt, Detective-Technical Services Unit, Riverside Police Department	Email	March 26, 2008	Expressed a desire to discuss the Box Springs Mountain communication building with a County representative.
46	Dan & Linda Felix	Email	March 26, 2008	Expressed opposition to placement of a tower in the Rancho Carrillo community.
47	James M. Reardon	Email	March 26, 2008	Expressed opposition to placement of a tower in the Rancho Carrillo community. Basis of opposition included economic impacts, ineffectiveness, aesthetic impacts, and land use and planning impacts.
48	Richard and Nancy Streza	Email	March 27, 2008	Expressed opposition to placement of a tower in the Rancho Carrillo community. Basis of opposition included economic impacts, ineffectiveness, aesthetic impacts, and land use and planning impacts.
49	Dwight D Pfonner	Email	March 28, 2008	Stated opposition to tower on Redondo Mesa. Wanted to know if the County will compensate for health risks and loss of aesthetic values.
50	Brenda S. Marines, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Corporate Resource Group Environmental Planning Team	Email	March 28, 2008	Acknowledged receipt of the NOP. Advised that approximately four sites are located on MWD properties. Requested review of each site to determine compatibility of the project with MWD facilities.
51	Joseph Wulff	Email	March 28, 2008	2nd Email: Asked how County plans to mitigate the visual impact of the Lake Elsinore site. Asked to be kept advised of project progress and asked the County keep impacts to a minimum.
52	Drew Feldman, San Bernardino Valley Audubon Society Chapter President	Email	March 31, 2008	Duplicate of letter sent March 30, 2008.
53	Jacquelyn Ford- Wingler	Email	April 3, 2008	Advised County that she owns three properties in near the Brookside site and asked that the proposed site be located as far as possible from her properties.
54	Patsy Reeley	Email	April 3, 2008	Advised County that she had not been notified of tower proposed at the Brookside site, and that she was opposed to a tower at that location.

Table 2-2 (Cont.): NOP Comments Received

Number	Commentor	Comment Type	Date Received	Summary of Comment
55	Laurene Heredia	Email	April 4, 2008	Expressed opposition to tower proposed for the Brookside site. Raised concerns regarding property values and asked that tower be placed as far back from the roadway as possible.
56	Herb Messenger	Phone Call	February 28, 2008	Stated that he owns a parcel with an existing tower, and that he was contacted about placing a County facility on his property but had never followed up.
57	Patty Stephens	Phone Call	February 28, 2008	Raised concerns regarding project's effect on property values in the vicinity (NOTE: specific project site not specified).
58	Herb Messenger	Phone Call	March 3, 2008	Asked to be contacted.
59	"Nick"	Phone Call	March 18, 2008	Asked to be contacted.
60	"Nick"	Phone Call	March 18, 2008	Asked to be contacted.
61	Opal Hellweg, Supervisor Stone's Office	Phone Call	April 2, 2008	Called to inform County that the Supervisor had received complaints regarding the Quail Valley site.
62	Jackie Ford-Wingler	Phone Call	April 3, 2008	Called and was advised to send her concerns via email.
63	Brenda S. Marines Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Corporate Resource Group Environmental Planning Team	Phone Call	March 28, 2008	Voicemail referencing email sent March 28, 2008.

2.2.4 - Project Changes since Release of the NOP

Since release of the NOP, several components of the project have changed. These items are noted below:

- The County has determined that development of both the Gold Crown and Cottonwood sites should not be undertaken at this time; therefore, analysis of those sites will not be included in the DEIR. If and when these sites are proposed to be developed in the future, they will be required to undergo their own environmental analysis at that time.
- When the NOP was released, the locations of the Blythe, El Cariso, Estelle Mountain, Margarita, and Rancho Carrillo sites had not been finalized. In each of these cases, two candidate locations were presented in the NOP. Since that time, the proposed locations of these sites has been determined, and only one candidate location will be analyzed in the DEIR for each site. In the case of Blythe, the County has determined that its needs can be met by

using an existing facility (Candidate A). The upgrade of that site is of a minor nature, and will not require analysis under CEQA, as per the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301, which exempts certain activities from CEQA if it can be determined that the action only involves minor modification to an existing structure, and will therefore not have a significant effect on the environment. As such, further analysis of the Blythe site will not be provided in this DEIR.

