

# SACRAMENTO LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

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# NOTICE OF PREPARATION

(California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375)

To:

State Clearinghouse

State Agencies

Responsible Agencies Local and Public Agencies

Trustee Agencies

From: Peter Brundage

Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission 1112 I Street, Suite 100 Sacramento, CA 95814

# Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Program Environmental Impact Report

The Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) is the Lead Agency and will prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) for the project identified below. LAFCo needs to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with future implementation activities associated with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the Program EIR prepared by our agency (and any subsequent project-specific environmental documents) when, if applicable, considering any permit or other approval for subsequent projects your agency may be required or authorized to issue.

Due to the time limits mandated by state law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than October 3, 2005. For ease of reference, Exhibit A of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) (see pages 3 through 9 of the NOP) summarizes questions asked of each agency, from the Environmental Issues Discussion. The questions are organized by agency.

The project description and the location of the proposed project are contained in Exhibit B. Exhibit C presents the Environmental Issues Discussion, including the probable/potential environmental effects of the project. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the decision has been made to proceed directly to the preparation of a Program EIR, without including an Initial Study checklist.

Please send your response to Peter Brundage at the address shown above. Please also provide the name and contact information for the responsible person in your agency.

A PUBLIC INFORMATION SCOPING MEETING WILL BE HELD AT 5:30 PM ON SEPTEMBER 14, 2005, AT THE YOLO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 625 COURT STREET, ROOM 204, WOODLAND, CA 95695-1268. ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES, PARTIES, AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

**Project Title:** 

Amendment of the Sphere of Influence for the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) and

Annexation by SMUD of the Cities of West Sacramento, Davis, and Woodland, and Portions of

Unincorporated Areas of Yolo County

Project Applicant: Sacramento Municipal Utility District

**Project Location:** 

Cities of West Sacramento, Davis, and Woodland and portions of unincorporated Yolo County

between and surrounding the cities.

Peter Brundage

Title: Executive Officer, Sacramento LAFCo

Telephone: (916) 874-6458

# ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

Aesthetics

Printed name

The environmental factors listed below with an adjacent darkened square will be discussed in the Program EIR.

Agriculture Resources

Air Quality

	Biological Resources	<ul><li>Cultural Resources</li></ul>	☐ Geology/Soils
	Hazards & Hazardous Materials	<ul><li>Hydrology / Water Quality</li></ul>	■ Land Use / Planning
	Mineral Resources	■ Noise	■ Population / Housing
-	Public Services	<ul><li>Recreation</li></ul>	■ Transportation/Traffic
	Utilities / Service Systems	■ Mandatory Findings of Signif	icance
DET	ERMINATION: (To be complete	d by the Lead Agency)	
On th	ne basis of this initial evaluation:		
	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.		
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.		
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.		
	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.		
	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.		
Sign	Peter Bur Caz		Deptember 1, 2005
Pete	r Brundage, for Sacramento Loca	l Agency Formation Commission	

#### **Exhibit A**

# **Questions Asked of Agencies**

All recipients of this NOP are invited to respond to any aspect of the NOP. In particular, throughout this NOP, Sacramento LAFCo, as the Lead Agency, invites specific agencies to respond to specific environmental issues and questions presented herein. For ease of reference, those agencies are listed hereafter, along with the specific issues and questions asked of them. Please note the narrative presented in Exhibit C for appropriate context.

# California Department of Conservation, State Mining and Geology Board

#### Section X—Mineral Resources

Does your agency agree that mineral resources will not be significantly affected by this project?

# California Department of Fish and Game, Central Sierra Region 2

## • Section IV—Biological Resources

Please advise us of any sensitive species or habitat present in the Annexation Territory and transmission line study area that are not included in commonly available databases.

#### California Department of Transportation, District 3

#### • Section I—Aesthetics

Are there any state scenic highways in the Annexation Territory or in the transmission line study area?

# California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics

#### Section VII—Hazards and Hazardous Materials

What air traffic rules and regulations should be considered in analyzing the proposed SOI amendment/annexation and construction of new electric facilities?

#### Federal Aviation Administration

### Section VII— Hazards and Hazardous Materials

What air traffic rules and regulations should be considered in analyzing the proposed SOI amendment/annexation and construction of new electric facilities?

# Feather River Air Quality Management District

# • Section III—Air Quality

Do you have air quality concerns related to the project other than defining the temporary construction air quality mitigation measures?

# Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

# • Section III—Air Quality

Do you have air quality concerns related to the project other than defining the temporary construction air quality mitigation measures?

# Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District

### • Section III—Air Quality

Do you have air quality concerns related to the project other than defining the temporary construction air quality mitigation measures?

# City of Davis Planning Department

#### Section IX—Land Use and Planning

What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?

#### • Section XI—Noise

Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.

### • Section XII—Population and Housing

Please provide us with any insights you may have regarding secondary impacts, given the potential for inducement of growth as a result of a decrease in electric rates.

