

**BLYTHE ENERGY PROJECT  
BIOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
(California Supplement)**

**Prepared for:  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
and  
California Department of Fish and Game**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	1
POTENTIAL IMPACTS TO CALIFORNIA SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES .....	1
OTHER SPECIAL SPECIES .....	2
Glandular Ditaxis .....	2
Harwood's Milkvetch .....	2
Colorado River Toad .....	3
Couch's Spadefoot .....	3
Lowland Leopard Frog .....	3
Mojave Desert Blister Beetle .....	4
Burrowing Owl .....	4
California Black Rail .....	4
California Horned Lark .....	4
Crissale Thrasher .....	5
Ferruginous Hawk .....	5
Golden Eagle .....	5
Large-billed Savannah Sparrow .....	6
LeConte's Thrasher .....	6
Loggerhead Shrike .....	6
Merlin .....	7
Prairie Falcon .....	7
Short-eared Owl .....	7
Sonoran Yellow Warbler .....	8
Summer Tanager .....	8
Vermilion Flycatcher .....	8
Western Least Bittern .....	8
Colorado River Cotton Rat .....	6
MITIGATION AND COMPENSATION .....	9
OTHER SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES .....	9
Harwood's Milkvetch .....	9
Burrowing Owl .....	10
Other Riparian Bird Species .....	10
Avian Issues .....	10
Special-Status Amphibians and Mammals .....	10
Bats .....	11
GENERAL MITIGATION MEASURES .....	11
Designated Biologist .....	11
Construction Monitoring at Borings .....	11
Worker Environmental Awareness Program .....	11
Evaporation Ponds .....	11
Weed Reduction Program .....	11

## INTRODUCTION

This *Biological Evaluation* has been prepared in conjunction with the federal *Biological Assessment* to assist the California Department of Fish and Game to fulfill its requirements under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) for issuance of a 2081.1 Consistency Determination for potential take of state-listed species. The Biological Evaluation addresses State listed, proposed, or candidate species under CESA that could be affected as a result of the construction and operation of the Blythe Energy Project, and is supplemental to the Biological Assessment which addresses plants and wildlife that are listed, proposed, or candidate species under the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (FESA). Western Area Power Administration is the lead federal agency and is responsible for preparing the Biological Assessment and this attachment.

## POTENTIAL IMPACTS TO CALIFORNIA SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

A total of 57 special-status species that are known from the project region were sought during surveys (see Attachment 2 for species list and survey methods). Special-status species include species that are formally listed as threatened or endangered, candidate species, state and federal Species of Concern and plants from Lists 1A, 1B, and 2 of the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) *Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California* (CNPS; 1994). Federally listed species are discussed in the Biological Assessment.

Such species have been determined to be uncommon in at least some portions of their range and/or their viability is questionable due to past and foreseeable impacts. Frequently, they have an inherently limited geographic range and/or limited habitat. Species listed as threatened or endangered are protected from further threats to their viability by federal and state law.

The project site, including the plant site and ancillary facilities, has been sited to minimize impacts to special-status wildlife and plant species. It is, however, possible that California special-status species inhabit the proposed project site or adjacent areas and might be minimally affected by project construction and operation. No evidence of these species was observed during surveys, possibly due to rarity, behavior, or poor germination or growth as a result of poor rainfall in the winter of 1999-2000. These species include the following:

### *California Special-Status Species*

- Glandular Ditaxis
- Harwood's Milkvetch
- Colorado River Toad
- Couch's Spadefoot
- Lowland Leopard Frog
- Mojave Desert Blister Beetle
- Burrowing Owl
- California Black Rail
- California Horned Lark

Crissale Thrasher  
Ferruginous Hawk  
Golden Eagle  
Large-billed Savannah Sparrow  
LeConte's Thrasher  
Loggerhead Shrike  
Merlin  
Prairie Falcon  
Short-eared Owl  
Sonoran Yellow Warbler  
Summer Tanager  
Vermilion Flycatcher  
Western Least Bittern  
Colorado River Cotton Rat

Impacts to each are presented in the following discussion.

#### **OTHER SPECIAL SPECIES**

**Glandular Ditaxis** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: None; CNPS: List 2*). This herbaceous perennial (Family: Euphorbiaceae) is found from the Coachella Valley to Arizona and Sonora, Mexico at elevations below approximately 800 feet. Occupied habitats include sandy soils in Mojave and Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub, especially in disturbed microsites (Alice Karl pers. obs.). This species is similar to other species of *Ditaxis*, but is thinly strigose and the leaf blades and sepals subtending female flowers are glandular-serrulate. Aerial portions of the plant die back during dry periods; as such, it often is not evident during drought.

