Draft

INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
RIALTO CHANNEL FLOOD CONTROL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Prepared for:

San Bernardino County Flood Control District
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SECTION 1.0 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

1.1 PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the Rialto Channel Flood Control Improvement Project (Project) is to address increased stormwater runoff resulting from ongoing urban development in the surrounding area, as well as additional flows introduced by the construction of State Route 210 (SR-210) by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) north of the Cactus Basins. This will consist of grading activities such as excavation and fill, construction of a reinforced concrete rectangular and trapezoidal channel, and the replacement of undersized reinforced concrete box (RCB) culverts at multiple street crossings.

1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Project site is located along Cactus Avenue in the City of Rialto (City), in between Cactus Avenue's intersections with W 1st Street and Etiwanda Avenue. The GPS coordinates of the Project site are 34.10074446358789 N, -117.38382266675126 W to 34.114063657767765N, -117.3838240667169 W. San Bernardino County Flood Control District proposes improving the Rialto channel by implementing a reinforced concrete trapezoidal channel, replacing culverts, and the relocation of several existing utilities.

1.3 PROJECT LOCATION AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

1.3.1 Location

Rialto Channel is an active earthen, rock, and concrete-lined channel within the City of Rialto, running parallel to Cactus Avenue, a main artery for the Rialto community. This channel receives runoff originating from the north end of Rialto, recent commercial developments, and the 210 freeway. The GPS coordinates for the project extend from 34.10074446358789 N, -117.38382266675126 W to 34.114063657767765N, -117.3838240667169 W. The Rialto Channel runs from the intersection of Cactus Avenue and W 1st Street to the intersection of Cactus Avenue and Etiwanda Avenue. The Project footprint and location are presented in Figure 1.

1.3.2 General Plan Designation/Zoning

The Proposed Project is located within the center of the City of Rialto within the County of San Bernardino. The Rialto Channel runs along Cactus Avenue and runs adjacent to areas zoned for Open Space – Resources (M-1). The proposed channel improvements would occur within land zoned and designated as Public Facility (PF).

1.3.3 Surrounding Land Uses and Project Setting

The Project site is located in a developed, mostly residential part of the City. The Rialto Channel runs alongside Cactus Avenue, a primary north-south transportation route. Surrounding uses around the Project site include Light Industrial, Residential, General Commercial land uses to the west, Open Space – Resources and Residential land uses to the north, Residential, General Commercial, and Light Industrial to the East, and Open Space – Resources and Light Industrial land uses to the south.

1.4 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project proposes improvements to the Rialto Channel, which extends approximately 2.97 miles between Willow Avenue and Etiwanda Avenue in the City of Rialto. The Proposed Project will involve grading activities such as excavation and fill, construction of a reinforced concrete rectangular and trapezoidal channel, and the replacement of undersized reinforced concrete box (RCB) culverts at multiple street crossings. The improvements are designed to convey flows associated with a 100-year storm event. The Proposed Project will require relocation of several existing utilities, including waterlines, gas lines, fiber optic and cable television (CATV) lines, Southern California Edison (SCE) duct banks, and sewer lines.

Excess soil and rock will be exported from the site; however, no vegetation or tree removal is proposed. Final surfaces will consist of reinforced concrete for the channel and asphalt concrete for the access roads.

1.4.1 Construction

Construction access will be available from several points along the Proposed Project alignment and construction activities will involve the use of heavy equipment, such as excavators, backhoes, road rollers, loaders, dump trucks, pavers, concrete trucks, grinders/planers, water trucks, and striping trucks. The construction duration would be approximately 280 days.

1.5 SUMMARY OF MITIGATION MEASURES

The following mitigation measures have been identified to reduce Project impacts to less than significant levels, as discussed in Section 3.0:

MM BIO-1 To minimize potential impacts to nesting birds protected under the MBTA within the Project site, construction activities shall take place outside nesting season (February 1 to August 31) to the greatest extent practicable. The survey shall be scheduled with and conducted by a qualified biologist in coordination with the County and on-site construction manager.

If construction activities must occur during nesting season, a preconstruction nesting bird survey shall be conducted prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities. The survey shall be completed within 3 days prior to ground disturbing activities, which consist of, but are not limited to, tree removal, trenching, etc.

During the survey, should nesting birds or their nests be encountered, to the maximum extent practicable, a minimum buffer zone around occupied nests should be determined by a qualified biologist experienced with nesting bird surveys and knowledgeable about the species known to nest in the area in order to avoid impacts to the active nest. The buffer shall range at a minimum of 100 to 300 feet. The buffer should be maintained during physical ground-disturbing activities. Avoidance measures that shall be implemented if the biologist finds that it is required to not impact the nests include but are not limited to noise, activity, and design modifications, worker education, signage, buffers and/or temporary fencing. Once the biologist has determined that the nesting has ceased and the nestlings have fledged, the buffer may be removed.

MM CUL-1 The County shall retain the services of a Qualified Archaeologist, meeting the Secretary of the Interior Standards, and County requirements. The Qualified Archaeologist shall remain on-call throughout the Project. The Qualified Archaeologist or cultural resources specialist working under the direction of the Qualified Archaeologist, shall provide an initial cultural resources sensitivity training (which may be incorporated within a more comprehensive or multi-discipline Worker Environmental Awareness Program) to inform all construction personnel prior to construction activities about the proper procedures in the event of a cultural resource discovery. The training shall be held in conjunction with the Project's initial on-site safety meeting and shall explain the applicable protocols, procedures, and legal basis for the protection of significant cultural resources.

In the event of an inadvertent discovery of potential cultural resources during ground-disturbing activities, all work within a 60-foot radius of the discovery shall be halted while the Qualified Archaeologist assesses the find. Work on the other portions of the Project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed within TCR-1, regarding any pre-contact finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.

If the resource is determined to be a significant or unique resource through significance evaluation, and avoidance is not possible, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to YSMN for review and comment, as detailed within TCR-1. All monitoring or associated plans would be prepared and implemented under the direction of the Qualified Archaeologist. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the project and implement the Plan accordingly. All required close-out reporting or archaeological site records would be completed in accordance with the Office of Historic Preservation's guidelines and submitted to the appropriate CHRIS IC, as necessary.

MM CUL-2 If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.

MM PAL-1 Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the County shall be required to obtain the services of a Qualified Project Paleontologist to remain on call for the duration of the proposed ground-disturbing construction activity. The paleontologist selected must be approved by the County. Upon approval or request by the County, a paleontological mitigation plan (PMP) outlining procedures for paleontological data recovery shall be prepared for the Project and submitted to the County for review and approval. The development and implementation of the PMP shall include consultations with the County's Engineering Geologist as well as a requirement that the curation of all specimens recovered under any scenario shall be through an appropriate repository agreed upon by the County. If the County accepts ownership, the curation location may be revised. The PMP shall include developing a multilevel ranking system, or Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC), as a tool to demonstrate the potential yield of fossils within a given stratigraphic unit. The PMP shall outline the monitoring and salvage protocols to address paleontological

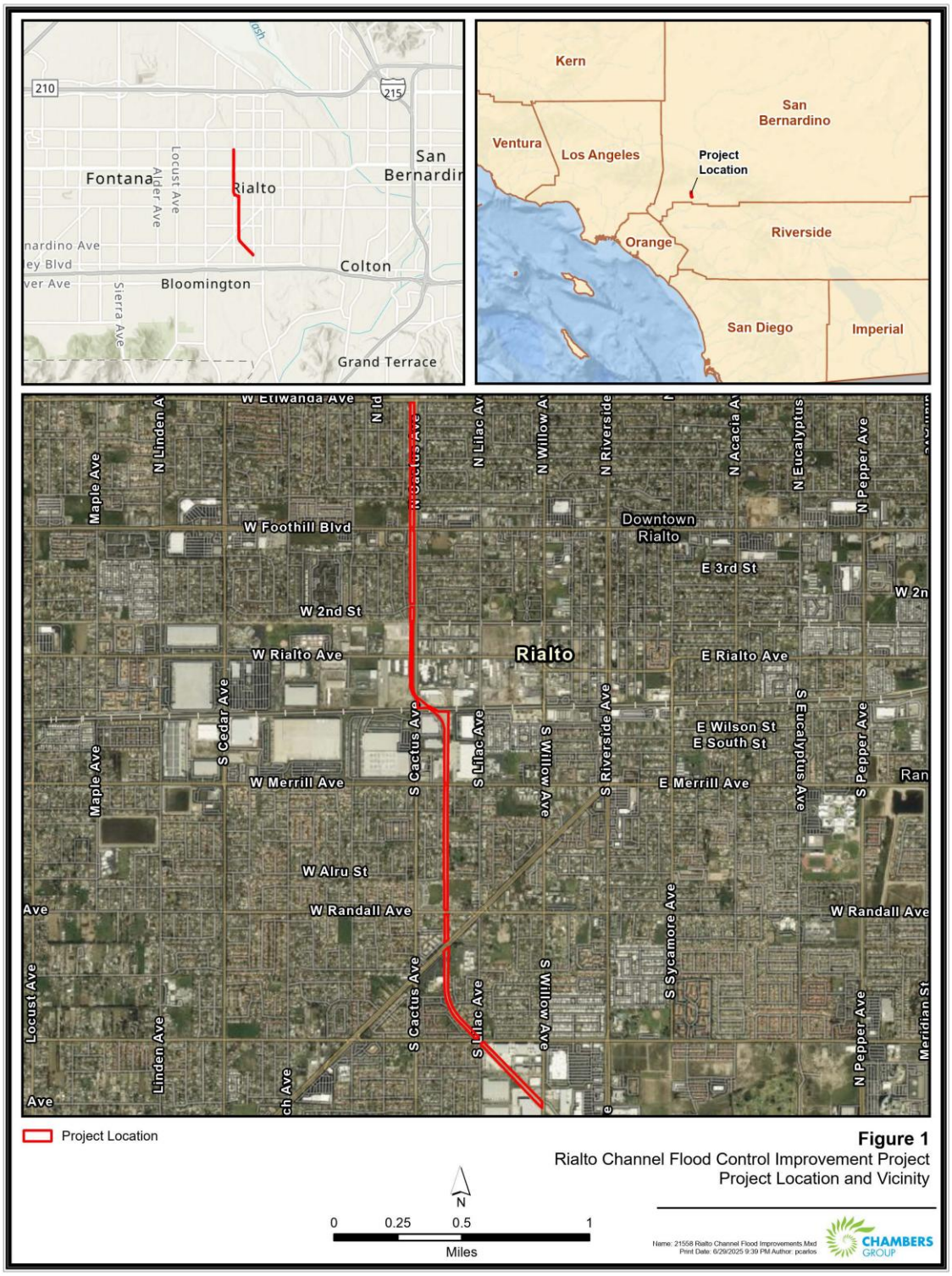
resources encountered during Project-related ground-disturbing activities, as well as the appropriate recording, collection, and processing protocols to appropriately address any resources discovered.

MM PAL-2 At the completion of all ground-disturbing activities, the Project Paleontologist shall prepare a final paleontological mitigation report summarizing all monitoring efforts and observations, as performed in line with the PMP, and all paleontological resources encountered, if any, as well as providing follow-up reports of any specific discovery, if necessary.

MM TCR-1 The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Management Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed in CUL-1, of any pre-contact cultural resources discovered during Project implementation, and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), a Cultural Resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with YSMN, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents YSMN for the remainder of the Project, should YSMN elect to place a monitor on-site.

MM TCR-2 Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be supplied to the applicant and Lead Agency for dissemination to YSMN. The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with YSMN throughout the life of the project.

Figure 1 - Project Vicinity and Location Map



1.6 REQUIRED PERMITS AND APPROVALS

This section provides, to the extent the information is known to the County, a list of permits and approvals to implement the Project and a list of agencies that are associated with review of Project plans.

