

# ES EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section provides a summary of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Power Plant 1 (PP1) and Power Plant 2 (PP2) Transmission Line Conversion Project (proposed project). The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires EIRs to contain a brief summary of the proposed project and its consequences. The summary must include each significant effect with proposed mitigation measures and alternatives that would reduce or avoid that effect; areas of controversy known to the lead agency including issues raised by agencies and the public; and, issues to be resolved including the choice among alternatives and whether or how to mitigate the significant effects (CEQA Guidelines Section 15123). In accordance with these requirements, this section provides a summary of the proposed project and of project impacts, lists mitigation measures and alternatives, describes areas of known controversy, and discusses issues to be resolved.

## ES.1 Introduction

This EIR has been prepared by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) to evaluate potential environmental effects that would result from development of the proposed project. This EIR has been prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA) statutes (Cal. Pub. Res. Code, Section 21000 et. seq., as amended) and implementing guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., Title 14, Section 15000 et. seq.). LADWP is the lead agency under CEQA.

## ES.2 Project Location and Setting

The proposed project is a transmission line replacement project proposed by LADWP. The proposed project would be located within an established transmission corridor and within two existing electrical switching stations (Haskell Canyon Switching Station and Sylmar Switching Station). The transmission corridor has been used for electricity transmission since the early 1900s. The corridor is an LADWP right-of-way, consisting of LADWP-owned land and private property that is 250 feet in width and contains three existing transmission lines: a 500 kilovolt (kV) direct current (DC) transmission line, a 115 kV double circuit transmission line that is proposed for replacement as part of this project, and a 4-circuit 230 kV transmission line. This corridor is referred to as the “South of Haskell Corridor” within the LADWP electrical transmission system.

The project alignment extends from Haskell Canyon Switching Station in the north to Sylmar Switching Station in the south. The southern extent of the alignment is located within the Granada Hills–Knollwood Community Plan area within the City of Los Angeles, immediately west of Interstate 5 (I-5), near the interchange of I-5 and I-210. The alignment then angles north before exiting the City of Los Angeles and extending through an undeveloped mountainous area in the San Gabriel Mountains, north of Sylmar and within an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County. The portion of the alignment that crosses the San Gabriel Mountains extends between State Route 14 to the west and the Angeles National Forest boundary to the east. Next, the alignment descends into the Santa Clara River basin in the City of Santa Clarita. The alignment then extends in a north–south orientation across the City of Santa Clarita, terminating at the Haskell Canyon Switching Station, located just south of the Angeles National Forest. The land uses surrounding the transmission corridor and the two switching stations range from industrial areas to open space.

### ES.3 Project Summary

The proposed project would involve replacing a 12-mile segment of an existing 115 kilovolt (kV) double circuit transmission line with a new 230 kV double circuit transmission line (hereafter referred to as the “115 kV line” and the “230 kV line,” respectively). The new 230 kV line would be strung with two 230-kV 3 phase circuits; however, only one circuit would be energized upon project completion. The second would be energized in the future, based on availability of future renewable energy supplies. The proposed project would involve demolishing the existing 115 kV line and constructing an approximately 12-mile segment of 230 kV lines and associated transmission structures generally adjacent to the existing 115 kV line. The 115 kV line and most of its associated transmission towers would be removed from Haskell Canyon Switching Station in the north to the line’s terminus at Olive Switching Station in the south. The new line would be installed and the old line would be removed within an existing alignment that extends from Haskell Canyon Switching Station in the north to Olive Switching Station and Sylmar Switching Station in the south. The proposed new line would also originate at Haskell Canyon Switching Station. The circuit that would not be energized would terminate at Olive Switching Station, and the energized circuit would terminate at Sylmar Switching Station. The project alignment is approximately 12 miles long and consists of LADWP-owned land and private properties within an LADWP right-of-way. The purpose of this project is to increase the transmission capacity between Haskell Canyon Switching Station and Sylmar Switching Station so that additional renewable energy supplies can be transmitted from the Tehachapi Mountains and Mojave Desert to the Los Angeles basin.

### ES.4 Project Objectives

The underlying purpose of the project is to alleviate constraints for transferring renewable energy supplies from the Tehachapi Mountains and Mojave Desert areas to the highly populated Los Angeles basin in order to help LADWP achieve state and local requirements for GHG reductions and an increased renewable energy portfolio. As set forth in the CEQA Guidelines, the project’s specific objectives are provided below.

