

MINUTE ITEM

This Calendar Item No. 64 was approved as
Minute Item No. 64 by the California State Lands
Commission by a vote of 3 to 0 at its
08/21/96 meeting.

**CALENDAR ITEM
C64**

A 3
S 1

PRC 7902
PRC 7903

08/21/96
W 25134
B. Young

TWO GENERAL LEASES - RIGHT OF WAY USE

Lease A: Sovereign Lands

Lease B: School Lands

APPLICANT:

Sierra Pacific Power Company
6100 Neil Road
Reno, Nevada 89520

LAND USE:

(A) and (B): Installation, operation and maintenance of a 345,000 volt (345 K.)
electric transmission line and associated facilities.

AREA TYPE LAND AND LOCATION:

- (A) 0.26 acres, more or less, of submerged lands in the bed of the Pit River,
Modoc County.
- (B) 105.73 acres, more or less, of school lands, Modoc and Lassen Counties.

PROPOSED LEASE TERMS:

(A) and (B): 49 years.

CONSIDERATION:

- (A) \$100 per annum; five year rent review.
- (B) \$1,623 per annum; five year rent review.

BASIS FOR CONSIDERATION:

(A) and (B): Pursuant to 2 Cal. Code Regs. 2003

AB 884:

10/11/96

CALENDAR ITEM NO. C64 (CONT'D)

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. The proposed project involves the installation, operation and maintenance of a 350,000 volt overhead electric power transmission line from Alturas, California, to Tracy, Nevada. This transmission line will provide power from the Bonneville projects on the Columbia River in Oregon, and more reliable service to the Reno area, which now relies on power sources in Montana and Idaho. The proposed route will cross eight parcels of State owned school lands in Modoc and Lassen Counties, and one parcel in the bed of the Pit River in Modoc County. While there have been no concerns expressed as to impacts of the project unique to the State owned lands, the overall project has been the subject of considerable controversy, primarily concerning its visual impacts.

The applicant has indicated that a transmission line of this size, 350,000 volts, runs too hot to be buried, and so proposes an overhead line. The CPUC has found that it is not economically or environmentally feasible to construct the Project underground. The applicant's proposed route crosses several scenic, as yet relatively undeveloped areas in Nevada and California, and is not expected to be visible from the town of Alturas. An EIS/EIR was prepared and identified an alternative route which would follow the existing Tuscarora pipeline corridor, but would pass closer to established residential areas, would require the applicant to buy out several homeowners, and would be visible from the town of Alturas.

The applicant's preferred route would cross lands owned by BLM, the National Forest Service, numerous private parties, and the State of California. BLM supports the proposed route, as does the California PUC, the CEQA Lead Agency. However, the National Forest Service has denied applications to cross lands within the Toiyabe National Forest in Nevada. Certain of these lands in Toiyabe have been designated to preserve the visual values of open space, a restriction inconsistent with construction of the overhead transmission lines. The applicant is working with the Forest Service in an effort to resolve this conflict.

2. Pursuant to the Commission's delegation of authority and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 Cal. Code Regs. 15025), the staff has reviewed a joint EIR/EIS prepared by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM), identified as

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SCH #94042001. This document was circulated for public review pursuant to the provisions of CEQA, and was certified by the CPUC on January 10, 1996.

Based on the EIR/EIS, and comments received in response thereto, the majority of environmental impacts can be mitigated to a level of insignificance, but there remain visual and aesthetic impacts that are significant and cannot be mitigated.

3. This activity involves lands identified as possessing significant environmental values pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 6370, et seq. Based upon the staff's consultation with the persons nominating such lands and through the CEQA review process, it is the staff's opinion that the project, as proposed and with the mitigation measures included in the Final EIR/EIS, is consistent with its use classification.
4. Findings made in conformance with Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines are contained in Exhibit "B" attached hereto.
5. A Mitigation Monitoring Plan (MMP) was included in the Final EIR/EIS and is contained in Exhibit "C" attached hereto. The CPUC and California Department of Fish and Game have assumed responsibility for all monitoring required by the MMP.
6. A statement of Overriding Consideration made in conformance with Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guideline is contained in Exhibit "D", attached hereto.

FURTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED:

California Department of Transportation, Modoc National Forest, Toiyabe National Forest, Bureau of Land Management, City of Reno, County of Washoe, Public Service Commission of Nevada.

EXHIBITS:

- A-1. Land Description (Sovereign Lands)
- A-2. Land Description (School Lands)
- B. CEQA Findings
- C. Mitigation Monitoring Plan

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D. Statement of Overriding Considerations

RECOMMENDED

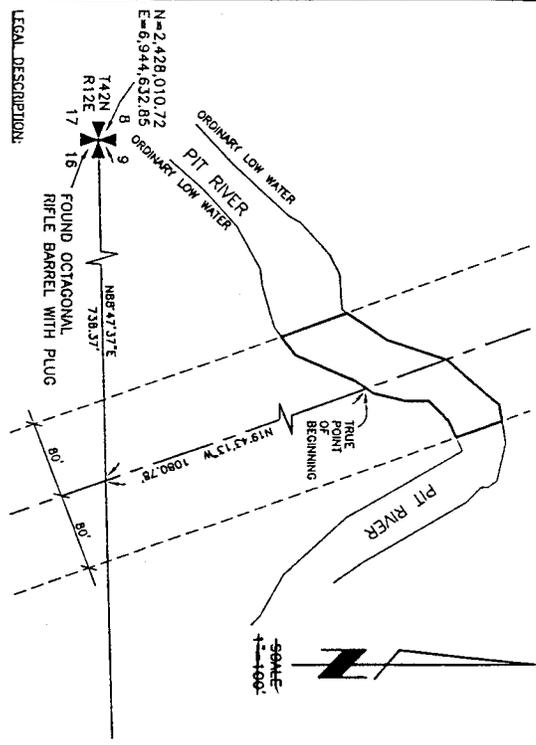
ACTION:

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. FIND THAT AN EIR/S, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE #94042001 WAS PREPARED AND ADOPTED FOR THIS PROJECT BY THE CPUC AND BLM, AS JOINT LEAD AGENCIES, AND THAT THE COMMISSION HAS REVIEWED AND CONSIDERED THE INFORMATION CONTAINED THEREIN.
2. ADOPT THE CEQA FINDINGS, MADE IN CONFORMANCE WITH SECTION 15096(h) OF THE STATE CEQA GUIDELINES, AS CONTAINED IN EXHIBIT "B", ATTACHED HERETO.
3. ADOPT THE MITIGATION MONITORING PLAN INCLUDED IN THE FINAL EIR/S AND AS CONTAINED IN EXHIBIT "C", ATTACHED HERETO.
4. ADOPT THE STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDED AS EXHIBIT "D", ATTACHED HERETO.
5. FIND THAT THE ACTIVITY IS CONSISTENT WITH THE USE CLASSIFICATION DESIGNATED FOR THE LAND PURSUANT TO PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTIONS 6370, ET. SEQ.
6. AUTHORIZE ISSUANCE TO SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY OF A 49-YEAR GENERAL LEASE - RIGHT OF WAY USE, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 21, 1996; OF 0.26 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, OF SUBMERGED LANDS IN THE BED OF THE PIT RIVER; MODOC COUNTY, IN CONSIDERATION OF \$100 PER ANNUM, WITH THE STATE RESERVING THE RIGHT TO FIX A DIFFERENT RENT ON EACH FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEASE, FOR CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF AN ELECTRIC POWER TRANSMISSION LINE ON THE LAND DESCRIBED IN EXHIBIT "A-1" ATTACHED AND BY REFERENCE MADE A PART HEREOF.
7. AUTHORIZE ISSUANCE TO SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY OF A 49-YEAR GENERAL LEASE - RIGHT OF WAY USE, EFFECTIVE AUGUST 21, 1996; OF 105.73 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, OF STATE SCHOOL LANDS IN MODOC AND LASSEN COUNTIES; IN CONSIDERATION OF \$1,623 PER ANNUM WITH

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THE STATE RESERVING THE RIGHT TO FIX A DIFFERENT RENT ON EACH FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LEASE; FOR CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF A ELECTRIC POWER TRANSMISSION LINE ON THE LAND DESCRIBED ON EXHIBIT "A-2", ATTACHED AND BY REFERENCE MADE A PART HEREOF.



LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

A ONE HUNDRED SIXTY (160) FOOT WIDE PARCEL FOR A PERMANENT OVERHEAD ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINE WITHIN SECTION 9, 142N, R12E, M3M, MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:
 COMMENCING AT THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF SAID SECTION 9; THENCE ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID SECTION 9, 142N, R12E, M3M, 1738.37 FEET TO THE CENTERLINE FEET OF THE SOUTHERLY ORDINARY LOW WATER MARK OF THE PIT RIVER AND THE TRUE POINT OF BEGINNING; THENCE ALONG SAID ORDINARY LOW WATER MARK THE FOLLOWING 3 COURSES:
 S34°19'06"W, 14.09 FEET;
 S23°25'09"W, 67.17 FEET;
 S53°12'42"W, 23.71 FEET;
 THENCE ACROSS SAID RIVER, N19°43'13"W, 71.68 FEET TO THE NORTHERLY ORDINARY LOW WATER MARK OF SAID RIVER; THENCE ALONG SAID ORDINARY LOW WATER MARK THE FOLLOWING 4 COURSES:
 N33°20'19"E, 50.82 FEET;
 N17°34'17"E, 98.84 FEET;
 N29°56'59"E, 17.38 FEET;
 N12°54'17"E, 17.94 FEET;
 THENCE ACROSS SAID RIVER, S19°43'13"E, 51.72 FEET TO THE SOUTHERLY ORDINARY LOW WATER MARK OF SAID RIVER; THENCE ALONG SAID ORDINARY LOW WATER MARK THE FOLLOWING 5 COURSES:
 S64°34'23"W, 19.27 FEET;
 S44°02'21"W, 28.75 FEET;
 S00°59'25"E, 23.94 FEET;
 S13°24'54"W, 35.88 FEET;
 S34°19'06"W, 8.46 FEET FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.
 CONTAINING AN AREA OF 0.26 ACRES, MORE OR LESS.

NOTES:

1. BASIS OF BEARING AND COORDINATES IS CALIFORNIA STATE PLANE ZONE 1.
2. ALL COORDINATES SHOWN HEREON ARE IN US SURVEY FEET.
3. DISTANCES SHOWN HEREON ARE SURFACE DISTANCES IN US SURVEY FEET.
4. COMBINED FACTOR (CF) = 0.9999215 (SURFACE OF = GRID).

I, PAUL PACE, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I AM A LICENSED SURVEYOR AND THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND CORRECT REPRESENTATION OF A SURVEY MADE UNDER MY SUPERVISION ON JANUARY 18, 1998 AT THE INSTANCE OF SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY.

PAUL PACE
 9/20/98
 LICENSE NO. 5386
 SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY
 PROJECT NO. 0102-35-7
 JAN 31, 1998

NO SCALE

LOCATION MAP

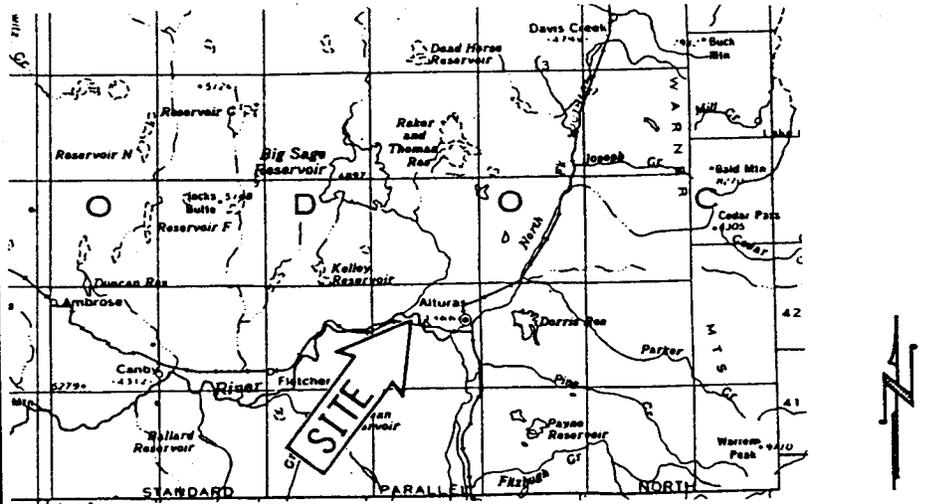


EXHIBIT "A-1"
 W 25134
 APNs 22 - 010 - 52 & 53
 Pit River
 MODOC COUNTY

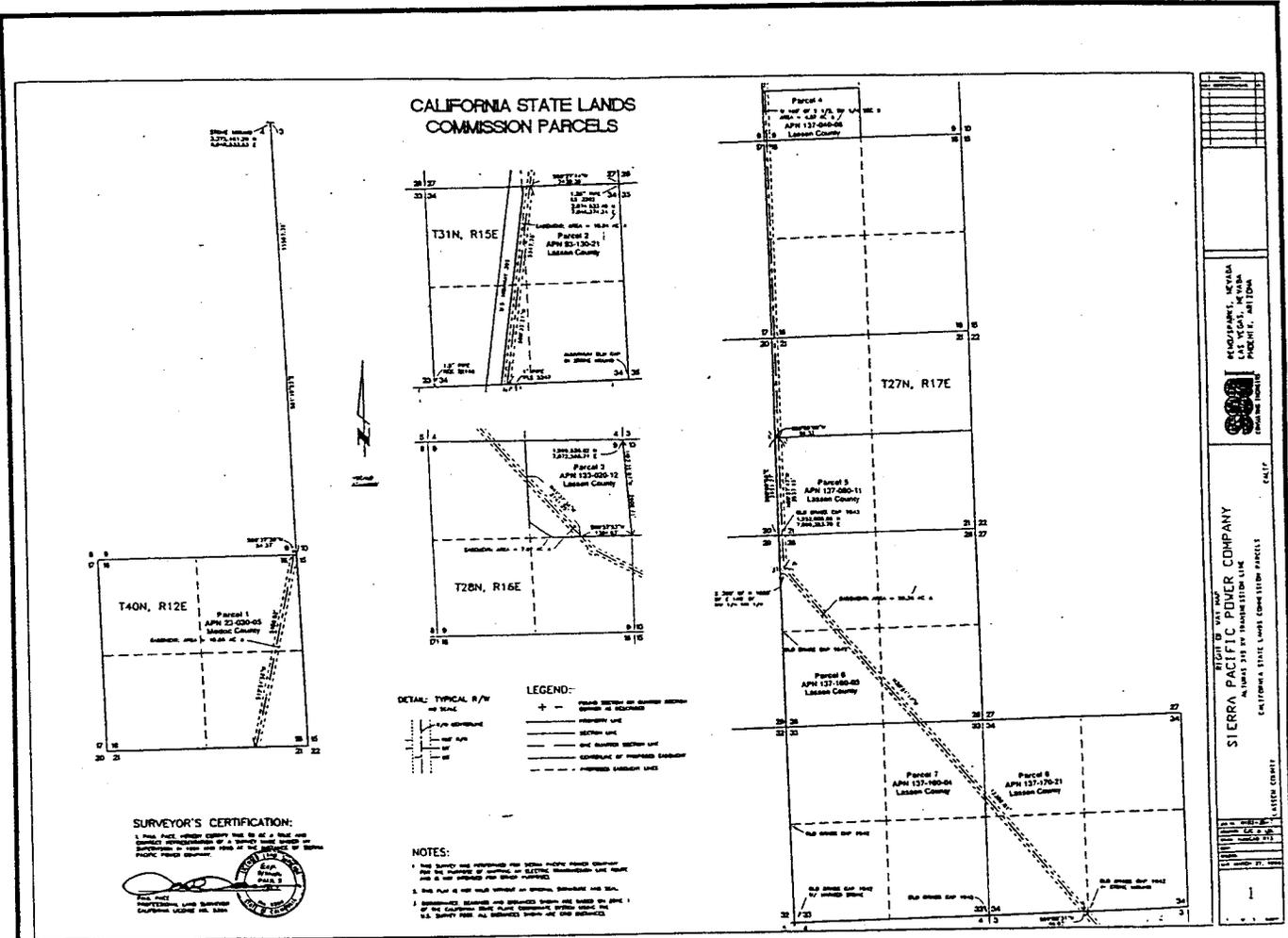


NO SCALE

This Exhibit is solely for purposes of generally defining the lease premises, and is not intended to be, nor shall it be construed as, a waiver or limitation of any State interest in the subject or any other property.

