Surrounding Land Uses
The proposed project is generally located at the base of the Tehachapi and Piute mountain ranges within the Sierra Nevada, directly west of the Fremont Valley in the Western Mojave Desert. The project vicinity is generally characterized as an undeveloped, rural area. Land usage in and around the proposed project area consists of open space with scattered residences, off-highway vehicle use, and livestock grazing. Existing development in the area includes rural access roads, producing and non-producing water wells, off-highway vehicle use, cattle ranching and maintenance facilities, and planned/existing met towers. The BLM’s Jawbone Off-highway Vehicle Open Area is located off Jawbone Canyon Road; directly east of the project. The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) is located west of the proposed project site. The distance between the PCT and the project site boundary varies, ranging from 5.5 miles at the northwest corner of the project to 0.8 mile at the southwest corner of the project.

4.11.3 Regulatory Setting

State
Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975
The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 State requires the State Geologist to classify land into MRZs according to its known or inferred mineral potential. The primary goal of mineral land classification is to ensure that the mineral potential of land is recognized by local government decision-makers and considered before land-use decisions are made that could preclude mining. MRZs in the vicinity of the proposed project are presented in Section 4.10.2, Environmental Setting.

Kern County
Kern County General Plan
The policies, goals, and implementation measures in the KCGP for mineral resources applicable to the project are provided below.

Chapter 1. Land Use, Open Space, and Conservation Element
Section 1.9 Resource Goals

- **Goal 1.** To contain new development within an area large enough to meet generous projections of foreseeable need, but in locations that will not impair the economic strength derived from the petroleum, agriculture, rangeland, or mineral resources or diminish the other amenities that exist in the County.

- **Goal 2.** To protect areas of important mineral, petroleum, and agricultural resource potential for future use.

- **Goal 3.** To ensure that the development of resource areas minimizes effects on neighboring resource lands.

- **Goal 4.** Encourage safe and orderly energy development within the County, including research and demonstration projects, and to become actively involved in the decision and actions of other agencies as they affect energy development in Kern County.

- **Goal 6.** Encourage alternative sources of energy, such as solar and wind energy, while protecting the environment.
Policies

- **Policy 14.** Emphasize conservation and development of identified mineral deposits.
- **Policy 17.** Lands classified as MRZ-2, as designated by the State of California, should be protected from encroachment of incompatible land uses.
- **Policy 25.** Discourage incompatible land use adjacent to Map Code 8.4 (Mineral and Petroleum) areas.

Implementation Measures

- **Implementation Measure H.** Use the California Geological Survey’s latest maps to locate mineral deposits until the regional and statewide importance mineral deposits map has been completed, as required by the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act.
- **Implementation Measure K.** Protect oilfields and mineral extraction areas through the use of appropriate implementing zone districts: A (Exclusive Agriculture), DI (Drilling Island), NR (Natural Resource), or PE (Petroleum Extraction).

Kern County Zoning Ordinance

The WE Combining District (Chapter 19.64) contains development standards and conditions (Section 19.64.140) that would be applicable to the siting and operation of wind turbine generators (WTGs). None of the provisions of Chapter 19.64 apply to mineral resources issues related to the proposed project.

4.11.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Methodology

California Department of Conservation publications, the KCGP map, and aerial photos were compared to identify potential conflicts of the proposed project’s presence and operations with mineral resource extraction.

Thresholds of Significance

The Kern County California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Implementation Document and Kern County Environmental Checklist state that a project would normally be considered to have a significant impact if it would:

- Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State; or

- Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan.

As discussed in Appendix A (Notice of Preparation/Initial Study [NOP/IS]), the proposed project was determined to have no impact with regard to the following impact threshold:

- Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State.

This issue is not discussed further in this EIR.