# City of Sacramento Planning Department

#### • Section II—Agriculture Resources

Are there any agricultural issues pertaining to Williamson Act land or the conversion of farmland in the transmission line study area that your department would recommend be discussed in the Program EIR?

# • Section IV—Biological Resources

Have the technical studies supporting your respective General Plan updates identified any rare or endangered species or habitat present in the transmission line study area inside Sacramento County, beyond those identified in commonly available databases?

#### • Section V—Cultural Resources

During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any significant cultural resources in the transmission line study area?

# • Section IX—Land Use and Planning

• What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?

#### Section XI—Noise

Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.

#### Section XII—Population and Housing

Please provide us with any insights you may have regarding secondary impacts, given the potential for inducement of growth as a result of a decrease in electric rates.

# City of West Sacramento Planning Department

# Section IX—Land Use and Planning

What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?

#### Section XI—Noise

Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.

#### Section XII—Population and Housing

Please provide us with any insights you may have regarding secondary impacts, given the potential for inducement of growth as a result of a decrease in electric rates.

# City of Woodland Planning Department

#### • Section IX—Land Use and Planning

What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?

#### Section XI—Noise

Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.

# Section XII—Population and Housing

Please provide us with any insights you may have regarding secondary impacts, given the potential for inducement of growth as a result of a decrease in electric rates.

### County of Sacramento Planning Department

#### Section I—Aesthetics

Does your agency have any General Plan policies regarding the protection of scenic resources?

#### • Section II—Agriculture Resources

Are there any agricultural issues pertaining to Williamson Act land or the conversion of farmland in the transmission line study area within Sacramento County that your department would recommend be discussed in the Program EIR?

#### Section IV—Biological Resources

Have the technical studies supporting your General Plan update identified any rare or endangered species or habitat present in the transmission line study area inside Sacramento County, beyond those identified in commonly available databases?

#### • Section V—Cultural Resources

During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any significant cultural resources in the transmission line study area in Sacramento County?

# Section VI—Geology and Soils

During your General Plan update, has there been identification of any geologic constraints that would inhibit construction of the proposed transmission lines?

#### Section VII—Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Do you foresee any actions necessary to avoid hazards and hazardous materials impacts beyond SMUD's current compliance with Sacramento County regulations?

#### Section IX—Land Use and Planning

What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?

#### Section XI—Noise

Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.

#### Section XII—Population and Housing

Please provide us with any insights you may have regarding secondary impacts, given the potential for inducement of growth as a result of a decrease in electric rates.

#### Airport Land Use Commission for Sacramento County

#### Section VII—Hazards and Hazardous Materials

What airport land-use regulations should be considered in analyzing the possible location of the proposed transmission lines and substations in the vicinity of local airports?

# County of Sutter Planning Department

#### • Section I—Aesthetics

Does your agency have any General Plan policies regarding the protection of scenic resources?

#### • Section II—Agriculture Resources

Are there any agricultural issues pertaining to Williamson Act land or the conversion of farmland in the transmission line study area within Sutter County that your department would recommend be discussed in the Program EIR?

# Section IV—Biological Resources

Have the technical studies supporting your General Plan update identified any rare or endangered species or habitat present in the transmission line study area inside Sutter County, beyond those identified in commonly available databases?

#### Section V—Cultural Resources

During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any significant cultural resources in the transmission line study area in Sutter County?

# • Section VI—Geology and Soils

During your General Plan update, has there been identification of any geologic constraints that would inhibit construction of the proposed transmission line?

#### • Section VII—Hazards and Hazardous Materials

What regulations has your agency developed that can be applied to avoid hazards and hazardous materials impacts as a result of the project?

#### Section IX—Land Use and Planning

What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?

### • Section XI—Noise

Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.

# Section XII—Population and Housing

Please provide us with any insights you may have regarding secondary impacts, given the potential for inducement of growth as a result of a decrease in electric rates.

# Airport Land Use Commission for Sutter County

#### Section VII—Hazards and Hazardous Materials

What airport land-use regulations should be considered in analyzing the possible location of the proposed transmission lines and substations that may be located in the vicinity of local airports?

# County of Yolo Planning Department

# • Section I—Aesthetics

Does your agency have any General Plan policies regarding the protection of scenic resources?

# • Section II—Agriculture Resources

Are there any agricultural issues pertaining to Williamson Act land or the conversion of farmland in the Annexation Territory that your department would recommend be discussed in the Program EIR?

#### Section IV—Biological Resources

Please advise us on the current status of the County's adoption of the Yolo County Habitat Conservation Plan.

#### Section V—Cultural Resources

During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any significant cultural resources in the Annexation Territory or the transmission line study area?

#### • Section VI—Geology and Soils

During your General Plan update, has there been identification of any geologic constraints that would inhibit construction of the proposed transmission line and substation?

#### Section VII—Hazards and Hazardous Materials

What regulations has your agency developed that can be applied to avoid hazards and hazardous materials impacts as a result of the project?