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NO SCALE

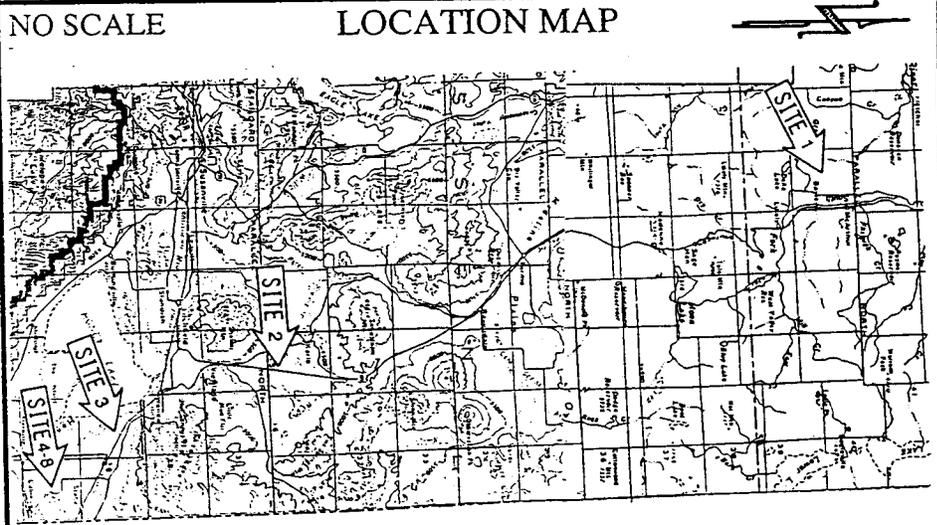


EXHIBIT "A-2"
W 25134
 Sierra Pacific Power
 Transmission Line R/W
 School Lands
 MODOC & LASSEN
 COUNTIES



This Exhibit is solely for purposes of generally defining the lease premises, and is not intended to be, nor shall it be construed as, a waiver or limitation of any State interest in the subject or any other property.

EXHIBIT B

CEQA FINDINGS

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.2-1

AIR RESOURCES: Construction emissions

Impact: Impacts associated with most construction emissions are considered adverse, but not significant because of their temporary nature. (Class III impact).

Finding: a) Class III impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Material delivery has the highest level of daily emissions for all pollutants, except TSP and PM₁₀. For TSP and PM₁₀, the ROW construction/road preparation would have the highest level of emissions. Though material delivery would product the highest overall levels of emissions, its potential adverse impacts would be less than those resulting from ROW construction and road preparation. Material delivery involves sources of emissions that would travel over longer distances, thus dispersing the pollutant through the atmosphere over a larger area (i.e., less concentration at any particular area). ROW construction/road preparation and wire installation would be the two activities with highest levels of potential adverse impact. The activities associated with substation construction (e.g., grading) produce emissions levels comparable with ROW preparation.

SUMMARY: Class III impact. This impact is found to be adverse but insignificant.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.2-2

AIR RESOURCES: PM₁₀ emissions during construction.

Impact: Impacts resulting from PM₁₀ would be significant, but can be mitigated to a level of non-significant through implementation of mitigation measures and the required dust plans.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact is found initially to be insignificant following mitigation.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Based on the nonattainment status of the study area with respect to PM₁₀ there are a number of rules that regulate any activity that generates dust and particulate matters. For the purpose of the analysis contained in the Final EIR/S, any activity that produces substantial levels of particulate matters would be considered to cause a significant impact. The levels predicted for the project during construction range from a low of 2.96 lbs/day for equipment installation to 624.83 lbs/day for ROW construction/road preparation. Other construction activities with levels above 100 lbs/day include wire installation, grading, footing construction.

SCAPCD, LCAPCD, and Washoe County District Health Department, AQMD require that any proposed project with the potential to produce significant levels of PM₁₀ take into consideration all reasonable precautions to prevent or minimize emissions of fugitive dust during construction.

Mitigation measures required include submittal of a Construction, Operation, and Maintenance Plan to the Lead Agency for review and approval prior to project approval. The applicant/contractor shall apply water spray to all disturbed active construction areas a minimum of two times per day, except when soil water content exceeds the levels recommended by the soils engineer for compaction; The frequency of watering shall be increased when wind speed exceeds 15 miles per hour; soil disturbance shall be limited to the immediate areas defined by the Construction, Operation, and Maintenance Plan. The full mitigation measures are described in detail on page C.2-15 of the Final EIR.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.2-3

AIR RESOURCES: Emissions associated with operations.

Impact: Impacts resulting from vehicular emissions associated with maintenance and repair of the transmission line would not result in any violation of standards.

Finding: a) Class III impact; this impact is found initially to be insignificant.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Vehicular emissions associated with maintenance and repair of the transmission line would be the only sources of emissions during the operational phase of the Proposed Project. The levels of emissions would not result in any violation of standards. In non-attainment areas (such as Truckee Meadows Air Basin in Nevada), the addition of any sources of emissions, particularly NO_x , ROC, and PM_{10} could be significant, because it exacerbates the existing conditions. However, based on the nature of these emissions sources (i.e., mobile sources which disperse the pollutants over a large area [90% of which would be outside of this air basin]) and the level of estimated worst-case maximum daily emissions, the impacts are assumed adverse, but not significant.

SUMMARY: Class III impact. This impact is found to be adverse but insignificant.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.2-4

AIR RESOURCES: Cumulative impact of construction

Impact: Concurrent construction of the Proposed Project and a number of subdivision projects proposed in Modoc County could result in short-term cumulative impacts resulting from increased PM₁₀ emissions.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact is found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

The combination of the construction from four proposed residential project in Modoc County could potentially affect receptors at the same time. However, since the construction emissions are short terms, the cumulative impact is expected to be insignificant.

As mitigation, the Project Applicant will implement emission control measures discussed in CEQA Finding C.2-1.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.3-1

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

Temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of low sagebrush shrub habitat.

Impact:

Construction of the project would result in the temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of low sagebrush shrub habitat.

Finding:

- a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigation or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

A total temporary loss of low sagebrush shrub would be 79 acres, a portion of which occurs on a State Lands parcel (T40N, R12E,S16). The temporary loss of low sagebrush shrub habitat would be associated with blading for construction access structure setup. Low sagebrush shrub is confined to areas with thinner, more rocky soil than is associated with other sagebrush shrub communities. Most areas of low sagebrush shrub are dominated by native shrubs and herbaceous plants whose potential for natural regeneration following surface removal is expected to be low.

Mitigation for the temporary loss of low sagebrush shrub would be a combination of avoidance, restoration, and offsite compensation, as described in Mitigation Measure B-1 in the Final EIR/S. Avoidance would consist of flagging allowable travel routs and construction areas to minimize impacts to natural plant communities. Avoidance shall be considered successful if no net loss or degradation of a resource has occurred.

