

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section discusses the possible environmental effects of the proposed project for the issue areas that were identified through the Initial Study and NOP process as having the potential to have significant effects. “Significant effect” is defined by the *CEQA Guidelines §15382* as “a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment, but may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.”

The assessment of environmental effects contained in each issue area begins with a discussion of the setting. Following the setting is a discussion of the project’s impacts. Within the impact analysis, the first subsection identifies the methodologies used and the “significance thresholds,” which are those criteria used for this analysis to determine whether potential impacts are significant. The next subsection describes the impact of the proposed project, mitigation measures for significant impacts, and the level of significance after mitigation. The significance of the project’s environmental impacts was identified based on the following classifications:

Significant and Unavoidable: An impact that cannot be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations to be issued if the project is approved.

Significant but Mitigable: An impact that can be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires findings to be made.

Less Than Significant: An impact that may be adverse, but does not exceed the threshold levels and does not require mitigation measures. However, mitigation measures that could further lessen the environmental effect may be suggested if readily available and easily achievable.

No Impact: No change in environmental conditions or an impact that would reduce existing environmental problems or hazards.

The impact analysis concludes with a discussion of cumulative effects, which evaluates the impacts associated with the proposed project in conjunction with other future development in the area.

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