#### Section IX—Land Use and Planning

What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?

#### Section XI—Noise

Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.

#### Section XII—Population and Housing

Please provide us with any insights you may have regarding secondary impacts, given the potential for inducement of growth as a result of a decrease in electric rates.

# Airport Land Use Commission for Yolo County

# • Section VII—Hazards and Hazardous Materials

What airport land-use regulations should be considered in analyzing the possible location of the proposed transmission lines and substations in the vicinity of local airports?

### Natomas Basin Conservancy

## Section IV—Biological Resources

Please advise us of any sensitive species or habitat present in your Habitat Conservation Plan that might be affected by construction of electric facilities.

# Section IX—Land Use and Planning

Please advise us of any sensitive species or habitat present in your Habitat Conservation Plan that might be affected by annexation or the selection of the transmission line route.

# Sacramento Area Council of Governments

# Section XII—Population and Housing

Please provide us with any insights you may have regarding secondary impacts, given the potential for inducement of growth as a result of decrease in electric rates?

#### **Exhibit B**

#### **Project Information**

Following are the project description, location, and related information regarding the proposed project.

#### **Project Title**

Amendment of the Sphere of Influence for the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) and Annexation by SMUD of the Cities of West Sacramento, Davis and Woodland and Portions of Unincorporated Areas of Yolo County

# **Lead Agency Name and Address**

Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) 1112 I Street, Suite 100 Sacramento, CA 95814

# **Contact Person and Telephone Number**

Peter Brundage, Executive Officer (916) 874-6458

# **Project Location**

The project location (Sphere of Influence [SOI] Amendment and Annexation Territory) includes the City of West Sacramento; the City of Woodland; the City of Davis (except for the University of California at Davis); and portions of unincorporated Yolo County between and surrounding those Cities. The proposed SOIs for SMUD and the cities in the proposed Annexation Territory are shown on Attachment A.

The regional location of the Annexation Territory is shown on Attachment B (Regional Location Map). The precise location and boundaries of the Annexation Territory are shown on Attachment C (Project Location Map).

#### **Project Sponsor's Name and Address**

Arlen Orchard, General Counsel Sacramento Municipal Utility District 6201 S Street Sacramento, CA 95817

## **General Plan Designation**

Various designations from the general plans of the City of West Sacramento; the City of Woodland; the City of Davis; portions of unincorporated Yolo County between and surrounding those cities; portions of Sacramento County; and potentially southern Sutter County.

#### **Zoning**

Various designations from the Zoning Ordinances of the City of West Sacramento; the City of Woodland; the City of Davis; portions of unincorporated Yolo County between and surrounding those cities; portions of Sacramento County; and potentially southern Sutter County.

# **Description of Project**

In general, the project consists of:

- Amendment of SMUD's SOI to include the Annexation Territory (see Attachment A).
- Annexation of an approximately 212 square-mile area of Yolo County, including the cities of West Sacramento, Davis (with the exception of the University of California at Davis) and Woodland, and certain unincorporated areas of Yolo County between and surrounding the cities (hereinafter referred to as the "Annexation Territory") into the SMUD service area for the purpose of replacing Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) as the provider of electric service (see Attachments B and C).
- SMUD's acquisition and operation of the existing PG&E electrical facilities serving the Annexation Territory.

The project's objectives are to integrate the Annexation Territory into the existing SMUD electrical system and to provide customers in the Annexation Territory with the potential for lower rates, local agency control and citizen participation in energy decision-making, and improved electric service reliability and customer service.

This Program EIR will analyze the potential impacts of the proposed project at a program level. The program-level assessment of the proposed project will include:

- The potential impacts to the Environmental Factors listed on Page 2 of this NOP;
- The potential impacts of SMUD extending its existing services to the Annexation Territory;
- The potential impacts related to the reconfiguration of SMUD's transmission system and PG&E's transmission and distribution systems;
- Potential changes in the operation of existing facilities, including generation resources such as the hydro, cogeneration, and wind facilities, among others; and
- Potential secondary impacts related to SMUD's electrical grid operation, energy supply, and system capacity.

This Program EIR also will provide the most current information regarding the installation of new electrical facilities that are required for the proposed annexation. Not all of these new facilities have been specifically sited at this time. Where the exact location for the proposed electrical facilities is unknown at this time, the Program EIR includes a study area for the proposed facility. Following the approval of the SOI amendment/annexation action, project specific environmental assessments will be completed to analyze the project-level site alternatives for the new electrical facilities.

Agencies are asked to respond at this time to questions pertaining to both the SOI amendment/annexation action and the proposed new electrical facilities.

The proposed annexation requires the installation of the following electrical facilities.

