

SECTION 5.0 – OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter presents the evaluation of other types of environmental impacts required by CEQA that are not covered within the other chapters of this EIR. The other CEQA considerations include environmental effects that were found not to be significant, growth-inducing impacts, and significant and unavoidable adverse impacts.

5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The Initial Study (IS) for the Proposed Project, completed in August 2011, which is included in the EIR as Appendix A, determined that the Proposed Project would result in no impact or a less than significant impact to 3 of 17 environmental issue areas. The IS for the Proposed Project discusses why the project would have no impact or less than significant impacts for these issue areas, which are subsequently not discussed in detail in this EIR. The issue areas determined to have no impact or a less than significant impact in the IS analysis include the following:

- Agriculture and Forest Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services (fire protection, police protection, schools, and other public facilities)

After a more detailed evaluation of the environmental issues associated with the Proposed Project, the EIR determined that impacts would be less than significant or less than significant with incorporation of mitigation measures for the following environmental issue areas:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise and Vibration
- Public Services
- Utilities and Service Systems

5.2 IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

According to CEQA Guidelines, “Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.” Therefore, the purpose of this analysis is to identify any significant irreversible environmental effects of project implementation that cannot be avoided.

Both sediment removal and reservoir management of the Proposed Project would lead to the consumption of limited, slowly renewable and nonrenewable resources, committing such resources to uses that future generations would be unable to reverse. Implementation of the Proposed Project would require the commitment of fuel.

For sediment removal and reservoir management activities associated with the Proposed Project, fossil fuels for construction vehicles and equipment would be consumed. The consumption of such resources would represent a long-term commitment of those resources.

5.3 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines: an EIR must address whether a project will directly or indirectly foster growth as follows:

[An EIR shall] discuss the ways in which the Proposed Project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth (a major expansion of wastewater treatment plant, might, for example, allow for more construction in service areas). Increases in the population may further tax existing community service facilities so consideration must be given to this impact. Also, discuss the characteristic of some projects, which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

As discussed below, this analysis evaluates whether the Proposed Project would directly, or indirectly, induce economic, population, or housing growth in the surrounding environment.

5.3.1 Direct Growth-Inducing Impacts in the Surrounding Environment

Direct growth-inducing impacts occur when the development of a project induces population growth or the construction of additional developments in the same area of a Proposed Project and produces related growth-associated impacts. Growth-inducing projects remove physical obstacles to population growth, such as the construction of a new road into an undeveloped area, a wastewater treatment plant expansion, and projects that allow new development in the service area. Constructions of such infrastructure projects are considered in relation to the potential development and the potential environmental impacts.

Implementation of the Proposed Project would maintain the capacity of the reservoir. The Proposed Project does not include residential development and does not directly induce population growth. The Proposed Project will not remove obstacles to regional growth and related development.

5.3.2 Indirect Growth-Inducing Impacts in the Surrounding Environment

The purpose of the Proposed Project is to remove sediment from Devil's Gate Reservoir to minimize potential flooding impacts to communities downstream of the dam. The Proposed Project does not contain components likely to indirectly induce employment or an employment-related increase in population.

5.4 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The potentially adverse effects of the Proposed Project are discussed in Chapter 3.0 of this EIR. Mitigation Measures have been recommended that would reduce impacts for all categories except aesthetics and traffic to less than significant based on each set of significance criteria. The Proposed Project would result in significant unavoidable impacts related to aesthetics and temporary significant unavoidable impacts related to traffic.