

## **Section 3.2 | Biological Resources**

### **3.2.1 Introduction**

This section describes the affected environment for biological resources, the regulatory setting associated with biological resources, the impacts on biological resources that would result from the project, and the mitigation measures that would reduce these impacts. The study area for biological resources consists of the entire County of Los Angeles.

Additional information on biological resources is provided in Appendix C.

The key sources of data and information used in the preparation of this section are listed and briefly described below.

- California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) (CDFG 2010) records.
- California Native Plant Society's (CNPS's) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (CNPS 2010).
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS 2011).
- USFWS Critical Habitat Portal (USFWS 2010).
- 2011 Google Earth aerial photographs.
- County of Los Angeles Draft General Plan (County of Los Angeles 2008).

The following impact determinations were made in the County of Los Angeles Initial Study Checklist for the proposed project.

- Grading, fire clearance, or flood related improvements would not remove substantial natural habitat areas.
- The project would not result in impacts associated with other factors related to biological resources (e.g., wildlife corridor, adjacent open space linkage).

These issues are not discussed further in this section.

### **3.2.2 Regulatory Setting**

#### **3.2.2.1 Federal**

##### **Federal Endangered Species Act**

The federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) was enacted in 1973 to provide protection to threatened and endangered species and their associated ecosystems. “Take” of a listed species is prohibited except when specific authorization has been granted through a USFWS permit under Section 4(d), 7,

or 10(a) of the ESA. “Take” is defined as to harass, harm, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any of these activities without a permit.

## **Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act**

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) was enacted in 1918. Its purpose is to prohibit the kill or transport of native migratory birds, or any part, nest, or egg of any such bird unless allowed by another regulation adopted in accordance with the MBTA. A list of migratory bird species that are protected by the MBTA is maintained by the USFWS, which also regulates most aspects of the taking, possession, transportation, sale, purchase, barter, exportation, and importation of migratory birds.

## **Clean Water Act**

In 1948, Congress first passed the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. This act was amended in 1972 and became known as the Clean Water Act (CWA), which regulates the discharge of pollutants into the waters of the United States. Under Section 404, permits need to be obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for discharge of dredge or fill material into jurisdictional waters of the U.S. USACE-regulated activities under Section 404 involve a discharge of dredged or fill material including, but not limited to, grading, placing of riprap for erosion control, pouring concrete, laying sod, and stockpiling excavated material into waters of the U.S. Activities that generally do not involve a regulated discharge (if performed specifically in a manner to avoid discharges) include driving pilings, some drainage channel maintenance activities, constructing temporary mining and farm/forest roads, and excavating without stockpiling. USACE issues Nationwide Permits for activities that require discretionary authority and do not exceed specific impact requirements (e.g., less than 0.5 acre of impacts, no impacts on special aquatic sites, etc.) and requires individual permits for activities that exceed the requirements of Nationwide Permits.

Under Section 401 of the act, Water Quality Certification from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)/Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) needs to be obtained if an action would potentially result in any impacts on jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

### **3.2.2.2 State**

#### **California Endangered Species Act (CESA)**

CESA prohibits the take of any species that the California Fish and Game Commission determines to be a threatened or endangered species. The act is administered by CDFG. Incidental take of these listed species can be approved by the CDFG.

#### **California State Fish and Game Code – Streambed Alteration Program**

The California Fish and Game Code mandates that “it is unlawful for any person to substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake designated by the department, or use any material from the streambeds, without first notifying the department of such activity.” CDFG jurisdiction includes ephemeral, intermittent, and

perennial watercourses (including dry washes) and lakes characterized by the presence of (1) definable bed and banks and (2) existing fish or wildlife resources. Furthermore, CDFG jurisdiction is often extended to habitats adjacent to watercourses, such as oak woodlands in canyon bottoms or willow woodlands that function hydrologically as part of the riparian system. Under the CDFG definition, a watercourse need not exhibit evidence of an Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) to be claimed as jurisdiction.

Under current California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600–1616, CDFG has the authority to regulate work that will substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of, change, or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake. The CDFG also has authority to regulate work that will deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake. This regulation takes the form of a requirement for a Section 1602 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) and is applicable to all projects involving state or local government discretionary approvals.