- A new 115,000-volt (115-kilovolt [kV]) transmission line between PG&E's existing Rio Oso/Woodland 115-kV transmission line north of the City of Woodland to SMUD's existing Elverta Substation (approximately 15 to 18 miles, depending on final route selection). The exact route has not been determined at this time. A transmission line study area will be reviewed as part of the Program EIR. The transmission line study area includes portions of Sacramento, Sutter, and Yolo Counties. As noted above, a future environmental assessment of transmission line routing alternatives will be conducted after the approval of the proposed annexation. (See Attachment H<sup>1</sup>, Figure 1, for the location of the transmission line study area.)
- Reconstruction of an existing SMUD 115-kV transmission line from Power Inn Road east to SMUD's Hedge Substation (2.5 miles). The existing transmission line lattice towers will be replaced by steel poles. Three additional overhead wires will be added to the existing line, bringing the total number of wires to nine, in addition to one fiber optic cable. (See Attachment H, Figure 2.)
- Interconnection of existing PG&E lines to SMUD lines near SMUD's North City Substation; these lines are adjacent to one another. (See Attachment H, Figure 3.)
- A new substation, the Willow Slough Substation, which will be located near an existing PG&E 115-kV line between Davis and Woodland, in the vicinity of the intersection of Road 102 and Road 27. The exact location of the substation has not been determined at this time. A substation study area will be reviewed as part of the Program EIR. As already noted, a future environmental assessment of substation site alternatives will be conducted after the approval of the proposed annexation. (See Attachment H, Figure 4, for the Substation Study Area.)
- Possible "reconductoring" (i.e., replacement of existing overhead wires with new slightly larger diameter overhead wires) to increase the electrical load-carrying capacity of sections of acquired PG&E lines. The application for annexation identified several facilities that may require reconductoring. Currently, the proposed reconductoring consists of one existing 115-kV transmission line and several existing 12-kV distribution lines. The 115-kV project consists of reconductoring the existing West Sacramento Substation to Davis Substation transmission line. PG&E already has identified the need for this project and has current plans to complete this project in 2005–2006, regardless of the proposed annexation. Therefore, this work may be completed prior to the proposed annexation. Selecting which sections of existing 12-kV lines may require reconductoring is dependent on the analysis of PG&E operational data not yet provided. After the approval of the annexation, and when the data are available, a complete 12-kV reconductoring list will be developed, and SMUD will perform any necessary environmental assessments at that time.

#### **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting (briefly describe the project's surroundings)**

The Annexation Territory is surrounded by rural and urban development on relatively flat topography. The remaining portion of Yolo County lies to the north, south, and west of the Annexation Territory. Sacramento County is to the east, Solano County is to the southwest, and Sutter County is to the northeast of the Annexation Territory.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The attachments used in this NOP are taken from the annexation application submitted to LAFCo for the proposed project. For consistency, when an attachment from the LAFCo application is reused in the NOP, the letter designation for the attachments will remain the same as those used in the application. Not all attachments from the application will be used in the NOP. Therefore, the attachment letter designations in the NOP will not be in alphabetical order, nor will all letters in a sequence be used.

Other Public Agencies Whose Approval May Be Required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement)

# Approval of the SOI Amendment/Annexation Action and the Program EIR

Sacramento Local Agency Formation Commission

# Subsequent Project-Level Electrical Facility CEQA Review and Approval

- Approval required from SMUD, Sacramento County, and Yolo County.
- Potential for approval or permitting, or agencies with a pertinent concern:
  - Airport Land Use Commission for Sacramento County
  - Airport Land Use Commission for Sutter County
  - Airport Land Use Commission for Yolo County
  - California Department of Fish and Game, Central Sierra Region 2
  - California Department of Forestry
  - California Department of Transportation, District 3
  - California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley
  - California State Lands Commission
  - Federal Aviation Administration
  - Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
  - Sutter County
  - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
  - U.S. Coast Guard
  - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1
  - Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District

#### **Exhibit C**

#### **Environmental Issues Discussion**

Following are the probable/potential environmental effects of the project.

#### I. AESTHETICS

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have a direct impact on aesthetics at the program level.

The proposed subsequent transmission and substation facility additions and modifications may occur in rural areas of the Annexation Territory, Sutter County, or Sacramento County, thereby potentially affecting designated scenic resources, such as highways and vistas. Most existing SMUD substations, similar to the one proposed for the Annexation Territory, have either little or no lighting. If lighting is installed, the effects of the lighting will be localized to the substation location. **Due to these potential impacts, aesthetic impacts will be discussed in the Program EIR.** 

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

- California Department of Transportation, District 3: Are there any state scenic highways in the Annexation Territory or in the transmission line study area?
- **Sutter County Planning Department:** Does your agency have any General Plan policies regarding the protection of scenic resources?
- Yolo County Planning Department: Does your agency have any General Plan policies regarding the protection of scenic resources?
- Sacramento County Planning Department: Does your agency have any General Plan policies regarding the protection of scenic resources?

#### II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have a direct impact on agricultural resources at the program level.