Suitable habitat for glandular ditaxis exists on the plant site. As such, some individuals could be lost during construction activities. While a CNPS List 2 plant, this species is moderately common where it occurs and is often associated with disturbance. As such, the loss of some individuals on the plant site, if present, are not likely to represent a significant impact to the species.

**Harwood's Milkvetch** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: None; CNPS: List 2*). This annual herb (Family: Fabaceae) grows in dunes and windblown sand in Mojave and Sonoran Creosote Bush Scrub, at elevations of 300 to 1200 feet. Herbage is cinereous with short, appressed hairs. Leaves are up to 5 inches long, with 11 to 19, narrowly oblong to oblanceolate, often folded leaflets. Racemes are loosely 3- to 9-flowered and flowers, which bloom from February to May, are reddish purple with a striated banner. The pod is sessile, greatly inflated, papery, purple-speckled, and beaked.

Marginal habitat for Harwood's milkvetch exists on the plant site. If present, some individuals could be lost during construction activities. Due to the low habitat quality for the species, impacts to the population and species should be minimal.

**Colorado River Toad** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern, Protected*). This is the largest western toad (4-7.5 inches). Occupied habitats include deserts, oak-sycamore communities of mountain canyons, and tropical thorn forests. While these toads are often found near permanent water, they also frequent temporary pools and have been reported several miles from water. Their range extends from extreme southeastern California into Arizona and from Bill Williams River and lower Colorado River drainages across southern Arizona to extreme southwestern New Mexico and northwestern Sinaloa. These nocturnal toads are most active from May to July, although activity may be stimulated later in summer by monsoons. While their activity appears to be largely stimulated by rainfall, these toads are not dependent on rainfall for breeding.

Habitat for this species exists near and in any of the irrigation canals and drainages along the gas pipeline and at the Colorado River. No breeding habitat should be impacted by construction of the pipeline. However, some individuals may be killed during construction activities, especially during activity periods, from April through October.

**Couch's Spadefoot** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). This species is found from extreme southeastern California, to southwestern Oklahoma, and south across Texas into central Mexico and Baja California. Habitat includes shortgrass plains, mesquite savannah, creosote bush desert, thornforest, tropical deciduous forest and other areas of low rainfall (Stebbins 1985). These individuals remain in subterranean burrows for most of the year, emerging to breed in temporary pools after or during periods of rainfall, both winter rains and summer monsoons. Thus, breeding may occur from April or May to September. Breeding can also occur in slow streams, reservoirs, or ditches.

Habitat for this species exists on the plant site and, marginally, in drainages. Impacts from the project comprise habitat loss (plant site) and potential loss of individuals from construction activities.

**Lowland Leopard Frog** (*USFWS: Species of Special Concern; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). This species is primarily found from west-northwestern Arizona and southeastern California to southwestern New Mexico and the head of the Gulf of California. Occupied microhabitats are generally limited to water and include permanent springs and pools, overflow ponds, river side channels, and permanent stock tanks. Desert, grassland, oak and oak-pine woodland are the typical macro-habitats. The species breeds from February to April and sometimes in the fall.

Habitat for this species includes any of the irrigation canals and drainages along the gas pipeline that are more-or-less permanently wet. No breeding habitat should be impacted by construction of the pipeline. However, some individuals may be killed during construction activities, especially from February to April.

**Mojave Desert Blister Beetle** (*USFWS: Species of Special Concern; CDFG: None*). This species is found in the Mojave Desert, most commonly on the flowers and foliage of various desert plants. Larvae are parasitic and generally beneficial, typically feeding on grasshopper eggs, although some may feed on the eggs or larvae of bees.

Habitat for this species exists on the plant site. Impacts from the project comprise habitat loss and potential loss of individuals from construction activities.

**Burrowing Owl** (*USFWS: Species of Special Concern; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). This is an owl of open grasslands, prairies, deserts, and farms; it is also common on golf courses, road cuts and ruderal sites in arid habitats. It breeds from southern Canada south throughout much of the United States west of the Mississippi and Mexico, typically wintering in warmer areas. Nesting occurs primarily in burrows built by other species, including ground squirrels, kit fox, badger, and desert tortoise.