## **California Coastal Act of 1976**

The California Coastal Act (CCA), administered by the California Coastal Commission (CCC), includes policies for development proposed within the coastal zone and recognizes California ports, harbors, and coastline beaches as economic and coastal resources. Decisions to implement specific development, where feasible, are to be based on consideration of alternative locations and designs in order to minimize any adverse environmental impacts. The CCC regulates all jurisdictional wetlands that are under the joint jurisdiction of USACE and RWQCBs, as well as riparian habitat under jurisdiction of CDFG. The CCA also defines “environmentally sensitive area” as “any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments” (Section 30107.5). The CCA requires that such areas be protected and that development project within or adjacent to such areas be planned and sited to prevent degradation of environmentally sensitive areas.

## **Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act**

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne) is the California equivalent of the CWA. It provides for statewide coordination of water quality regulations through the establishment of the California SWRCB and nine separate RWQCBs that oversee water quality on a day-to-day basis at the regional/local level. The RWQCB regulates actions that would involve “discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, with any region that could affect the water of the state” (Water Code 13260(a)), pursuant to provisions of Porter-Cologne. Waters of the State are defined as “any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state” (Water Code 13050 (e)).

The RWQCB also regulates waters of the U.S. under Section 401 of the CWA. A Water Quality Certification or a waiver must be obtained from the RWQCB if an action would potentially result in any impacts on jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

### 3.2.2.3 Local

#### Los Angeles County Significant Ecological Areas

As part of the General Plan Conservation/Open Space and Land Use elements, the County has identified and adopted policies for Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs), which represent a wide variety of biological communities within the County. The SEAs are intended to preserve and protect regional biodiversity; however, SEAs do not preclude limited compatible development.

#### Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance

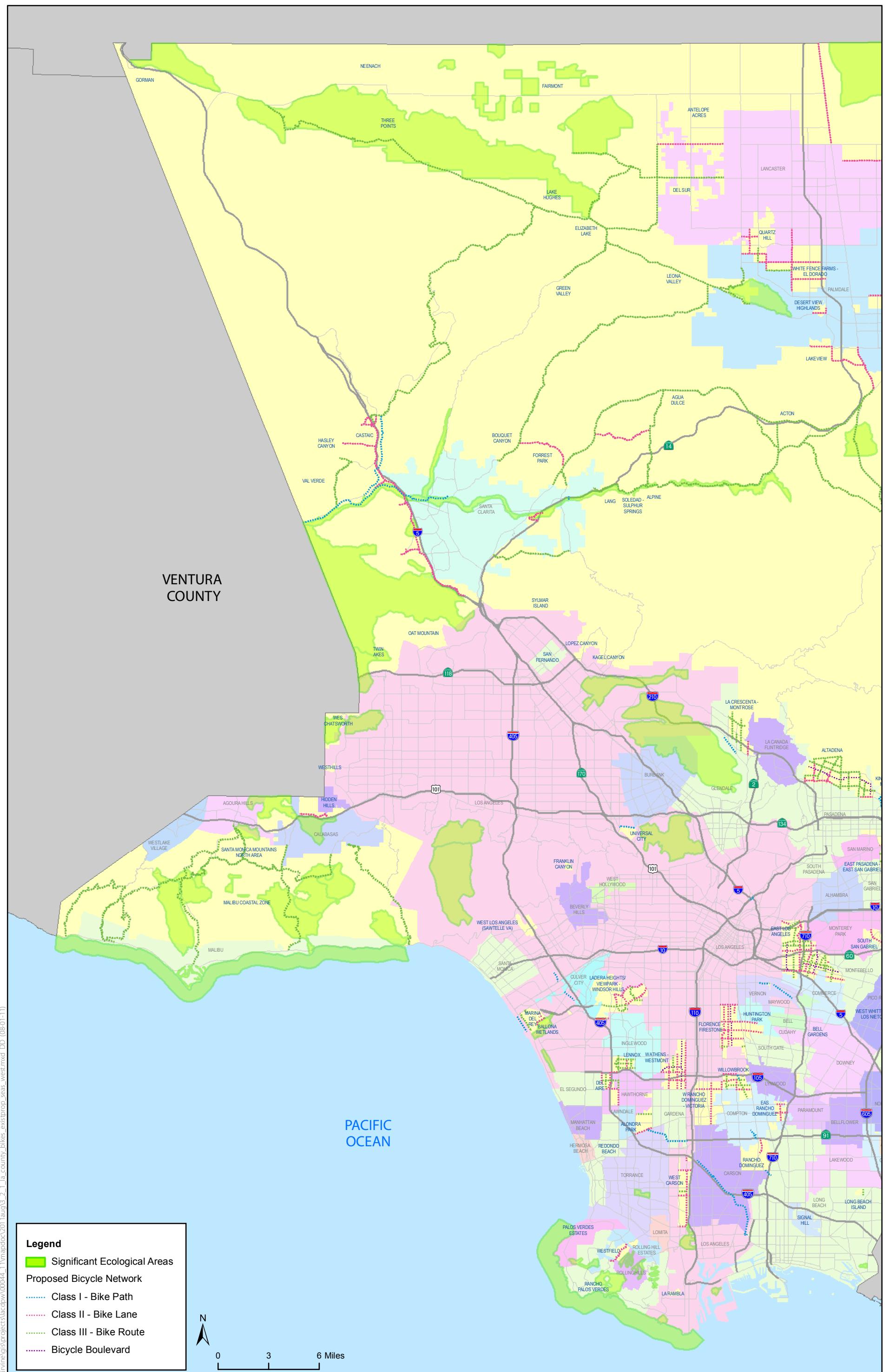
The Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance is intended to preserve and maintain healthy oak trees in the County and places restrictions on development for their preservation. All trees of the oak genus (including Valley Oak and Coast Live Oak) with a trunk measuring 25 inches or more in circumference (8 inches in diameter) and more than 4.5 feet tall are legally protected from being damaged or removed during the course of a development project without first obtaining a permit. Exemptions to this ordinance include trees within existing road rights-of-way where pruning is necessary to maintain line-of-sight or where removal/relocation is necessary to maintain public facilities and infrastructure within existing road rights-of-way.