1.6.1 Lead Agency Approval

The following lists Lead Agency entitlements and permits that may be required for the Project prior to construction and operation:

- United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 Permit
- Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife Section (CDFW) 1600 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSA)

SECTION 2.0 – ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would potentially be affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact," as indicated by the checklists on the following pages. For each of the potentially affected factors, mitigation measures are recommended that would reduce the impacts to less than significant levels.

☐ *Aesthetics*	☐ *Agriculture and Forestry Resources*	☐ *Air Quality*
☒ *Biological Resources*	☒ *Cultural Resources*	☐ *Energy*
☒ *Geology /Soils*	☐ *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*	☐ *Hazards & Hazardous Materials*
☐ *Hydrology /Water Quality*	☐ *Land Use / Planning*	☐ *Mineral Resources*
☐ *Noise*	☐ *Population / Housing*	☐ *Public Services*
☐ *Recreation*	☐ *Transportation*	☒ *Tribal Cultural Resources*
☐ *Utilities /Service Systems*	☐ *Wildfire*	☒ *Mandatory Findings of Significance*

2.2 DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

1. I find that the project **could not** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared. ☐
2. I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared. ☒
3. I find the proposed project **may have a significant effect** on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required. ☐
4. I find that the proposed project **may have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated impact"** on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed. ☐
5. I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required. ☐

Ayida Smith — Signature

1/14/2026 — Date

SECTION 3.0 – EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if substantial evidence exists that an effect may be significant. If one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries are marked when the determination is made, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required.
4. "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from earlier analyses may be cross-referenced).
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
    a. Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
    b. Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
    c. Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. The explanation of each issue should identify:
    a. The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
    b. The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

SECTION 4.0 – CHECKLIST OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

4.1 AESTHETICS

1.	AESTHETICS. Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.1.1 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

a&b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Construction activities, including grading, equipment staging, and material storage, may result in short-term visual disturbances. However, these impacts would be temporary and limited to the construction period.

The Proposed Project would not add any buildings to the Project site. The components of the Project include renovating the existing stormwater drainage channel that runs parallel to North Cactus Avenue, which will include the construction of a reinforced concrete rectangular and trapezoidal channel and other improvements. There are no scenic vistas or highways within the Project vicinity. According to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Scenic Highway Program, the nearest eligible scenic highways are segments following the State Route 330 (approximately 11.07 miles northeast of the Project site) and US Route 38 (approximately 11.95 miles southeast of the Project site) (Caltrans 2024). Due to this distance, the Project site is not visible from the scenic highway, and no visual intrusion would occur.

The Project area is characterized by flat, disturbed terrain along the side of the road with very little visible vegetation. The existing stormwater drainage channel is characterized by large boulders lining the walls of the channel. The removal of vegetation within the planned expansion area would not result in substantial damage to scenic resources as the existing vegetation is not visually prominent or protected under local or state scenic resource policies. Given these factors, the Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character of the area or result in adverse effects on scenic vistas or scenic highways. Therefore, a less than significant impact to scenic vistas and scenic resources would occur as a result of Project implementation.

c) Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is located in an urbanized area surrounded by residential and commercial uses. It currently features sparse vegetation and an existing stormwater drainage channel. Following the proposed improvements to the stormwater drainage channel, the site's overall visual character is expected to remain largely unchanged. Public views of the Project site are limited to those experienced by drivers and passengers traveling along North Cactus Avenue and cyclists utilizing the bike lane that borders the Project site. The Project site does not conflict with any applicable zoning regulations or scenic quality standards.

The Project involves the construction of a reinforced concrete rectangular and trapezoidal channel and the replacement of undersized reinforced concrete box (RCB) culverts at multiple street crossings. No permanent above-ground structures or new vertical infrastructure will be added that could obstruct views or substantially alter the visual character of the area. Construction activities, including grading, equipment staging, and material storage, may result in short-term visual disturbances. However, these impacts would be temporary and limited to the construction period. Given these

factors, the Project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. Impacts would be less than significant.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

No Impact. Existing light sources in the Project area consist mainly of streetlights during the night hours along North Cactus Avenue. There are no existing structures in the Project area that create a substantial source of daytime glare.

The amount of light present in the Project area would not change after completion of the Project. There are no permanent lighting fixtures proposed. No construction lighting is proposed because all construction work would occur during daytime. Therefore, no lighting impacts would occur.

4.2 AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY RESOURCES

2.	**AGRICULTURE & FOREST RESOURCES. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board Would the project:**	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
(a)	Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(c)	Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e)	Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to nonagricultural use or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.2.1 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use?

No Impact. According to the California Important Farmland Finder, the Project area is located outside of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey and is not mapped by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) (DOC 2022). The County of San Bernardino does not designate any land within the Project vicinity as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide importance (County 2020b). The closest designated farmland is approximately 5.46 miles northwest of the Project site in Fontana, California. The Proposed Project will not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Therefore, the Project would have no impact associated with converting any type of farmland to other non-agricultural uses.

b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. The Project site does not include any land zoned for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract (County 2020b). The Project site is zoned Public Facility, which does not include agricultural uses. The channel improvement Project would have no impact associated with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract; therefore, no impact would occur.

c) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact. The Project site is currently a stormwater drainage channel and is not forested. Thus, the Project site is not located on land zoned as forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. The Project site is zoned Public Facility, which does not include agricultural uses. The Project would not conflict with forest land or timberland zoning, resulting in no impact.

d) Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. As mentioned above, there is no forest land or timberland within the Project vicinity. The stormwater channel improvements would not result in loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact would occur.

e) Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to nonagricultural use or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. There is no farmland or agricultural land in the Project area. The channel improvements would not result in conversion of farmland or forest land to non-forest use. There would be no impacts to farmland or forest land created by the Project.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

3.	AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Result in other emissions, such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.3.1 Environmental Setting

The following analysis is based on the Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis (Air Quality, Energy, and GHG Report) prepared by Vista Environmental, dated December 4th, 2025 (Appendix A).

The Project site is located within western San Bernardino County, which is part of the South Coast Air Basin (Air Basin) that includes the non-desert portions of Riverside, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles Counties and all of Orange County. The Air Basin is located on a coastal plain with connecting broad valleys and low hills to the east. Regionally, the Air Basin is bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the southwest and high mountains to the east forming the inland perimeter.

4.3.2 Regulatory Framework

The following discussion summarizes the primary state and local regulations applicable to air quality that are most relevant to the Proposed Project. A more detailed discussion of applicable regulations, policies, and plans is provided by the Air Quality, Energy, and GHG Report (Appendix A) in Section 4.0.

State

California Air Resources Board (CARB)

The CARB, which is a part of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), is responsible for the coordination and administration of both federal and state air pollution control programs within California. In this capacity, the CARB conducts research, sets the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), compiles emission inventories, develops suggested control measures, provides oversight of local programs, and prepares the State Implementation Plan (SIP). In addition, the CARB establishes emission standards for motor vehicles sold in California, consumer products (e.g. hairspray, aerosol paints, and barbeque lighter fluid), and various types of commercial equipment. It also sets fuel specifications to further reduce vehicular emissions, such as the CARB regulation for in-use off-road diesel vehicles

(adopted July 26, 2007) and CARB resolution 08-43 for on-road diesel truck fleets (adopted December 12, 2008), detailed in Section 4.2 of Appendix A.

Regional

South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)

SCAQMD develops rules and regulations, establishes permitting requirements for stationary sources, inspects emission sources, and enforces such measures through educational programs or fines, when necessary. SCAQMD is directly responsible for reducing emissions from stationary, mobile, and indirect sources. It has responded to this requirement by preparing a sequence of AQMPs. The *Final 2022 Air Quality Management Plan* (2022 AQMP) was adopted by CARB on January 26, 2023, and has been submitted to the U.S. EPA for final approval, which is anticipated to occur sometime this year. After the 2022 AQMP has been adopted by the U.S. EPA, the 2022 AQMP will be incorporated into the SIP. The 2022 AQMP establishes actions and strategies to reduce ozone levels to the U.S. EPA 2015 ozone standard of 70 ppb by 2037. The 2022 AQMP promotes extensive use of zero-emission technologies across all stationary and mobile sources coupled with rules and regulations, investment strategies, and incentives.

Although SCAQMD is responsible for regional air quality planning efforts, it does not have the authority to directly regulate air quality issues associated with plans and new development projects throughout the Air Basin. Instead, this is controlled through local jurisdictions in accordance with CEQA. In order to assist local jurisdictions with air quality compliance issues, the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* (SCAQMD CEQA Handbook), prepared by SCAQMD in 1993, was developed in accordance with the projections and programs detailed in the AQMPs.

The purpose of the SCAQMD CEQA Handbook is to assist Lead Agencies, as well as consultants, project proponents, and other interested parties in evaluating a proposed project's potential air quality impacts. Specifically, the SCAQMD CEQA Handbook explains the procedures that SCAQMD recommends be followed for the environmental review process required by CEQA. The SCAQMD CEQA Handbook provides direction on how to evaluate potential air quality impacts, how to determine whether these impacts are significant, and how to mitigate these impacts. The SCAQMD intends that by providing this guidance, the air quality impacts of plans and development proposals will be analyzed accurately and consistently throughout the Air Basin, and adverse impacts will be minimized.

SCAQMD rules that are applicable but not limited to flood control projects in the Air Basin include Rule 402 (Nuisance), Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), and Rules 1108 and 1108.1 (Cutback and Emulsified Asphalt), detailed in Section 4.3 of Appendix A.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

The SCAG is the regional planning agency for Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial Counties and addresses regional issues relating to transportation, the economy, community development and the environment. SCAG is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the majority of the southern California region and is the largest MPO in the nation.

With respect to air quality planning, SCAG has prepared the *2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (Connect SoCal 2024), adopted by SCAG on April 4, 2024, which is based on the regional development and growth forecasts provided in the *2023 Federal Transportation*

Improvement Program (2023 FTIP), adopted October 2022. In September 2024, SCAG adopted the *Final 2025 Federal Transportation Improvement Program* (2025 FTIP), that provides a comprehensive listing of projects that will receive federal funding and/or are regionally significant projects that are proposed over the Federal Fiscal years of 2024/2025 through 2027/2028 as well as years 2028/2029 and 2029/2030 that have been included for informational purposes. The projects included in the 2025 FTIP are consistent with programs and projects and subsequent amendments contained in Connect SoCal 2024.

Although the Connect SoCal 2024 and 2025 FTIP are primarily planning documents for future transportation projects, a key component of these plans are to integrate land use planning with transportation planning that promotes higher density infill development in close proximity to existing transit service. These plans form the basis for the land use and transportation components of the 2022 AQMP, which are utilized in the preparation of air quality forecasts and in the consistency analysis included in the 2022 AQMP. The Connect SoCal 2024, 2025 FTIP, and 2022 AQMP are based on projections originating within the City and County General Plans.

Local Jurisdictions

Local jurisdictions, such as the City of Rialto and County of San Bernardino, have the authority and responsibility to reduce air pollution through its decision-making authority. Specifically, the City and County are responsible for the assessment and mitigation of air emissions resulting from its land use decisions. The City and County are also responsible for the implementation of transportation control measures as outlined in the AQMPs.

In accordance with CEQA requirements and the CEQA review process, the City and County assess the air quality impacts of new development projects, requires mitigation of potentially significant air quality impacts by conditioning discretionary permits, and monitors and enforces implementation of such mitigation. The City and County do not, however, have the expertise to develop plans, programs, procedures, and methodologies to ensure that air quality within the City and region will meet federal and state standards. Instead, the City and County rely on the expertise of the SCAQMD and utilize the SCAQMD CEQA Handbook as the guidance document for the environmental review of plans and development proposals within its jurisdiction.