The placement of proposed subsequent transmission and substation facilities may occur in rural areas where agricultural land is present. However, these facilities will have relatively small footprints and agricultural activities can continue under the overhead wires and near the structures and foundations.

The expected reduction in agriculture electric service rates, as a result of the annexation, may have secondary impacts on Annexation Territory irrigation practices. In addition, many farmers in the Annexation Territory use diesel motors to operate their irrigation pumps. Efforts are underway by regulating agencies to transition farmers back to electric pumps to reduce air emissions from the diesel motors. Therefore, a focused discussion of these potential impacts will be included in the Program EIR.

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

• City of Sacramento Planning Department: Are there any agricultural issues pertaining to Williamson Act land or the conversion of farmland in the transmission line study area that your department would recommend be discussed in the Program EIR?

- Sacramento County Planning Department: Are there any agricultural issues pertaining to Williamson Act land or the conversion of farmland in the transmission line study area within Sacramento County that your department would recommend be discussed in the Program EIR?
- Sutter County Planning Department: Are there any agricultural issues pertaining to Williamson Act land or the conversion of farmland in the transmission line study area within Sutter County that your department would recommend be discussed in the Program EIR?
- Yolo County Planning Department: Are there any agricultural issues pertaining to Williamson Act land or the conversion of farmland in the Annexation Territory that your department would recommend be discussed in the Program EIR?

# III. AIR QUALITY

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have a direct impact on air quality at the program level.

Sacramento County and Yolo County are designated as nonattainment for specific ambient air quality standards at both the state and federal levels. The emissions from temporary construction activities as a result of the project might contribute to existing violations of ambient air quality standards. However, these activities would be only short-term. A substantial emission of air pollutants is not expected to be generated during project operation.

The changes in generation supply resources when SMUD replaces PG&E as the electric service provider may have a secondary impact on air quality. No new power plants are planned for the region as a result of the proposed annexation. The electric demand will essentially be unchanged, except for current growth estimates and the attempt to encourage the use of electric irrigation pumps rather than the existing diesel irrigation pumps. As discussed in Agriculture Resources, reduced agriculture electric service rates may induce the replacement of diesel motor irrigation pumps with electric irrigation pumps and therefore reduce the resultant air emissions. **Due to these potential impacts, a focused discussion on air quality will be included in the Program EIR.** 

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District: Do you have air quality concerns related to the project other than defining the temporary construction air quality mitigation measures?
- Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District: Do you have air quality concerns related to the project other than defining the temporary construction air quality mitigation measures?
- **Feather River Air Quality Management District:** Do you have air quality concerns related to the project other than defining the temporary construction air quality mitigation measures?

#### IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have a direct impact on biological resources at the program level.

The proposed subsequent transmission and substation facilities may have an impact on threatened or endangered wildlife species or habitats or federally protected wetlands that might be present in the Annexation Territory and transmission line study area.

In Sacramento and Yolo County, the Natomas Basin Conservancy District serves as plan operator for the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan. It acquires and manages habitat land for the benefit of the 22 "special status" species covered under the Plan. A preliminary draft of the Yolo County Habitat Conservation Plan has been prepared recently; however, it has not yet been adopted. There are no other known adopted plans affecting the Annexation Territory or transmission line study area. The Program EIR will address the project's conformance with these plans and criteria to avoid or mitigate potential impacts. **Due to these potential impacts, a focused discussion on biological resources will be included in the Program EIR.** 

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

- California Department of Fish and Game, Central Sierra Region 2: Please advise us of any sensitive species or habitat present in the Annexation Territory and transmission line study area that are not included in commonly available databases.
- Sacramento County Planning Department: Have the technical studies supporting your General Plan update identified any rare or endangered species or habitat present in the transmission line study area inside Sacramento County, beyond those identified in commonly available databases?
- Sutter County Planning Department: Have the technical studies supporting your General Plan update identified any rare or endangered species or habitat present in the transmission line study area inside Sutter County, beyond those identified in commonly available databases?
- City of Sacramento Planning Department: Have the technical studies supporting your General Plan update identified any rare or endangered species or habitat present in the transmission line study area inside Sacramento County, beyond those identified in commonly available databases?
- Yolo County Planning Department: Please advise us on the current status of the County's adoption of the Yolo County Habitat Conservation Plan.
- **Natomas Basin Conservancy:** Please advise us of any sensitive species or habitat present in your Habitat Conservation Plan that might be affected by construction of electric facilities.

#### V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have a direct impact on cultural resources at the program level.

The proposed transmission and substation facilities may have an impact on cultural resources in the Annexation Territory and the transmission line study area. **Due to these potential impacts, focused discussion on cultural resources will be included in the Program EIR.** 

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

- **City of Sacramento Planning Department:** During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any significant cultural resources in the transmission line study area?
- Sacramento County Planning Department: During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any significant cultural resources in the transmission line study area in Sacramento County?