Habitat for this species exists on the plant site. Unavoidable impacts from the project consist of habitat loss. Burrowing owls could move onto the site and disturbance to nesting activities could occur. Nesting activity could be assessed by surveys within 30 days of project construction. Should burrowing owls be present and nesting on the proposed plant site, this impact is mitigable by or avoidance of nests by a 250-foot buffer (CDFG 1995). Mitigation via project construction outside of the nesting season is infeasible due to the anticipated length of construction necessary for the plant site and ancillary facilities.

**California Black Rail** (*USFWS: Species of Special Concern; CDFG: Threatened*). This small bird occupies fresh, brackish, and salt or tidal marshes, grassy swamps and wet meadows. It is the most secretive of the rails, spending most of its life in rodent-made runways and passageways under dense marsh vegetation. The breeding range includes the San Francisco Bay region, the Salton Sea and the Colorado River, although the species may also range to the head of the Gulf of California.

Habitat for this species includes the more densely vegetated and least-disturbed irrigation canals and drainages along the gas pipeline. The most likely habitat is Borrow Pit Drain. California black rail may also reside in Goodman Slough Drain, west of Intake Blvd. No habitat should be impacted by construction of the pipeline. Nesting activities may be disturbed by construction activities, although birds are currently exposed to continual agricultural activities and road noise. A retired landfill is adjacent to the Goodman Slough Drain.

**California Horned Lark** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). This species is a common inhabitant of open habitats, including desert scrub and grassland. It is a resident over much of the United States, breeding throughout North America. Prey items include seeds and insects.

Habitat on the project site is almost exclusively confined to the plant site. While habitat there will be lost to this species, ample foraging habitat exists in the area. As such, the loss of habitat at the plant site should have negligible impacts. It is unlikely that individuals would be lost during construction, the possible exception being nestlings. Because the species is extremely common in the desert, although unobserved on the project site, no population or species impacts should occur.

**Crissale Thrasher** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). This species is a resident from southeastern California, east to extreme western Texas and south to northeastern Baja California and northern and central Mexico. Occupied habitats include dense brush, mesquite thickets, and willows along desert streams and washes.

Habitat for this species includes the more densely vegetated and arboreal drainages along the gas pipeline. The most likely habitat is Borrow Pit Drain, Goodman Slough Drain west of Intake Blvd and the Colorado River. No habitat should be impacted by construction of the pipeline. Nesting activities may be disturbed by construction activities, although birds are currently exposed to continual agricultural activities and road noise. A retired landfill is adjacent to the Goodman Slough Drain.

**Ferruginous Hawk** (*USFWS: Species of Special Concern; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). This species is a winter resident in California and the southwest, into Mexico. It forages over open habitat, preying on rodents, rabbits, and other small prey.

The plant site constitutes winter foraging habitat for this species; the pipeline route is too congested with human activity for foraging. While foraging habitat on the plant site will be lost to this species, ample similar habitat exists in the area. As such, the loss of habitat at the plant site should have negligible impacts. No individuals will be lost during construction and nesting will be unaffected as the species, if present, will only occur as a winter transient. Losses of individuals during project operation, through collisions or electrocution, should not increase over current levels because there will be no net increase in the length of transmission line - the 1500 feet of new transmission line will coincide with the removal of approximately the same distance of old transmission line (Greystone Environmental Consultants, Inc. 2000). In addition, bird diverters will be installed if collisions appear to be a problem.

**Golden Eagle** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern, Fully Protected*). This species is a common resident of foothill, mountainous, and open country, foraging over deserts, farmland, prairies for small mammals, snakes, and birds. It is a year-round resident throughout most of western North America. Nesting occurs in cliffs and large trees.

The plant site constitutes foraging habitat for this species; the pipeline route is too congested with human activity for foraging. While foraging habitat on the plant site will be lost to this species, ample similar habitat exists in the area. As such, the loss of habitat at the plant site should have negligible impacts. No individuals will be lost during construction and nesting will be unaffected

as nests would occur well away from the site. Losses of individuals during project operation, through collisions or electrocution, should not increase over current levels because there will be no net increase in the length of transmission line - the 1500 feet of new transmission line will coincide with the removal of approximately the same distance of old transmission line (Greystone Environmental Consultants, Inc. 2000). In addition, bird diverters will be installed if collisions appear to be a problem.

**Large-billed Savannah Sparrow** (*USFWS: Species of Special Concern; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). The savannah sparrow can be found throughout most of North America, to Guatemala, wintering to El Salvador and the West Indies. The *large-billed* savannah sparrow breeds on the Colorado River Delta and is seen in United States chiefly at the Salton Sea. A variety of open habitats are occupied, including prairies, fields, grasslands, salt and freshwater marshes, and shores.