### 3.2.3 Environmental Setting

Los Angeles County is heavily urbanized, and most of the undeveloped land that remains is within unincorporated areas. The County is climatically and ecologically diverse and includes coastal, mountain, and desert ecosystems. The regional climate of the County is Mediterranean with most precipitation occurring in the winter months with a slightly increasing trend from south to north. The primary mountain ranges in the County include the Santa Monica Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains. Surface water originating in the elevated areas of the County formed drainages that traverse the County and eventually flow into the Pacific Ocean, which borders the County along approximately 75 miles of coastline (except in the Antelope Valley, where water drains northward into the California Central Valley). Major drainage features in the County include the Los Angeles River, Rio Hondo, the San Gabriel River, and the Santa Clara River.

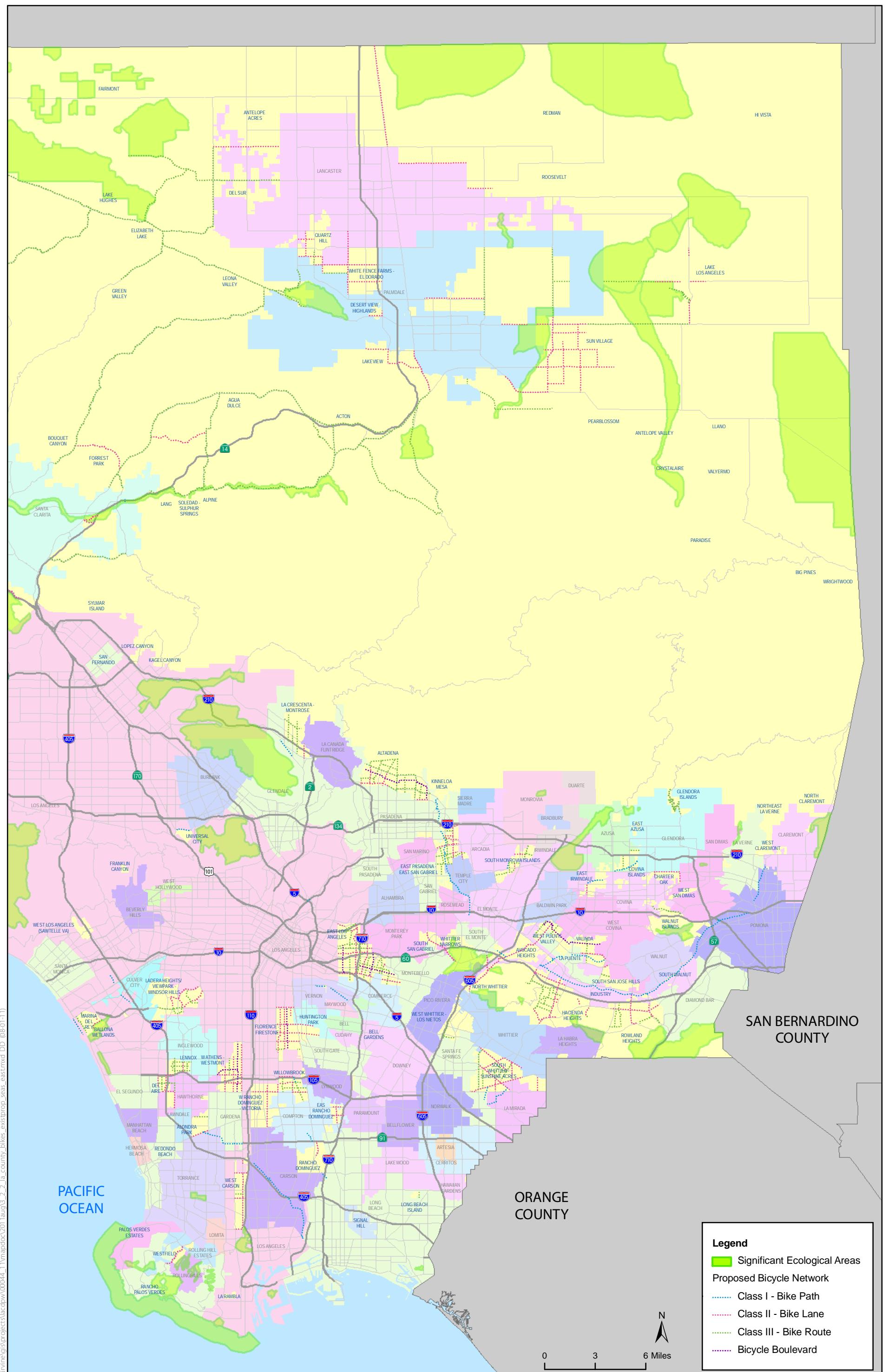
The southern portion of the County has been extensively developed and, as a result, undisturbed habitat is generally found in smaller pockets and in areas where steep topography precludes development. The northern portion of the County supports more scattered, rural development and large blocks of undeveloped areas and natural open space, including the Angeles and Los Padres National Forests and the Mohave Desert.

The County's General Plan established SEAs, which represent a wide variety of biological communities within the County. SEAs occur throughout the County and range from areas along the Malibu coastline, areas within the Santa Monica Mountains, and portions of the Angeles National Forest and the Mohave Desert. Figures 3.2-1 and 3.2-2 depict existing SEAs within the County.



SOURCE: ESRI Streetmap USA (2008); Significant Ecological Areas - Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