- Sutter County Planning Department: During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any significant cultural resources in the transmission line study area in Sutter County?
- Yolo County Planning Department: During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any significant cultural resources in the Annexation Territory or the transmission line study area?

# VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have geology and soils impacts at the program level.

It is not expected that the proposed electrical facilities will result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil, given the relatively small size of the footprints that the facilities will be occupying. The project will not involve the development or use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. SMUD has extensive electric facilities in Sacramento County and generation facilities in Solano, El Dorado, and Placer Counties. Given existing utility design standards and practices, it is not expected that there will be any impacts on geology or soils or that the local geology or soils will impact the proposed electric facilities. **Therefore, potential geology and soil impacts will not be discussed in the Program EIR.** 

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

- Sacramento County Planning Department: During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any geologic constraints that would inhibit construction of the proposed transmission lines?
- **Sutter County Planning Department:** During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any geologic constraints that would inhibit construction of the proposed transmission line?
- Yolo County Planning Department: During your General Plan update, has there been an identification of any geologic constraints that would inhibit construction of the proposed transmission line and substation?

#### VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

When the proposed SOI amendment/annexation action is approved, SMUD will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the electrical facilities in the Annexation Territory. Therefore, SMUD will assume responsibility for the management of hazards and hazardous material normally associated with an electrical utility. SMUD has extensive electric facilities in Sacramento County and generation facilities in Solano, El Dorado, and Placer Counties. SMUD will incorporate applicable Yolo County regulations into its current hazards and hazardous materials procedures and practices and extend them to the proposed Annexation Territory. Therefore, there may be potential impacts to the existing hazards and hazardous materials procedures and practices in the Annexation Territory.

The installation of the transmission and/or substation facilities may create possible hazards and involve the use of hazardous materials, which might create a hazard to the public. In addition, the proposed transmission line and substation study areas may be in the vicinity of existing or proposed schools.

Pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, the Cortese List was consulted in July 2005. The Cortese List reported multiple hazardous waste sites in both Sacramento and Yolo Counties where the Annexation Territory is located. The Program EIR will develop locational criteria to avoid placement of the proposed transmission and substation facilities in these affected areas.

The Annexation Territory is near the Sacramento International Airport and numerous smaller airstrips. The Program EIR will develop operational criteria to avoid placing the proposed transmission and substation facilities in conflict with these aviation facilities. The Annexation Territory contains rural areas of mostly agricultural lands, where wildland fires present a low hazard to the proposed transmission and substation facilities. **Due to these potential impacts, focused discussion on hazards and hazardous materials will be included in the Program EIR.** 

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

- Sacramento County Health Department: Do you foresee any actions necessary to avoid hazards and hazardous materials impacts beyond SMUD's current compliance with Sacramento County regulations?
- Sacramento County Airport Land Use Commission: What airport land-use regulations should be considered in analyzing the possible location of the proposed transmission lines and substations in the vicinity of local airports?
- **Sutter County Health Department:** What regulations has your agency developed that can be applied to avoid hazards and hazardous materials impacts as a result of the project?
- Sutter County Airport Land Use Commission: What airport land-use regulations should be considered in analyzing the possible location of the proposed transmission lines and substations that may be located in the vicinity of local airports?
- Yolo County Health Department: What regulations has your agency developed that can be applied to avoid hazards and hazardous materials impacts as a result of the project?
- Yolo County Airport Land Use Commission: What airport land-use regulations should be considered in analyzing the possible location of the proposed transmission lines and substations in the vicinity of local airports?
- California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics: What air traffic rules and regulations should be considered in analyzing the proposed SOI amendment/annexation and construction of new electric facilities?
- Federal Aviation Administration: What air traffic rules and regulations should be considered in analyzing the proposed SOI amendment/annexation and construction of new electric facilities?

# VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have direct impacts on hydrology and water quality at the program level.

Given the limited nature of the construction necessary for the proposed transmission line and substation facilities within the Annexation Territory and the transmission line study area, the construction of electrical facilities is not likely to generate significant hydrologic or water quality impacts. The project also will not involve the construction of any housing.

Since the proposed locations for the transmission line and substation facilities are unknown at this time, it cannot be determined whether the proposed facilities will be located in 100-year floodplains, where structures might be susceptible to flood damage. However, in the event that they are located in such a floodplain, this infrastructure will leave relatively small footprints, resulting in minimal impedance of existing flood flows. The project is not located in an area that could experience inundation from seiches, tsunamis, or mudflows.

SMUD is not proposing to operate its Upper American River Project (UARP) hydroelectric facility in El Dorado County differently as a result of the proposed annexation. As discussed in SMUD's annexation application submitted to LAFCo, the Annexation Territory will not receive generation supply from SMUD's UARP facility. The Program EIR will include a focused discussion on any possible relationship between SMUD's operation of the UARP facility and the proposed annexation. If a relationship is established, the potential impacts on hydrology and water quality related to the UARP will be included in the Program EIR.

