3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2, this Draft EIR identifies and focuses on the significant direct and indirect environmental effects of the proposed project, given due consideration to both its short-term and long-term effects. Short-term effects are generally those associated with construction of the proposed project, while long-term effects are generally those associated with operation of project components. As described in Section 1.0, Introduction, of this Draft EIR, this analysis focuses on a limited number of environmental resource topics, as other topics were addressed in the analysis that accompanied the NOP (Appendix A). Sections 3.1 through 3.19 discuss the environmental impacts that may result with approval and implementation of the proposed project.

ENVIRONMENTAL TOPICS

The potential environmental effects associated with the implementation of the proposed project are evaluated in the following environmental resource areas:

- Aesthetics, Light, and Glare
- Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

ORGANIZATION OF ISSUE AREAS

Each environmental issue section contains the following components:

Environmental Setting presents the existing environmental conditions on the project site and within the surrounding area as appropriate, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15125. The extent of the environmental setting area evaluated (the project study area) differs among resources, depending on the locations where impacts would be expected. For example, air quality impacts are assessed for the air basin (macro-scale), as well as the site vicinity (micro-scale), whereas aesthetic impacts are assessed for the project vicinity only.

Regulatory Setting presents the laws, regulations, plans, and policies that are relevant to each issue area. Regulations originating from the federal, state, and/or local levels are each discussed as appropriate.

Methodology for Analysis summarizes the resources, methods, procedures and techniques used to evaluate proposed project impacts.

Thresholds of Significance identifies the thresholds of significance used to determine the level of significance of the environmental impacts for each resource topic, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15126, 15126.2, and 15143. The thresholds of significance used in this Draft EIR are based on the checklist presented in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines; best available data; and regulatory standards of federal, state, and local agencies.

Project Impacts identify the level of each environmental impact by comparing the effects of the proposed project to the environmental setting. Key methods and assumptions used to frame and conduct the impact analysis, as well as issues or potential impacts not discussed further (i.e., such issues for which the project would have no impact), are also described.

Project impacts are organized numerically in each subsection (e.g., Impact AES-1, Impact AES-2, Impact AES-3). A bold-font environmental impact statement precedes the discussion of each impact while its level of significance succeeds the discussion of each impact. The discussion that follows the impact summary includes the substantial evidence supporting the impact significance conclusion.

Mitigation Measures describe any feasible measures that could avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, or compensate for significant adverse impacts, with measures having to be fully enforceable through incorporation into the project (PRC Section 21081.6[b]). Mitigation measures are not required for environmental impacts that are found to be less than significant. Where feasible mitigation for a significant environmental impact is available, it is described following the impact. Where sufficient feasible mitigation is not available to reduce environmental impacts to a less than significant level, or where the lead agency lacks the authority to ensure that the mitigation is implemented when needed, the impacts are identified as significant and unavoidable.

Level of Significance After Mitigation describes the level of impact significance remaining after mitigation measures are implemented.

Cumulative Impacts describes two or more individual impacts that, when considered together, are significant or that compound or increase other significant environmental impacts. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15355). The incremental impact of a project, although less than significant on its own, may be considerable when viewed in the cumulative context of other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. A considerable contribution is considered to be significant from the point of view of cumulative impact analysis.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Determining the severity of project impacts is fundamental to achieving the objectives of CEQA. CEQA Guidelines Section 15091 requires that decision makers mitigate, as completely as is feasible, the significant impacts identified in the Final EIR. If the EIR identifies any significant unmitigated impacts, CEQA Guidelines Section 15093 requires decision makers to adopt a statement of overriding considerations that explains why the benefits of the project outweigh the adverse environmental consequences identified in the EIR.

The level of significance for each impact examined in this Draft EIR is determined by considering the predicted magnitude of the impact against the applicable threshold. Thresholds were developed using criteria from the CEQA Guidelines and Appendix G Checklist; federal, state, and local regulatory schemes; regional/local plans and ordinances; accepted practice; consultation with recognized experts; and other professional opinions.

FORMAT USED FOR IMPACT ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The format adopted in this Draft EIR to present the evaluation of environmental impacts is described and illustrated below.

Summary Heading of Impact

Impact AIR-1:	**An impact summary heading appears immediately preceding the impact description (Summary Heading of Impact in this example). The impact abbreviation identifies the section of the report (AIR for Air Quality in this example) and the sequential order of the impact (1 in this example) within that section. To the right of the impact number is the impact statement, which identifies the potential impact.**

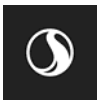
Impact Analysis
A narrative analysis follows the impact statement.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation
This section identifies the level of significance of the impact before any mitigation is proposed.

Mitigation Measures
In some cases, following the impact discussion, reference is made to federal and state regulations and agency policies that would fully or partially mitigate the impact. In addition, policies and programs from applicable local land use plans that partially or fully mitigate the impact may be cited.

Project-specific mitigation measures, beyond those contained in other documents, are set off with a summary heading and described using the format presented below:

MM AIR-1: Project-specific mitigation is identified that would reduce the impact to the lowest degree feasible. The mitigation number links the particular mitigation to the impact with which it is associated (AIR-1 in this example).



Level of Significance After Mitigation

This section identifies the resulting level of significance of the impact following mitigation. Abbreviations used in the mitigation measure numbering are shown in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1: Environmental Issue Abbreviations

Code	Environmental Issue
AES	Aesthetics, Light, and Glare
AG	Agricultural and Forestry Resources
AIR	Air Quality
BIO	Biological Resources
CUL	Cultural Resources
EN	Energy
GEO	Geology, Soils, and Seismicity
GHG	Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change
HAZ	Hazards and Hazardous Materials
HYD	Hydrology and Water Quality
LU	Land Use and Planning
NOI	Noise
POP	Population and Housing
PS	Public Services
REC	Recreation
TRANS	Transportation and Traffic
TRIB	Tribal Cultural Resources
UTIL	Utilities and Service Systems
WF	Wildfire