Habitat for this species in the project site is probably limited to the gas pipeline route. No habitat or individuals should be lost to pipeline construction. While nesting may be disturbed by construction activities, birds are currently exposed to continual agricultural activities and road noise.

**LeConte's Thrasher** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). LeConte's thrasher is a commonly-observed species of the Mojave and Colorado deserts. The species ranges from southern California, in the western and southern San Joaquin Valley, to southwestern Utah, western and central Arizona, Baja California and northwestern Mexico. While similar in appearance to crissal thrasher, LeConte's thrasher occupies more open habitats, often with *Yucca* spp.

Marginal habitat for this species exists on the plant site. No nesting habitat occurs on the project site. While foraging habitat on the plant site will be lost to this species, ample similar habitat exists in the area. As such, the loss of habitat at the plant site should have negligible impacts.

**Loggerhead Shrike** (*USFWS: Species of Special Concern; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). Loggerhead shrike is a common resident of the southwestern deserts and occupies many habitats, including both native habitats and agricultural parcels. The species range includes most of the United States.

The entire project site constitutes of foraging habitat for this species. While foraging habitat on the plant site will be lost to this species, ample similar habitat exists in the area. As such, the loss of habitat at the plant site should have negligible impacts. No individuals should be lost to pipeline construction. This species is easily habituated to suburban settings, so it is unlikely that nesting will be disturbed by construction activities.

**Merlin (USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern).** This species is a winter resident in California and the far-southern United States, into Mexico. It inhabits a variety of habitats, nesting in wooded sites in trees, cliffs, or on the ground. Prey includes birds, rodents and large insects.

The plant site constitutes winter foraging habitat for this species; the pipeline route is too congested with human activity for foraging. While foraging habitat on the plant site will be lost to this species, ample similar habitat exists in the area. As such, the loss of habitat at the plant site should have negligible impacts. No individuals will be lost during construction and nesting will be unaffected as the species, if present, will only occur as a winter transient. Losses of individuals during project operation, through collisions or electrocution, should not increase over current levels because there will be no net increase in the length of transmission line - the 1500 feet of new transmission line will coincide with the removal of approximately the same distance of old transmission line (Greystone Environmental Consultants, Inc. 2000). In addition, bird diverters will be installed if collisions appear to be a problem.

**Prairie Falcon (USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern).** This species is a year-round resident of the western United States. It inhabits open country, including deserts and prairies, occasionally hunting in woodlands. Prey includes birds, lizards, large insects and rodents. Nesting occurs in cliffs.

The plant site constitutes foraging habitat for this species; the pipeline route is too congested with human activity for foraging. While habitat on the plant site will be lost to this species, ample foraging habitat exists in the area. As such, the loss of habitat at the plant site should have negligible impacts. No individuals will be lost during construction and nesting will be unaffected as nests would occur well away from the site. Losses of individuals during project operation, through collisions or electrocution, should not increase over current levels because there will be no net increase in the length of transmission line - the 1500 feet of new transmission line will coincide with the removal of approximately the same distance of old transmission line (Greystone Environmental Consultants, Inc. 2000). In addition, bird diverters will be installed if collisions appear to be a problem.

**Short-eared Owl (USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern).** This species is an uncommon winter resident of the southern United States, into Mexico. It inhabits a variety of open-country habitats, including marshes, fields, deserts and prairies. It both hunts over these habitats, chiefly at dawn and dusk, and roosts there during the day.

The plant site constitutes winter foraging habitat for this species; the pipeline route is too congested with human activity for foraging. While foraging habitat on the plant site will be lost to this species, ample habitat exists in the area. As such, the loss of habitat at the plant site should have negligible impacts. No individuals will be lost during construction and nesting will be unaffected as the species, if present, will only occur as a winter transient.

**Sonoran Yellow Warbler** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). This species frequents willows, poplars, and other streamside trees and shrubs, town shade trees, open woodlands, orchards, and moist thickets. The range for the species includes all of North America, south through Central America and the West Indies to northern South America. The subspecies *sonorana* is confined to the Colorado River Valley from Nevada to Mexico, and possibly the Imperial Valley.

Habitat on the project site is limited to the more well-vegetated drainages along gas pipeline. The most likely habitat is Borrow Pit Drain and the north side of the route at the Colorado River. California black rail may also reside in Goodman Slough Drain, west of Intake Blvd. No habitat should be impacted by construction of the pipeline. Nesting activities may be disturbed by construction activities, although birds are currently exposed to continual agricultural activities and road noise. A retired landfill is adjacent to the Goodman Slough Drain.