2.3 - Organization of the Draft EIR

The DEIR is organized into the main sections listed below. The number of sites that make up this project require a slight modification in conventional EIR presentation. For this DEIR, detailed descriptions of each site are not included in the project description or each impact issue section as would normally be the case. Instead, site descriptions for each candidate location are presented in Appendix A. This arrangement will serve to place all descriptive information, maps, photographs, etc. in one convenient location rather than scattered throughout the document. It will also significantly lessen the size of the overall document.

Section 1: Executive Summary

Section 1 provides an Executive Summary of the proposed project, areas of controversy, issues to be resolved, the potential environmental effects that may result from the implementation of the proposed project, the mitigation measures proposed to reduce or eliminate significant effects, and a summary of the proposed alternatives to the project. This section also includes a discussion of effects found to be less than significant, effects that remain significant after mitigation measures are implemented and cumulative impacts.

Section 2: Introduction

Section 2 provides an introduction and overview describing the intended use of the document and authority under CEQA. This Section also includes a list of acronyms and a glossary of terms used in the DEIR.

Section 3: Project Description

This section provides a detailed description of the proposed project along with project objectives and other relevant information about the project. The project sites are presented in tabular format with general information about each site presented. Detailed site information (existing conditions, maps, photographs, etc.) is presented in Appendix A.

Section 4: Environmental Impact Analysis

This section is broken into subsections that provide an assessment of the project for each of the issues identified in Appendix G of the CEQA Checklist. Each subsection describes the regulatory environment for each environmental issue evaluated in the DEIR and states the significance criteria (thresholds) used to evaluate potentially significant effects of the project. There is an evaluation of the potential environmental effects of the project as it relates to each issue area, as well as identification of mitigation measures (if any) to be used to reduce or

eliminate effects found to be potentially significant. Finally, a statement regarding the level of significance after mitigation measures have been implemented is provided.

Section 5: Cumulative Impacts

This section discusses the larger, project-wide impacts that could result if the project is implemented. It also considers the project within the context of other similar projects in the region.

Section 6: Alternatives to the Proposed Project

This section identifies and evaluates a range of alternatives that could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the proposed project but avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. This section also includes an evaluation of the comparative merits of the alternatives, along with a discussion of the alternatives eliminated from further consideration by the County. The reasoning for their elimination is discussed, and an environmentally superior alternative is identified.

Section 7: Growth Inducing, Irreversible, and Unavoidable Impacts

This section evaluates the potential for the proposed project to be growth inducing, that is, how implementation of the project could trigger development of other projects in the vicinity by providing public services and/or infrastructure where currently none exist. Other impacts evaluated in this section include Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes that could result from the proposed project, as well as Significant Environmental Effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented.

Section 8: Report Preparation Resources

This section lists the individuals who prepared the DEIR and technical studies for the project used in the preparation of the DEIR, as well as a list of lead agency staff members. The project team is also identified.

Appendices

A principal component of the EIR is the site-by-site write-ups of existing conditions and proposed improvements (tower, equipment building, etc.) contained in Appendix A. Each of these site write-ups contains detailed information about each candidate site, as well as maps, photographs, and other information. This approach was used to lessen the size of the overall document that would result if this information were to be included as part of the project description and existing conditions discussions in the main text of the DEIR.

Appendices B and C contain the Biological Resources Assessment and the Cultural Resources Assessment, respectively. Additional appendices contain technical reports, relevant correspondence, and other materials used in the preparation of the DEIR.

Appendix D contains the NOP and comment letters. All of the appendices are included on a CD inside the back cover of the DEIR. These studies are listed in the Table of Contents.

2.4 - Lead Agency and Consultant

The County of Riverside is the lead agency in the preparation of the DEIR. Michael Brandman Associates (MBA) is the environmental consultant to the County for the project.

2.5 - Review of the Draft EIR

Upon completion of the DEIR, the County filed a Notice of Completion (NOC) with the State Office of Planning and Research (State Clearinghouse) to begin the public review period (Public Resources Code, Section 21161). Concurrent with the NOC, the DEIR was distributed to responsible and trustee agencies, other affected agencies, surrounding cities, and interested parties, as well as all parties requesting a copy of the DEIR in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21092 (b)(3). During the 45-day public review period, the DEIR, including the technical appendices, are available for review at the County of Riverside Department of Facilities Management offices, located at the address indicated below. Copies of the DEIR are also available for viewing at County libraries throughout the County, and the entire document is also available on the internet at <http://psec.co.riverside.ca.us>. Agencies, organizations, and interested parties not previously contacted, or who did not respond to the NOP, currently have the opportunity to comment on the DEIR during the public review period.

