serving an approximate population of 33,077 in the Tehachapi subarea of Kern County (TVHD, 2011; Kern County, 2008).

Other public services include federal post offices and City and County libraries. The City of California City, City of Tehachapi, and community of Mojave each has a post office and library.

### 4.14.3 Regulatory Setting

**Federal**

There are no applicable federal plans or policies for this issue area.

**State**

Under Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) has the primary responsibility for implementing wildfire planning and protection for the SRA. The CDF develops fire safe regulations and issues fire safe clearances for land within a fire district of the SRA. More than 31 million acres of California's privately owned wildlands are under the jurisdiction of the CDF.

In addition to wildland fires, the CDF’s planning efforts involve responding to other types of emergencies that may occur on a daily basis, including residential or commercial structure fires, automobile accidents, heart attacks, drowning victims, lost hikers, hazardous material spills on highways, train wrecks, floods, and earthquakes. Through contracts with local government, the CDF provides emergency services in 36 of California’s 58 counties.

**Local**

**Kern County General Plan (KCGP), Land Use, Open Space, and Conservation Element, Adopted March 2007**

**Chapter 1. Land Use, Open Space, and Conservation Element**

**1.4 Public Facilities and Services**

**Policies**

- **Policy 1.** New discretionary development will be required to pay its proportional share of the local costs of infrastructure improvements required to service such development.

- **Policy 6.** The County will ensure adequate fire protection to all Kern County residents.

- **Policy 7.** The County will ensure adequate police protection to all Kern County residents.

**Implementation Measures**

- **Implementation Measure L.** Prior to the approval of development projects, the County shall determine the need for fire protection services. New development in the County shall not be approved unless adequate fire protection facilities and resources can be provided.
1.10 General Provisions

**Goals**

- **Goal 1.** Ensure that the County can accommodate anticipated future growth and development while maintaining a safe and healthful environment and a prosperous economy by preserving viable natural resources, guiding development away from hazardous areas, and assuring the provision of adequate public services.

1.10.1 Public Services and Facilities (General Provisions Element)

**Policies**

- **Policy 9.** New development should pay its pro rata share of the local cost of expansions in services, facilities, and infrastructure that it generates and upon which it is dependent.
- **Policy 15.** Prior to approval of any discretionary permit, the County shall make the finding, based on information provided by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents, staff analysis, and the applicant, that adequate public or private services and resources are available to serve the proposed development.
- **Policy 16.** The developer shall assume full responsibility for costs incurred in service extension or improvements that are required to ensure the project. Cost sharing or other forms of recovery shall be available when the service extensions or improvements have a specific quantifiable regional significance.

Chapter 4. Safety Element

4.6 Wildland and Urban Fire

**Policies**

- **Policy 1.** Require discretionary projects to assess impacts on emergency services and facilities.
- **Policy 3.** The County will encourage the promotion of fire prevention methods to reduce service protection costs and costs to taxpayers.
- **Policy 4.** Ensure that new development of properties have sufficient access for emergency vehicles and for the evacuation of residents.
- **Policy 6.** All discretionary projects shall comply with the adopted Fire Code and the requirements of the Fire Department.

**Implementation Measures**

- **Implementation Measure A.** Require that all development comply with the requirements of the Kern County Fire Department or other appropriate agency regarding access, fire flows, and fire protection facilities.

Kern County Wildland Fire Management Plan, Adopted January 2004

The WFMP documents the assessment of the wildland fire situation throughout the SRA within the County. It includes stakeholder contributions and priorities, and identifies strategic targets for pre-fire solutions as defined by the people who live and work with the local fire problem. The goal of the Plan is to reduce costs and losses from wildfire by protecting assets at risk through focused pre-fire management prescriptions and increasing initial attack success. Based on this assessment, preventive measures are implemented, including the creation of wildfire protection zones. The
WFMP is referenced in this analysis; however, the goals set forth by this plan are not applicable to development of the proposed project.

**Kern County Zoning Ordinance**

The Wind Energy (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 WTGs. None of the provisions of Chapter 19.64 apply to public services issues related to the proposed project.

### 4.14.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**Methodology**

Public service systems were evaluated by reviewing the most current data available from State and Kern County department websites, the KCGP, the Kern County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, the KCFD WFMP, and personal communication via telephone calls.

**Thresholds of Significance**

The Kern County CEQA Implementation Document and Kern County Environmental Checklist state that a project would have a significant impact on public services if it would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or to other performance objectives for any of the public services:
  - Fire Protection;
  - Police Protection;
  - Schools;
  - Parks; or
  - Other public facilities.

**Project Impacts**

**Impact 4.14-1: Increased Need for or Alter, Fire Protection Services**

The CAL FIRE Fire and Resource Assessment Program provides a map depicting fire threat to SRAs in Kern County. Much of the southeast areas within the County range mostly from “Moderate” to “Very High” fire threat rating, and the project site, similarly, is located in an area ranging from “Moderate” to “Very High” fire threat ratings (CAL FIRE, 2007). Onsite vegetation consists primarily of juniper woodland and Mojave Creosote scrub interspersed with introduced annual grasses. During the construction phase, heavy equipment and passenger vehicles driving on vegetated areas before clearing and grading could increase the danger of fire. Heated mufflers could ignite surrounding vegetation. In addition, during operation, lightning strikes on WTGs could create power surges and start a fire. As a result, construction and operation of the project would have a significant potential to cause wildfires. As discussed in Section 4.8, “Hazards and Hazardous Materials,” of this EIR, implementation of Mitigation Measure (MM) 4.8-10 would reduce the potential for construction and maintenance activities to result in severe fires by requiring fire-safe construction and maintenance practices. MM 4.8-11 would further reduce the severity of this impact.