**Figure 3.2-1**  
**Western Los Angeles County Areas with Significant Ecological Areas**  
**Los Angeles County Bicycle Master Plan**



SOURCE: ESRI Streetmap USA (2008); Significant Ecological Areas - Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

**Figure 3.2-2**  
**Eastern Los Angeles County Areas with Significant Ecological Areas**  
**Los Angeles County Bicycle Master Plan**

The physical and climatic conditions found in the County of Los Angeles provide for a wide variety of plants, wildlife, and biological communities. Beaches, canyons, mountains, deserts, parks, and even vacant lots surrounded by development can provide habitat for sensitive biological resources; native oak trees and other rare plants, raptors, bats, and songbirds can persist within even highly urbanized areas.

The CNDDB lists over 250 sensitive species that may be found within the County of Los Angeles, including plant species, invertebrates, fish, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and mammals. Federally and state-listed plant and wildlife species identified by the CNDDB search as potentially occurring within the County are provided in Appendix C. The County of Los Angeles also supports critical habitat for several federally listed species, including the following: Braunton's milk-vetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*), thread-leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*), Moran's nosegay (*Navarretia fossalis*), coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), Palos Verdes blue butterfly (*Glaucopsyche lygdamus palosverdesensis*), western snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*), desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomus santaanae*), tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*), and California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*) (USFWS 2010). The CNDDB also lists a total of 28 priority plant communities within the County (Table 3.2-1).

