

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

BARONA NEW ROW PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FONSI

SDG&E proposes to obtain a new easement and Right-Of-Way (ROW) to install, own, operate, maintain, repair, replace, reinstall, reconstruct, and/or remove electric and communications facilities to serve the tribal members within the Barona Indian Reservation, Tribal Tract 5071. The facilities located within the requested new easement area are existing. The requested new easement area for C974 Sec D - Easement # 7 includes existing poles P378616 through P572561, with a width of 12 feet and length of 548.13 feet, or 0.150 acre. The new ROW would expressly provide SDG&E the right to install, own, operate, maintain, repair, replace, and remove communication facilities and overhead appurtenances used solely and exclusively for SDG&E's internal communications. The term of the new easement would be held in perpetuity, but the Tribe may terminate it per 25 C.F.R. Part 169. The proposed project is needed to allow SDG&E to install, operate, and maintain reliable electric service to tribal members on the Barona Indian Reservation.

Based on the Environmental Evaluation (EE), it has been considered the potential effects of the new ROW on the environment will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, in accordance with Section 102(2)(A) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

This determination is supported by the following findings:

1. The proposed ROW project area is located on trust lands on the Barona Indian Reservation analyzed in the EE.
2. The EE discloses the environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and potentially viable alternative(s); which includes the no-action alternative.
3. As described in the EE, no mitigation is recommended as all evaluated impacts would be less than significant.
4. Federally-listed species were not known to occur within the project footprint as documented in a biological assessment. Therefore, BIA has determined that there will be "no effect" to federal listed species or critical habitat as a result of this project.
5. The BIA determined that the ROW would result in no significant impact to historic properties.
6. Cumulative and secondary effects on soil, water, air, noise, vegetation, cultural resources, and wildlife resources (species and habitat) were considered and determined to be less than significant.
7. In accordance with Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, impacts to minority and low-income populations and communities have been considered, as have impacts to Indian Trust Resources and found to be less than significant.

Determination

It has been determined that the proposed action for the easement (ROW) to install, operate, and maintain electric service does not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Therefore, in accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C § 4321 et seq., an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This determination is supported by the aforementioned findings described in this FONSI and the analysis contained in the entire administrative record, including the EA, and the mitigation imposed. This fulfills the requirements of NEPA as set out in the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 C.F.R. 1500–1508), and the BIA NEPA Guidebook (59 IAM 3-H, August 2012).

Approved:

Date:

Superintendent
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Southern California Agency
