

1 **3.1 AESTHETICS**

AESTHETICS – Would the Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2 **3.1.1 Environmental Setting**

3 The former Port Costa marine oil terminal (MOT) wharf (Project) site is located along
 4 the southeast shore of the Carquinez Strait near the town of Port Costa, Contra Costa
 5 County, within scenic areas designated by the County. The Carquinez Strait waterway
 6 and shoreline are part of the “Scenic Waterways” system, as designated in the Open
 7 Space Element of the Contra Costa County General Plan 2005-2020; this designation
 8 identifies the major scenic resources in the County, which should be considered when
 9 evaluating nearby development proposals.

10 The Project site is visible from the Benicia-Martinez Bridge (Interstate 680 [I-680]) and
 11 from Benicia, including parts of the Carquinez Strait Scenic Loop Trail along the Benicia
 12 shoreline. The view from the Project site includes panoramic open water, with the
 13 Benicia shoreline to the north and northeast across the Carquinez Strait (approximately
 14 0.75 mile to the Benicia Pier), the Benicia-Martinez Bridge to the east, and sloped
 15 shoreline to the south and west. West of the wharf site, the upland area includes two
 16 active rail lines. Between the water line and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) rail lines are
 17 primarily disturbed areas consisting of concrete riprap and weedy vegetation. Beyond
 18 the rail lines, the upland area slopes steeply into a rocky hillside.

19 **3.1.2 Regulatory Setting**

20 Federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to this issue area and relevant to the
 21 Project are identified in Tables 1-2 and 3.1-1. Local goals, policies, and/or regulations
 22 applicable to this issue area are listed below.

Table 3.1-1. Federal and/or State Laws, Regulations, and Policies Potentially Applicable to the Project (Aesthetics)

CA	California Scenic Highway Program	The California Scenic Highway Program, managed by the California Department of Transportation, was created to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. State highways identified as scenic, or eligible for designation, are listed in California Streets and Highways Code section 260 et seq.
CA	San Francisco Bay Plan (see also Table 1-2)	The Bay Plan provides BCDC policies on Appearance, Design, and Scenic Views around the Bay. Several of these policies are to ensure and maintain the visual quality around the Bay.

1 The Contra Costa County General Plan 1995-2020 outlines development goals and
 2 policies that promote protection of the scenic qualities of the County. Specifically, the
 3 General Plan identifies the following scenic resource goals and policies that are
 4 applicable to the Project site:

- 5 • Goal 9-10 - To preserve and protect areas of identified high scenic value, where
 6 practical, and in accordance with the Land Use Element map.
- 7 • Goal 9-12 - To preserve the scenic qualities of the San Francisco Bay/Delta
 8 estuary system and the Sacramento–San Joaquin River/Delta shoreline.
- 9 • Policy 9-27 - The appearance of the County shall be improved by eliminating
 10 negative features such as non-conforming signs and overhead utility lines, and
 11 by encouraging aesthetically designed facilities with adequate setbacks and
 12 landscaping.
- 13 • Policy 9-28 - Maintenance of the scenic waterways of the County shall be
 14 ensured through public protection of the marshes and riparian vegetation along
 15 the shorelines and delta levees, as otherwise specified in the General Plan.

16 **3.1.3 Impact Analysis**

17 **a) Have a substantial effect on a scenic vista?**

18 **No Impact.** The Project site is located in a Contra Costa County designated scenic
 19 waterway. During MOT deconstruction activities, there would be several short-term,
 20 temporary impacts to views of the scenic waterway. Temporary impacts include
 21 anchoring of two barges offshore as well as smaller vessels needed to transport
 22 workers or other equipment; marker buoys; incidental temporary facilities upland from
 23 the MOT for parking, storage of non-hazardous materials (not used for the
 24 deconstruction work on water), and sanitary stations; and offsite secured storage
 25 facilities at the selected contractor’s shore base. The presence of marine vessels would
 26 be consistent with views of the Carquinez Strait, and all deconstruction facilities and
 27 materials would be removed at Project completion. Scenic impacts would be short-term,

1 occurring over the approximately 5-month deconstruction period. The removal of the
2 MOT structures would ultimately result in improved aesthetic benefits to the area.
3 Therefore, the Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista and
4 would result in beneficial impacts to the area.

5 ***b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees,***
6 ***rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway corridor?***

7 **No Impact.** No Federal, State, or locally designated scenic highway corridors are
8 located in, or are visible from, the Project site. Therefore, the Project would have no
9 impact on scenic resources including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and
10 historic buildings within a State scenic highway corridor.

11 ***c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and***
12 ***its surroundings?***

13 **No Impact.** The Project would remove the MOT structures from the scenic waterway,
14 improving views of the Carquinez Strait from Benicia and from the Carquinez Strait
15 Scenic Loop Trail along the Benicia shoreline. The Project is consistent with the Contra
16 Costa County's General Plan, Scenic Resource Policy 9-27, which promotes the
17 removal of negative features from scenic areas. Removal of the man-made MOT
18 structures would ultimately increase the aesthetic value of the Project site. Therefore,
19 the Project would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the Project site
20 and its surroundings. Deconstruction would result in beneficial impacts to the area.

21 ***d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect***
22 ***daytime or nighttime views in the area?***

23 **No Impact.** No new source of visual glare or substantial light is expected to occur due
24 to the Project. Deconstruction activities would be performed generally between 8 a.m.
25 and 5 p.m., except for periods when required by tide conditions. Deconstruction
26 activities would only occur during daylight hours; because the U.S. Coast Guard
27 (USCG) does not require additional lighting, none would be used. Presence of marine
28 vessels, temporary facilities, and equipment would be short-term and fully removed at
29 Project completion. Therefore, there would be no new impact on visual glare or light.

30 **3.1.4 Mitigation Summary**

31 The Project would not result in significant aesthetic impacts; therefore, no mitigation is
32 required.