**Summer Tanager** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). This species frequents riparian woodlands (e.g., cottonwood and willow groves), open woodlands and shade trees. It breeds from the Colorado River through the southern tip of Nevada to west Texas and south and regularly winters in southern California.

Poor habitat exists for this species on the project site, although shade trees at homes near the Colorado River crossing may offer marginal habitat. No habitat should be impacted by construction of the pipeline and it is unlikely that nesting activities would be disturbed by pipeline construction due to the current noise and human activity levels at the Colorado River crossing.

**Vermilion Flycatcher** (*USFWS: None; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). Vermilion flycatcher occupies wooded or shrubby sites near water. Commonly-associated trees are mesquite, willows, and cottonwoods. The species is mainly a resident from southern California to the southwestern tip of Utah, western and southern Texas and south throughout Baja California, Mexico, Honduras, western South America and the Galapagos Islands.

Habitat for this species includes the more densely vegetated and arboreal drainages along the gas pipeline. The most likely habitat is Borrow Pit Drain, Goodman Slough Drain west of Intake Blvd and the north side of the Colorado River crossing. No habitat should be impacted by construction of the pipeline. Nesting activities may be disturbed by construction activities, although birds are currently exposed to continual agricultural activities and road noise. A retired landfill is adjacent to the Goodman Slough Drain.

**Western Least Bittern** (*USFWS: Species of Special Concern; AGFG: Wildlife Species of Special Concern*). This species is an inhabitant of freshwater marshes, swamps and ponds that are densely vegetated with tules, bulrushes, and cattails. The species breeding range includes southeastern Oregon through California and along the lower Colorado River; it also breeds on the Rio Grande.

The limited habitat for this species on the project site consists of the more well-vegetated and least-disturbed drainages and canals along the gas pipeline. However, most of these are periodically dredged and their banks cleared, so the quality of the habitat for nesting is questionable. Goodman Slough Drain west of Intake Blvd. may represent the highest-quality habitat. No habitat should be impacted by construction of the pipeline. Nesting activities may be disturbed by construction activities, although birds are currently exposed to continual agricultural activities and road noise. A retired landfill is also adjacent to the Goodman Slough Drain.

**Colorado River Cotton Rat** (*USFWS: Species of Special Concern; CDFG: Species of Special Concern*). This large cotton rat is typically associated with waterways and drainages in desert areas. It is found along the Colorado River from Parker Dam south.

Habitat for this species exists near and in any of the irrigation canals and drainages along the gas pipeline and at the Colorado River. No habitat should be impacted by construction of the pipeline. However, some individuals may be killed during construction activities.

## MITIGATION AND COMPENSATION

As presented in the Biological Assessment, the Blythe Energy Project plan of construction and operation incorporates several mitigation and compensation measures to decrease or eliminate direct and net impacts to special-status species. Specific measures are described in detail in the Applicant's Biological Resources Mitigation Implementation and Monitoring Plan (BRMIMP) (Attachment 3). A complete list of measures is presented in the Biological Assessment; measures which apply to State listed or other special-status species are summarized below and discussed relative to their anticipated success at reducing or eliminating impacts.

## OTHER SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

**Harwood's Milkvetch.** Although the habitat quality for the species is low, it is unknown if the Harwood's milkvetch grows on the project site. While surveys were conducted at the appropriate time, poor rainfall the previous winter may have influenced germination. Additional surveys prior to project construction are equivocal because construction may begin prior to the growing period for the species, February to May, and the precipitation levels for Winter 2001 may again be inadequate for germination. In view of this, the project owner will assume that Harwood's milkvetch grows on the site and will assist in a program of population conservation. This may occur through contribution to a seed conservation bank, or harvesting of seeds to plant at the plant site. The details of this mitigation will be identified through further discussion with such seed conservation banks, the California Native Plant Society, and CDFG.

**Burrowing Owl.** Disruption of burrowing owl nesting activities will be avoided. On the plant site, a survey will be conducted within 30 days of project construction to assess owl presence. If owls are present, and nesting is not occurring, owls may be removed via a CDFG-approved passive relocation method. Removal of owls is recommended to proceed between 1 September and 31 January, to avoid disruption of breeding activities. If owls are nesting, nests will be avoided by a minimum of a 250-foot buffer until fledging has occurred (1 February through 31 August). Following fledging, owls may be passively relocated. CDFG (1995) also recommends off-site compensation for loss of occupied habitat. This consists of a minimum of 6.5 acres of lands, approved by CDFG and protected in perpetuity, for each pair of owls or unpaired resident bird. In addition, existing unsuitable burrows on the protected lands should be enhanced (i.e., cleared of debris or enlarged) or new burrows installed at a ratio of 2:1.

