



# NOTICE OF PREPARATION FOR A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Date: May 2, 2008

To: Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Interested Organizations and Individuals

Subject: Notice of Preparation

Lead Agency: California Department of Toxic Substances Control

Contact: Mr. Aaron Yue, Project Manager  
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## PROJECT TITLE

PG&E Topock Compressor Station Environmental Investigation and Cleanup Project

## PROJECT LOCATION

Needles, California

## PURPOSE OF THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) specifies that a public agency must prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for any project that it proposes to carry out or approve that may have a significant direct or indirect impact on the environment (Public Resources Code Section 21100[a]). The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is the lead agency for the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) Topock Compressor Station, Environmental Investigation and Cleanup Project. DTSC has determined that this project may have a significant impact on the environment and has therefore decided to prepare an EIR.

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) is a procedural document used to initiate interagency and public dialogue to determine the scope of an EIR. The purpose of the scoping process is to engage Responsible Agencies<sup>1</sup>, Trustee

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<sup>1</sup> In accordance with Title 14, Section 15381 of the California Code of Regulations, "Responsible Agency" means a public agency which proposes to carry out or approve a project, for which a Lead Agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR or Negative Declaration. For the purposes of CEQA, the term "Responsible Agency" includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency which have discretionary approval power over the project.

Agencies<sup>2</sup>, federal agencies, and interested organizations and individuals in order to identify concerns to be addressed in the EIR. The principal goal of this NOP is to inform agencies and the public about issues related to the project and to solicit recommendations and develop information regarding the scope, focus, and content of the proposed EIR. DTSC encourages recipients of this notice to inform others with an interest in or responsibility related to the proposed project that this NOP is available for review.

## **PROVIDING COMMENTS ON THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, federal agencies and interested organizations and individuals are encouraged to submit comments regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be contained in the draft EIR for DTSC's consideration. To provide greater opportunity for input on the scope of the EIR, this NOP is being circulated an additional 30 days beyond the required 30-day comment period for a total of 60 days. Comments should be submitted as soon as possible and must be received no later than July 1, 2008.

Please send written comments to Mr. Aaron Yue, DTSC Project Manager, at the address listed above. When submitting comments, please identify a contact person to answer any questions regarding your comments.

## **DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING COMMENTS**

Comments on this NOP must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on July 1, 2008.

Documents related to the proposed project are available for review at the project repositories listed below, on the internet at [http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Projects/PGE\\_Topock.cfm](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Projects/PGE_Topock.cfm), and at the DTSC address listed above.

### **Information Repository Locations and Contact Information**

Needles Public Library  
1111 Bailey Avenue  
Needles, CA 92363  
Kristin Mouton: 760-326-9255

Colorado River Indian Tribes Public Library  
2nd Avenue and Mojave Road  
Parker, AZ 85344  
Amelia Flores: 928-669-1285

Chemehuevi Indian Reservation  
2000 Chemehuevi Trail  
Havasas Lake, CA 92363  
Gilbert Parra: 760-858-1140

Parker Public Library  
1001 Navajo Avenue  
Parker, AZ 85344  
Jana Ponce: 928-669-262

Golden Shores/Topock Library Station  
13136 Golden Shores Parkway  
Topock, AZ 86436  
Avis McKinnon: 928-768-2235

California Department of Toxic Substances Control  
5796 Corporate Avenue  
Cypress, CA 90630  
Julie Johnson: 714-484-5337  
9am-Noon, 1pm-4pm, Monday –Friday  
Please call for an appointment

Lake Havasu City Library  
1770 McCulloch Blvd.  
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403  
Audrey Lacomarre: 928-453-0718

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<sup>2</sup> In accordance with Title 14, Section 15386 of the California Code of Regulations, "Trustee Agency" means a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project which are held in trust for the people of the State of California. Trustee Agencies include: the California Department of Fish and Game, the State Lands Commission, the State Department of Parks and Recreation, and the University of California.