4.3.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires a discussion of any inconsistencies between a Proposed Project and applicable General Plans and regional plans (CEQA Guidelines Section 15125). The regional plan that applies to the Proposed Project includes the SCAQMD AQMP. The purpose of this discussion is to set forth the issues regarding consistency with the assumptions and objectives of the AQMP and discuss whether the Proposed Project would interfere with the region's ability to comply with Federal and State air quality standards. If the decision-makers determine that the Proposed Project is inconsistent, the lead agency may consider project modifications or inclusion of mitigation to eliminate the inconsistency.

A Proposed Project should be considered to be consistent with the AQMP if it furthers one or more policies and does not obstruct other policies. The SCAQMD CEQA Handbook identifies two key indicators of consistency, which are evaluated in the following sections:

Criterion 1 - Increase in the Frequency or Severity of Violations?

Based on the air quality modeling analysis contained in this report, short-term regional construction air emissions would not result in significant impacts based on SCAQMD regional and local thresholds of significance, discussed in Section 9.1 and Section 9.2 of the Air Quality, Energy, and GHG Report respectively (Appendix A). The ongoing operation of the Proposed Project would not create any additional air emissions, over which is currently being created. As such, the Proposed Project would be consistent with the first criterion, resulting in a less than significant long-term impact.

Criterion 2 - Exceed Assumptions in the AQMP?

Consistency with the AQMP assumptions is determined by performing an analysis of the Proposed Project with the assumptions in the 2022 AQMP. The emphasis of this criterion is to ensure that the analyses conducted for the Proposed Project are based on the same forecasts as the AQMP. The 2022 AQMP was developed through use of the planning forecasts provided in the Connect SoCal and 2019 FTIP. For this project, the City of Santa Ana General Plan Land Use Map defines the assumptions that are represented in AQMP. The Project site is located within the Rialto Channel, which runs along Cactus Avenue and is adjacent to areas zoned for Open Space – Resources (M-1). The proposed channel improvements would occur within land zoned and designated as Public Facility (PF), and is therefore an allowed use within the current land use designation.

As such, the Proposed Project is not anticipated to exceed the AQMP assumptions for the Project site and is found to be consistent with the AQMP for the second criterion. Therefore, the Proposed Project will not result in an inconsistency with the SCAQMD AQMP, resulting in a less than significant impact in relation to AQMP implementation.

Based on the above analysis, implementation of the Proposed Project would not (1) increase the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or (2) exceed AQMP assumptions. As the Proposed Project would not conflict with the SCAQMD AQMP, a less than significant impact would occur.

b) *Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standard. Consistent with SCAQMD guidance on cumulative air quality impacts, the analysis in the Air Quality, Energy, and GHG Report (Appendix A) assumes that projects with construction or operational emissions below SCAQMD's recommended daily significance thresholds would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to regional air pollutant levels in nonattainment areas and would not result in a significant air quality impact. Conversely, project-related emissions that exceed SCAQMD's significance thresholds would be considered cumulatively considerable. Construction-related emissions for the Proposed Project, compared to applicable SCAQMD thresholds, are summarized below, with additional detail provided in Appendix A.

Construction Emissions

The construction activities for the Proposed Project involve improvements to an existing stormwater drainage channel that include four phases: (1) grubbing and land clearing; (2) grading and excavation; (3) drainage, utilities, and sub-grade; and (4) paving. The CalEEMod model has been utilized to calculate the construction-related emissions from the Proposed Project and the input parameters utilized in this analysis have been detailed in Section 8.1 of Appendix A. The maximum daily regional construction-related criteria pollutant emissions from the Proposed Project are shown below in Table 4-1: Construction-Related Criteria Pollutant Emissions.

Table 4-1: Construction-Related Criteria Pollutant Emissions

Season and Year of Construction	Maximum Daily Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NOx	CO	SO2	PM10	PM2.5
Daily Summer Maximum						
2026	3.2	31	35	0.09	4.9	1.7
2027	2.5	20	26	0.05	1.9	0.89
Daily Winter Maximum						
2026	3.2	31	35	0.09	4.9	1.7
2027	3.1	29	34	0.09	4.8	1.7
Maximum Daily Construction Emissions	**3.2**	**31**	**35**	**0.09**	**4.9**	**1.7**
SCAQMD Regional Thresholds	**75**	**100**	**550**	**150**	**150**	**55**
SCAQMD Local Thresholds	**--**	**203**	**1,230**	**--**	**9**	**5**
Exceeds Thresholds?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Notes: The nearest offsite sensitive receptors are single-family homes that are located as near as 5 feet (1.5 meters) from the proposed area disturbed. According to SCAQMD methodology, all receptors closer than 25 meters are based on the 25-meter threshold. Calculated from SCAQMD's Mass Rate Look-up Tables for 3.0 acres interpolated from two and five acres in Air Monitoring Area 34, Central San Bernardino Valley.

Source: CalEEMod Version 2022.1

Table 4-1 shows that none of the analyzed criteria pollutants would exceed the regional emissions thresholds during construction of the Proposed Project. Table 4-1 also shows that the Proposed Project's regional construction-related criteria pollutant emissions that consist of both onsite and offsite emissions sources would not exceed the local thresholds, which provides for a worst-case analysis, since the local thresholds are for analyzing only the emissions created onsite. A less than significant regional or local air quality impact would occur from construction of the Proposed Project.

Operational Emissions

The on-going operation of the Proposed Project would not result in a long-term increase in criteria pollutant emissions. The only emissions associated with the long-term operations are from weekly routine maintenance trips to the project site by County personnel in a small truck. No change in the

routine maintenance schedule would occur from the Proposed Project. Long-term operational emissions would be less than significant.

In summary, the Proposed Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant during construction or operations. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

c) *Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. The local concentrations of criteria pollutant emissions produced in the nearby vicinity of the Proposed Project, which may expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations have been calculated in Section 10.3 of Appendix A for both construction and operations. The nearest sensitive receptors to the Project site are single-family homes located as near as 5 feet from the proposed area disturbed, located north of San Bernardino Avenue and south of Randall Avenue. There is also Inland Lighthouse Church that has structures located as near as 10 feet from the proposed area disturbed and Simpson Elementary School that has structures located as near as 250 feet from the proposed area disturbed.

Construction-Related Sensitive Receptor Impacts

Construction activities may expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations of localized criteria pollutant concentrations and from TAC emissions created from onsite construction equipment, described below.

Local Criteria Pollutant Impacts from Construction

As illustrated in Table 4-1, the local air quality impacts from construction of the Proposed Project would not exceed the local NOx, CO, PM10 and PM2.5 thresholds of significance discussed in Section 9.2 of Appendix A. Therefore, construction of the Proposed Project would create a less than significant construction-related impact to local air quality and no mitigation would be required.

TAC Impacts from Construction

Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project are anticipated to generate TAC emissions from diesel particulate matter (DPM) associated with the operation of trucks and off-road equipment.

DPM Emissions

The greatest potential for TAC emissions would be related DPM emissions associated with heavy equipment operations during construction of the Proposed Project. Given the relatively limited number of heavy-duty construction equipment, the varying distances that construction equipment would operate to the nearby sensitive receptors, and the short-term construction schedule, the Proposed Project would not result in a long-term (i.e., 30 or 70 years) substantial source of TAC emissions and corresponding individual cancer risk. In addition, the Proposed Project would comply with requirements outlined in California Code of Regulations Title 13, Article 4.8, Chapter 9, Section 2449, which regulates emissions from off-road diesel equipment in California. Due to the limitations in off-road construction equipment DPM emissions from implementation of Section 2449, less than

significant short-term TAC impacts would occur during construction of the Proposed Project from DPM emissions.

Operations-Related Sensitive Receptor Impacts

The on-going operation of the Proposed Project would not result in a long-term increase in criteria pollutant emissions. The only emissions associated with the long-term operations are from weekly routine maintenance trips to the project site by County personnel in a small truck. No change in the routine maintenance schedule would occur from the Proposed Project. Therefore, long-term operational emissions impacts to sensitive receptors would be less than significant.

In summary, implementation of the Proposed Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Construction and operations-related air quality impacts would be less than significant.

d) *Would the project result in other emissions, such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Individual responses to odors are highly variable and can result in a variety of effects. Generally, the impact of an odor results from a variety of factors such as frequency, duration, offensiveness, location, and sensory perception. Detailed definitions are included in Section 10.5 of Appendix A, and potential odor impacts have been analyzed for construction and operations below.

Construction-Related Odor Impacts

Potential sources that may emit odors during construction activities include the application of asphalt pavement and from emissions from diesel equipment. Standard construction requirements that limit the time of day when construction may occur as well as adherence to SCAQMD Rule 1108 (which limits VOC content in asphalt) would minimize odor impacts from construction. As such, the objectionable odors that may be produced during the construction process would be temporary and would not likely be noticeable for extended periods of time beyond the Project site's boundaries. Given the Proposed Project would comply with applicable regulations that reduce odors and due to the transitory nature of construction odors, a less than significant odor impact would occur.

Operations-Related Odor Impacts

The Proposed Project would consist of improvements to the Rialto Channel. No sources of odors would occur with the proposed improvements. Therefore, a less than significant impact related to odors would occur during the on-going operations of the Proposed Project.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4.	BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(e)	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(f)	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.4.1 Environmental Setting

The following analysis is based on the Biological Reconnaissance Assessment Report (Biological Assessment Report) prepared by Chambers Group, dated December 8th, 2025. The Biological Assessment Report included a literature review and reconnaissance survey to assess the Project site's existing conditions. Complete details and results of the survey are provided in Appendix B.

The Project includes improvements to the Rialto Channel, which extends approximately 2.97 miles between Willow Avenue and Etiwanda Avenue in the City of Rialto, San Bernardino County, California. The site is located within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *Fontana,* California 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle. The approximately 15,100 linear-foot Project site has a relatively flat terrain with an elevation between approximately 1,077 and 1,310 feet above mean sea level (amsl).

4.4.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modification, on any species identified as candidate, sensitive or special status species in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

Special Status Plant Species. According to the Biological Assessment Report, the results of the literature review and field assessment confirmed that 51 total special status plant species are known to historically occur within the Project site. Out of these 51 special status plant species, 43 plant species are considered absent, six plant species are considered to have a very low potential to occur, and two plant species are considered to have a low potential to occur on the Project site.

Additionally, the Biological Assessment Report recorded proposed impacts to native vegetation communities, which includes up to 0.21 acre of temporary impacts and 0.07 acre of permanent impacts to disturbed forms of native vegetation communities (Disturbed California Buckwheat Scrub and Disturbed Mexican Sprangletop Patch). However, because the Project site is highly disturbed, it offers very limited, low-quality habitat that would be insufficient for special status plant species. No special status plant species were observed during the survey, and therefore, no focused plant surveys are recommended at this time.

Special Status Wildlife Species. The Biological Assessment Report recorded 31 special status wildlife species that are known to historically occur within the Project site, 26 of which are considered absent due to lack of suitable habitat. Eight species are considered to have a low potential to occur due to low quality habitat and no observations of these species have been recorded within the past five years. No species with potential to occur were observed during the survey, and no signs of their presence – such as active burrows or scat – were detected within the Project site.

While no impacts to these special status wildlife species are anticipated to occur as a result of the Proposed Project activities, implementation of BIO-1 will minimize potential impacts to nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) within the Project site.

MM BIO-1: To minimize potential impacts to nesting birds protected under the MBTA within the Project site, construction activities shall take place outside nesting season (February 1 to August 31) to the greatest extent practicable. The survey shall be scheduled with and conducted by a qualified biologist in coordination with the County and on-site construction manager.