- Allow for increased transmission of renewable energy from the Tehachapi Mountains and Mojave Desert areas to the highly populated Los Angeles basin.
- Assist LADWP in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and meeting Renewable Portfolio Standards goals established in the City’s sustainability plans and initiatives.
- Improve the safety and operational flexibility of energy transmission in the South of Haskell Corridor to address system reliability concerns associated within increased use of solar and wind energy sources.
- Enhance the operational flexibility of the Haskell Canyon Switching Station and Sylmar Switching Station.
- Minimize the environmental disturbance of transmission upgrades by constructing improvements within an existing transmission corridor and within existing switching stations; avoiding sensitive resources to the extent feasible; and minimizing the number of new access routes.

## ES.5 Areas of Controversy/Issues to be Resolved

LADWP issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to prepare an EIR for the proposed project. Issuance of the NOP began the scoping process for proposed project. The purpose of scoping is to seek input from public agencies and the general public regarding the environmental issues and concerns that may potentially result from the proposed project. During the scoping period, a public scoping meeting was held at the City of Santa Clarita Activities Center, on February 7, 2018. One person, who was a planner from the City of Santa Clarita Community Development department, attended the meeting. Comment letters were also received in response to the Notice of Preparation and Initial Study for this project. Copies of the comment letters, a summary of the verbal comments received during the scoping meeting, and the Initial Study and NOP are provided in Appendix A. The primary areas of controversy identified by the public and agencies included the following potential issues (the EIR section that addresses the issue raised is provided in parentheses):

- Health effects and corona noise associated with transmission lines (Section 3.7 addresses noise and Section 3.11 discusses electric and magnetic fields)
- Construction-related traffic and associated effects on commuters, pedestrians, cyclists, emergency responders, and police patrol operations (Section 3.8 addresses transportation and traffic)
- Impacts to the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County’s sewer lines and recycled water lines (Chapter 2.0 addresses coordination with the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County for the protection of the district’s facilities during project construction and operation)
- Loss of habitat and edge effects (Section 3.3 addresses effects to biological resources)
- Impacts to special-status species, including burrowing owl, least Bell’s vireo, passerine birds, and sensitive plant species (Section 3.3 addresses effects to biological resources)
- Impacts to streams and associated plant and animal species, watershed function, and biological diversity (Section 3.3 addresses effects to biological resources)
- Potential for the project to facilitate growth inducement (Chapter 6.0 addresses growth inducement)
- Aesthetic impacts of new transmission towers, including visual impacts to residents (Section 3.1 addresses potential visual impacts)
- Outreach efforts to the neighborhoods potentially impacted by the new transmission towers (Appendix A includes a scoping report that describes the outreach conducted for the NOP process)

## ES.6 Summary of Environmental Impacts

The project’s potential environmental impacts are summarized in Table ES-1. This table contains a summary of the impacts described in this EIR, as well as the impacts that were addressed in the Initial Study and determined to require no further detailed analysis in the EIR. Table ES-1 also includes a list of the proposed mitigation measures that are recommended in response to the project’s potentially significant impacts, as well as a determination of the level of significance of the impacts after implementation of the recommended mitigation measures.