Unavoidable temporary impacts would be restored. Due to the low potential for restoration of impacted areas to preconstruction conditions and the long recovery time required, offsite compensation would be used to supplement restoration. Details of the calculation and implementation criteria for offsite compensation is contained on page C.3-76 of the Final EIR/S. A Community and Habitat Restoration Plan shall be developed by the Applicant and submitted to lead resource agencies at least 60 days prior to the start of construction. The plan shall contains plans for seed collection, soils

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preparation, planting, and monitoring. Quantitative success criteria shall also be presented in the plan. The restoration objective for affected natural plant communities shall be restoration to preconstruction conditions as measured by species cover, species composition, and species diversity. Restoration would be monitored for five years after construction. If restoration is not successful, then the Applicant must take remedial actions deemed necessary by the responsible agencies and described in the restoration plan.

Offsite compensation would be used to off-set temporary loss of plant community functions during the time period required for restoration. Additional offsite compensation shall be required if the responsible agencies determine that restoration has failed or would not be feasible. The area of offsite compensation shall be directly proportional to the loss or degradation of the affected resource. Additional offsite compensation would be required if the resource cannot be fully restored within 15 years.

Impacts to low sagebrush scrub would result from overland travel by off-road vehicles and assorted heavy equipment within a single-lane, up to 15-foot-wide route roughly parallel to the centerline. Impacts to this community would include crushing of vegetation, disruption of microphytic crust, and soil compaction.

Mitigation for overland travel disturbance would include a combination of avoidance, restoration, and offsite compensation as described in Mitigation Measure B-4 in the Final EIR/S. Avoidance would be conducted as described above in Measure B-1.

Unavoidable temporary impacts would be restored, with offsite compensation used to supplement restoration. Details of the calculation and implementation criteria for offsite compensation is contained on page C.3-86 of the Final EIR/S. A Community and Habitat Restoration Plan shall be developed by the Applicant and submitted to lead resource agencies as described above.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.3-2

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

Temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of montane meadow wetlands.

Impact:

There would be temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of montane meadow wetlands as a result of construction.

Finding:

- a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigation or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Temporary loss of montane meadow wetlands would be approximately 2 acres, of which 0.41 acres of this temporary loss would occur immediately north of the Pit River within or immediately adjacent to a State Lands parcel (Pit River crossing). Montane meadow wetlands are potentially subject to the jurisdiction of the USACE and protected by Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Potential project impacts on this plant community may also require a Streambed Alteration Agreement with CDFG.

Impacts to montane meadow wetlands would result from overland travel by off-road vehicles and heavy equipment within a single-lane, up to 15-foot-wide route roughly parallel to the centerline. Impacts to this community would include crushing of vegetation, disruption of microphytic crust, and soil compaction.

Mitigation for the temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of montane meadow wetlands would be the same as described under CEQA Findings C.3-1.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.3-3

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

Temporary and permanent loss and overland travel disturbance of big sagebrush scrub.

Impact:

Construction of the project would result in the temporary and permanent loss and overland travel disturbance of big sagebrush scrub habitat.

Finding:

a) Class III impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Total temporary loss of big sagebrush scrub would be approximately 119.78 acres, a portion of which occurs on a State Lands parcel (T27N,R17E,S16,21,28,33, and 34). Permanent losses of this plant community would be approximately 0.63 acre. Big sagebrush scrub is widespread throughout the intermountain regions of eastern California, Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah. This habitat occurs on a wide variety of slopes, aspects and topographic positions where there are well-drained soils.

Impacts to big sagebrush scrub would result from overland travel by off-road vehicles and assorted heavy equipment within a single-lane, up to 15-foot-wide route roughly parallel to the centerline. Impacts to this community would include crushing of vegetation, disruption of microphytic crust, and soil compaction. Overland travel impacts to this community are considered adverse, but not significant due to the widespread distribution of this community relative to the magnitude of the impact.

No specific mitigation measures are proposed for impacts to big sagebrush scrub.

SUMMARY: Class III impact. This impact is found to be adverse but insignificant.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.3-4

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

Temporary and permanent loss and overland travel disturbance of stabilized/partially stabilized dunes.

Impact:

Construction of the project would result in the temporary and permanent loss and overland travel disturbance of stabilized/partially stabilized dunes.

Finding:

a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Total temporary loss of stabilized/partially stabilized dunes would be approximately 7 acres, a portion of which occurs on State Lands parcels (T27N,R17E,S33 and 34). Permanent loss of this habitat would be approximately 0.02 acre. The temporary and permanent losses are associated with the placement of structures and a wire setup site. Stabilized/partially stabilized dunes is an uncommon community type and is associated with several special status plant species.

Impacts to stabilized/partially stabilized dunes would result from overland travel by off-road vehicles and assorted heavy equipment within a single-lane, up to 15-foot-wide route roughly parallel to the centerline. Impacts to this community would include crushing of vegetation, disruption of microphytic crust, and soil compaction.

Mitigation for the temporary and permanent loss and overland travel disturbance of stabilized/partially stabilized dunes would be the same as described under CEQA Findings C.3-1.

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SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.3-5

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

Temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of chenopod scrub.

Impact:

Construction of the project would result in the temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of chenopod scrub.

Finding:

- a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Total temporary loss of chenopod scrub would be approximately 1 acre. However, the Final EIR/S states that chenopod scrub occurs only on Segment N. The maps clearly show chenopod scrub occurring on State Lands parcels (T31N,R15E,S34 and T28N,R16E,S9). It is likely that temporary loss of this community would also occur on State Lands parcels. No special status plant species are associated with this community.

Mitigation for the temporary loss and overland travel disturbance on chenopod scrub on State Lands holdings is not discussed under impacts in the Final EIR/S. However, for Segment N, impacts to chenopod scrub would result from overland travel by off-road vehicles and assorted heavy equipment within a single-lane, up to 15-foot-wide route roughly parallel to the centerline. Impacts to this community would include crushing of vegetation, disruption of microphytic crust, and soil compaction.

Mitigation for the temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of chenopod scrub would be the same as described under CEQA Findings C.3-1.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-6

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Temporary loss and permanent loss of special status plant species and their habitats.

Impact: Construction of the project would result in the temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of special status plant species and their habitats.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

The Final EIR/S identifies temporary loss of habitat for lance-leaved scurf-pea (*Psoralidium lanceolatum*) totaling approximately 0.11 acre and overland travel disturbance totaling approximately 0.2 acre occurring only in Segment Q. However, this species is present on State Lands parcels in Segment O (T27N,R17,S33 and 34) within the stabilized/partially stabilized dune community. Impacts to this species are identified as occurring between Angle Points O05 and Q01 in Appendix E.1 of the Final EIR/S.

The distribution of this species is limited to sandy soils in stabilized/partially stabilized dune community in the southeastern portion of the Honey Lake Valley in Lassen County. While rare in California, this species is more abundant elsewhere in the Great Basin and Range region.

Mitigation for the temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of lance-leaved scurf-pea on State Lands holdings is not discussed under impacts in the Final EIR/S. However, for Segment Q, temporary loss and overland travel disturbance of special status plant species would be mitigated by a combination of avoidance, restoration, and offsite compensation. Temporary and overland travel disturbance impacts to populations that cannot be avoided would be restored.

Overland travel disturbances on special status plant populations during construction would be mitigated by restoration. Permanent and overland travel disturbance impacts which cannot be restored would be mitigated by offsite compensation. Offsite compensation would also be used to offset temporary losses and overland travel disturbance of plant species habitat during periods required for restoration. The responsible agencies would verify that the resource has been avoided by comparing pre- and post-construction conditions. Avoidance would be considered successful if no net loss or degradation of a resource has occurred. Details of the calculation and implementation criteria for offsite compensation is contained on pages C.3-83 and 89 of the Final EIR/S.

The Applicant would submit a re-survey of known populations of special status plant species following construction to the responsible agencies for their review and approval, whether the plant species is avoided or impacted.

Populations of green prince's plume (*Stanleya viridiflora*) which occur on a State Lands parcel (T31N,R15E,S34) would be avoided by placing all structures outside of the limits of these populations and by placing overland travel exclusion zones around these populations. Habitats for these populations would be clearly flagged prior to construction. Preconstruction surveys of known populations of this species would be conducted at the discretion of the responsible agencies to verify areas of impacts, even if the species is to be avoided.

