

# Chapter 3

## Environmental Impact Analysis and Mitigation Measures

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### 3.0.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the environmental setting, and evaluates the potential significant environmental impacts of the Proposed Project, No Project Alternative, and Partial Gravel Removal Alternative. It also identifies appropriate mitigation measures for each environmental resource analyzed in this Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR).

### 3.0.2 Environmental Elements Analyzed in the Draft SEIR

The scope of this SEIR is based on the Project Description outlined in Chapter 2, as well as the proposed scope of analysis contained within the Notice of Preparation (NOP) (Appendix A), focusing review of environmental resources that could result in potentially significant impacts. This chapter identifies 10 environmental resources, which were determined to be potentially significant in the NOP scoping process and are addressed in the following sections:

- Section 3.1, "Aesthetics and Visual Resources"
- Section 3.2, "Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions"
- Section 3.3, "Biological Resources"
- Section 3.4, "Cultural Resources"
- Section 3.5, "Hazards"
- Section 3.6, "Hydrology and Water Quality"
- Section 3.7, "Land Use and Planning"
- Section 3.8, "Noise"
- Section 3.9, "Recreation"
- Section 3.10, "Transportation and Traffic"

Sections 3.1 through 3.10 provide a detailed discussion of the environmental setting, impacts associated with the Proposed Project, the No Project Alternative, and the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative, and mitigation measures designed to reduce significant impacts where required and when feasible. The residual impacts following the implementation of any mitigation measures and cumulative impacts also are discussed.

Additionally, Section 3.11, *Effects Found Not to be Significant*, identifies several other CEQA resource areas and provides a brief discussion of why they were not analyzed as primary environmental elements in this SEIR.

### 3.0.3 Organization of Environmental Impact Analysis

Each section (Sections 3.1–3.10) addresses an environmental element and contains the following information for each component of the Proposed Project:

- **Introduction.** Introduces the issue area and provides a general approach to the assessment.
- **Existing Setting.** Describes the physical environmental conditions in the Project Site as they relate to the issue in question. According to the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the environmental setting normally constitutes the baseline physical conditions by which the lead agency determines whether or not an impact is significant.
- **Regulatory Setting.** Summarizes the regulations, plans, and standards that apply to the Proposed Project and relate to the specific issue area in question.
- **Environmental Impact Analysis.** Discusses the significance criteria, the environmental impact analysis, and mitigation measures that may be necessary to reduce environmental impacts and the residual impacts following the implementation of recommended mitigation measures.
  - **Thresholds of Significance.** Identifies the significance criteria or, where applicable, the thresholds of significance that will be used to evaluate impacts. The criterion or threshold for a given environmental effect is the level at which the County finds the effect to be significant. The significance criteria can be a quantitative or qualitative standard, or set of criteria, pursuant to which the significance of a given environmental effect may be determined. (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.7)
  - **Impact Assessment Methodology.** Outlines the general approach taken in evaluating the individual environmental resource area, if applicable. The methodology is laid out to provide a context for the analysis of impacts.
  - **Impacts of the Proposed Project and Alternatives.** The environmental analysis considers the potential impacts resulting from short-term construction and long-term operation of the Proposed Project, the No Project Alternative, and the Partial Gravel Removal Alternative. While the criteria for determining significant impacts are unique to each issue area, the analysis applies a uniform classification of the impacts based on the following definitions:
    - A significant but unavoidable impact would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment, and no feasible mitigation measures would be available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. (Class I impact)
    - A less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated would avoid substantial adverse impacts on the environment through mitigation. (Class II impact)
    - A less than significant impact would cause no substantial adverse change in the environment. (Class III impact)
    - A beneficial impact would result in the improvement of an existing physical condition in the environment (Class IV impact).
    - A determination of no impact is given when no adverse changes in the environment are expected.

Based on the above criteria, the environmental impact analysis assesses each issue area to determine the significance level.

This section also identifies mitigation measures for Project impacts that are considered significant or less than significant with mitigation based on the significance criteria or thresholds of significance. Residual impacts are also identified after mitigation measures are applied to minimize those impacts.