If construction activities must occur during nesting season, a preconstruction nesting bird survey shall be conducted prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities. The survey shall be completed within 3 days prior to ground disturbing activities, which consist of, but are not limited to, tree removal, trenching, etc.

During the survey, should nesting birds or their nests be encountered, to the maximum extent practicable, a minimum buffer zone around occupied nests should be determined by a qualified biologist experienced with nesting bird surveys and knowledgeable about the species known to nest in the area in order

to avoid impacts to the active nest. The buffer shall range at a minimum of 100 to 300 feet. The buffer should be maintained during physical ground-disturbing activities. Avoidance measures that shall be implemented if the biologist finds that it is required to not impact the nests include but are not limited to noise, activity, and design modifications, worker education, signage, buffers and/or temporary fencing. Once the biologist has determined that the nesting has ceased and the nestlings have fledged, the buffer may be removed.

b) *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?*

Less Than Significant Impact. According to the USFWS Critical Habitat WebGIS map, the Project site does not fall within designated critical habitat (Appendix B). The Project site is located within Rialto Channel, which was the only drainage identified during the jurisdictional delineation. A total of 20.84 acres of this drainage, 8.39 acres within the OHWM and 12.45 acres within bank-to-bank, was mapped within the Proposed Project area. Therefore, the Rialto Channel was analyzed for potential jurisdiction under the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW, and all jurisdictional delineations are subject to verification and approval by the appropriate regulatory agencies.

USACE Jurisdiction. While the Rialto Channel could potentially fall under USACE jurisdiction, it is classified as an ephemeral feature and therefore is not subject to federal jurisdiction under current regulatory guidance and would not require a Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit.

RWQCB Jurisdiction. Since the USACE does not have jurisdiction over the Rialto Channel and the Project does not require a Clean CWA Section 404 permit, a corresponding CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification is also not required. However, it is recommended that the Project proponent obtain the appropriate RWQCB General Construction Permit through the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) Stormwater Multiple Application and Report Tracking System (SMARTS) portal. Because the Project involves construction activities within an existing channel located in San Bernardino County, it falls under the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana RWQCB. Accordingly, the Project proponent should submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) through the SMARTS portal to obtain coverage for 8.39 acres of impacts within the OHWM under the applicable General Order.

CDFW Jurisdiction. This portion of the Rialto Channel does not sustain sufficient flow or habitat to support fish, wildlife, or riparian vegetation, therefore, CDFW jurisdiction is not anticipated to apply to the fixed bank-to-bank limits of this feature. A Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) will likely not be required for this Project.

The results of the jurisdictional delineation confirm the Proposed Project is subject to RWQCB jurisdiction. Given the Proposed Project would obtain the appropriate RWQCB General Construction Permit and submit a NOI through the SWRCB SMARTS portal, potential adverse impacts to riparian habitats would be less than significant.

c) *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed in Section 4.4.2 Impact (b) above, the Proposed Project is located within the Rialto Channel and is subject to RWQCB jurisdiction. Accordingly, coverage under the RWQCB Construction General Permit and submittal of a NOI through the SWRCB SMARTS portal would be required.

The Biological Assessment Report indicates that no National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) or National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) features are mapped within the Rialto Channel. Additionally, the application of the USACE Streamflow Duration Assessment Method (SDAM) found that the Project site lacks two of the three parameters required to qualify as a wetland – hydric soils and hydrophytic vegetation – and does not retain water for durations sufficient to develop hydric soil conditions.

Because the Rialto Channel is routinely maintained by the County, contains no vegetation or sustained flow, and lacks the necessary characteristics to support wetland vegetation, implementation of the proposed improvements within the Rialto Channel would not result in a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands. Additionally, coverage under the RWQCB Construction General Permit and submittal of a NOI through the SWRCB SMARTS portal would result in a less than significant impact to state or federally protected wetlands.

d) *Would the project Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. USFWS designated Critical habitat includes sites for breeding and rearing, movement or migration, feeding, roosting, cover, and shelter, and therefore requires special management and protection of existing resources. However, as described in Section 4.4.1 Impact (a) above, the Project site does not fall within designated critical habitat (Appendix B).

Additionally, although no impacts to special-status wildlife species are anticipated as a result of Proposed Project activities, implementation of MM BIO-1 would avoid or minimize potential impacts to nesting birds protected under the MBTA. Furthermore, implementation of MM BIO-1 would ensure that migratory wildlife corridors are preserved. Incorporation of these mitigation measures would reduce impacts to less than significant.

e) *Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is a stormwater drainage channel and is therefore regularly maintained by the County and is mostly devoid of vegetation. Implementation of the proposed improvements within the Rialto Channel would result in a conflict with the County's General Plan Natural Resources Element: Biological Resources or Division 8: Resource Management and Conservation of its Development Code (County 2020c). Given the Proposed Project would not present a direct conflict with any local policies or ordinances, impacts would be less than significant.

f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservancy Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. As described in the Biological Assessment Report, the Project site is located within the Middle Santa Ana River watershed, which is a major water source for the Upper Santa Ana River, and is characterized as a stormwater drainage channel (Appendix B). The City is located within the Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), which includes specific actions related to water quality and flow management within the Rialto Channel. According to the Upper Santa Ana River Sustainable Resources Alliance's Preserve Map, the Project site is located within the Upper Santa Ana River HCP Planning Boundary (USAR 2021).

The County's General Plan Natural Resources Element: Biological Resources Policy NR-5.1 Coordinated habitat planning indicates the County's participation and coordination with existing or proposed HCPs to preserve critical biological resources and functions. As such, the Proposed Project would comply with applicable management actions outlined in the Upper Santa Ana River HCP; impacts would be less than significant.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

5.	CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(c)	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.5.1 Environmental Setting

In September 2025, Chambers Group prepared a Cultural Resources Survey Letter Report for the Rialto Channel Flood Control Improvement Project (Cultural Survey) to gather and analyze information needed to assess the potential for effects to any cultural resources within the Project site. This report can be found in Appendix C.

The City of Rialto is located in the San Bernardino Valley, south of the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, which in addition to the San Bernardino Mountains form the Traverse Mountain Ranges. The San Bernardino Valley is bordered on the north by the eastern San Gabriel Mountains and the San Bernardino Mountains, on the east by the San Jacinto Mountains, on the south by the Temescal Mountains and Santa Ana Mountains, and on the west by the Pomona Valley. The area is characterized by the presence of decomposing granite derived from the nearby hillsides and windborne or water-borne alluvial deposits. The University of California, Davis SoilWeb database was consulted to identify soils that underlie the Project site. The database indicates that the property is underlain by the Hanford (HaC) soil association, which consists of coarse sandy loam with slopes ranging from 2 to 9 percent (Appendix C).

The Project site is generally located in the southwestern portion of San Bernardino County on the San Gabriel alluvial fan. Sediments from the San Gabriel Mountains have washed into the valleys below over thousands of years forming this fan. The Project site is situated atop a geologic formation of Pleistocene to Holocene age sediments comprised largely of marine and non-marine (continental) sedimentary rocks described as alluvium, lake, playa, and terrace deposits; both unconsolidated and semi-consolidated (Appendix C). At the surface and immediate subsurface, the sediments are Holocene in age (less than 11,000 years old). Deeper sediments in the valley areas are Pleistocene in age, ranging from 2.6 million to 11,000 years old (Appendix C).

In southern California, the middle Pleistocene is generally associated with a pre-human presence, although recent research suggests early human exploration of North America earlier in the Late Pleistocene than previously documented. Fossil specimens are also associated with the Pleistocene, particularly in areas where deposits are referred to as “older Alluvium.” The Holocene is the most recent geologic period and one that is directly associated with human activity. The Holocene is also generally associated with “younger Alluvium,” which tend not to be fossil bearing, except in instances where fossils have been redeposited (Appendix C).

4.5.2 Regulatory Framework

Federal

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties that are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This regulation mandates a structured consultation process with stakeholders, including State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs), Native American tribes, and other interested parties. The process involves identifying historic properties, assessing adverse effects, and seeking ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate those effects. Section 106 ensures that federal projects do not inadvertently harm important cultural resources and that such impacts are addressed transparently and collaboratively.

Code of Regulations (CFR) Title 36 Part 800 – Protection of Historic Properties

36 CFR Part 800 outlines the federal process for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). It requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on historic properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The process involves identifying historic properties within a project's area of potential effects, assessing whether those properties would be adversely affected, and consulting with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), Native American tribes, and other stakeholders to resolve any adverse effects. If impacts cannot be avoided, mitigation measures must be developed, often formalized through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The regulation also provides procedures for handling unanticipated discoveries during construction.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SOI) Professional Qualification Standards

The Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards establish the minimum education and experience required for professionals conducting work in historic preservation fields, including archaeology, history, and architectural history. For archaeology, the standards require a graduate degree in archaeology, anthropology, or a closely related field, along with demonstrated experience in fieldwork, research, analysis, and report preparation. These qualifications ensure that cultural resources are evaluated and managed by appropriately trained professionals, especially during environmental review and in response to unanticipated discoveries. Adherence to these standards is considered best practice and is often required for compliance with both state and federal historic preservation laws.

State

California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR)

The California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) is the state's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Managed by the California Office of Historic Preservation, the CRHR includes buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts that reflect California's heritage and meet established criteria for historical significance. These criteria evaluate a resource's association with important historical events or people, its embodiment of distinctive characteristics or construction methods, and its potential to yield important information about the past. Resources listed in or found eligible for the CRHR are afforded

protection under CEQA, meaning any project that could adversely affect such a resource must undergo environmental review and mitigation as necessary.

Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF)

The Sacred Lands File (SLF), maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), is a confidential record of known Native American sacred sites in California. When a project is proposed, a Sacred Lands File search is requested to determine whether any sacred or culturally significant sites are known to exist within or near the project area. While a negative SLF result indicates no known sacred sites on file, it does not guarantee that such resources are absent—it simply means they have not been documented in the database. The SLF search is typically followed by outreach to Native American tribes to ensure thorough consultation and to protect traditional cultural places.

4.5.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?

No Impact. As discussed in the Cultural Survey, a records search at the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) was conducted in June 2025 – identifying eight previous cultural resource studies (reports) within the 0.25-mile study area, with three of those studies mapped within or intersecting with the Project site (SB-01772; SB-07084; SB-07960). The requested Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) search results were negative, indicating that no sacred lands have been recorded within the 0.25-mile radius study area and/or the Project site itself. Background research yielded no findings of cultural or archaeological significance (Appendix C).

As discussed in Appendix C, during the field survey conducted by Chambers Group on June 24-25, 2025, no evidence of cultural or paleontological resources were observed. While the Project site was established as a water control channel by the mid-1980s, this feature does not meet the current minimum age threshold for evaluation under CEQA and is not further considered as a potential eligible resource in this report.

Based on the results of the records search review, background research, and field survey, as documented in Appendix C, no historical resources, as defined per CEQA Guidelines §15064.5(a), were identified within the Project site; therefore, no impacts to historical resources are expected.

b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. As discussed in Appendix C, no known cultural resources would be impacted under the Proposed Project.

Considering that the Project site is largely developed, including the currently utilized concrete, rock, and earthen lined channel that is proposed for improvement, the potential for encountering intact resources within the upper sediments is low; however, the possibility of identifying unknown buried resources remains. This is further emphasized as the currently proposed improvements are likely to go beyond the depth of previous disturbance related to the original construction and ongoing maintenance of the channel.

For post-review discoveries of cultural and paleontological resources, the Project is required to adhere to 36 CFR 800.13(b), "discoveries without prior planning," and industry standard best management practices regarding the unanticipated discovery of cultural resources, detailed below in MM CUL-1 and in Appendix C.