A Community and Habitat Restoration Plan and offsite compensation would be required as discussed in CEQA Finding C.3-1.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-7

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Increased access to sensitive vegetation resources.

Impact: Construction of the project would result in increased access to sensitive vegetation resources.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Construction would create new and upgrade existing access roads to facilitate transport of materials and equipment to all segments of the proposed corridor. Overland travel and blading for overland travel would remove existing barriers to vehicle access, impacting natural plant communities, special status plant species, and jurisdictional wetlands not currently accessible to most vehicles. Increased access was determined to be significant because the project would create permanent new access roads that would be used after construction in areas where existing vehicle access routes do not currently exist.

Mitigation for increased access impacts on vegetation would combine measures discussed previously for overland travel disturbance (see CEQA Finding C.3-1), measures for increased erosion and sedimentation (CEQA Finding C.6-6), and introduction of non-native plant species (CEQA Finding C.3-9), and replacing existing barriers to overland travel following construction and placement of new barriers at access points to non-bladed overland travel routes as described in Mitigation Measure B-6 in the Final EIR/S.

The Applicant would submit lists and maps of all access to be used for long-term operation and maintenance of facilities to the responsible agencies for review and approval at least 60 days prior to beginning construction. Following construction, the Applicant would submit "as-built" maps to these agencies for review of consistency with the preconstruction impact assessment. All access roads would be returned to pre-

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construction conditions unless the agencies determine it to be not feasible or unnecessary. Permanent access corridors would be treated as permanent surface removal and would be mitigated as discussed in Mitigation Measures B-1, B-2, and B-3 in the Final EIR/S. New roads and routes would be blocked during all phases of construction to prevent unauthorized vehicular traffic.

During construction, all vehicles would stay on designated access routes inside and outside the ROW. The Applicant shall not operate vehicles of any kind off of existing roads within 200 feet of stream channels with adjacent or in-channel wetlands as defined by the criteria of the USACE 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual. No culverts or fill would be placed in stream channels or adjacent wetlands to facilitate overland travel. Overland travel routes would be established in consultation with the above agencies and final staking of the routes would be completed in the presence of a qualified botanist, wildlife biologist, and cultural resource specialist.

No vehicular traffic for construction or maintenance shall be allowed in the project area during periods when the soil is too wet to support construction equipment. If construction equipment creates ruts in excess of 3 inches deep and over 100 feet in length, the soil shall be deemed too wet to adequately support equipment.

Responsible agencies would assess whether the objectives of the mitigation measures have been met. If the objectives have not been met, contingency measures would be implemented. These measures would include offsite compensation and/or modifications to the measures above.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-8

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Erosion and sedimentation.

Impact: Construction of the project would result in erosion and sedimentation.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Erosion and sedimentation would occur during and after construction related to overland travel resulting in soil compaction and vegetation removal and to construction or operation activities that could disturb the soil profile in all segments. Erosion and sedimentation would adversely affect drainages and wetlands next to the project area and may delay or prevent recovery of disturbed areas.

Mitigation for erosion and sedimentation would be the same as described under CEQA Finding C.6-6.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-9

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Introduction of non-native plant species.

Impact: Construction of the project would result in introduction of non-native plant species.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Non-native plants pose a threat to the natural processes of plant community succession, fire frequency, and biological diversity and species composition. Construction equipment, use of hay bales for erosion control, and other potential vectors for transport of non-native plant species may inadvertently introduce or spread non-native species in all segments. Species of particular concern are the noxious weed species.

Mitigation for the potential introduction of non-native plant species would consist of use of standard precautionary measures. The project corridor would be surveyed and flagged for existing noxious weed populations prior to beginning construction. A Noxious Weed Control Plan would be submitted to responsible agencies 60 days prior to beginning construction. The plan would specify locations of existing weed populations, measures to control introduction and spread of noxious weeds, construction procedures to reduce introduction and spread of weeds, post-construction monitoring for noxious weeds, and eradication and control methods.

All seed and straw material would be certified weed free by CDFA. All gravel and fill material shall be certified weed free by the local County Agriculture Commissioner's Office. The removal site for all fill materials would be examined for presence of noxious weeds by the local County Agriculture Commissioner and approved by BLM and CPUC. Material transported between counties would be approved by the local County Agriculture Commission in the county receiving materials.

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BLM and CPUC would monitor implementation of this mitigation, if it is determined that mitigation objectives are not being met, contingency measures would be implemented. Potential contingency measures include additional steps to control new occurrences of the target species and changes in equipment and materials used for operation and maintenance.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-10

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Loss and overland travel disturbance of mule deer winter range.

Impact: Construction and operation of the project would result in loss and overland travel disturbance of mule deer winter range.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Mule deer winter range occurring on State Lands parcel (T10N,R12E,S16) in Segment C would be lost at structure locations and within permanent access routes. Temporary loss would likely result from blading to allow vehicle access, temporary staging areas, and structure construction locations. Overland travel by vehicles and equipment used during construction would result in crushed vegetation in mule deer winter range. Crushed vegetation would result in temporary loss of available forage for the species during critical life stages.

Mitigation for removal of mule deer winter habitat would generally follow procedures for avoidance, restoration, and offsite compensation as described in CEQA Finding C.3-1. These measures would be applied as soon as possible following construction or the following spring. Restoration efforts would be modified to emphasize appropriate deer forage and browse species. Annual monitoring of restored habitats would be required.

Permanent loss of mule deer winter range would be mitigated by acquisition of suitable habitat in the vicinity of the project area. Calculation and implementation criteria for compensation is contained on page C.3-98 of the Final EIR/S.

Mitigation for overland travel disturbance would be the same as described under CEQA Finding C.3-11.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-11

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Loss of sage grouse brood or winter habitat.

Impact: Construction and operation of the project would result in loss and overland travel disturbance of sage grouse brood or winter habitat.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Yearlong sage grouse habitat is present on State Lands in Segment C (T40N,R12E,S16), adjacent to the Rocky Prairie lek. Sage grouse require wet meadow habitat with grasses and forbs during brood rearing. This open habitat provides escape cover, insects for food, and a reliable source of water during the dry season. Winter habitat is composed of low sage scrub at lower elevations or in areas where snow cover is reduced due to physiographic features.

Mitigation for removal of sage grouse habitat would generally follow procedures for avoidance, restoration, and offsite compensation as described in CEQA Finding C.3-1 and would include species composition and cover requirements specific to this habitat. Successful application of this mitigation measure would be establishment of suitable vegetation species which were originally present and provide cover and forage for brood and winter habitat. Sage grouse leks would be located prior to construction and avoided during construction by flagging allowable travel areas.

Permanent loss of habitat would require acquisition of suitable sage grouse habitat. Details of the calculation and implementation criteria for offsite compensation is contained on page C.3-102 of the Final EIR/S.

Overland travel disturbance mitigation would require annual monitoring for 3 to 5 years to identify areas where natural revegetation has or is taking place. Monitoring

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reports must be filed annually with appropriate agencies. Successful recovery would have occurred when vegetation of the same type which was disturbed has become established. Habitat which has not successfully regenerated within 5 years would be mitigated by offsite compensation at a 0.9 compensation ratio. Details of calculation and implementation of criteria for offsite compensation is contained on page C.3-104 of the Final EIR/S.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-12

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Disturbance to special status wildlife species and habitats.

Impact: Construction and operation of the project would result in disturbance to special status wildlife species and habitats.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Disturbance associated with construction and maintenance of the proposed project may affect some special status species habitats. Overland travel and construction would be concentrated at the staging areas and around structure locations. Species that may be affected include: ferruginous hawk, Swainson's hawk, northern harrier, greater sandhill crane, sage grouse, loggerhead shrike, long-eared owl, burrowing owl, and the habitats upon which these species rely.