**Table 3.2-1. CNDDB List of Priority Plant Communities within the County of Los Angeles**

Plant Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canyon Live Oak Ravine Forest</li> <li>• Mojave Riparian Forest</li> <li>• Southern California Arroyo Chub/Santa Ana Sucker Stream</li> <li>• Southern California Coastal Lagoon</li> <li>• Southern California Steelhead Stream</li> <li>• Southern California Threespine Stickleback Stream</li> <li>• Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest</li> <li>• Southern Coastal Salt Marsh</li> <li>• Southern Cottonwood Willow Riparian Forest</li> <li>• Southern Mixed Riparian Forest</li> <li>• Southern Riparian Forest</li> <li>• Southern Riparian Scrub</li> <li>• Southern Sycamore Alder Riparian Woodland</li> <li>• Southern Willow Scrub</li> <li>• California Walnut Woodland</li> <li>• Island Cherry Forest</li> <li>• Island Ironwood Forest</li> <li>• Mainland Cherry Forest</li> <li>• Maritime Succulent Scrub</li> <li>• Open Engelmann Oak Woodland</li> <li>• Riversidean Alluvial Fan Sage Scrub</li> <li>• Southern Coastal Bluff Scrub</li> <li>• Southern Dune Scrub</li> <li>• Southern Foredunes</li> <li>• Valley Needlegrass Grassland</li> <li>• Valley Oak Woodland</li> <li>• Walnut Forest</li> <li>• Wildflower field</li> </ul>

## 3.2.4 Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This section describes the impact analysis relating to biological resources for the Bicycle Master Plan at the program level. It describes the methods used to determine the impacts of the project and lists the thresholds used to conclude whether an impact would be significant. Measures to mitigate (i.e., avoid, minimize, rectify, reduce, eliminate, or compensate for) significant impacts accompany each impact discussion, if necessary. Detailed analysis at the project level will determine the significance of impacts for individual Bicycle Master Plan projects and, if necessary, the applicability of mitigation measures.

### 3.2.4.1 Methods

The impact analysis is a program-level analysis that evaluates development that is reasonably foreseeable if the Bicycle Master Plan is adopted and implemented. Based on the existing conditions described above, the impact analysis programmatically and qualitatively assesses the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on biological resources as a consequence of implementing the Bicycle Master Plan.

### 3.2.4.2 Thresholds of Significance

For this analysis, an impact pertaining to biological resources was considered significant if it would result in a “yes” answer to any of the following questions from the Los Angeles County Initial Study Checklist.

- Is the project site located within a SEA, SEA Buffer, or coastal Sensitive Environmental Resource (Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA), etc.), or is the site relatively undisturbed and natural?
- Is a drainage course located on the project site that is depicted on USGS quad sheets by a dashed blue line or that may contain a bed, channel, or bank of any perennial, intermittent, or ephemeral river, stream, or lake?
- Does the project site contain a major riparian or other sensitive habitat (e.g. coastal sage scrub, oak woodland, sycamore riparian, woodland, wetland, etc.)?
- Does the project site contain oak or other unique native trees (specify kinds of trees)?
- Is the project site habitat for any known sensitive species (federal or state listed endangered, etc.)?

### 3.2.4.3 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

#### **Impact 3.2-1: Be located within a SEA, SEA Buffer, or coastal ESHA, or is relatively undisturbed and natural.**

##### **Construction**

The bicycle network's impacts on biological resources would be site-specific. Such impacts would occur primarily through construction of Class I bike paths and on-road bikeways that would require widening within or adjacent to sites that contain sensitive environmental resources, are relatively undisturbed and natural, or are designated SEAs.

As described in Section 3.2.3 above, SEAs have been designated throughout the County, including within areas where the bicycle network is proposed (Figures 3.2-1 and 3.1-2). In addition, large blocks of undisturbed and natural vegetation occur primarily within the northern portion of the County; however, even the most highly urbanized areas of the County support fragments of natural areas that could provide suitable habitat for sensitive species and that would be considered a sensitive environmental resource.

