

1 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

2 INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

3 Section 4.0 examines the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project
4 and Project Alternatives. This Section includes analyses of the environmental issue
5 areas listed below:

6 4.1 Aesthetic/Visual Resources;

7 4.2 Agricultural Resources;

8 4.3 Air Quality;

9 4.4 Biological Resources;

10 4.5 Cultural Resources;

11 4.6 Geology and Soils;

12 4.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials;

13 4.8 Hydrology and Water Quality;

14 4.9 Land Use and Planning;

15 4.10 Noise;

16 4.11 Recreation;

17 4.12 Population and Housing/Public Services/Utilities and Service Systems;

18 4.13 Transportation and Traffic; and

19 4.14 Energy and Mineral Resources.

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21 Each environmental issue area analyzed in this document provides background
22 information and describes the environmental setting (baseline conditions) to help the
23 reader understand the conditions that would cause an impact to occur. In addition,
24 each section describes how an impact is determined to be “significant” or “less than
25 significant.” Finally, the individual sections recommend mitigation measures (MMs)
26 to reduce significant impacts. Throughout this Section’s environmental sub-sections,
27 both impacts and the corresponding MMs are identified by a bold **letter-number**
28 **designation** (e.g., Impact **LU-1** and **MM LU-1a**).

1 **ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

2 **Environmental Baseline**

3 The analysis of each issue area begins with an examination of the existing physical
4 setting (baseline conditions as determined pursuant to section 15125(a) of the
5 CEQA Guidelines) that may be affected by the proposed Project. The effects of the
6 proposed Project are defined as changes to the environmental setting that are
7 attributable to Project components or operation.

8 **Significance Criteria**

9 Significance criteria are identified for each environmental issue area. The
10 significance criteria serve as benchmarks for determining if a component action will
11 result in a significant adverse environmental impact when evaluated against the
12 baseline. According to the CEQA Guidelines section 15382, a significant effect on
13 the environment means "...a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change
14 in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project..."

15 **Impact Analysis**

16 Impacts are classified as:

- 17 • **Class I** (significant adverse impact that remains significant after mitigation);
- 18 • **Class II** (significant adverse impact that can be eliminated or reduced below an
19 issue's significance criteria);
- 20 • **Class III** (adverse impact that does not meet or exceed an issue's significance
21 criteria); or
- 22 • **Class IV** (beneficial impact).

23 A determination will be made, based on the analysis of any impact within each
24 affected environmental issue area and compliance with any recommended mitigation
25 measure(s), of the level of impact remaining in comparison to the pertinent
26 significance criteria. If the impact remains significant, at or above the significance
27 criteria, it is deemed to be Class I. If a "significant adverse impact" is reduced,
28 based on compliance with mitigation, to a level below the pertinent significance
29 criteria, it is determined to no longer have a significant effect on the environment,
30 i.e., to be "less than significant" (Class II). If an action creates an adverse impact
31 above the baseline condition, but such impact does not meet or exceed the pertinent

1 significance criteria, it is determined to be adverse, but less than significant (Class
2 III). An action that provides an improvement to an environmental issue area in
3 comparison to the baseline information is recognized as a beneficial impact (Class
4 IV).

5 **Formulation of Mitigation Measures and Mitigation Monitoring Program**

6 When significant impacts are identified, feasible mitigation measures are formulated
7 to eliminate or reduce the intensity of the impacts and focus on the protection of
8 sensitive resources. The effectiveness of a mitigation measure is subsequently
9 determined by evaluating the impact remaining after its application. Those impacts
10 meeting or exceeding the impact significance criteria after mitigation are considered
11 residual impacts that remain significant (Class I). Implementation of more than one
12 mitigation measure may be needed to reduce an impact below a level of
13 significance. The mitigation measures recommended in this document are identified
14 in the environmental analysis for each issue area and presented in Section 6.0,
15 Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMP).

16 If any mitigation measure becomes incorporated as part of a project's design, it
17 would no longer be considered a mitigation measure under the CEQA. If mitigation
18 measures eliminate or reduce a potentially significant impact to a level below the
19 significance criteria, they eliminate the potential for that significant impact since the
20 "measure" is now a component of the action. Such measures incorporated into the
21 project design have the same status as any "Applicant Proposed Measures." The
22 California State Lands Commission's (CSLC's) practice is to include all measures to
23 eliminate or reduce the environmental impacts of a proposed project, whether
24 applicant proposed or recommended mitigation, in the MMP.

25 **Impacts of Alternatives**

26 Section 3.0, Alternatives and Cumulative Projects, provides a list, description, and
27 map identifying alternatives to the proposed Project. Each issue area in this Section
28 presents the impact analysis for each alternative scenario. A summary of the
29 collective impacts of each alternative in comparison with the impacts of the proposed
30 Project is included within the Executive Summary.

31 **Cumulative Projects Impact Analysis**

32 Each issue area in this Section presents the cumulative impact scenario, the focus
33 of which is to identify the potential impacts of the Project that might not be significant

1 when considered alone, but that might contribute to a significant impact when
2 viewed in conjunction with the other projects.

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