MM CUL-1 The County shall retain the services of a Qualified Archaeologist, meeting the Secretary of the Interior Standards, and County requirements. The Qualified Archaeologist shall remain on-call throughout the Project. The Qualified Archaeologist or cultural resources specialist working under the direction of the Qualified Archaeologist, shall provide an initial cultural resources sensitivity training (which may be incorporated within a more comprehensive or multi-discipline Worker Environmental Awareness Program) to inform all construction personnel prior to construction activities about the proper procedures in the event of a cultural resource discovery. The training shall be held in conjunction with the Project's initial on-site safety meeting and shall explain the applicable protocols, procedures, and legal basis for the protection of significant cultural resources.

In the event of an inadvertent discovery of potential cultural resources during ground-disturbing activities, all work within a 60-foot radius of the discovery shall be halted while the Qualified Archaeologist assesses the find. Work on the other portions of the Project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed within TCR-1, regarding any pre-contact finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.

If the resource is determined to be a significant or unique resource through significance evaluation, and avoidance is not possible, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to YSMN for review and comment, as detailed within TCR-1. All monitoring or associated plans would be prepared and implemented under the direction of the Qualified Archaeologist. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the project and implement the Plan accordingly. All required close-out reporting or archaeological site records would be completed in accordance with the Office of Historic Preservation's guidelines and submitted to the appropriate CHRIS IC, as necessary.

Therefore, compliance with existing regulations and incorporation MM CUL-1 would result in a less than significant impact.

c) Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. The Cultural Survey did not identify any evidence of human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries within the Project site or surrounding area (Appendix C). However, this does not preclude the potential discovery of previously unknown human remains during grading activities on undisturbed land.

The Proposed Project shall implement MM CUL-2, which requires that in the event that human remains are discovered during ground-disturbing activities, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease.

The Project would be subject to California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5, CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5, and California PRC § 5097.98. If human remains are found during ground-disturbing activities, State of California Health and Safety Code § 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to PRC § 5097.98. In the event of an unanticipated discovery of human remains, the County Coroner shall be notified immediately. If the human remains are determined to be prehistoric, the County Coroner shall notify the NAHC, which shall notify a most likely descendant (MLD). The MLD shall complete the inspection of the site within 48 hours of notification and may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials.

MM CUL-2 If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.

Compliance with existing regulations and implementation of MM CUL-2 would result in a less than significant impact.

4.6 ENERGY

6.	ENERGY Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.6.1 Environmental Setting

The following analysis is based on the Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis (Air Quality, Energy, and GHG Report) prepared by Vista Environmental, dated December 4th, 2025 (Appendix A).

4.6.2 Regulatory Framework

The following discussion summarizes the primary state and local regulations applicable to energy that are most relevant to the Proposed Project. A more detailed discussion of applicable regulations, policies, and plans is provided by the Air Quality, Energy, and GHG Report (Appendix A) in Section 5.0.

State

Energy conservation management in the State was initiated by the 1974 Warren-Alquist State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Act that created the California Energy Resource Conservation and Development Commission (currently named California Energy Commission [CEC]), which was originally tasked with certifying new electric generating plants based on the need for the plant and the suitability of the site of the plant. In 1976, the Warren-Alquist Act was expanded to include new restrictions on nuclear generating plants, that effectively resulted in a moratorium of any new nuclear generating plants in the State.

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Part 11

CCR Title 24, Part 11: *California Green Building Standards* (CalGreen Code) was developed in response to continued efforts to reduce GHG emissions associated with energy consumption. The CalGreen Code is also updated every three years, and the current version is the 2022 CalGreen Code that went into effect on January 1, 2023, and the 2025 CalGreen Code will go into effect on January 1, 2026.

The CalGreen Code contains requirements for construction site selection; storm water control during construction; construction waste reduction; material selection; natural resource conservation; site irrigation conservation; and more. The code provides design options allowing the designer to determine how best to achieve compliance for a given site or building condition. The CalGreen Code provides standards for grading and paving, graywater systems, pollutant controls (including moisture control), acoustical controls, and storm water management, among others. Implementation of the CalGreen Code measures reduces energy consumption and vehicle trips and encourages the use of alternative-fuel vehicles, which reduces pollutant emissions.

Executive Order N-79-20

The California Governor issued Executive Order N-79-20 on September 23, 2020 that requires all new passenger cars and trucks and commercial drayage trucks sold in California to be zero-emissions by the year 2035 and all medium- heavy-duty vehicles (commercial trucks) sold in the state to be zero-emission by 2045 for all operations where feasible. Executive Order N-79-20 also requires all off-road vehicles and equipment to transition to 100 percent zero-emission equipment, where feasible by 2035.

Local

The Rialto General Plan 2035 and County of San Bernardino General Plan: Renewable Energy and Conservation Element provide applicable goals and policies for the Proposed Project, detailed in Section 5.2 of the Air Quality, Energy, and GHG Report (Appendix A).

4.6.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would impact energy resources during construction, including petroleum-based fuel supplies and distribution systems. This analysis includes a discussion of the potential energy impacts of the Proposed Project, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy.

Construction Energy

The Proposed Project would consume energy resources during construction in three general forms: (1) electricity; (2) petroleum-based fuels; and (3) energy consumed to produce construction materials.

Construction-Related Electricity

During construction, the Proposed Project would consume electricity to construct the proposed structures. Electricity would be supplied to the Project site by SCE and would be obtained from the existing electrical lines in the vicinity of the Project site. The use of electricity from existing power lines rather than temporary diesel or gasoline powered generators would minimize impacts on fuel consumption. Electricity consumed during Project construction would vary throughout the construction period based on the construction activities being performed, including dust control (supply and conveyance) and electricity to power any necessary lighting during construction.

Such electricity demand would be temporary, nominal, and would cease upon the completion of construction. Overall, construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would require limited electricity consumption that would not be expected to have an adverse impact on available electricity supplies and infrastructure. Compliance with City's guidelines and requirements would ensure that the Proposed Project fulfills its responsibilities relative to infrastructure installation, coordinates any electrical infrastructure removals or relocations, and limits any impacts associated with construction of the Project. Construction of the Project's electrical infrastructure is not anticipated to adversely affect the electrical infrastructure serving the surrounding uses or utility system capacity. Therefore, the use of electricity during Project construction would not be wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary.

Construction-Related Petroleum Fuel Use

Petroleum-based fuel usage represents the highest amount of transportation energy potentially consumed during construction, which would be utilized by both off-road equipment operating on the project site and on-road automobiles transporting workers to and from the project site and on-road trucks transporting equipment and supplies to the Project site.

The off-road construction equipment fuel usage was calculated through use of the off-road equipment assumptions and fuel use assumptions shown in Section 8.2 of Appendix A, which illustrates that construction-related petroleum use would be nominal when compared to current county-wide petroleum usage rates. Additionally, construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would be required to adhere to all State and SCAQMD regulations for off-road equipment and on-road trucks, which provide minimum fuel efficiency standards. As such, construction activities for

the Proposed Project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Impacts regarding transportation energy would be less than significant.

Operational Energy

The on-going operation of the Proposed Project would not result in a long-term increase in energy consumption. The only energy consumption associated with the long-term operations are from weekly routine maintenance trips to the Project site by County personnel in a small truck. No change in the routine maintenance schedule would occur from the Proposed Project. Therefore, operation of the Proposed Project would not consume additional petroleum fuel, over which is currently being consumed. Thus, impacts with regard transportation energy supply and infrastructure capacity would be less than significant.

In conclusion, the Proposed Project would comply with regulatory compliance measures outlined by the State and City related to energy (see Section 5.0 of Appendix A). Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during Project construction or operation. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) *Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. The applicable energy plans for the Proposed Project include the City's General Plan Energy Resources Component, dated December 2010, and the County's General Plan Renewable Energy and Conservation Element, amended February 2019.

The Proposed Project would be consistent with all applicable energy-related policies from the City's General Plan and County's General Plan, detailed in Section 10.7 of Appendix A. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with the City's plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

7.	GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
	i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
	ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
	iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e)	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f)	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.7.1 Environmental Setting and Regulatory Framework

Federal

Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act

The Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act (42 USC § 7701 et seq.) was enacted in 1977 to reduce the risks to life and property from future earthquakes in the United States through the establishment and maintenance of an effective earthquake hazards reduction program. To accomplish this, the act established the National Earthquake Hazard Reduction Program (NEHRP), which refined the description of agency responsibilities, program goals, and objectives. NEHRP's mission includes improved understanding, characterization, and prediction of seismic hazards and vulnerabilities; improvement of building codes and land use practices; risk reduction through post-earthquake investigations and education; development and improvement of design and construction techniques; improvement of mitigation capacity; and accelerated application of research results. NEHRP designates the Federal

Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the lead agency of the program and assigns it several planning, coordinating, and reporting responsibilities. Programs under NEHRP help inform and guide planning and building code requirements such as emergency evacuation responsibilities and seismic code standards.

State

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (California Public Resources Code § 2621 et seq.) was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures used for human occupancy. The main purpose of the act is to prevent the construction of buildings used for human occupancy on top of the traces of active faults. Although the act addresses the hazards associated with surface-fault rupture, it does not address other earthquake-related hazards, such as seismically-induced ground shaking, liquefaction, or landslides. The law requires the state geologist to establish regulatory zones (known as Earthquake Fault Zones or Alquist-Priolo Zones)—averaging about 0.25 mile wide—around the surface traces of active faults, and to publish appropriate maps that depict these zones. The maps are then distributed to all affected cities, counties, and state agencies for their use in planning and controlling new or renewed construction. In general, construction within an Alquist-Priolo Zone requires a fault investigation be approved by the County prior to issuing grading and building permits. The Act seeks to prevent construction or major rehabilitation of structures used for human occupancy within 50 feet of an active fault.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (California Public Resources Code § 2690-2699.6 et seq.) was passed in 1990 to mitigate earthquake hazards other than surface-fault rupture, including seismically-induced ground shaking, liquefaction and landsliding. Under this act, seismic hazard zones have been mapped by the State Geologist to assist local governments in land use planning. The act aims to identify and map seismic hazard zones in order for cities and counties to adequately prepare the safety element of their general plans and to encourage land-use management policies and regulations to reduce and mitigate those hazards to protect public health and safety. Section 2697(a) of the Act states that "cities and counties shall require, prior to the approval of a project located in a seismic hazard zone, a geotechnical report defining and delineating any seismic hazard."

California Building Code

The California Building Standards Code, also known as Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, reflects various building standards that have been derived from different sources. One of these sources is the International Building Code, a model building code adopted across the United States that has been modified to suit conditions in the State, thereby creating what is known as the California Building Code (CBC), or Part 2 of CCR Title 24.

The CBC is updated every three years; the 2016 CBC took effect January 1, 2017. Much of the CBC is adopted by reference in the County Code, Title 6, Division 3, Chapter 1, as of January 1, 2018. Through the CBC, the State provides a minimum standard for building design and construction. The CBC contains specific requirements for seismic safety, excavation, foundations, retaining walls, and site demolition. It also regulates grading activities, including drainage and erosion control.