As discussed in Agriculture Resources, the reduction in agriculture electric service rates may have an impact on irrigation practices in the Annexation Territory. If this potential impact is significant, a focused discussion on secondary impacts on hydrology and water quality related to electric rates will be included in the Program EIR.

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

• No specific questions/issues are addressed to specific agencies.

#### IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have land use and planning impacts at the program level.

It is not expected that the proposed electrical facilities will physically divide an established community. It is anticipated that the General Plans for the affected cities and counties will accommodate the construction of public utilities, such as those proposed by the project to meet service needs. Further review of these plans will be included in the Program EIR.

In Sacramento County, the Natomas Basin Conservancy serves as plan operator for the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan. It acquires and manages habitat land for the benefit of the 22 "special status" species covered under the Plan. A preliminary draft of the Yolo County Habitat Conservation Plan has been prepared recently; however, it has not yet been adopted. There are no other adopted plans affecting the Annexation Territory. The Program EIR will address the project's conformance with these plans. **Due to these potential impacts, focused discussion on land use and planning will be included in the Program EIR.** 

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

- **City of Davis Planning Department:** What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?
- **City of Sacramento Planning Department:** What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?

- **City of West Sacramento Planning Department:** What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?
- **City of Woodland Planning Department:** What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?
- Sacramento County Planning Department: What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?
- **Sutter County Planning Department:** What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?
- Yolo County Planning Department: What regulations, plans, or concerns do you have that may be pertinent to the proposed annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route?
- Natomas Basin Conservancy: Please advise us of any sensitive species or habitat present in your Habitat Conservation Plan that might be affected by the annexation or the selection of the final substation site and transmission line route.

#### X. MINERAL RESOURCES

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have mineral resources impacts at the program level.

Proposed transmission and substation facilities might be placed in areas where mineral resources may be present. While no mineral resource extraction proposals are known near the proposed electrical facilities, mineral extraction and gas wells can and do occur adjacent to electrical facilities. In the event of discovery of a rare or valuable resource in the future, temporary or permanent relocation of transmission lines is feasible. **Therefore, mineral resources impacts will not be discussed in the Program EIR.** 

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

• California Department of Conservation, State Mining and Geology Board: Does your agency agree that mineral resources will not be significantly affected by this project?

#### XI. NOISE

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have noise impacts at the program level.

The proposed transmission and substation facilities might create noise impacts if they were located near residential and other noise-sensitive areas. Appropriate siting criteria and substation equipment specifications will minimize these impacts. Although the Annexation Territory and the transmission line study area will include or be near several large and small airports, the electrical facilities to be constructed in the future to implement the annexation will not introduce new adverse noise exposure to residents and workers. **Due to these potential impacts, a focused discussion on noise will be included in the Program EIR.** 

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

- City of Davis Planning Department: Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.
- City of Sacramento Planning Department: Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.
- City of West Sacramento Planning Department: Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.
- City of Woodland Planning Department: Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.
- Sacramento County Planning Department: Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.
- **Sutter County Planning Department:** Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.
- Yolo County Planning Department: Please send us your current noise ordinance and/or noise criteria.

#### XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have direct impacts on Population and Housing at the program level.

The proposed electric facilities will not involve any changes in population or housing. Rather, the electric facilities are intended to serve existing electric customers as well as the projected growth in the general plans of the relevant jurisdictions.

There may be secondary impacts given that possible inducement of growth, as a result of reduction in electric rates, above the levels currently planned for by the local jurisdiction. Therefore, the Program EIR will include an analysis of the potential impact of growth inducement. If this potential impact is significant, a focused discussion of secondary impacts on population and housing will be included in the Program EIR.

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

• The cities, counties, and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments: Please provide us with any insights you may have regarding secondary impacts, given the potential for inducement of growth as a result of a decrease in electric rates.

#### XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have a direct impact on fire and police protection, schools, parks, and other public facilities at the program level. However, the loss of fees (i.e., franchise fees and property taxes) currently paid to the local jurisdictions by PG&E may have a secondary impact on the general fund of the affected jurisdictions. As a publicly owned utility, SMUD is exempt from these types of fees. Any shortfall to the affected jurisdictions may result in the delay or elimination of planned infrastructure improvements or a reduction in public services in the Annexation Territory, or possibly even decay or blight. The annexation application includes provisions for a surcharge on electric rates in the Annexation Territory to mitigate the potential impacts. A focused discussion of these potential impacts will be presented in the Program EIR.

There may be secondary impacts given that possible inducement of growth, as a result of reduction in electric rates, above the levels currently planned for by the local jurisdiction. Therefore, the Program EIR will include an analysis of the potential impact of growth inducement. If this potential impact is significant, a focused discussion of secondary impacts on public services will be included in the Program EIR.

