

## 5.0 Environmental Information

### 5.1 General

The following 17 subsections of this Application for Certification (AFC) address the various resource areas identified in the California Energy Commission (CEC) Energy Facilities Siting Regulations (Title 20, California Code of Regulations, Section 1704, Appendix B):

- 5.2 Air Quality
- 5.3 Biological Resources
- 5.4 Cultural Resources
- 5.5 Geologic Hazards and Resources
- 5.6 Hazardous Materials Handling
- 5.7 Land Use
- 5.8 Noise
- 5.9 Paleontological Resources
- 5.10 Public Health
- 5.11 Socioeconomics
- 5.12 Soils
- 5.13 Traffic and Transportation
- 5.14 Transmission Line Safety and Nuisance
- 5.15 Visual Resources
- 5.16 Waste Management
- 5.17 Water Resources
- 5.18 Worker Safety

For consistency and ease of review, each of these discipline areas is presented in a standardized format under the following subheadings:

- LORS (laws, ordinances, regulations and standards) Compliance (including involved agencies and agency contacts; permit requirements and permit schedules);
- Affected Environment;
- Environmental Impacts (including construction, operations, and cumulative impacts);
- Mitigation Measures; and
- References.

### **5.1.1 Projects Considered in Cumulative Impact Analysis**

The following paragraphs identify and briefly summarize the projects that were considered in the cumulative impacts analysis for each of the 17 resource areas. As required under CEQA, the impacts of the PHPP must be considered together with those of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the area that may produce related or cumulative impacts. The area of interest for potential cumulative projects included the Cities of Palmdale and Lancaster.

Past and present projects, because they already exist, are inherently part of the environmental baseline or “affected environment” discussed in detail in this AFC for each environmental area. For purposes of determining the PHPP’s cumulative impacts, the impacts associated with past and present projects represent the starting point to which impacts from the proposed Project are added, along with the reasonably foreseeable projects presented below. Projects within a three-mile radius around the plant site were examined in this analysis. Brief descriptions of these projects are provided below.

#### **5.1.1.1 Fairway Business Park**

The Fairway Business Park is located approximately 1.3 miles southwest of the PHPP plant site in the City of Palmdale. The Fairway Business Park is located on 120 acres at the south side of Ave O between 7th St W and Division Street and was created by the Palmdale Community Redevelopment Agency in 1998. The goal of the Park was to purchase land that could be developed into a commercial and industrial park to assist in attracting large-scale industrial users. A Master EIR and a Master Conditional Use Permit were approved in 2005.

According to City of Palmdale Planning Department personnel, the Fairway Business Park is approximately 60 percent built out (Kite, 2008), with tenants including a commercial manufacturer of outdoor light fixtures and poles, a manufacturer of vehicle access control equipment, a FedEx distribution center, and an auto body and repair shop. An additional roughly 200,000 square feet of industrial and commercial buildings are available for lease or purchase and nine parcels totaling 39 acres are currently vacant and available for development.

#### **5.1.1.2 Palmdale Transit Village Specific Plan**

The Palmdale Transit Village Specific Plan area is located approximately 2.5 miles southwest of the PHPP plant site. Development of the Palmdale Transit Village Specific Plan would result in a transit-oriented village near the City’s newly constructed Metrolink commuter rail and Antelope Valley Transit Authority bus transfer station (Multi-modal Transportation Center). The area potentially could be developed with up to 1,027 new housing units; 40,000 square feet of stand alone neighborhood retail uses; 93,000 square feet of neighborhood retail mixed use; 353,000 square feet of stand alone low rise office; and 93,000 square feet of low rise mixed-use office uses. Development also would involve circulation improvements including a pedestrian bridge traversing the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, landscaping, and extending the existing box culvert and rail platform approximately 100 feet north of the existing platform.

The Transit Village site incorporates approximately 100 acres to the south and west of the Multi-modal Transportation Center. Construction has not yet begun. The project area currently includes 311 residential units, approximately 68,000 square feet of commercial/industrial uses and 20,000 square feet of public/school uses. In order to accommodate development of the Palmdale Transit Village Specific Plan, removal of certain existing residential, commercial/industrial and public/school uses would be required.

### 5.1.1.3 Amargosa Creek Specific Plan

The Amargosa Creek Specific Plan is located approximately two miles northwest of the PHPP plant site in the City of Lancaster. The Specific Plan area is a 152-acre site located at 10<sup>th</sup> St W between Ave L and Ave K-8. The project is the development of retail and office uses, a hotel, and a medical facility within two major districts: the Commercial District (1.1-1.5 million square feet to be built out over 10 years) and the Medical District (approximately 655,000 square feet). An EIR was approved for the project in 2007. According to City of Lancaster Planning Department personnel, no specific projects have been filed for this area (Swain, 2008).

### 5.1.1.4 30th St W and Avenue K Projects

The 30th St W and Ave K projects are located approximately three miles northwest of the PHPP plant site in Lancaster. The two projects at this intersection include a commercial development on the southwest corner and a commercial and townhome development on the southeast corner. The southwest project site is approximately 4.4 acres, and the project would include approximately 25,800 square feet of commercial retail facilities and 10,500 square feet of high-turnover restaurant facilities, and 216 parking spaces. Access to the development would be via both 30th St W and Ave K. The southeast project site is approximately 8.5 acres and would be developed with commercial and residential uses. The commercial component would include 264 parking spaces, and access to the commercial site would be provided from both 30 Street West and Avenue K. The southeast project site has been approved and is moving forward. A hearing is scheduled for the southwest corner site in August 2008 (Swain, 2008).

## 5.1.2 References

City of Lancaster, Amargosa Creek Specific Plan, Final Program Environmental Impact Report. 2007. Prepared for the City of Lancaster Planning Department. Prepared by Impact Sciences. July.

Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Palmdale – Fairway Business Park. Website accessed July 24, 2008.

<<http://www.calredevelop.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=4170>>.

Draft Environmental Impact Report, 30<sup>th</sup> Street W and Avenue K Projects, City of Lancaster. 2007. Prepared for the City of Lancaster Planning Department. Prepared by Christopher A. Joseph & Associates. August.

Kite, Richard, 2008. Planner, City of Palmdale Planning Department. Personal communication with Stephanie Hsia, ENSR. July 24.

Ng, Chung, 2008. Planner, City of Lancaster Planning Department. Personal communication with Stephanie Hsia, ENSR. July.

Swain, Jocelyn, 2008. Planner, City of Lancaster Planning Department. Personal communication. July 2.