## ES.7 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

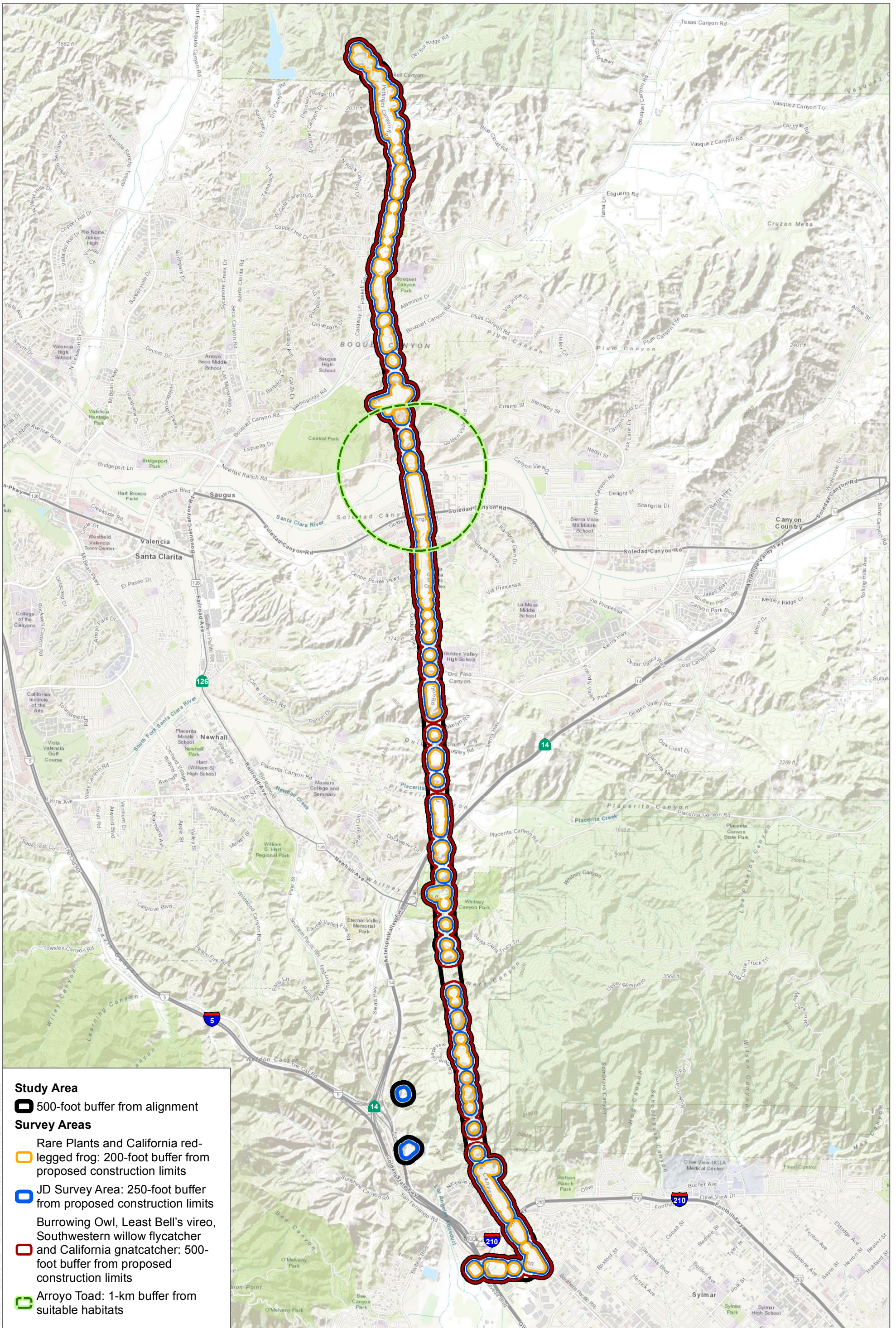
The CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires consideration and discussion of alternatives to the proposed project in an EIR. Several alternatives, including alternate project locations, were considered but rejected from consideration in this EIR. A review of those alternatives and the reasons for rejecting them is provided in Chapter 5.0 of this document. Two alternatives, including the No Project Alternative, are reviewed in detail in Chapter 5.0 of this document. This section summarizes the two alternatives to the project that were analyzed in detail as required under CEQA.

### **Alternative 1**

Alternative 1 assumes the proposed project would not proceed. The existing 115 kV transmission line would continue to operate within the South of Haskell Corridor. No improvements would occur within this corridor or at the switching stations. The proposed project is being undertaken in part to address thermal violations on transmission lines south of the Haskell Canyon Switching Station. This indicates that line currents would increase to the extent that safety and reliability of the line may become compromised. When the line current increases, the conductor heats, the line elongates, and spans of the line can sag. If lines sag beyond required clearances, code violations and safety hazards may occur. As such, Alternative 1 would include activities that would help address the code violations and safety hazards, such as grading underneath transmission lines, raising the height of existing transmission towers, and/or limiting the amount of energy that is transferred through the South of Haskell Corridor. While the new 230 kV would not be built, Alternative 1 would nevertheless result in construction activities that are similar to those of the proposed project. The activities may occur more sporadically, as various safety hazards are addressed along the alignment over time. Alternative 1 would likely result in similar or greater construction impacts, when compared to those of the proposed project. Operational activities would be similar to existing conditions and to those required for the proposed project. Maintenance and repairs would continue to occur as necessary, similar to existing conditions. However, as the line continues to age, maintenance activities could increase in intensity and frequency. Some operational impacts associated with the proposed project would be avoided, although operational effects would generally be the same as those of the proposed project, since the 115 kV line would require periodic inspection, maintenance, and repairs, similar to existing conditions and to the operational activities that would be required for the proposed 230 kV line.

### **Alternative 2**

Alternative 2 would be generally identical to the proposed project with the exception of the construction scenario. Under this alternative, helicopters would not be used for structure removals or installations. The proposed project would cause a significant and unavoidable impact in the category of construction air quality. Without the use of heavy-duty helicopters, this impact can be reduced to a less than significant level with mitigation. As such, Alternative 2 is proposed for the purpose of eliminating the project's significant and unavoidable impact. However, construction impacts in most other categories would increase, due to increased grading acreages, increased construction duration, and increased vehicle trips associated with elimination of the heavy-duty helicopters. Operational activities for Alternative 2 and associated impacts would be generally the same as those of the proposed project.