Mitigation measure requires flagging allowable travel areas to avoid habitat per species-specific buffers, seasonal avoidance, utilizing a biological monitor during construction, and preconstruction surveys to identify sensitive wildlife resources. Overland travel would be limited to areas identified in the Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan. Riparian and perennial stream habitats would be avoided.

Blasting for some construction footings would be required in the area between Secret Valley and the Pit River crossing and T40N,R12E,S16. Disturbance to springs supporting special-status snails may occur. To mitigate, geologic and soils tests performed prior to construction would identify specific areas requiring blasting and the information would be provided to CDFG 60 days prior to construction. Any springs or wells located within 100 feet of the ROW would be monitored before and after blasting to evaluate changes in flow or yield.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.	C.3-13
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:	Direct mortality to wildlife.
Impact:	Construction and operation of the project would result in direct mortality to wildlife.
Finding:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Class III impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant.b) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Direct mortality of wildlife species could occur at any segment, substation, access road, or staging area where vehicle access or other human disturbance occurs during construction or maintenance activities. Direct mortality could occur as a result of vehicle collisions, crushing of burrows or nests by equipment, hunting or illegal take.

- a) Direct mortality of reptiles or small mammals which are not as mobile as larger wildlife species would likely occur. This impact is an unavoidable Class III impact, which does not require mitigation.
- b) Direct mortality of large, mobile wildlife species and ground-nesting birds or their young is a Class II impact.

Mitigation for direct mortality of large, mobile wildlife species and ground-nesting birds would be a combination of construction conditions, as described in Mitigation Measure B-16. The conditions are speed limits, firearms and pet restrictions, litter removal, restricting overland travel in the vicinity of sage grouse leks between March 1 and June 1, implementing a worker training program, and presence of a biological monitor during construction.

- SUMMARY: a) Class III impact (direct mortality of reptiles and small mammals).
This impact found to be adverse but insignificant.
- b) Class II impact (direct mortality of large, mobile wildlife species).
This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.3-14

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES:

Indirect impacts on wildlife as a result of increased human presence.

Impact:

Construction of the project would result in indirect impacts on wildlife as a result of increased human presence.

Finding:

a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Wildlife would be displaced by increased human activity, particularly during construction. This could impact big game species during critical life stages and increase pressures on adjacent populations and habitats.

Mitigation would include scheduling construction and maintenance activities to avoid critical seasons. Additional mitigation measures would be the same as described in CEQA Finding C.3-12.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-15

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Indirect impacts on wildlife due to increased access to remote habitats.

Impact: Construction of the project would result in indirect impacts on wildlife due to increased access to remote habitats.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

During and after construction, access to remote areas would be improved and may attract recreationalists. Increased access could impact wildlife if the areas were accessed for hunting, poaching, or during breeding seasons.

Mitigation would include returning roads improved during construction to their original conditions after construction is complete, with the exception of new maintenance and emergency access roads. Spur access roads would be revegetated as described in CEQA Finding C.3-1 and would include stacking or scattering boulders in the roadway where appropriate.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-16

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Potential bird collisions with transmission lines.

Impact: Construction and operation of the project could result in bird collisions with transmission lines.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Bird collisions with transmission lines would potentially occur in areas where lines bisect waterfowl, shorebird, wading birds, or raptor habitats. Additional collision potential would occur during migration periods when birds fly at lower altitudes to land and feed. Poor weather conditions, such as fog, could also increase collision potential.

Mitigation to reduce potential for avian collisions with transmission lines includes fitting "bird flight diverters" on segment portions where there is a high to moderate probability of collisions. These include Segment A from MP-3.5 to MP-6.5 (State Lands parcel at Pit River Crossing), Segment C from MP-15 to MP-20 (State Lands parcel at T40N,R12E,S16), and Segment O from MP-96.5 to MP-114 (State Lands parcel at T28N,R16E,S9; T27N,R17E,S16,21,28,33, and 34). These segments would be monitored three times per year for the lifetime of the project. A detailed collision monitoring plan would be included in the Mitigation Monitoring, Compliance, and Reporting Plan.

Additional monitoring would be required three times per year for the lifetime of the project at segments without bird flight diverters based on observations of bald eagle and raptor behavior in the ROW vicinity. This monitoring would identify any need for additional bird flight diverters and can be used as controls for statistical analyses. Additional monitoring is required on Segment L from MP-82 to MP-86.5 (State Lands parcel T31N,R15E,S34).

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-17

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Increased predation on ground-nesting birds, small mammals, and waterfowl.

Impact: Construction and operation of the project could result in increased predation on ground-nesting birds, small mammals, and waterfowl.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Placement of structures would allow raptors and ravens to perch and gain broad views of surrounding habitat while hunting. This would increase predation on upland bird species, nesting waterfowl, and small mammals, and may cause decreases in populations. This would also displace sage grouse from habitat within 0.5 mile of the transmission line. These impacts are most likely to occur on State Lands in Segments C (T40N,R12E,S16) and L (T31N,R15E,S34).

To mitigate for increased raptor activity in the vicinity of sage grouse habitat, perch deterrents would be installed on structures within a two-mile radius of sage grouse leks and areas identified as potential sage grouse brood habitat, waterfowl nesting habitat, and pygmy rabbit habitat. Monitoring of the perch deterrents would occur for two years. If deterrents are applied and greater than five raptors annually are observed using the structures as a perch, then contingency measures would be implemented.

Mitigation for displacement of sage grouse leks within 0.5 mile of the transmission line includes habitat enhancement in areas outside of the project corridor. Monitoring of the 0.5 mile transmission line corridor would occur during pre- and post-construction surveys. If monitoring reveals that sage grouse are no longer using the corridor or significant reduction has occurred, then habitat enhancement would take place.

Specifications for habitat enhancement would be included in a habitat enhancement plan to be submitted to responsible agencies as discussed under CEQA Finding C.3-1.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.3-18

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Cumulative impacts on biological resources.

Impact: Cumulative impacts on biological resources could result if cumulative project impacts would be additive or increase impacts assessed for the proposed project.

Finding: a) Unclassified impact. Mitigation for impact provided.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

The only project identified in the Final EIR/S that could result in cumulative biological impacts on State Lands is the Tuscarora Gas Pipeline. A second project, the potential future Lassen County tie-in with the proposed project at the northern margin of Honey Lake Valley between Wendel and Susanville could have cumulative impacts, but the impacts have not been quantified and are not discussed in detail in the Final EIR/S.

The Tuscarora Gas Pipeline has been constructed since the Final EIR/S was issued. However, construction of the proposed project may overlap with remediation or operation of the pipeline. Mitigation for impacts to vegetative communities and special-status plant species and habitats on State Lands are discussed in CEQA Findings C.3-1 to C.3-7. Mitigation for impacts to wildlife species and habitats on State Lands are discussed in CEQA Findings C.3-10, C.3-12, C.3-14, and C.3-15.

No classification was provided for cumulative impacts. Based on the description in the Final EIR/S, cumulative impacts to biological resources would not result in a Class I classification.

SUMMARY: Unclassified impact. Mitigation for impact provided.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.	C.4-1
CULTURAL RESOURCES:	Surface removal and disturbance of surface or subsurface cultural resource sites.
Impact:	During construction surface and subsurface cultural resources sites considered to be <i>significant</i> under the National Registry of Historic Places may be affected.
Finding:	a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be significant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Construction-related activities causing surface disturbance and surface removal (eg., blading to provide construction equipment access, structure construction, and substation construction) could damage or destroy surface or subsurface cultural resources considered to be significant under NRHP eligibility criteria.

State Lands holdings are located within Segments A, C, L, and O and within each of these Segments significant cultural resources are present. Given the need to keep the location of the cultural sites confidential, it is not known whether any of the significant sites are within the boundary of any State land. The greatest concentration of prehistoric and multi-components site are located within Segments A, D, and E in the Modoc Plateau area. Historic sites along the route tend to be concentrated along Segment O in Honey Lake Valley. Nonetheless, the potential does exist and therefore this impact is considered significant prior to mitigation.