DTSC will be hosting several scoping meetings to give the Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, federal agencies and interested organizations and individuals an opportunity to appear and comment on the scope and content of the draft EIR. These professionally facilitated scoping meetings will consist of introductions, a project overview, a CEQA process overview and an opportunity for meeting participants to comment orally on the scope and content of the EIR. A reasonable amount of time will be allotted to allow all participants who wish to speak to do so. Written comments will also be accepted at the meetings. Scoping meetings have been scheduled at the following locations and times:

<b>Public Scoping Meetings</b>			
<b>City</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
Palm Desert, CA	City of Palm Desert City Council Chamber Palm Desert, CA 92260	Tuesday, May 27	1:30-4:30 p.m.
Yuma, AZ	Gila Ridge High School Auditorium 7150 E. 24 <sup>th</sup> Street Yuma, AZ 85365	Wednesday, May 28	1:30-4:30 p.m.
Needles, CA	Needles Elks Lodge 1000 Lillyhill Dr. Needles, CA 92363-3432	Thursday, May 29	5:30-8:30 p.m.
Lake Havasu City, AZ	City Council Chamber 2360 McCulloch Blvd. North Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403	Monday, June 2	2:00-5:00 p.m.
Big River, CA	Big River Development Enterprises 150313 Rio Vista Drive Big River, CA 92242	Thursday, June 5	5:00-7:00 p.m.

## **CONTACT**

If you have any questions or wish to discuss the project, please contact Aaron Yue, DTSC Project Manager, at (714) 484-5439 or email: [ayue@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:ayue@dtsc.ca.gov) or Jeanne Matsumoto, DTSC Public Participation Specialist, at (714) 484-5338, toll free at (866) 495-5651 or email: [jmatsumo@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:jmatsumo@dtsc.ca.gov). For media inquiries, please contact the DTSC Public Information Officer, Jeanne Garcia, at (818) 717-6573 or email: [jgarcia1@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:jgarcia1@dtsc.ca.gov).

## **INFORMATION FOR THE DISABLED AND HEARING IMPAIRED**

The meeting rooms for the scoping meetings are accessible to people with disabilities. If translation services are needed or if additional accommodations for the disabled are needed, please notify Susan Callery at (818) 717-6567 [scallery@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:scallery@dtsc.ca.gov) no later than one week before the meeting. TDD users can obtain additional information by using the California Relay Service at 1-(888)-877-5378 to reach DTSC's Project Manager Aaron Yue at (714) 484-5439.

# 1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT OVERVIEW

DTSC is the Lead Agency for the environmental investigation and cleanup of contamination at the PG&E Topock Compressor Station (Station). The proposed project includes the development of a final remedy under the California Hazardous Waste Control Law for corrective action. A “final remedy” is a final cleanup action proposed for dealing with contaminants at a site. Under California law, owners or operators of facilities that treat, store, or dispose of hazardous waste must undertake corrective actions to clean up releases and spills of hazardous wastes or constituents resulting from their operation. The final remedy will address both soil and groundwater contamination at the Station, which is located in eastern San Bernardino County, California. DTSC will be preparing a Programmatic EIR which would allow DTSC to identify and analyze project-wide alternatives and environmental effects while including detailed analysis of all approved actions. Any subsequent activities would then be examined in light of the Programmatic EIR to determine whether a supplemental environmental document must be prepared.