Written comments on this DEIR should be sent to the address below. E-mailed comments will also be accepted, and the County has also developed a website for the project. Visitors to the site may provide comments there. Addresses for the website and the project's email address are provided below.

County of Riverside
Department of Facilities Management
ATTN: Ms. Ashley Mitchell
P.O. Box 789
Riverside, CA 92502-0789
Email: EIR@co.riverside.ca.us
Website: <http://psec.co.riverside.ca.us>

Upon completion of the 45-day public review period, written responses to all significant environmental issues raised will be prepared and made available for review at least 10 days prior to the public hearing on the project before the County Board of Supervisors, at which the certification of the EIR will be considered. Comments received and the responses to comments will be included as part of the record for consideration by decision-makers for the project.

2.6 - List of Acronyms Used in the Draft EIR

µm	micrometer
AAA	American Antiquities Act
AB 32	Assembly Bill 32
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
AFB	Air Force Base
AQMD	Air Quality Management District
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
ARPA	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BNSF	Burlington Northern Santa Fe (railroad)
CalEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CalFire	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (formerly known as CDF)
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDCA	California Desert Conservation Area Plan (BLM)
CDF	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (now known as CalFire)
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game
CDMG	California Division of Mines and Geology
CDNPA	California Desert Native Plant Act
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CFC	Chlorofluorocarbons
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGS	California Geological Survey
CHL	California Historical Landmarks
CHP	California Highway Patrol

CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNF	Cleveland National Forest
CNFMP	Cleveland National Forest Management Plan
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	carbon monoxide
CPHI	California Points of Historical Interest
CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CRMP	Cultural Resources Management Plan
CSC	California Species of Special Concern
CUP	Conditional Use Permit
CVAG	Coachella Valley Association of Governments
CVCC	Coachella Valley Conservation Commission
CVMSHCP	Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
CWA	Clean Water Act
dBA	A-weighted decibel
DBESP	Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation
DEIR	Draft Environmental Impact Report
DMG	Division of Mines and Geology (State of California)
DOC	Department of Conservation
DOSH	California Division of Occupational Safety and Health
DPM	diesel particulate matter
DPR	California Department of Parks and Recreation
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EMF	electromagnetic frequency
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency

EPD	Environmental Planning Department (Riverside County)
ERP	Emergency Response Plan
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FCAA	Federal Clean Air Act
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FEIR	Final Environmental Impact Report
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FESA	Federal Endangered Species Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FPMP	Fugitive PM ₁₀ Management Plan
ft	feet
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GPS	Global Positioning System
H ₂ S	hydrogen sulfide
HANS	Habitat Evaluation and Acquisition Negotiation Strategy
HCFC	Hydrochlorofluorocarbons
HFC	Hydrofluorocarbons
HP	Horsepower
HRI	California State Historic Resources Inventory
HVAC	Heating-Ventilation-Air Conditioning
Hz	hertz
JTNP	Joshua Tree National Park
KW	Kilowatt
LOS	Level of Service
LSTs	Localized Significance Thresholds
lux	unit of illumination equal to one lumen per square meter
m	meter
MBA	Michael Brandman Associates
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act

MDAB	Mojave Desert Air Basin
MDAQMD	Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District
MHz	Megahertz
MMTCO _{2e}	Million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
mph	miles per hour
MSHCP	Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
msl	mean sea level
MTCO _{2e}	Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent
MWD	Metropolitan Water District
AAQS	Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAGPRA	Native American Graves and Repatriation Act
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Planning
NECD	Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert amendment to the CDCA (BLM)
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide
NOC	Notice of Completion
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NO _x	oxides of nitrogen
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPPA	Native Plant Protection Act
NPS	National Park Service
NR	National Register of Historic Places
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service

NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWP	Nationwide Permit
O ₃	ozone
OHP	California State Office of Historic Preservation
OHWM	ordinary high water mark
OSHA	Occupational Safety & Health Administration
Pb	lead
P-C	Production-Consumption (regions)
PFC	Perfluorocarbons
PM _x	particulate matter
ppm	parts per million
ppv	peak particle velocity
PRC	Public Resources Code
PSEC	Public Safety Enterprise Communication
PVC	polyvinyl chloride
RCA	Regional Conservation Authority
RCIP	Riverside County Integrated Plan
RCLIS	Riverside County Land Information System
REL	reference exposure limits
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFR	Radio Frequency Radiation
ROG	reactive organic gases
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SAFZ	San Andreas Fault Zone
SBCM	San Bernardino County Museum
SBKR	San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat
SBNF	San Bernardino National Forest
SBNFMP	San Bernardino National Forest Management Plan
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments

SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCE	Southern California Edison
SCRMP	South Coast Regional Management Plan (BLM)
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SIP	State Implementation Plans
SJFZ	San Jacinto Fault Zone
SKR	Stephens' Kangaroo Rat
SKRHCP	Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act
SMGB	State Mining and Geology Board
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
sp	species
spp	sub-species
sq ft	square feet
SRA	Source Receptor Area
SSAB	Salton Sea Air Basin
SWMP	Storm Water Management Plan
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution and Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TCNS	Tower Construction Notification System
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
UBC	Uniform Building Code
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USC	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
VdB	vibration decibels

VHF	very high frequency
VOC	volatile organic compounds
VRP	visibility reducing particles
WDRs	Waste discharge requirements
WMP	West Mojave amendment to the CDCA (BLM)
WQCB	Water Quality Control Board
WRMSHCP	Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
YRMP	Yuma Resource Management Plan (BLM)

2.7 - Glossary of Terms Used in the Draft EIR

Active fault: Geologic fault with recent seismic activity that has displaced materials not more than 12,000 years old.

Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone: State-identified areas of potentially active and recently active faults.

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone (formerly Special Studies Zones) Act: Places specific responsibilities on local governments for identification and evaluation of seismic and geologic hazards, and formulation of programs and regulations to reduce risk in identified locations.

Aquifer: A geological formation that is sufficiently permeable to conduct groundwater and to yield significant quantities of water to wells and springs.

California Endangered Species Act: California state legislation, enacted in 1984, with the intent to protect floral and faunal species by listing them as “rare,” “threatened” “endangered,” or “candidate” and by providing a consultation process for the determination and resolution of potential adverse impact to the species.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): Policies enacted in 1970, and subsequently amended, the intent of which is the maintenance of a quality environment for the people of California now and in the future.

CNEL: Community Noise Equivalent Level-A noise index that accounts for the greater annoyance of noise during evening and nighttime hours.

Discretionary actions: Conditions that can be imposed on a project action prior to approval for implementation. The approval would thus be “at the discretion” of an agency.

Endangered species: A species whose prospects of survival and reproduction in the wild are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes.

Environmental Impact Report (EIR): Document in which the impacts of any state or local, public or private project action, which may have a significant environmental effect, are evaluated prior to its approval and subsequent construction or implementation, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act.

Fault: A geologic fracture or fracture zone along which there has been displacement of the sides relative to one another.

Groundwater: Water found beneath the land surface in the zone of saturation below the water table.

Hazardous material: Substance which, because of its potential for either corrosivity, toxicity, ignitability, chemical reactivity, or explosiveness, may cause injury to persons or damage to property.

Hydrogeology: The study of surface and subsurface water.

Lead Agency: The public agency, which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.

Notice of Completion (NOC): A brief notice sent by the public agency with principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project to notify other agencies and individuals that an EIR has been completed and is available for review.

Notice of Preparation (NOP): A brief notice sent by the public agency with principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project to notify other agencies that an EIR is being prepared.

NOx: A generic term for various oxides of nitrogen.

Ozone (O₃): A product of complex reactions between reactive organic gases (or non-methane hydrocarbons) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) in the presence of intense ultraviolet radiation.

Rare species: A species, which, although not presently threatened with extinction, is in such small numbers throughout its range that it may become endangered if its present environment worsens.

Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB): Agency which administers the requirements of the California Administrative Code, Title 23, Division 3, Chapter 15 (Section 2595,g,7) to ensure the highest possible water quality consistent with all demands.

Responsible agency: A public agency, which proposes to carry out or approve a project for which a lead agency has prepared an EIR. A responsible agency is any agency with discretionary approval over a project.

Right-of-way (ROW): The right to pass over property owned by another. The strip of land over which facilities such as roadways, railroads, or power lines are built.

Seismicity: The likelihood of an area being subject to earthquakes.

Sensitive species: Generic term for any plant or animal species, which is recognized by the government or by any conservation group as being depleted, rare, threatened, or endangered.

Significant environmental impact: As defined by CEQA, Chapter 3, Article 1, Section 15002(g), “a substantial adverse change in the physical conditions which exist in the area affected by the proposed project.”

Threatened Species: Species, which, although not presently threatened with extinction, is likely to become endangered in the near future in the absence of special protection and management efforts.

Trustee Agency: A state agency having jurisdiction over natural resources that may be affected by the project, which are held in trust by the state. These include the California Department of Fish and Game, State Lands Commission, and State Department of Parks and Recreation.