Local

San Bernardino County Code

The California Buildings Standards Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24) is a compilation of codes and standards for electrical, mechanical, plumbing, fire, design, and other structural features. The CBC is updated every three years with the latest advances in building technology and practices recommended by the International Code Council. Every local government is required by state law to adopt the CBC within 180 days of publication. The County has adopted the most recent 2016 update of the CBC. The 2019 triennial update to the CBC is being released and will be considered for adoption by the County. State law permits jurisdictions to amend state building codes to address local geographic, topographic, or climatic conditions. The California Building Standards Commission publishes all code amendments adopted by local agencies. The County amended the 2016 CBC for administrative provisions and included excavation and grading requirements that were not in the original 2016 CBC. No other local amendments were made, although other cities in the county may have adopted more restrictive amendments. In addition to the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones designated by the State, the County has designated County Fault Hazard Zones for particular faults not addressed by the State. The County Fault Hazard Zones also average about a quarter mile in width around the surface traces of County-recognized active faults. In general, construction within a County Fault Hazard Zone requires a fault investigation prior to issuing grading and building permits. Title 8 of the County Code, Chapter 82.15.040 (a) seeks to prevent construction or major rehabilitation of structures used for human occupancy within 50 feet of an active fault. Chapter 82.15.040 (b) of the Code requires that structures used for critical facilities be located at least 150 feet from any active fault trace.

4.7.2 Impact Analysis

a) i) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

Less Than Significant Impact. Although the region is subject to seismic activity due to its location in Southern California, the Project does not involve the construction of habitable structures or new bridge foundations. The proposed improvements consist of improvements to an existing stormwater drainage channel. These activities do not significantly increase the risk of fault rupture-related hazards.

According to the California Geological Survey (CGS), the Project site is not within an Earthquake Fault Zone (DOC 2024). According to the U.S Geological Survey (USGS), the closest faults to the Project site are the San Jacinto fault located approximately 2.65 miles east of the Project and the Lytle Creek fault located 5 miles northwest of the Project site (USGS 2022). There are no active or potentially active faults, or Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones that underlay the Project site.

Furthermore, the Project will comply with the City of Rialto Seismic Design Requirements, ensuring that the drainage channel is designed to withstand seismic ground motions. Due to the distance between the Project site and faults and the use of Caltrans Seismic Design Requirements, impacts

related to the rupture of a known earthquake fault as depicted on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map would be less than significant.

ii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground-shaking?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site, like all of Southern California, is in a seismically active region. Ground shaking resulting from earthquakes associated with both nearby and more distant faults is likely to occur. The Project footprint is an existing drainage channel that would be undergoing improvements and renovations. As discussed in Section 4.7 Impact (a) above, the Project's construction will be approved and completed using state and local standards that take into account the need for seismic design elements. The Proposed Project would not cause or exacerbate strong seismic ground shaking that would expose people or structures to significant risk of injury or loss of property; therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

iii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

No Impact. According to the County's Geologic Hazard Overlays Map, the Project site is not located within or near an area with liquefaction susceptibility (County 2007). Additionally, all Project activities would be conducted in accordance with the County regulations and ordinances, pertaining to the mitigation of potential geologic and seismic impacts. Therefore, no impact would occur.

iv) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

No Impact. The Project area consists of a relatively flat strip of land, with minor elevation changes occurring within the existing concrete-lined stormwater drainage channel. According to the U.S. Landslide Inventory and Susceptibility Map and the County's Geologic Hazard Overlays Map, the Project site is not located on an area, nor adjacent to an area that is susceptible to landslides (USGS 2025; County 2007). Additionally, all Project activities would be conducted in accordance with County regulations and ordinances, pertaining to the mitigation of potential geologic and seismic impacts. Therefore, no impact would occur.

b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is in a flat desert region with minimal elevation changes, which reduces the risk of significant soil erosion. Minor elevation variations within the existing concrete-lined stormwater drainage channel will be addressed by the proposed improvements, further mitigating erosion risk. The existing landscape consists of paved surfaces and compacted soils, limiting the presence of loose topsoil that could be displaced.

The Project's construction activities will involve the use of heavy equipment, such as excavators, backhoes, road rollers, loaders, dump trucks, pavers, concrete trucks, grinders/planers, water trucks, and striping trucks, but does not include large-scale earthmoving, excavation, or slope alterations. Temporary soil disturbance may occur during construction, however, as described in Section 4.10, the Project will implement standard Best Management Practices (BMPs) under a prepared Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) to prevent erosion, such as erosion control measures, stormwater pollution prevention, and dust suppression techniques.

Operational conditions of the Project site would be an impervious surface area that would not be prone to erosion or loss of topsoil; therefore, substantial on-site erosion and loss of topsoil would not occur. For these reasons, impacts related to erosion or loss of topsoil would be less than significant.

c) *Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The soil type in the Project footprint consists of Tujunga gravelly loamy sand with 0 to 9 percent slopes. These soil types are comprised of gravelly sandy loam at shallow depths and extremely gravelly coarse sand at lower depths. These soil types are either classified as "Well Drained" or "Excessively Drained" and have low rates of runoff. Quarries and Pits soils are present within the Project site, indicating previous disturbance associated with past excavation and construction of the existing stormwater drainage channel (USDA 2019).

These soil characteristics indicate that the Project site is not prone to instability. The well-drained nature of the soils reduces the likelihood of liquefaction, lateral spreading, or collapse due to their low moisture retention. Additionally, the flat topography of the Project area minimizes the risk of landslides or subsidence.

The Project does not involve deep excavation or significant structural loads that could trigger instability. Furthermore, compliance with County grading requirements and California Building Code (CBC) standards will ensure that construction activities do not introduce instability risks. Therefore, any impacts relating to on- or off-site landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse would be less than significant.

d) *Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?*

No Impact. The Tujunga gravelly loamy sand soil type is well drained with rapid runoff and does not contain expansive properties (USDA 2019). Therefore, there would be no impacts associated with expansive soils creating substantial risk of life or property.

e) *Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?*

No Impact. The Project involves improvements to a stormwater drainage channel and does not require the use of septic or wastewater disposal systems. There would be no impact associated with the disposal of wastewater.

f) *Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated. On June 22, 2025, Chambers Group received the results of the paleontological records search from the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles (NHMLA). While the records search results identified no fossil localities directly within the 0.25-mile radius study area and/or the Project site, the results identified four fossil localities nearby from the same sedimentary deposits that may occur in the study area and/or the Project site, either at the surface or at depth (LACM VP 1728, LACM VP 7268, LACM VP 7811, and LACM VP 4619)

(Appendix C). According to the Cultural Survey, the Project site is within a region with low to no paleontological sensitivity (Appendix C).

Given the Project site is largely developed, including the currently utilized concrete, rock, and earthen lined channel that is proposed for improvement, the potential for encountering intact resources within the upper sediments is low; however, the possibility of buried resources being identified below these surface disturbances is not diminished. Additionally, proposed improvements are likely to go beyond the depth of previous disturbance related to the original construction and ongoing maintenance of the channel. With implementation of mitigation measures PAL-1 and PAL-2, impacts to paleontological resources would be less than significant.

MM PAL-1 Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the County shall be required to obtain the services of a Qualified Project Paleontologist to remain on call for the duration of the proposed ground-disturbing construction activity. The paleontologist selected must be approved by the County. Upon approval or request by the County, a paleontological mitigation plan (PMP) outlining procedures for paleontological data recovery shall be prepared for the Project and submitted to the County for review and approval. The development and implementation of the PMP shall include consultations with the County's Engineering Geologist as well as a requirement that the curation of all specimens recovered under any scenario shall be through an appropriate repository agreed upon by the County. If the County accepts ownership, the location of the curation may be revised. The PMP shall include developing a multilevel ranking system, or Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC), as a tool to demonstrate the potential yield of fossils within a given stratigraphic unit. The PMP shall outline the monitoring and salvage protocols to address paleontological resources encountered during Project-related ground-disturbing activities, as well as the appropriate recording, collection, and processing protocols to appropriately address any resources discovered.

MM PAL-2 At the completion of all ground-disturbing activities, the Project Paleontologist shall prepare a final paleontological mitigation report summarizing all monitoring efforts and observations, as performed in line with the PMP, and all paleontological resources encountered, if any, as well as providing follow-up reports of any specific discovery, if necessary.

4.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

8.	GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.8.1 Environmental Setting

The following analysis is based on the Air Quality, Energy, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Analysis (Air Quality, Energy, and GHG Report) prepared by Vista Environmental, dated December 4th, 2025 (Appendix A).

4.8.2 Regulatory Framework

The following discussion summarizes the primary state and local regulations applicable to greenhouse gas emissions that are most relevant to the Proposed Project. A more detailed discussion of applicable regulations, policies, and plans is provided by the Air Quality, Energy, and GHG Report (Appendix A) in Section 6.0.

State

California Air Resources Control Board (CARB)

The CARB has the primary responsibility for implementing state policy to address global climate change, however there are State regulations related to global climate change that affect a variety of State agencies. CARB, which is a part of CalEPA, is responsible for the coordination and administration of both the federal and state air pollution control programs within California. In this capacity, the CARB conducts research, sets CAAQS, compiles emission inventories, develops suggested control measures, provides oversight of local programs, and prepares the SIP. In addition, the CARB establishes emission standards for motor vehicles sold in California, consumer products (e.g. hairspray, aerosol paints, and barbeque lighter fluid), and various types of commercial equipment. It also sets fuel specifications to further reduce vehicular emissions.

CARB Climate Change Scoping Plan

In 2008, CARB approved a Climate Change Scoping Plan that proposes a "comprehensive set of actions designed to reduce overall carbon GHG emissions in California, improve our environment, reduce our dependence on oil, diversify our energy sources, save energy, create new jobs, and enhance public health" (CARB 2008). The Climate Change Scoping Plan has a range of GHG reduction actions which include direct regulations; alternative compliance mechanisms; monetary and non-monetary incentives; voluntary actions; market-based mechanisms such as a cap-and-trade system.

In 2014, CARB approved the First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan (CARB, 2014) that identifies additional strategies moving beyond the 2020 targets to the year 2050. On December 14, 2017, CARB adopted California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, November 2017 (CARB, 2017) that provides specific statewide policies and measures to achieve the 2030 GHG reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and the aspirational 2050 GHG reduction target of 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. On December 15, 2022, CARB adopted the *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality,* November 16, 2022 (CARB, 2022) that lays out a path to achieve targets for carbon neutrality and reduce anthropogenic GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels no later than 2045, as directed by Assembly Bill 1279. In addition to the Scoping Plans, the State has passed the following laws directing CARB to develop actions to reduce GHG emissions, which are listed in detail in Section 6.3 of Appendix A.

California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 11

The CalGreen Building standards have been developed by the CEC primarily for energy conservation and is described in more detail above in Section 5.1 under Energy Conservation Management. It should be noted that implementation of the CalGreen Building standards would also reduce GHG emissions, since as detailed above under Title 23, Part 6, energy usage from buildings creates 9.7 percent of GHG emissions in the State.

Assembly Bill 32

In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 requires CARB, to adopt rules and regulations that would achieve GHG emissions equivalent to statewide levels in 1990 by 2020 through an enforceable statewide emission cap which will be phased in starting in 2012. Emission reductions shall include carbon sequestration projects that would remove carbon from the atmosphere and utilize best management practices that are technologically feasible and cost effective.

In 2007 CARB released the calculated Year 1990 GHG emissions of 431 $MMTCO_2e$. The 2020 target of 431 $MMTCO_2e$ requires the reduction of 78 $MMTCO_2e$, or approximately 16 percent from the State's projected 2020 business as usual emissions of 509 $MMTCO_2e$ (CARB, 2014). Under AB 32, CARB was required to adopt regulations by January 1, 2011, to achieve reductions in GHGs to meet the 1990 cap by 2020. Early measures CARB took to lower GHG emissions included requiring operators of the largest industrial facilities that emit 25,000 metric tons of CO_2 in a calendar year to submit verification of GHG emissions by December 1, 2010. The CARB Board also approved nine discrete early action measures that include regulations affecting landfills, motor vehicle fuels, refrigerants in cars, port operations and other sources, all of which became enforceable on or before January 1, 2010.