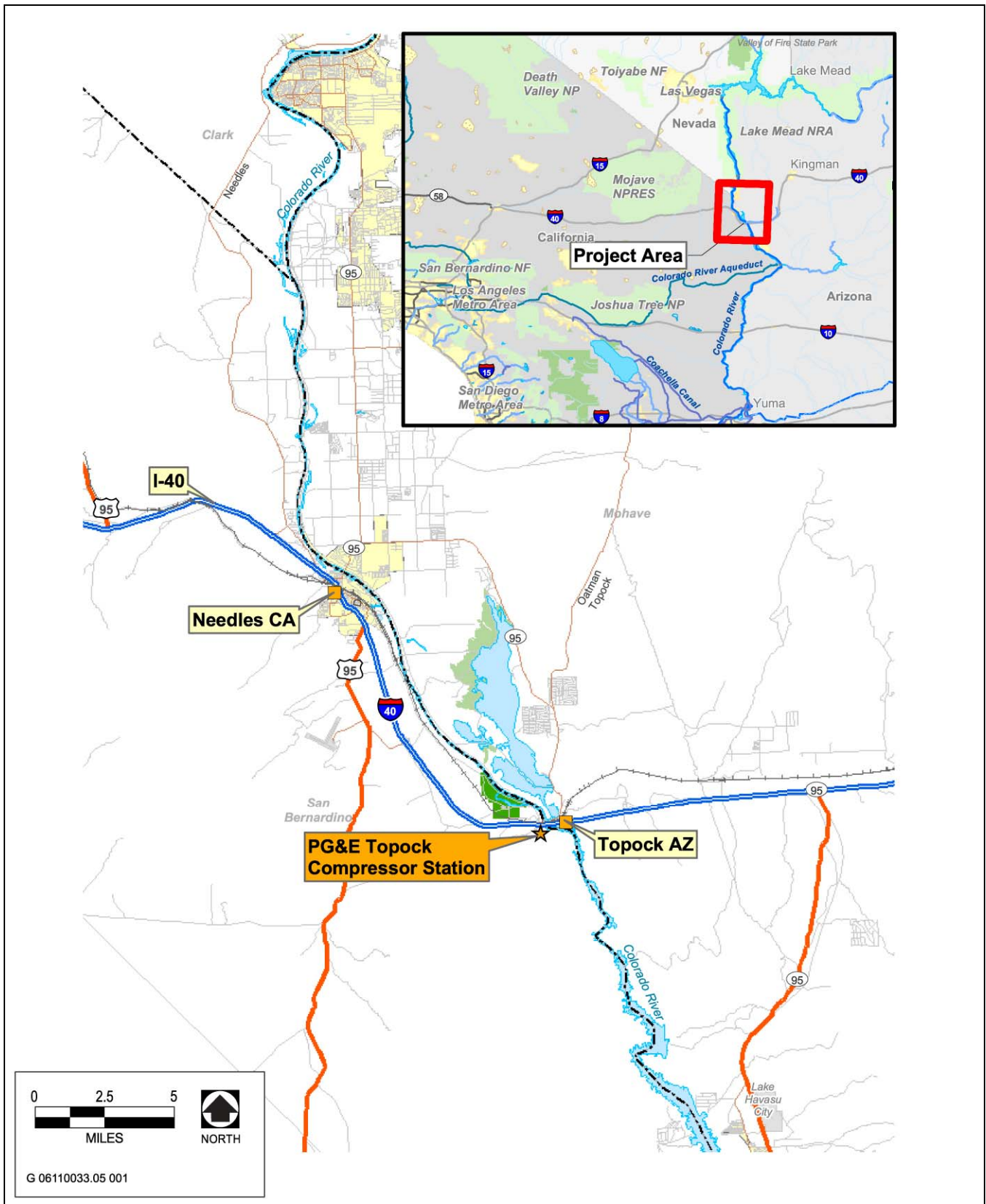
The goal of the final remedy for groundwater and soil is to contain, control, and/or eliminate the mobility, toxicity, and other risks of all Chemicals of Concern (COCs) identified by meeting the Remedial Action Objectives developed for the site. Hexavalent chromium [Cr(VI)] is the principal COC with regard to human health and environmental impacts at this site. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has determined that certain chromium compounds [e.g., Cr(VI)] are known to cause cancer in humans. Cr(VI) is generally soluble in water. Based on current investigation and historic wastewater discharges at the Station, other constituents that ultimately may become COCs in groundwater are copper, nickel, lead, zinc, pH, total dissolved solids, and petroleum hydrocarbons. Other COCs in groundwater may be identified as ongoing investigations are completed.