The proposed electric facilities will not involve any changes in population that will increase the demand for schools and parks, compared to projections in general plans by the jurisdictions. The proposed electric facilities will require appropriate police and fire protection services of the various jurisdictions. However, the addition of the proposed electric facilities will not require additional protection services above those currently provided for the existing electrical facilities in the Annexation Territory. A focused discussion of these potential impacts will be presented in the **Program EIR.** 

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

• No specific questions/issues are addressed to specific agencies.

#### XIV. RECREATION

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have a direct impact on recreation at the program level. However, the loss of fees (i.e., franchise fees and property taxes) currently paid to the local jurisdictions by PG&E may have a secondary impact on the general fund of the affected jurisdictions. As a publicly owned utility, SMUD is exempt from these types of fees. Any shortfall to the affected jurisdictions may result in the delay or elimination of planned infrastructure improvements or a reduction in recreation services in the Annexation Territory, or possibly even decay or blight. The annexation application includes provisions for a surcharge on electric rates in the Annexation Territory to mitigate the potential impacts. A focused discussion of these potential impacts will be presented in the Program EIR.

SMUD is not proposing to operate its Upper American River Project (UARP) hydroelectric facility in El Dorado County differently as a result of the proposed annexation. As discussed in SMUD's annexation application submitted to LAFCo, the Annexation Territory will not receive generation supply from SMUD's UARP facility. The Program EIR will include a focused discussion on any possible relationship between SMUD's operation of the UARP facility and the proposed annexation. If a relationship is established, the potential impacts on recreation related to the UARP will be included in the Program EIR.

There may be secondary impacts given that possible inducement of growth, as a result of reduction in electric rates, above the levels currently planned for by the local jurisdiction. Therefore, the Program EIR will include an analysis of the potential impact of growth inducement. If this potential impact is significant, a focused discussion of secondary impacts on recreation will be included in the Program EIR.

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

• No specific questions/issues are addressed to specific agencies.

#### XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

The SOI amendment/annexation action will not have transportation or traffic impacts at the program level. However, the loss of fees (i.e., franchise fees and property taxes) currently paid to the local jurisdictions by PG&E may have a secondary impact on the general fund of the affected jurisdictions. As a publicly owned utility, SMUD is exempt from these types of fees. Any shortfall to the affected jurisdictions may result in the delay or elimination of planned infrastructure improvements in the Annexation Territory, or possibly even decay or blight. The annexation application includes provisions for a surcharge on electric rates in the Annexation Territory to mitigate the potential impacts. A focused discussion of these potential impacts will be presented in the Program EIR.

There may be secondary impacts given that possible inducement of growth, as a result of reduction in electric rates, above the levels currently planned for by the local jurisdiction. Therefore, the EIR will include an analysis of the potential impact of growth inducement. If this potential impact is significant, a focused discussion of potential secondary impacts on transportation and traffic will be included in the Program EIR.

Other than during the initial construction periods, the transmission and substation facilities will not generate transportation and traffic impacts. The transmission line will be sited to avoid impacts to air traffic. Therefore, the Program EIR will not include a discussion on traffic and transportation impacts related to the installation of new electrical facilities.

Specific Questions/Issues Addressed to Specific Agencies:

No specific questions/issues are addressed to specific agencies.

#### XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

The SOI amendment/annexation action will result in SMUD replacing PG&E as the electric service provider in the Annexation Territory. This change may result in potential impacts on SMUD's and PG&E's electric utility and service systems. **The Program EIR will include a focused discussion on:** 

- Potential impacts related to the reconfiguration of SMUD's transmission system and PG&E's transmission and distribution systems;
- Potential changes in the operation of existing facilities, including generation resources such as the hydro, cogeneration, and wind facilities, among others; and
- Potential secondary impacts related to SMUD's electrical grid operation, energy supply, and system capacity.

There may be secondary impacts given that possible inducement of growth, as a result of reduction in electric rates, above the levels currently planned for by the local jurisdiction. Therefore, the Program EIR will include an analysis of the potential impact of growth inducement. If this potential impact is significant, a focused discussion of potential secondary impacts on utilities and service systems will be included in the Program EIR.

#### XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The SOI amendment/annexation action and the proposed electrical facilities may have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or

animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

The SOI amendment/annexation action and the installation of the proposed electrical facilities may have the potential for impacts that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.) In addition, the action could have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

#### **XVIII. REFERENCES**

The following references were used in preparing the Environmental Discussion for the Amendment of the Sphere of Influence for the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) and Annexation by SMUD of the Cities of West Sacramento, Davis, and Woodland and Portions of Unincorporated Areas of Yolo County.

- California Air Resources Board. http://www.arb.ca.gov/desig/adm/adm.htm, accessed July 2005.
- Department of Toxic Substances Control. *Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese List)*, http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/database/Calsites/cortese\_List.cfm, accessed July 2005.
- EIP Associates. Preliminary Draft Yolo County Habitat Conservation Plan. January 2001.
- SMUD Application for Annexation of the Cities of West Sacramento, Davis, and Woodland, and Unincorporated Areas of Yolo County and Related Sphere of Influence Amendment.

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