**Study Area**

500-foot buffer from alignment

**Survey Areas**

Rare Plants and California red-legged frog: 200-foot buffer from proposed construction limits

JD Survey Area: 250-foot buffer from proposed construction limits

Burrowing Owl, Least Bell's vireo, Southwestern willow flycatcher and California gnatcatcher: 500-foot buffer from proposed construction limits

Arroyo Toad: 1-km buffer from suitable habitats

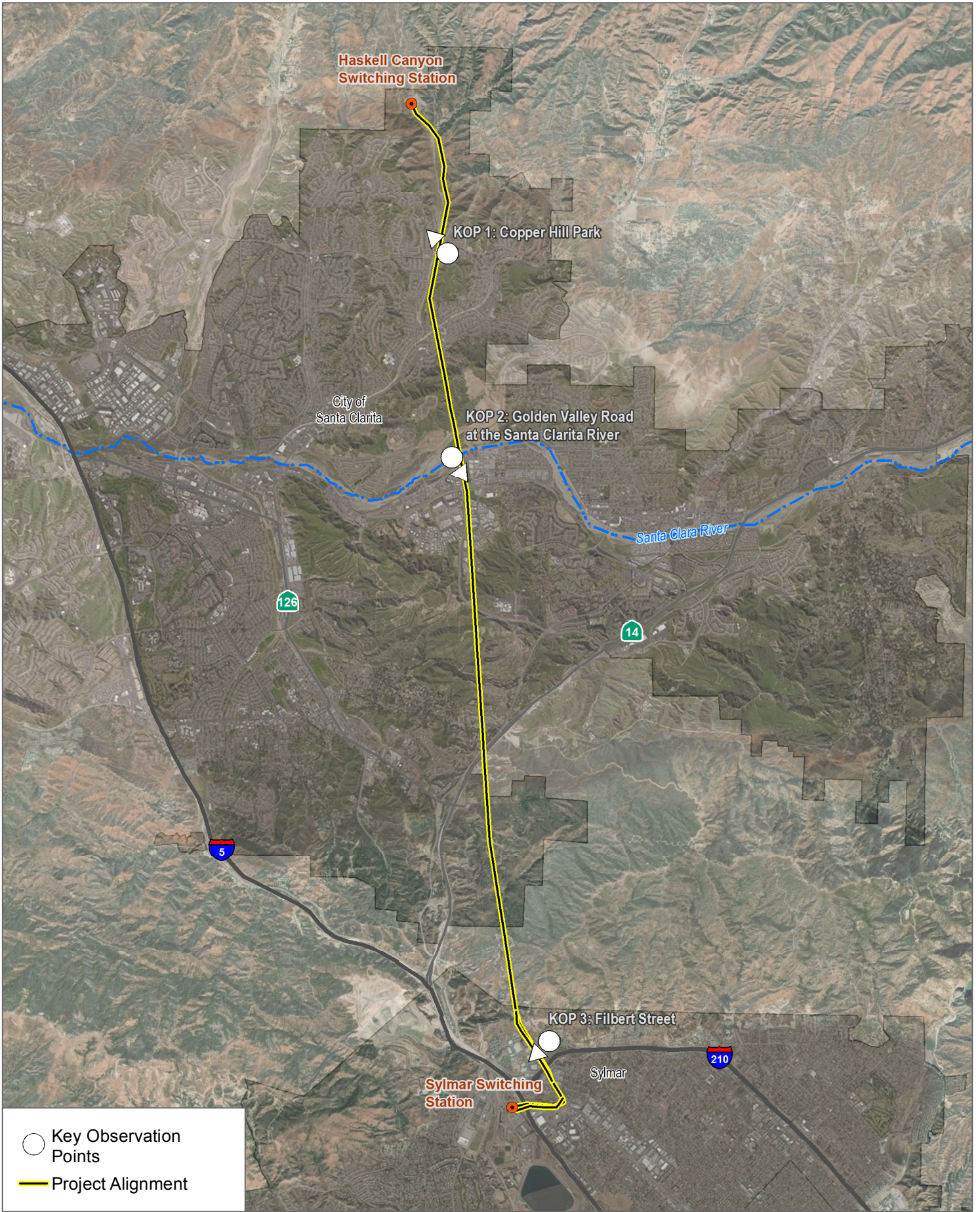
SOURCE: ESRI basemaps



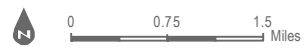
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**FIGURE 3.3-1**  
Survey Areas

PP1 and PP2 Transmission Line Conversion Project



SOURCE: Dudek 2018



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**FIGURE 3.1-5**  
 Key Observation Points  
 PP1 and PP2 Transmission Line Conversion Project



SOURCE: Esri Basemaps



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**FIGURE 2-1**  
 Regional Map

PP1 and PP2 Transmission Line Conversion Project