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.
by restricting work during severe fire weather. MM 4.8-12 would require WTGs to be equipped with automatic fire detection and extinguishing systems. MM 4.8-13 would require vegetation management during construction to reduce fire risk.

If a fire were to occur, it is anticipated that personnel and equipment between KCFD’s Tehachapi, Mojave, and Piute Stations would be sufficient to respond to a fire at the project site and, therefore, in the event of a construction- or operation-related fire, existing fire service capacities would not be exceeded and additional, permanent fire protection services, equipment, facilities, or personnel would not be required.

**Mitigation Measures**

Implement Mitigation Measures 4.8-10 through 4.8-13, as described in Section 4.8.

**Level of Significance after Mitigation**

Impacts would be less than significant.

**Impact 4.14-2: Increase Need for or Alter, Police Protection Services**

The Mojave Substation of the KCSD would be the primary responder to the proposed project and it would take an hour or more to respond to a call. The KCSD does not anticipate the need for additional staffing to handle any increase in activity (e.g., thefts, trespassing complaints, peace disturbances, and emergencies) created by this project (KCSD, 2010b).

The proposed project may attract vandals or other security risks and potentially increase traffic along SR-14 that would increase demand on police protection/law enforcement services in the event of an incident. However, the project site is in a remote location surrounded by vacant land and rural communities and is unlikely to attract attention and make project facilities susceptible to crime. Nevertheless, as a part of the project design, the project proponents would implement security measures for project facilities, including a chain-link security fence around the perimeter of the substations for safety and security purposes, and all other project fencing requirements would be evaluated and the best-fit scenario would be incorporated into the project based upon the final determination by Kern County. In addition, security services would likely be provided during construction and any additional security would be on an as-needed basis. The security personnel would be assigned the responsibility of controlling egress and ingress, safety requirements, and all other policies for the control of the site area during the construction phase. After construction, these duties would fall under the control of the assigned operations and maintenance provider. These measures would minimize the need for police surveillance and response.

Project personnel commuting to the project site via nearby highways (SR-14 and SR-58) could increase services required by the CHP in the event of accident or traffic violations. Project personnel would be required to adhere to all federal and State traffic laws. The additional volume of traffic associated with workers commuting to the site during construction and with permanent personnel during operation is not expected to exceed the CHP’s ability to patrol the highways.

As the project would not induce population growth in the area and security services would be provided during construction and on an as-need basis, implementation of the proposed project is not expected to result in the need to construct new, or to physically alter existing, police protection facilities to maintain acceptable services.
Mitigation Measures

The project would comply with the goals, policies, and implementation measures of the KCGP. No additional measures would be required.

Level of Significance after Mitigation

Impacts would be less than significant.

Impact 4.14-3: Increase Need for or Alter, School Services

Construction of the project would require a peak construction workforce of 180 workers, most of whom are expected to travel to the site from various locations throughout Southern California. The number of workers expected to relocate to the surrounding area is not expected to be substantial. If temporary housing should be necessary, it is expected that accommodations would be available in the nearby cities of Lancaster, Palmdale, Tehachapi, California City, and the community of Mojave. Construction workers who relocate to these areas may enroll their children in local schools. However, because it is expected that most construction workers would not relocate, the addition of children of relocated workers would be minimal and would not affect the capacity of the schools they might attend.

The project would require an estimated 32 full-time/part-time permanent employees to operate the project. It is anticipated that these employees would be local to the project area and would commute to the project, as do current employees at other wind farms in the Tehachapi area. However, in the event that operations staff does relocate to the project area, those with children may enroll their children in local schools. As noted above in Section 4.14.2, the average class size and pupil-teacher ratio are roughly equivalent to State averages. Given the low number of permanent employees expected to relocate to the area, the proposed project would not substantially affect enrollment in local schools.

Mitigation Measures

The project would comply with the goals, policies, and implementation measures of the KCGP. No additional measures would be required.

Level of Significance

Impacts would be less than significant.