In the event that construction occurs in areas within or adjacent to SEAs, SEA buffers, or areas supporting sensitive environmental resources (including drainage courses, riparian or other sensitive habitats, oaks or other unique native trees, and areas supporting sensitive species) the most common sources of impact would be the following:

- Removal or disturbance of vegetation (including areas that provide suitable foraging, nesting, and burrowing habitat for wildlife species).
- Alteration of surface drainage patterns through grading and installation of hard surfaces that affects vegetation and wildlife.
- Noise and light disturbance and dust deposition.
- Increased human and pet presence.
- Increased potential of exotic species invasion due to soil disturbance.

##### **Operation**

As with construction impacts, impacts on sensitive biological resources (including SEAs, SEA buffers, and environmentally sensitive habitat areas) resulting from operation of the bicycle network would be site-specific and would be dependent on several factors. These factors include the specific resources located adjacent to the proposed project site/bicycle network, the existing land uses surrounding the specific project site and associated noise/light levels, and the anticipated level of use of the proposed bicycle network in the project area. Operation of the bicycle network has the potential to result in significant impacts on SEAs, SEA buffers, and environmentally sensitive habitat areas, if present adjacent to proposed project sites.

## Mitigation Measures

Detailed analysis will be required prior to implementation of individual Bicycle Master Plan projects located within or adjacent to SEAs, SEA buffers, coastal ESHAs, or other relatively undisturbed or natural areas. This analysis will include a literature search conducted by a biologist with knowledge of the local biological conditions. Where appropriate in the opinion of the qualified biologist, the literature search will be supplemented with a site visit. Resources and information that will be investigated for each site should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- CNDDB
- CNPS Rare Plant Inventory
- National Wetlands Inventory
- USFWS Critical Habitat Portal
- Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning for information on SEAs

If it is determined by the qualified biologist that potentially significant impacts on sensitive biological resources could occur as a result of construction and/or operation of a specific project proposed under the Bicycle Master Plan, a comprehensive site-specific biological assessment will be conducted and a Biological Resources Technical Report will be prepared to identify potentially significant impacts and appropriate mitigation. The biological assessment will determine whether other site-specific focused surveys are required, such as a wetland delineation, focused rare plant surveys, or focused surveys for sensitive wildlife species. If determined to be necessary, such surveys will be conducted by a qualified biologist in accordance with established protocols or methodologies and during the appropriate time of year.

### **MM 3.2-1: Obtain agency permits/approvals.**

If a project will impact resources under the jurisdiction of the USFWS, CDFG, SWRCB/RWQCB, USACE, and/or the CCC, the project will obtain the necessary permits/approvals from these agencies prior to construction and implement the associated conditions, if any.

### **MM 3.2-2: Protect sensitive habitat areas from harmful exposure to light.**

If a project is within or adjacent to sensitive habitat areas (including SEAs, SEA buffers, habitat for sensitive species, etc.), the project will be designed to protect such areas from harmful exposure to light by shielding light sources, redirecting light sources, or using low intensity lighting.

### **MM 3.2-3: Avoid impacts on nesting birds and raptors.**

If a project is constructed during the nesting season (February 15 – September 15) and tree/vegetation removal is necessary, one of the following will be conducted:

- All tree/vegetation removal will be prohibited during the nesting season to avoid potential impacts on nesting birds/raptors.

- A qualified biologist will be retained to conduct pre-construction nesting bird surveys. If active nests are found, a “no work” buffer around the nest will be delineated by the qualified biologist and tree/vegetation removal will be delayed until the young have fledged or the nest has been abandoned for other reasons.

#### **MM 3.2-4: Conduct biological monitoring.**

If a project is within or adjacent to sensitive habitat areas (including SEAs, SEA Buffers, habitat for sensitive species, etc.), a biological monitor will be on site during construction activities within 100 feet of sensitive habitat areas to ensure protection measures (i.e., flagging, fencing, etc. as noted in the mitigation measure below) are in place.

#### **MM 3.2-5: Delineate sensitive habitat areas.**

Sensitive habitat areas to be avoided, including appropriate buffers (determined by a qualified biologist), will be flagged by a qualified biologist prior to the onset of construction activities. Where indicated by the biologist, these areas will be fenced or otherwise protected from direct or indirect impacts. All such areas to be avoided will be clearly marked on construction plans and designated as “no construction” zones.