Executive Order B-30-15, Senate Bill 32, and Assembly Bill 197

The California Governor issued Executive Order B-30-15 on April 29, 2015 that aims to reduce California's GHG emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. This executive order aligns California's GHG reduction targets with those of other international governments, such as the European Union that set the same target for 2030 in October, 2014. This target will make it possible to reach the ultimate goal of reducing GHG emissions 80 percent under 1990 levels by 2050 that is based on scientifically established levels needed in the U.S.A to limit global warming below 2 degrees Celsius – the warming threshold at which scientists say there will likely be major climate disruptions such as super droughts and rising sea levels.

Assembly Bill 197 (AB 197) (September 8, 2016) and Senate Bill 32 (SB 32) (September 8, 2016) codified into statute the GHG emissions reduction targets of at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, as detailed in Executive Order B-30-15. AB 197 also requires additional GHG emissions reporting that is broken down to sub-county levels and requires CARB to consider the social costs of emissions impacting disadvantaged communities.

Regional

South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)

SCAQMD develops rules and regulations, establishes permitting requirements for stationary sources, inspects emission sources, and enforces such measures through educational programs or fines, when necessary. SCAQMD is directly responsible for reducing emissions from stationary, mobile, and indirect sources. The SCAQMD is also responsible for GHG emissions for projects where it is the lead agency. However, for other projects in the Air Basin where it is not the lead agency, it is limited to providing resources to other lead agencies in order to assist them in determining GHG emission thresholds and GHG reduction measures. In order to assist local agencies with direction on GHG emissions, the SCAQMD organized a working group, which is described below.

SCAQMD Working Group

Since neither CARB nor the OPR has developed GHG emissions threshold, the SCAQMD formed a Working Group to develop significance thresholds related to GHG emissions. At the September 28, 2010 Working Group meeting, the SCAQMD released its most current version of the draft GHG emissions thresholds, which recommends a tiered approach that either provides a quantitative annual thresholds of 3,500 $MTCO_2e$ for residential uses, 1,400 $MTCO_2e$ for commercial uses, and 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ for mixed uses. An alternative annual threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ for all land use types is also proposed.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

As detailed above in Section 4.3.2, the current applicable RTP/SCS for the project area region is the Connect SoCal 2024 and 2025 FTIP, which have been prepared to meet the GHG emissions reduction targets set by SB 375 for the SCAG region of 19 percent reduction over the 2005 per capita emissions levels. The Connect SoCal 2024 includes new land use, transportation, and technology strategies to meet the new 19 percent GHG emission reduction target for 2035.

Local

The most recent adopted Climate Action Plan that covers the City of Rialto is the Regional GHG Plan (2021 Regional GHG Plan), prepared by San Bernardino Council of Governments (SBCOG), March 2021. The 2021 Regional GHG Plan was prepared in accordance with the GHG reduction measures provided in the California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, November 2017 (CARB, 2017) and to address SB 32, which mandates a 40 percent reduction in GHG emissions from 1990 levels by 2030. ICF prepared a reduction scenario for the City of Rialto that identified a reduction goal of its community GHG emissions to a level that is 40 percent below its 2016 GHG emission level by 2030 to the match the SB 32 targets.

The *County of San Bernardino Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan* (GHG Plan), prepared September 2011, requires the reduction of 159,423 metric tons of $C0_2$ equivalent emissions ($MTCO_2e$) per year from

new development by 2020 as compared to the unmitigated conditions. The *Greenhouse Gas Emissions Development Review Processes* (GHG Review Processes), prepared for the County of San Bernardino, March 2015, provides project level direction on how the County plans to achieve the reduction in GHG Emissions.

4.8.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. The Project's construction-related GHG emissions have been calculated with the CalEEMod model based on the construction and operational parameters detailed in Section 8.1 of Appendix A. Since the on-going operation of the Proposed Project would not result in a long-term increase in GHG emissions, operational GHG emissions have not been calculated. A summary of the results is shown below in Table 4-2: Project-Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions and the CalEEMod model run is provided in Appendix A.

Table 4-2: Project-Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions

Construction Year	Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Metric Tons per Year)			
	CO_2	CH_4	N_2O	$CO2_e$
Year 2026	613	0.04	0.05	628
Year 2027	483	0.02	0.02	489
Total Construction Emissions	1,096	0.06	0.07	1,117
Total Amortized Construction Emissions	**36.5**	**<0.01**	**<0.01**	**37.2**
County of San Bernardino GHG Emissions Reduction Plan Screening Threshold				**3,000**
Exceed Threshold?				**No**

Notes: Construction emissions amortized over 30 years as recommended in the SCAQMD GHG Working Group on November 19, 2009.

Source: CalEEMod Version 2022.1

The data provided in Table 4-2 shows that the Proposed Project would create a total of 1,117 $MTCO_2e$, or 37.2 $MTCO_2e$ per year when amortized over 30 years. Per the County's GHG Emission Reduction Plan, small projects that do not exceed 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year are considered to be consistent with the Plan and determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions. Since the Proposed Project's GHG emissions are below the County's screening threshold, the Proposed Project would not create a significant cumulative impact from GHG emissions. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The applicable plan for the proposed project is the *County of San Bernardino Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan* (GHG Plan), September 2011. In addition, the G*reenhouse Gas Emissions Development Review Processes* (GHG Review Processes), prepared for the County of San Bernardino, updated March 2015, provides direction for conformity of new development projects to the GHG Plan.

The GHG Review Processes determined that projects that do not exceed 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year will be consistent with the GHG Plan and determined to have a less than significant individual and cumulative impact for GHG emissions. As shown in Table 4-2 above, the Proposed Project would create 37.2 $MTCO_2e$ per year, which is well below the 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year threshold provided in the GHG Review Processes. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

9.	HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan had not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(f)	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(g)	Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.9.1 Environmental Setting and Regulatory Framework

Federal

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 (42 USC. § 6901 et seq.) is the principal federal law that regulates the generation, management, and transportation of waste. Hazardous waste management includes the treatment, storage, or disposal of hazardous waste. The RCRA gave the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the authority to control hazardous waste from "cradle to grave," that is, from generation to transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal, at active and future facilities. It does not address abandoned or historical sites. The RCRA also set forth a framework for managing nonhazardous wastes. Later amendments required phasing out land disposal of hazardous waste and added underground tanks storing petroleum and other hazardous substances.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980 (42 USC § 9601 et seq.), commonly known as the Superfund, protects water, air, and land resources from the risks created by past chemical disposal practices such as abandoned and historical hazardous waste sites. It gave the EPA power to seek out the parties responsible for a release and ensure their cooperation in the cleanup. CERCLA also enabled the revision of the National Contingency Plan, which established the National Priority List (NPL) of sites, known as Superfund sites. CERCLA was amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) in 1986 to continue cleanup activities.

Toxic Substances Control Act

The Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976 (15 USC § 2601 et seq.) gave the EPA the ability to track the 75,000 industrial chemicals produced or imported into the United States. The EPA repeatedly screens these chemicals; can require reporting or testing of any that may pose an environmental or human health hazard; and can ban the manufacture and import of chemicals that pose an unreasonable risk. The EPA tracks the thousands of new chemicals each year with unknown or dangerous characteristics. The act supplements other federal statutes, including the Clean Air Act and the Toxics Release Inventory under EPCRA.

State

California Environmental Protection Agency

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) was created in 1991, unifying California's environmental authority in a single cabinet-level agency and bringing the California Air Resources Board (Air Resources Board), State Water Resources Control Board, RWQCBs, California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (known as CalRecyle and formerly the Integrated Waste Management Board), Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and Department of Pesticide Regulation under one agency. These agencies were placed within the Cal/EPA "umbrella" for the protection of human health and the environment and to ensure the coordinated deployment of state resources. Its mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment, to ensure public health, environmental quality, and economic vitality.

Department of Toxic Substance Control

The DTSC is a department of Cal/EPA and is the primary agency in California that regulates hazardous waste, cleans-up existing contamination, and looks for ways to reduce the hazardous waste produced in California. The DTSC regulates hazardous waste in California primarily under the authority of the federal RCRA and the California Health and Safety Code (primarily Division 20, Chapters 6.5 through 10.6, and Title 22, Division 4.5). Other laws that affect hazardous waste are specific to handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup, and emergency planning. Government Code Section 65962.5 (commonly referred to as the Cortese List) includes DTSC-listed hazardous waste facilities and sites, Department of Health Services (DHS) lists of contaminated drinking water wells, sites listed by the State Water Resources Control Board as having underground storage tank (UST) leaks and which have had a discharge of hazardous wastes or materials into the water or groundwater, and lists from local regulatory agencies of sites that have had a known migration of hazardous waste/material. Today, the

Cortese list refers to many databases that record hazardous materials, including the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI), EnviroStor, and GeoTracker.

Regional Water Quality Control Board

The RWQCB is a department of Cal/EPA that oversees investigation and cleanup of sites including underground storage tanks where wastes have been discharged in order to protect the water quality of the state. The RWQCB regulates wastewater discharges to surface waters and to groundwater. They also regulate storm water discharges from construction, industrial, and municipal activities. The RWQCB is the lead regulatory agency for the Project site.

Hazardous Materials Transportation

Section 31303 of the California Vehicle Code and US Department of Transportation regulate hazardous materials transport. The California Highway Patrol and California Department of Transportation are the enforcement agencies. Cal OES provides emergency response services involving hazardous materials incidents.

Local

San Bernardino County Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Program

In the County, the Business Emergency/Contingency Plan (Business Plan) is also used to satisfy the contingency plan requirement for hazardous waste generators. Any business subject to any of the CUPA permits is required in the County to file a Business Emergency/Contingency Plan using the California Environmental Reporting System. This submission is used as the basis for the permit application. A new business going through the process of obtaining County planning or building approval is required to comply with the Business Emergency/Contingency Plan requirement prior to obtaining final certificate of occupancy and prior to bringing hazardous materials onto the property.

The quantities that trigger disclosure are based on the maximum quantity on site at any time excluding materials under active shipping papers or for direct retail sale to the public. The basic quantities are hazardous materials at or exceeding 55 gallons, 500 pounds, or 200 cubic feet at any time in the course of a year; specified amounts of radioactive material, and extremely hazardous substances above the threshold planning quantity.

4.9.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project involves enhancing an existing stormwater drainage channel. Construction of the Project would require the use of hazardous materials. Hazardous materials that are used during construction (e.g., petroleum-based products, solvents, sealers, and concrete) for a short period of time would be transported, used, stored, and disposed of according to local, County, state, and federal regulations. Operations of the Project would not involve routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, or result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Therefore, hazards to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

b) *Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Review of the EnviroStor and GeoTracker databases shows that there are several Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) cleanup sites within a mile of the Project site along Foothill Boulevard; however, all are listed as completed, with their cases closed (SWRCB 2025; DTSC 2025).

As previously stated in Section 4.9 Impact (a) above, construction activities would involve the use of chemical agents, oils, solvents, paints, and other hazardous materials that are associated with construction activities. The amount of these chemicals present during construction is limited and would be in compliance with existing government regulations. Therefore, construction activities would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Operations would be similar to existing conditions; the improvements to the channel are intended to address increased stormwater runoff resulting from ongoing urban development in the surrounding area, as well as additional flows introduced by the construction of State Route 210. The Project would have a less than significant impact associated with creating significant hazards to the public or the environment through foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.

c) *Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?*

Less Than Significant Impact. There are multiple schools within a one-mile radius of the Proposed Project. The closest school is Dunn Elementary School, which is located approximately 0.254 miles northeast of the Project site. Other nearby schools include Hellen L. Dollahan Elementary School and Charlotte N. Werner Elementary School, located approximately 0.404 miles northwest and 1.08 miles southwest of the Project site, respectively.