Cr(VI) was used as an additive to the cooling water at the Station from 1951 to 1985 to inhibit corrosion to the equipment and minimize scaling. From 1951 to 1964, a portion of the cooling water was discharged to a dry wash adjacent to the Station. As a result, Cr(VI) has been detected in the groundwater and soil in the vicinity of the Station, although there is currently no evidence that human or ecological receptors are being exposed to Cr(VI) from the contaminated groundwater. Human and ecological receptors could be affected if contaminated groundwater were to reach drinking water wells or the Colorado River. The final remedy will be designed to protect potential receptors against exposures in the future.

In 2002, PG&E submitted a Draft Corrective Measures Study/Feasibility Study Work Plan (CMS/FS Work Plan) to DTSC. After comments were received from various public agencies, a revised CMS/FS Work Plan was issued in June 2007. The 2007 Draft CMS/FS Work Plan has been commented on and a final revision, dated March 2008, is pending agency approval.

## 1.2 PROJECT LOCATION

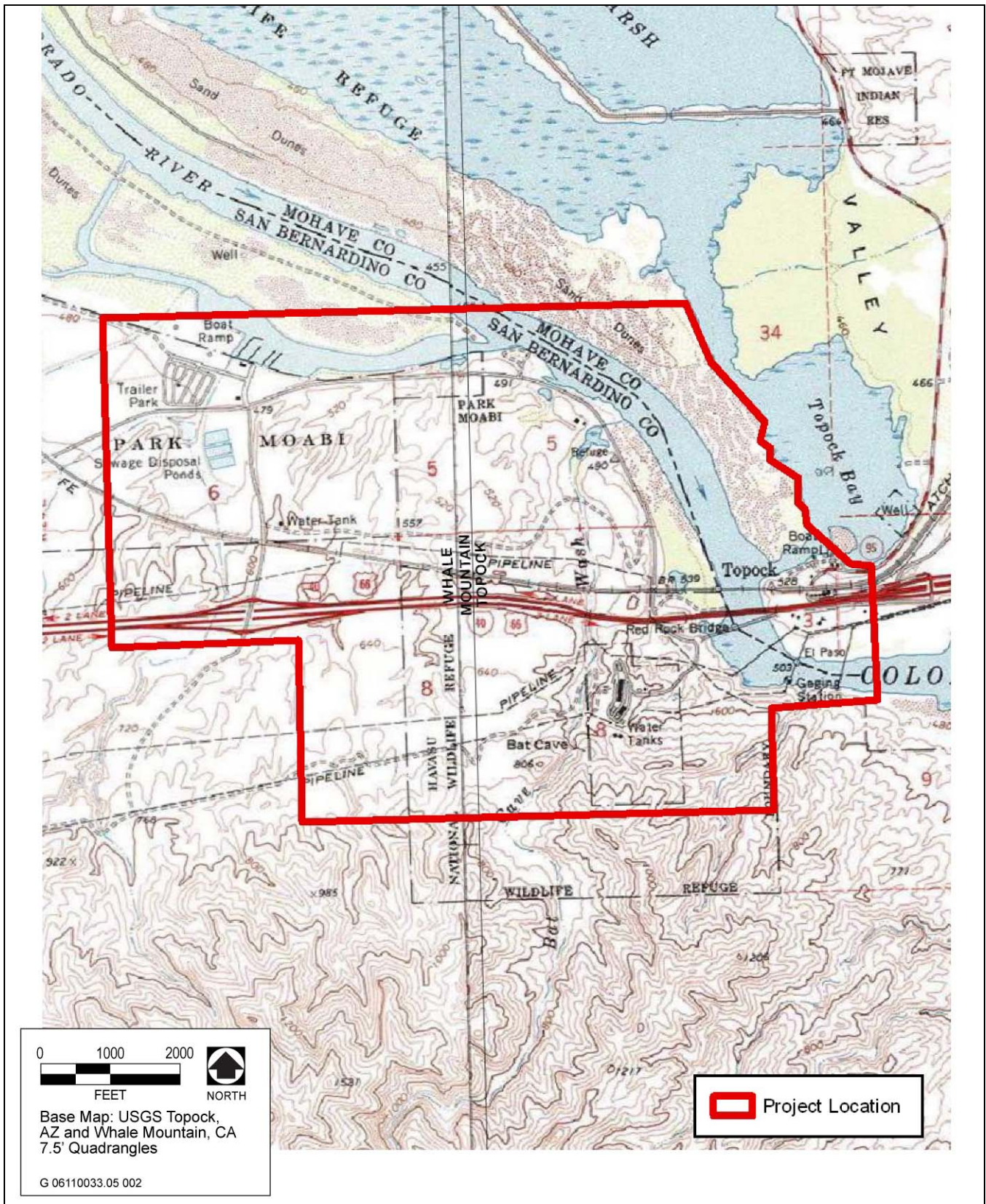
The Station is located in the Mojave Desert approximately 12 miles southeast of the city of Needles, California, and 1 mile southeast of the Moabi Regional Park in California. The Station is one-half mile west of the community of Topock, Arizona, which is situated directly across the Colorado River from the Station, and 5 miles south of Golden Shores, Arizona. The Station is one-half mile west of the Colorado River and south of Interstate 40 (see Exhibits 1-1 and 1-2, and 2-1) and occupies approximately 65 acres of land owned by PG&E. However, the study area for the corrective action activities covers additional surrounding land owned and managed by a number of private entities and government agencies, including the Havasu National Wildlife Refuge managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), lands managed by the Department of Interior (DOI), U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), rights of way for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad and California Department of Transportation, and land owned by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (see Exhibits 1-1 1-2, and 1-3).