The primary component of mitigation is impact avoidance. Mitigation includes prohibition against construction-related activities occurring within 100 feet of all cultural resources site that are considered NRHP-eligible. All sites must be monitored during construction to ensure avoidance. Details of the construction monitoring requirements are included in Mitigation Measure C-1 on page C.4-33 of the Final EIR/S. The objective of the mitigation measure to ensure that those cultural resources that appear to retain qualities sufficient for inclusion on the NRHP will not be adversely affected by the project. A Programmatic Agreement for this project and Section 106 of the National

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Historic Preservation Act, avoidance of such resources would result in "no effect" to the historic property. If avoidance is not achieved, a higher level of mitigation will be triggered through the emergency discovery provisions (data recovery) included in the Project's construction monitoring plan.

Sites that have recommended as eligible to the NRHP or are unevaluated, will be treated as significant cultural resources (unless determined otherwise). Mitigation requires avoidance, and if avoidance is not achieved or possible, though provisions of the Programmatic Agreement site specific steps will be required to reduce or eliminate adverse effects. The objective of this mitigation measure is to ensure that those cultural resources that appear to retain qualities sufficient for inclusion on the National Register will have potential impacts to those sites minimized.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.4-2

CULTURAL RESOURCES:

Surface removal and disturbance of surface or subsurface cultural resource sites.

Impact:

During construction surface and subsurface cultural resources sites considered to be *non-significant* under the National Registry of Historic Places may be affected.

Finding:

a) Class III impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Construction-related activities causing surface disturbance and surface removal (eg., blading to provide construction equipment access, structure construction, and substation construction) could damage or destroy surface or subsurface cultural resources considered to be non-significant under NRHP eligibility criteria.

State Lands holdings are located within Segments A, C, L, and O and within each of these Segments non-significant cultural resources are present. Given the need to keep the location of the cultural sites confidential, it is not known whether any of the significant sites are within the boundary of any State Land parcel. The greatest concentration of prehistoric and multi-components site are located within Segments A, D, and E in the Modoc Plateau area. Historic sites along the route tend to be concentrated along Segment O in Honey Lake Valley. Impacts to any non-significant sites are considered adverse, but not significant. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

SUMMARY: Class III impact. This impact is found insignificant.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.4-3

CULTURAL RESOURCES: Increased vandalism or unauthorized collection.

Impact: Increased access to previously isolated regions could increase the potential for vandalism or unauthorized collection at cultural resources sites.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be significant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

During construction, construction crews would have the opportunity to visit cultural resource sites during "down-time". Maintenance crews (including vegetation management crews) would also have the opportunity to visit cultural resources locations. Where access to the project along powerline results in road or access improvements, the general public might use the improved ingress, potentially exposing cultural resource location to vandals and collectors.

Vandalism or unauthorized collection of artifacts at a cultural resource site considered to be significant under NRHP eligibility criteria would be a significant impact. These impacts would also affect non-significant sites; however, the impacts would not be considered.

Mitigation for potential impacts to significant sites requires that during preconstruction briefings/meetings and prior to maintenance activities near any sensitive cultural resource, the Applicant must inform crew of the resources values involved and of the regulatory protection afforded the resources. Further instruction is required to not drive into these areas, park, or operate construction equipment on cultural sites. The crew shall be educated on the procedures that must be followed if a site is discovered during construction. The specifics of the crew education protocols must be set forth in the construction monitoring plan.

An additional mitigation measure will be required. Following completion of construction, all new or improved roads shall be blocked or concealed in a manner that is agreeable to the land managing agency and limits public access. The construction

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monitor shall ensure that each identified access area is inspected to verify access has been blocked or concealed.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.4-4

CULTURAL RESOURCES:

Impact to integrity of setting, feeling, or association.

Impact:

Activities associated with construction, operation, or maintenance of the project may result in long-term disturbance to the integrity of context, setting, feeling or association of sites eligible for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places.

Finding:

- a) Class I or Class II impact, depending on the effectiveness of the mitigation; this impact found to be significant without mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Disturbance to a cultural resource site would be significant impact, but would be mitigable through project avoidance, data recovery, project redesign or re-engineering of permanent facilities, or a combination of these measures to minimize impacts. In certain instances implementation of such measures might still result in residual significant impacts.

To mitigation this potential impact, all permanent facilities including permanent access roads, to the maximum extent feasible, will be placed as far and as unobtrusively as possible from those cultural resources sites that appear to be significant under NRHP eligibility criteria or are Traditional Cultural Properties. The objective of this mitigation measure is to protect intact, to the greatest extent possible, the setting of those cultural resources that appear to be significant on the basis of their setting or other qualities rather than their information content. Careful consideration of facilities placement and/or use of materials that blend with the surrounding environment would result in "no effect" or "no adverse effect" to such historic properties.

SUMMARY: Class I or Class II impact, depending on the effectiveness of the mitigation. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.4-5

CULTURAL RESOURCES: Cumulative impacts on cultural resources..

Impact: The Alturas Transmission Line Project in conjunction with other foreseeable projects may compound or increase impacts on cultural resources.

Finding: a) Class II impact, depending on the effectiveness of the mitigation; this impact found initially to be significant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

There are 18 reasonable foreseeable projects that when considered in conjunction with the Alturas Transmission Line project may compound or increase impacts on cultural resources. The largest projects are, the Tuscarora Project, the LMUD intertie, and the Lassen County tie-in/service. The other projects are fairly small (less than 100 acres in size), non-linear development that would have only modest potential to impact the cultural resource in this regions. The only projects for which cumulative impact information available is the Alturas project, the Tuscarora project, and the Evans Creek watershed improvement project. When considered together, these three projects have the potential to impact 533 cultural resources sites. The sites within the study corridor of the Alturas Project represents 50 percent of the resource base of 533 sites; however, only about 15 percent of these sites which are significant or unevaluated occur exclusively within the Project survey corridor. There is some overlap in some of the cultural sites associated with the three projects. Disturbance to cultural resource site considered to be significant under NRHP eligibility criteria would be a significant impact; however, these impacts would be mitigable through avoidance or data recovery/archival research as described in CEQA Finding C.4-1, and C.4-3 and C.4-4, thereby resulting in Class II impacts on the cultural resource base.

SUMMARY: Class II impacts; this impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.4-6

CULTURAL RESOURCES: Unavoidable significant impacts to cultural resources.

Impact: Construction of the project may affect three historic sites, one of which is located within Segment O (segment where two State Land holding are located).

Finding: a) Class I impact; impact cannot be mitigation to insignificance.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Three historic sites, which may have historic components that might be eligible to the NRHP, are located along the Proposed Project alignment. One of the sites is located within Segment O which contains two State Lands holdings (T28N, R16E and T27N, R17E).

SUMMARY: Class I impacts; this impact cannot be mitigated to insignificance.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.5-1

ENERGY & UTILITIES: Disruption of service/construction accidents.

Impact: Accidents during construction may affect buried and overhead utilities and result in disruption of service.

Finding: a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Excavation of earth could affect buried utilities, resulting in accidental disruption of service. Roadways in small communities along the route could be spanned in most cases and would not require construction of structures within utility easements. In most cases, structures along U.S. 395 would be placed outside the roadway easement, and in all cases, would be distant enough from existing electrical transmission lines to not cause electrical interference.

For above-ground utilities, disruption of service could also occur during raising of temporary and permanent structures; however, several construction techniques are routinely employed to minimize the chance of accidents. The exact location of the closely parallel or intersecting utilities that could be affected by construction activities would be determine when developing final construction plans.

Mitigation to further reduce any possibility for disruption of service would be required during construction, in accordance with Mitigation Measure U-1 in the Final EIR/S. Mitigation requires that the Applicant submit final construction plans to all affected utilities for their review and shall obtain written approval prior to commencement of construction. Additional requirements include identification of all authorized utilities in the construction plan and 72-hour written notice to each affected utility owner prior to construction within 100 yards of an existing utility. Each utility crossing must be field marked prior to work within a given area.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.5-2

ENERGY & UTILITIES:

Interference with emergency service providers.