#### **MM 3.2-6: Install signage and fencing, vegetation, or other natural barriers to prevent impacts on adjacent areas during operation.**

Fencing, vegetation, or other natural barriers will be constructed to prevent impacts on sensitive habitat areas adjacent to the bicycle network during operation. Signs will be erected in appropriate locations to inform bicycle network users of the need to stay within designated bike paths, lanes, routes, and boulevards.

### **Level of Significance after Mitigation**

With implementation of MM 3.2-1 through MM 3.2-6, impacts would be less than significant.

#### **Impact 3.2-2: Be located within a drainage course that is depicted on USGS quad sheets by a dashed blue line or that may contain a bed, channel, or bank of any perennial, intermittent or ephemeral river, stream, or lake.**

### **Construction**

The Bicycle Master Plan includes an expanded bikeway network in unincorporated communities and along rivers, creeks, channels, and flood control facilities. Direct impacts on drainage courses (including rivers, creeks, streams, and lakes) would occur if construction of the bicycle network resulted in the removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other disturbance to these resources.

### **Operation**

Operation of the bicycle network has the potential to result in significant impacts on drainage courses, if present adjacent to the footprint of a specific project proposed under the Bicycle Master

Plan. Operational impacts could occur as a result of increased human and pet presence and degradation of the functions and values of the drainage course resulting from accumulation of trash and debris.

## Mitigation Measures

Detailed analysis will be required prior to implementation of individual Bicycle Master Plan projects located within or adjacent to drainage courses, as described for Impact 3.2-1.

Impact 3.2-2 would be mitigated through implementation of measures MM 3.2-1 (Obtain agency permits/approvals), MM 3.2-4 (Conduct biological monitoring), MM 3.2-5 (Delineate sensitive habitat areas), and MM 3.2-6 (Install signage and fencing, vegetation, or other natural barriers to prevent impacts on adjacent areas during operation).

## Level of Significance after Mitigation

With implementation of MM 3.2-1, MM 3.2-4, MM 3.2-5, and MM 3.2-6, impacts would be less than significant.

## **Impact 3.2-3: Be located in a major riparian or other sensitive habitat.**

### **Construction**

Riparian and other sensitive habitats are known to occur within the County of Los Angeles (see Table 3.2-1) and could be impacted if present in or adjacent to the project footprint of a specific project to be implemented under the Bicycle Master Plan. Impacts on riparian or other sensitive habitats could occur through direct removal, potential invasion of exotic species due to soil disturbance, deposition of dust during construction, and increased human and pet presence.

### **Operation**

Operation of the bicycle network has the potential to result in significant impacts on riparian or other sensitive habitat, if present adjacent to the footprint of a specific project proposed under the Bicycle Master Plan. Operational impacts could occur as a result of increased human and pet presence and degradation of habitat resulting from accumulation of trash and debris.

## Mitigation Measures

Detailed analysis will be required prior to implementation of individual Bicycle Master Plan projects located within or adjacent to riparian areas and other sensitive habitats, as described for Impact 3.2-1.

Impact 3.2-3 would be mitigated through implementation of measures MM 3.2-1 (Obtain agency permits/approvals), MM 3.2-2 (Protect sensitive habitat areas from harmful exposure to light), MM 3.2-3 (Avoid impacts on nesting birds and raptors), MM 3.2-4 (Conduct biological monitoring), MM 3.2-5 (Delineate sensitive habitat areas), and MM 3.2-6 (Install signage and fencing, vegetation, or other natural barriers to prevent impacts on adjacent areas during operation).

## **Level of Significance after Mitigation**

With implementation of MM 3.2-1 through MM 3.2-6, impacts would be less than significant.

### **Impact 3.2-4: Be located near oak or other unique native trees.**

#### **Construction**

Unique native trees (oak trees, western sycamore, California walnut, and Joshua trees) are known to occur within the County. Specific projects proposed under the Bicycle Master Plan could result in the removal of oak or other unique native trees, if present within the site-specific project impact area.

#### **Operation**

Operation of the proposed trail network would not result in direct or indirect impacts on oaks or other unique native trees.