Source: Data provided by CH2M Hill in 2007 and adapted by EDAW in 2008

**Project Vicinity**

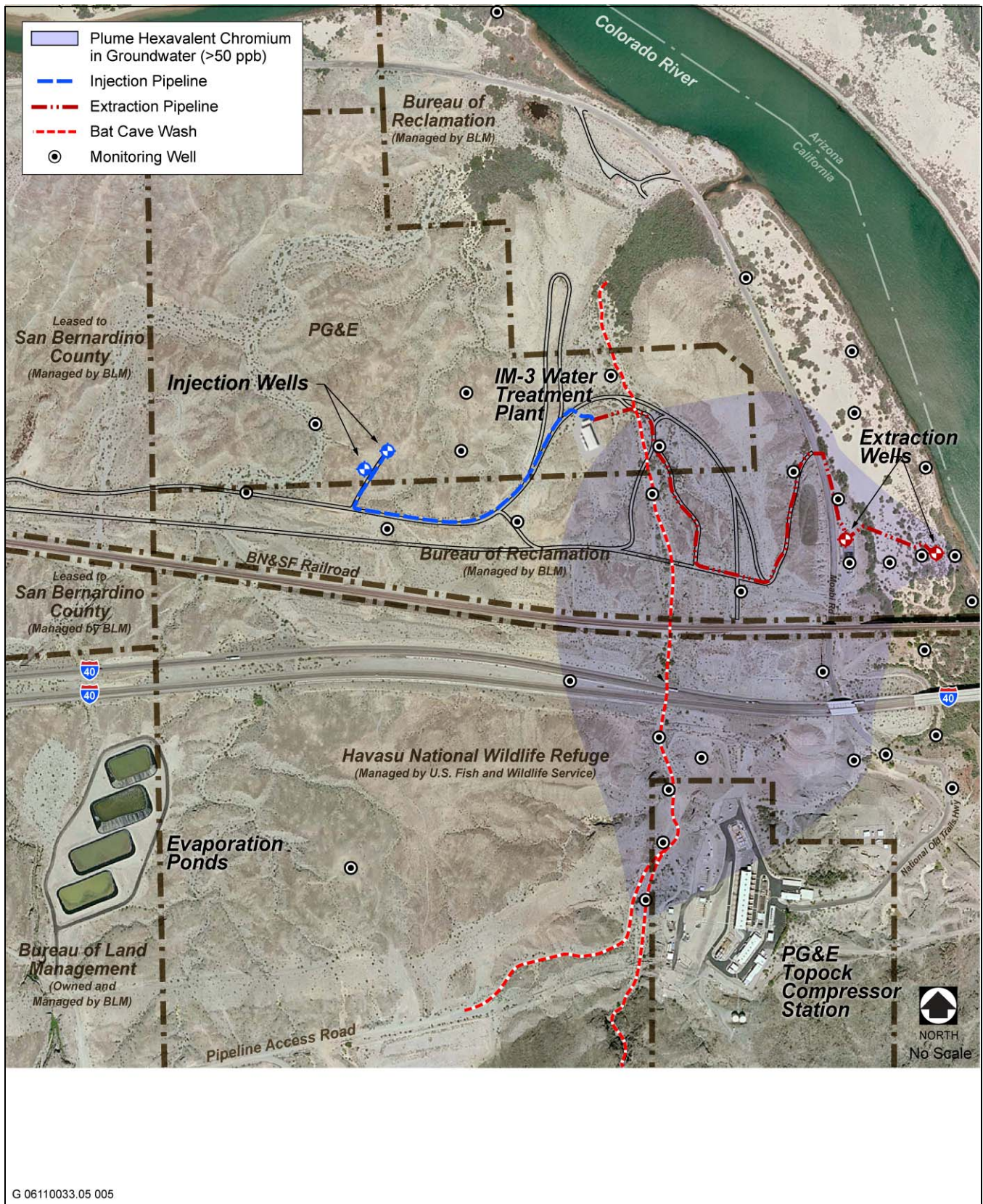
**Exhibit 1-1**



Source: Data provided by ESRI in 2007 and adapted by EDAW in 2008

**Project Location**

**Exhibit 1-2**



Site Map Showing Topock Maze and Groundwater Plume

Exhibit 1-3

## 2 REMEDIAL ACTION ALTERNATIVES

### 2.1 REASONABLE RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES

CEQA requires an EIR to include a discussion of a reasonable range of alternatives, including the “no project” alternative. Specifically, an EIR must “describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.”<sup>3</sup> The lead agency is responsible for selecting a range of project alternatives for examination and must publicly disclose its reasoning for selecting those alternatives.

The Topock EIR will analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the Final Remedy. Although the Corrective Measure Study/Feasibility Study (CMS/FS) Work Plan has not yet been approved, and preparation of the individual CMS/FS reports for groundwater and soil have not begun, DTSC anticipates that the Final Remedy will include the use of one or more of the following remedial action technologies identified in the draft CMS/FS Work Plan:

#### Groundwater Remediation Technologies

Monitored natural attenuation  
Impermeable barrier wall  
Permeable reactive barrier  
Groundwater extraction and on-site treatment  
Groundwater extraction and off-site treatment  
Reactive *in-situ* treatment zones  
Passive *in-situ* treatment zones

#### Soil Remediation Technologies

Excavation and offsite disposal  
Excavation and onsite treatment  
Soil washing  
Chemical reduction/oxidation  
Soil flushing  
*In-situ* reduction  
Phytoremediation  
Solidification/stabilization  
Capping in place

### 2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS TO BE EXAMINED IN THE EIR

The purpose of an EIR is to examine a project for potentially significant environmental effects and to identify measures that can reduce, avoid, or mitigate potential adverse impacts<sup>4</sup>. Based upon consultation with other agencies and environmental assessments conducted in and around the site, it has been determined that the proposed project may have a significant impact on Biological Resources and Cultural Resources. Because DTSC believes additional adverse impacts could exist, the EIR also will examine potential effects in the following areas:

Aesthetics	Noise
Air Quality	Population and Housing
Agricultural Resources	Public Services
Geology and Soils	Recreation
Hazardous Materials and Public Health	Transportation and Circulation
Hydrology and Water Quality	Utilities and Service Systems
Land Use	

<sup>3</sup> Section 15126.6[e][1] of the California Code of Regulations

<sup>4</sup> According to the [CEQA Guidelines Section 15382](#) a “significant effect on the environment” means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.