In addition to pre-construction surveys on the plant site, pre-construction surveys will be conducted on the natural gas pipeline routes no more than 30 days prior to construction. If owls are present within 250 feet and are not in actively farmed parcels (e.g., levees and ditch banks), they will be monitored during construction to determine effects on behavior by construction activities. It is anticipated that any resident birds will be habituated to continual disturbance from agricultural processes. If, however, birds are obviously disturbed by pipeline construction, the following mitigation actions will be implemented:

- Construction within 250 feet of any active nest will be limited to no more than a single, 24-hour day. In this event, resident birds will be observed during and after construction to monitor their occupation of the nest.
- Non-nesting birds will be allowed to relocate as desired; no active or otherwise passive relocation program will be conducted.

**Other Riparian Bird Species.** Seasonal construction (September 1 to April 1) at the Borrow Pit Drain, Goodman Slough Drain at Intake Boulevard, and the Colorado River crossing of the natural gas pipeline will mitigate any impacts to other special-status bird species that may occupy these drainages.

**Avian Issues.** New transmission lines will be installed following Avian Power Line Interaction Committee Guidelines (1996). If any existing transmission lines are upgraded, the same size or larger conductors would be used to maintain or increase visibility. Selected electrical equipment with the potential to electrocute wildlife within the substation shall be covered with appropriate UV-resistant material. Finally, if collisions are found to occur, the appropriate spans will be marked with state-of-the-art bird diverters, including swan diverters and “flappers”.

**Special-Status Amphibians and Mammals.** To avoid construction-related mortalities of nocturnal special-status amphibians and mammals that may occupy drainages and canals, pipeline construction will be conducted during daylight hours.

**Bats.** Bats may be affected by foraging on insects and drinking from water associated with the evaporation ponds. The project owner will conduct a monitoring program for both water quality and invertebrate toxicity levels (see 2.3.3, below).

## **GENERAL MITIGATION MEASURES**

**Designated Biologist.** A Designated Biologist will be appointed for the project and approved by the Energy Commission Compliance Project Manager (CPM). During construction and operation, the Designated Biologist will advise the Construction Manager on mitigation, supervise or conduct mitigation, conduct monitoring and other biological resources compliance efforts, and notify the project owner and the CPM of non-compliance with any of the mitigation measures. The Construction Manager will act on the advice of the Designated Biologist to ensure conformance with mitigation measures. If directed by the Designated Biologist, the Construction Manager will halt all construction activities in sensitive areas to assure that potentially significant biological resource impacts are avoided. The Designated Biologist will inform the project owner of any necessary remedial measures and when to resume construction. The Designated Biologist will also advise the Energy Commission CPM what remedial measures are needed or have been instituted.

**Construction Monitoring at Borings.** At all borings underneath drainages and underneath the Colorado River, a biologist will be present to monitor construction activities and impacts to wildlife and plants.

**Worker Environmental Awareness Program.** The project owner will develop and implement a CPM-approved Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) in which each of its employees, as well as employees of contractors and subcontractors who work on the project site or related facilities during construction and operation, are informed about the sensitive biological resources associated with the project area, their responsibilities, and relevant mitigation measures. The WEAP will consist of an on-site or training center presentation in which supporting written material is made available to all participants. The program will be administered by the Designated Biologist or a competent individual(s) authorized by the Designated Biologist.

**Evaporation Ponds.** Evaporation ponds will be monitored weekly by power plant personnel for bird and wildlife losses. Any specimens found will be placed in plastic bags, labeled, logged into a database, and then frozen for potential future identification and tissue assessment. If a substantial number of bird and wildlife are found dead during any year, as determined by the CPM or Designated Biologist, then measures will be identified and implemented that will substantially reduce or eliminate the problem. In addition, water quality and invertebrates will be monitored for toxic levels and live bird counts will be conducted.

**Weed Reduction Program.** A comprehensive exotic species control program will be implemented at the plant site. In addition, only native species will be used for landscaping the plant site. This program will be implemented until such time that the adjacent land use on the north and west sides is no longer a natural community or is agriculture, or until the plant is permanently closed. At the Colorado River, this exotic control program will be implemented until the Caltrans ROW is replanted and established.