#### **Mitigation Measures**

Detailed analysis will be required prior to implementation of individual Bicycle Master Plan projects located in areas containing oaks and other unique native trees, as described for Impact 3.2-1.

Impact 3.2-4 would be mitigated through implementation of measures MM 3.2-1 (Obtain agency permits/approvals), MM 3.2-2 (Protect sensitive habitat areas from harmful exposure to light), MM 3.2-3 (Avoid impacts on nesting birds and raptors), MM 3.2-4 (Conduct biological monitoring), MM 3.2-5 (Delineate sensitive habitat areas), and MM 3.2-6 (Install signage and fencing, vegetation, or other natural barriers to prevent impacts on adjacent areas during operation).

#### **MM 3.2-7: Replace native trees.**

Individual projects implemented under the Bicycle Master Plan will minimize impacts on oaks and other unique native trees to the extent feasible and will comply with the County's Oak Tree Ordinance. If impacts on oaks (not protected by the ordinance) and/or other unique native trees are unavoidable, the following will be conducted: (1) remove the tree and move it to another location adjacent to the impact area where conditions are favorable for survival of the tree; or (2) provide for in-kind replacement of each tree within an adjacent area outside of the impact footprint at a ratio of 2:1.

## **Level of Significance after Mitigation**

With implementation of MM 3.2-1 through MM 3.2-7, impacts would be less than significant.

### **Impact 3.2-5: Be located in habitat for any known sensitive species.**

#### **Construction**

As discussed in Section 3.2.3 above, a search of the CNDDDB identified over 250 sensitive species with potential to occur in the County. If present within or adjacent to an identified project footprint

of an individual project to be constructed under the Bicycle Master Plan, potentially significant impacts on sensitive species and suitable habitat could occur. Such impacts could occur through direct removal of suitable/occupied habitat; degradation of suitable/occupied habitat as a result of increased human and pet presence, dust during construction, and potential invasion of exotic species due to soil disturbance; increased noise during construction; and increased light disturbance.

## **Operation**

As with construction impacts, impacts on sensitive species resulting from operation of the bicycle network would be site-specific and would be dependent on several factors, including the specific resources located adjacent to the proposed project site/bicycle network, existing land uses surrounding the specific project site and associated noise levels, and the anticipated level of use of the proposed bicycle network in the project area. Operation of the bicycle network has the potential to result in significant impacts on sensitive species, if present adjacent to proposed project sites.

## **Mitigation Measures**

Detailed analysis will be required prior to implementation of individual Bicycle Master Plan projects located within relatively undisturbed or natural areas where sensitive species may occur, as described for Impact 3.2-1.

Impact 3.2-5 would be mitigated through implementation of measures MM 3.2-1 (Obtain agency permits/approvals), MM 3.2-2 (Protect sensitive habitat areas from harmful exposure to light), MM 3.2-3 (Avoid impacts on nesting birds and raptors), MM 3.2-4 (Conduct biological monitoring), MM 3.2-5 (Delineate sensitive habitat areas), and MM 3.2-6 (Install signage and fencing, vegetation, or other natural barriers to prevent impacts on adjacent areas during operation).

## **Level of Significance after Mitigation**

With implementation of MM 3.2-1 through MM 3.2-6, impacts would be less than significant.

## **3.2.5 Cumulative**

The geographic scope for the cumulative analysis includes the County of Los Angeles. Past and present development projects have changed the overall natural setting of the County to moderate-to-high density, primarily automobile-oriented communities with blocks of natural areas preserved or currently undeveloped. Impacts from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects within the cumulative study area have been cumulatively considerable.

Although past projects have shaped the existing development conditions within portions of the County, there are still sensitive biological resources within the County limits. Future projects implemented under the Bicycle Master Plan could result in significant impacts on sensitive biological resources. In light of these potential biological impacts from foreseeable development, specific mitigation measures are proposed to reduce such potential impacts to below a level of significance. With implementation of these measures and in consideration of the small scale of the proposed development associated with an expanded bicycle network within the County, the Bicycle Master

Plan's contribution to further reducing sensitive biological resources in the cumulative study area would be less than cumulatively considerable. Therefore, the Bicycle Master Plan's incremental contribution to cumulative biological resources impacts from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects would be less than cumulatively considerable.

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