Impact 4.14-4: Increase Need for or Alter, Park Services

During construction, there is the potential that some of the temporary construction workers (ranging from 100 to 200 workers) would come from out of the area and use the local and regional parks for recreation. During operation, the population increase associated with permanent personnel would be minimal (32 full-time/part-time employees), and therefore, would not exceed Kern County’s standard of 2.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (PRD, 2010c). In addition, Tehachapi Mountain Park and Lake Isabella are the closest regional parks. Since there are no local parks in the vicinity of the project site, it is likely that Tehachapi Mountain Park and Lake Isabella would be the primary regional parks utilized by construction and operation workers. As such, according to the County’s PRD, Tehachapi Mountain Park could accommodate increased use by project personnel and their families given that the current ratio is five acres per 1,000 residents in the area surrounding
Tehachapi (PRD, 2010c). Given the limited personnel required for the project, the temporary construction period, and the potential accommodation of two regional parks located in the project vicinity, increased use by construction personnel would not exceed the capacity of existing parks.

**Mitigation Measures**

The project would comply with the goals, policies, and implementation measures of the KCGP. No additional measures would be required.

**Level of Significance**

Impacts would be less than significant.

**Impact 4.14-5: Increase Need for or Alter, Medical Services**

During construction, the addition of 100 to 200 temporary construction workers may temporarily increase the need for EMS should a medical emergency occur. However, because access to the project site would be restricted to properly trained construction workers, the likelihood of accidents and thus the need for emergency medical care would be reduced. In addition, as described in Section 4.8, “Hazards and Hazardous Materials,” in accordance with the California Health and Safety Code and Kern County regulations, the project proponents would prepare a Hazardous Materials Business Plan, which would further reduce the potential for project-related emergency incidents to occur during construction. Nevertheless, some accidents may occur during construction; however, the small number of accidents that may occur is not expected to place undue pressure on existing capacity for medical services. With a peak construction workforce of up to 200 personnel, construction would increase the population served by the Tehachapi Valley Healthcare District by 0.6 percent. Such an increase would not be expected to result in the need for additional capacity for the Tehachapi Valley Healthcare District to provide emergency services for potential project-related incidents, therefore, additional medical and/or emergency personnel or facilities would not be required.

During operation, emergency incidents involving any of the 32 full-time/part-time staff would not be expected to overwhelm current medical services capacity. Therefore, additional medical and/or emergency personnel or facilities would not be required and this impact would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures**

The project would comply with the goals, policies, and implementation measures of the KCGP. No additional measures would be required.

**Level of Significance**

Impacts would be less than significant.

**Cumulative Setting Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

**Cumulative Setting**

Cumulative impacts are two or more individual impacts that, when considered together, are considerable or that compound or increase other environmental impacts. The geographic scope for cumulative impacts to public services includes closely related past, present, and reasonable
foreseeable probable future projects within 30 miles of the project site. This geographic scope of analysis is appropriate because it reflects the maximum distance to any potential services providers that may be affected by implementation of the proposed project.

**Impact 4.14-6: Contribute to Cumulative Public Service Impacts**

The proposed project is not expected to have a significant impact on fire fighting services, but mitigation measures would be incorporated to ensure that impacts are less than significant. The limited construction and operation personnel associated with the proposed project is not expected to exceed capacity for school enrollment at local schools, adequate capacity of hospitals to provide emergency services, or the capacity of existing parks. Also, the proposed project is not expected to result in the need to construct new, or to physically alter existing, police protection facilities to maintain acceptable services.

With regard to cumulative impacts, the proposed and ongoing projects identified in Tables 3-9 and 3-10 of Section 3.11 (Cumulative Projects) include commercial, residential, natural resource, and wind energy projects within an area that is currently rural and undeveloped. This vast number of projects collectively would stimulate population growth and contribute to development of this region. In particular, population growth in this region would require additional emergency and medical services, would increase enrollment in local schools, and would increase recreational activities in local and regional parks. However, the KCGP contains the provision that new discretionary development pay its proportional share of local costs of infrastructure improvements required to service such development. Therefore, impacts on existing public services caused by future projects would be offset by this requirement, and the developers would be responsible for ensuring that impacts on public services are less than significant. These projects would comply with the goals, policies, and implementation measures of the KCGP and cumulatively significant impacts are not anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures**

Implement Mitigation Measures 4.8-10 through 4.8-13, as described in Section 4.8.

**Level of Significance after Mitigation**

Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.