Impact:

Construction could result in some disruption of traffic and therefore impact utility companies when providing emergency service.

Finding:

- a) Class II impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Construction would take place primarily in areas of low population and uncongested traffic; however, there would be some disruption of traffic during construction. As a result, the ability of utility companies to respond to an emergency may be adversely affected.

Mitigation would require that the Applicant implement Mitigation Measure T-5 in the Final EIR/S which requires that the Applicant conduct advance coordination with emergency service providers to minimize the chance of creating problems/delays for emergency vehicles. At locations where access to nearby property is blocked, the contractor shall be ready at all times to accommodate emergency vehicles by measures such as rapid removal of equipment, or use of short detours or alternative routes. The Applicant shall be required to implement an approved Transportation Management Plan.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.5-3

ENERGY & UTILITIES:

Loss of nonrenewable resources.

Impact:

During construction a considerable amount of diesel and gasoline fuel would be required for construction equipment and worker vehicles.

Finding:

- a) Class III impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant. However, mitigation has been incorporated to ensure no residual impact occurs.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Fuels such as diesel and gasoline are considered nonrenewable resources. During construction a considerable amount of these fuels would be expended for use in machinery and for workers to travel to the job site.

Mitigation Measure T-6 would require a bus shuttle service between work sites and staging areas. This would reduce consumption of fuel by automobiles owned by workers to a less than significant level; therefor no unnecessary consumption of fuel would occur.

SUMMARY: Class III impact. This impact is found to be insignificant with mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO. C.5-4

ENERGY & UTILITIES: Consumption of energy.

Impact: Some energy loss would occur during the electric power transmission process would result in a minor adverse impact.

Finding: a) Class III impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

The Proposed Project would consume little energy, but energy loss would occur during the electric power transmission process. However, the efficiency of energy transmission is second only to that of gas and petroleum pipelines.

The energy requirements of the Proposed Project during construction and operation would not exceed the capacity of other utility services, disrupt plans for providing service, nor place a substantial burden on existing resources. Energy conveyance by transmission lines does not result in inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy, nor does it require significant amounts of nonrenewable resources.

It is presently infeasible for renewable energy sources, such as solar or geothermal power, to replace the Proposed Project. The Project would convey hydroelectric power, a renewable energy resource, to customers at an acceptable energy efficiency.

No mitigation measures beyond those already incorporated into the Project were required in the Final EIR/S.

SUMMARY: Class III impact. This impact is found to be insignificant.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.	C.5-5
ENERGY & UTILITIES:	Cumulative impact on utilities or utility services.
Impact:	Construction may result in cumulative impacts on energy resources or utility service.
Finding:	a) Class II impact; this impact found insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

There are two planned utility projects close to the Proposed Project: Tuscarora Gas Pipeline and the LMUD Intertie. Impacts involving simultaneous construction activities on the Tuscarora Pipeline and the Proposed Project in the same areas can be adequately mitigated. No cumulative construction impacts would be associated with the future LMUD Intertie since that project would not occur until approximately the year 2004.

Mitigation for simultaneous construction impacts would require implementation of the mitigation measures described under CEQA Finding C.5-1 (Mitigation Measure U-1).

Operational impacts on the Proposed Project from construction of the two identified cumulative projects would be mitigated through implementation of the Mitigation Monitoring Program for these projects.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.6-1

GEOLOGY, SOILS,
PALEONTOLOGY:

Impacts to geologic features.

Impact:

Impacts to geologic features are likely to occur largely during construction, and are less likely during maintenance and operations.

Finding:

- a) Class III impact; this impact found initially to be insignificant. However, some mitigation is required.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Geologic features include topography and unique geologic formations (e.g. rocky outcrops or formations of public interest). Construction of the transmission line and substations would involve both temporary and permanent alterations to topography as a result of clearing, staging, creating pads for structures, and crane landings and grading for access roads. Because of the flexibility in siting of structures and the Applicant's proposed use of existing roads, modification of topography is anticipated to be minimal and unique formation would be avoided.

Because some details of construction (specific location of towers) and operation have not yet been worked out, mitigation is required to help ensure disruptions are minimized. The mitigation requires that in areas where disturbance is extensive or where recontouring is required, surface restoration (smoothing of grading cuts, redistribution of spoils piles, and revegetation) be performed. The Construction, Operation, and Maintenance Plan must include details regarding restoration proposed for each area identified for restoration.

SUMMARY: Class III impact. This impact is found to be insignificant; with mitigation.

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Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.6-2

GEOLOGY, SOILS,
PALEONTOLOGY:

Fault displacement collapsing transmission line structures.

Impact:

Siting a transmission line in a seismically active region may comprise a hazard for structures if a rupture occurs within the foundation or between the legs of project structures.

Finding:

a) Class II impact; this impact was found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

It is difficult, if not impossible, to construct a lengthy transmission line through a seismically active region without crossing both active and potentially active faults.

Transmission lines are designed to withstand high winds and generally the flexibility inherent in a transmission line system will readily tolerate horizontal and vertical displacements in excess of the magnitudes anticipated from a worst-case rupture. However, large abrupt differential fault displacement may comprise a hazard for structures if the rupture occurs within the foundation or between the legs of project structures.

Displacement between structures are less likely to have a significant impact. Structure failure may occur at the active and potentially active fault crossing along the project alignment. The Proposed Project would cross two active fault zones; one of which lies within State Land in Segment O. An inactive fault is located immediately adjacent to a State Land parcel in Segment L (MP 84). Active faults are believed to be the faults that are most likely to have surface rupture with horizontal and/or vertical movements that could jeopardize the structural integrity of project structures.

Mitigation requires that structures not be located on or astride an *active* fault trace. Where structures are to be located within an Earthquake Fault Zone, detailed geologic

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investigations must be conducted by a California-licensed geologist to determine as exactly as possible the location of active fault traces. Where transmission lines cross active fault zones, engineering design shall consider the potential for sudden displacement along these faults. A geologic study is required to determine the maximum displacement, sense of movement, and expected recurrence intervals of movements. Results of all the geologic investigation will be reviewed and approved by the Lead Agencies, CDMG, and responsible public agencies prior to permit issuance.

Additional mitigation requires that structures not be located on *potentially* active fault traces. The Applicant must complete geologic investigation in the vicinity of potentially active faults to determine their potential hazard. Details of the requirements of the geologic study are described in Mitigation Measure G-3 on page C.6-34 of the Final EIR/S.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

Alturas Transmission Line Project

CEQA FINDING NO.

C.6-3

GEOLOGY, SOILS,
PALEONTOLOGY:

Damage to transmission line from strong ground shaking during an earthquake.

Impact:

A combination of strong ground shaking and soil liquefaction during an earthquake can result in potentially significant impacts to transmission structures.

Finding:

- a) Class II impact; this impact was found initially to be insignificant following mitigation. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the completed Environmental Impact Report.

FACTS SUPPORTING THE FINDING:

Strong ground shaking caused by earthquakes can cause significant damage to structures, particularly as a result of soil liquefaction, settlement, movement on steep slopes, or other types of ground failure. The Proposed Project is in seismic zones of moderate to high seismicity and traverses local areas of steep terrain and unconsolidated sandy soils. Liquefaction would be most likely to occur in soil area classified as Qa or Qld. These deposits are quite limited in the project area; however, Qa soils do occur within State Land parcel at the Pit River Crossing. Nonetheless, this hazard may be present within other State Lands holdings.

Mitigation requires that the Applicant conduct a geotechnical study to determine the seismic criteria to be used for design of structures and facilities for withstanding strong ground shaking at levels anticipated in the region. The results of the study must be review and approved by the Lead Agencies and other responsible agencies. All transmission line structures must be designed using project-specific criteria in accordance with CPUC and national standards. All designs must be reviewed and approved by the Lead Agencies and responsible agencies.

SUMMARY: Class II impact. This impact is found to be insignificant following mitigation.

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