The Project's construction would adhere to all safety regulations regarding transporting hazardous materials in the vicinity of schools and the operation of the Project would not expose any hazardous materials to these nearby schools. Therefore, construction and operations of the Proposed Project would have less than significant impacts associated with hazardous emissions, handling hazardous materials, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.

d) *Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Review of the EnviroStor and the GeoTracker database shows that there are several Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) cleanup sites within a mile of the Project site along Foothill Boulevard; however, all are listed as completed, with their cases closed (SWRCB 2025; DTSC 2025). Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact associated with known hazardous materials sites.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan had not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. The nearest airport is SBD International Airport, which is approximately 7.85 miles east of the Project site. As a result, there would be no impacts associated with excessive noise or safety hazards for people working on the Project site caused by an airport within 2 miles of the Project location.

f) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is subject to the County of San Bernardino Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

During construction, traffic control would likely be implemented on North Cactus Avenue to manage the movement of heavy construction vehicles entering and exiting the Project site. The Traffic Control plan will identify alternative routes during construction to effectively and safely move drivers through the Project site. The Traffic Control plan will be designed in accordance with the California Manual on Traffic Control Devices, Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction "Greenbook," and the County of San Bernardino Standards. Adequate emergency vehicle access will be ensured along the nearby streets. In addition, all construction/maintenance vehicles and stationary equipment would be located off public roads and would not block emergency access routes.

Once operational, the Project will enhance the existing drainage channel and won't have any effect on any emergency response or evacuation plans. Impacts would be less than significant.

g) Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project involves enhancing an existing stormwater drainage channel located within a relatively flat, urbanized. The Project site is not located within, nor adjacent to a Fire Hazard Severity Zone in a local, state, or federal responsibility area (CAL FIRE 2025). The Project would not alter existing land uses, introduce new habitable structures, or significantly increase human presence or ignition sources. Fire risks and the level of emergency response readiness during operations will be similar to existing conditions. Impacts would be less than significant.

4.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

10.	HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	☐	☐	☒	☐
	i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
	ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flood on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
	iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
	iv) Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(e)	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.10.1 Environmental Setting and Regulatory Framework

Federal

Clean Water Act

The federal Water Pollution Control Act (or Clean Water Act [CWA]) (33 USC section 1251 et seq.) is the principal statute governing water quality and regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States. It gives the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) authority to implement pollution control programs, such as setting wastewater standards for industry. The statute's goal is to regulate discharges and to restore, maintain, and preserve the integrity of the nation's waters. The CWA regulates direct and indirect discharge of pollutants; sets water quality standards for all contaminants in surface waters; and makes it unlawful for any person to discharge any pollutant from a point source into navigable waters unless a permit is obtained under its provisions. The CWA mandates permits for wastewater and stormwater discharges; requires states to establish site-specific water quality standards for navigable bodies of water; and regulates other activities that affect water quality, such as dredging and the filling of wetlands. The CWA funds the construction of sewage treatment plants and recognizes the need for planning to address nonpoint sources of pollution. Section 402 of the CWA requires a permit for all point

source (a discernible, confined, and discrete conveyance, such as a pipe, ditch, or channel) discharges of any pollutant (except dredge or fill material) into waters of the United States.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

Under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program (under Section 402 of the CWA), all facilities that discharge pollutants from any point source into waters of the United States must have a NPDES permit. The term "pollutant" broadly applies to any type of industrial, commercial, residential municipal, and agricultural waste discharged into water. Point sources can be publicly owned treatment works (POTWs), industrial facilities, and urban runoff. (The NPDES program addresses certain agricultural activities, but the majority are considered nonpoint sources and are exempt from NPDES regulation.) Direct sources discharge directly to receiving waters, and indirect sources discharge to POTWs, which in turn discharge to receiving waters. Under the national program, NPDES permits are issued only for direct point-source discharges. NPDES issues two basic permit types: individual and general. Also, the EPA has recently focused on integrating the NPDES program further into watershed planning and permitting. All construction sites one acre or more in size must file for and obtain an NPDES permit. Another measure, Phase I Final Rule, requires an operator (such as a city) of a regulated municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) to develop, implement, and enforce a program to reduce pollutants in post-construction runoff. The San Bernardino County Public Works Department enforces conditions of the MS4 NPDES permit on development and redevelopment projects in the County's jurisdiction.

State

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act (Water Code sections 13000 et seq.) is the basic water quality control law for California. Under this Act, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has primary responsibility for coordination and control of water quality, and the EPA has delegated authority to issue NPDES permits to the SWRCB. The state is divided into nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) who, with the SWRCB, regulate, protect, and administer water quality in each region. Each regional board adopts a Water Quality Control Plan or Basin Plan that includes the differences in water quality throughout the region, the beneficial uses of specific ground and surface waters, and local water quality conditions and problems. The County spans portions of three RWQCB regions: Santa Ana, South Lahontan, and Colorado River. The water quality control plan for the Santa Ana River Basin was updated in 2016; the plan for the South Lahontan Region was issued in 1995 and included amendments through 2016; and the plan for the Colorado River Basin was updated in 2019.

Santa Ana Region RWQCB

The Santa Ana RWQCB is responsible for maintaining and enhancing water quality, protecting beneficial uses of both surface water and groundwater, setting and enforcing water quality standards, and issuing permits such as NPDES (for stormwater), waste discharge permits, and water quality certifications. For flood control channel improvement projects, this means that discharges of stormwater, dredged or fill materials, or channel modifications may trigger requirements under the Clean Water Act (e.g., Section 401 water quality certification) and under California state law, including compliance with the region's Basin Plan, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for impaired water bodies, and MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) permits for stormwater runoff. Additionally, San Bernardino County and the San Bernardino County Flood Control District are co-permittees under the MS4 permit managed by the Santa

Ana RWQCB, which imposes obligations for controlling pollutant runoff, monitoring, public education, and maintenance of drainage infrastructure.

Caltrans Statewide Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP)

The Caltrans Statewide Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) outlines the agency's approach to managing stormwater discharges in compliance with the Statewide NPDES Permit issued by the State Water Resources Control Board (Order No. 2012-0011-DWQ, as amended by 2014-0077-DWQ). This permit regulates discharges from Caltrans-owned facilities, rights-of-way, and construction activities to protect surface waters from pollutants commonly associated with transportation infrastructure. The SWMP identifies procedures for planning, design, construction, and maintenance activities to ensure implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that reduce or eliminate the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable (Caltrans 2025).

Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) Requirements

For construction projects that disturb less than one acre of soil and therefore do not require coverage under the Construction General Permit (CGP), the Caltrans SWMP requires the preparation of a Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP). A WPCP is a simplified stormwater compliance document that outlines the site-specific temporary BMPs to be implemented during construction to minimize erosion, sedimentation, and pollutant discharge. WPCPs are reviewed and approved by Caltrans' Resident Engineer and must be implemented throughout the duration of the project. While not submitted to the Water Board, they are enforceable under Caltrans' Statewide Permit and may be audited by regulatory agencies.

Existing Project Area Conditions

The Project area is not located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identified 100-year flood hazard area (FEMA 2023).

4.10.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Less Than Significant Impact. During construction, chemicals, liquid products, petroleum products, and concrete-related waste may be spilled or leaked, potentially entering storm runoff and affecting receiving waters. The Project involves enhancing an existing stormwater drainage channel that circulates stormwater into local waterways, eventually connecting to the Santa Ana River. The Project will implement standard Best Management Practices (BMPs) under a prepared Water Pollution Control Program (WPCP) to prevent erosion, such as erosion control measures, stormwater pollution prevention, and dust suppression techniques. During the construction activity during expectant wet-weather conditions, silt fencing will be placed around the perimeter of the construction site to prevent sediment from construction related work from entering nearby waterways.

Equipment storage, fueling, and staging areas shall be located on upland sites with minimal risks of direct drainage into riparian areas or other sensitive habitats. These designated areas shall be located in such a manner as to prevent any runoff from entering sensitive habitat. Necessary precautions shall be taken to prevent the release of cement or other toxic substances into surface waters. Project

related spills of hazardous materials shall be reported to appropriate entities including but not limited to applicable jurisdictional city, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and CDFW, RWQCB and shall be cleaned up immediately and contaminated soils removed to approved disposal areas. Erodible fill material shall not be deposited into water courses. Brush, loose soils, or other similar debris material shall not be stockpiled within the stream channel or on its banks.

As discussed in Section 4.4.2 Impact (b) above, the Proposed Project is subject to RWQCB jurisdiction. Coverage under the RWQCB Construction General Permit and submittal of a NOI through the SWRCB SMARTS portal would be required. Therefore, adherence to WPCP BMPs and RWQCB Construction General Permit requirements would result in a less than significant impact to water quality.

b) *Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed enhancements to the existing stormwater drainage channel would result in a negligible increase in impervious surface area. The Proposed Project does not include the use of groundwater or installation of groundwater wells. The existing flood control facilities, and the proposed maintenance of those facilities, allow for the capture of runoff, precipitation, and flows from the surrounding watershed in the basins will contribute to infiltration and may contribute to groundwater resources. Implementation of the Proposed Project would result in less than significant impacts associated with depletion of groundwater supplies or interference with groundwater recharge.

c) i) *Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed renovation activities would include grading activities such as excavation and fill, construction of a reinforced concrete rectangular and trapezoidal channel, and the replacement of undersized reinforced concrete box (RCB) culverts at multiple street crossings. The benefits of the channel improvements include the removal of existing blockages and restoration of channel side slopes and drainage patterns within the existing stormwater drainage channel so that the facilities can properly convey flows.

Therefore, the operation of the renovated channel would not result in erosion or siltation onsite or offsite. All routine maintenance on the channel would be conducted outside of storm season or after storm events have ended and equipment operations are safe. Native vegetation will be avoided to the greatest feasible extent. Therefore, the channel improvements will not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the area or result in substantial erosion or siltation offsite. Additionally, implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), would reduce potential water quality impacts and ensure that work is conducted in a manner that would not contribute to substantial erosion or siltation off-site. Therefore, the impact is less than significant.

ii) *Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Soil would be compacted during grading and other construction activities, temporarily altering drainage patterns. However, construction activities would be temporary, and disturbed ground would be restored for operations. A reinforced concrete rectangular and trapezoidal channel would be constructed, which would stabilize adjacent banks, allowing it to more effectively convey flows downstream to reduce the potential for flooding on-site or off-site. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

iii) *Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources or polluted runoff?*

Less Than Significant Impact. As discussed previously, construction of the Proposed Project has the potential to introduce pollutants to the storm drainage system from erosion, siltation, and accidental spills. However, because of the small amount of ground disturbance during construction, Project construction activities have a low potential to impact water quality and would not result in a substantial increase in the rate or amount of storm water runoff.

Road grading does not appreciably increase surface area such that it would cause runoff to exceed capacity of the existing storm water drainage system. The Proposed Project involves maintenance of the existing facility and would not contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of the existing system. Construction BMPs will be implemented to protect water quality downstream. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

iv) *Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would impede or redirect flood flows?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project's construction will involve grading activities such as excavation and fill, construction of a reinforced concrete rectangular and trapezoidal channel, and the replacement of undersized reinforced concrete box (RCB) culverts at multiple street crossings. The improvements are designed to convey flows associated with a 100-year storm event.

Additionally, the proposed Project area is not located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identified 100-year flood hazard area (FEMA 2023). Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur related to impeding or redirecting flood flows.

d) *Would the project, in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?*

No Impact. The Project footprint and staging areas are not located near a large body of water that would be subject to seiches or tsunamis. The Pacific Ocean is located approximately 44.5 miles southwest of the Project site and Lake Gregory is located approximately 10.8 miles northeast of the Project site.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Map Service Center, the Project is not located within a special flood hazard area and is designated as Zone D. Zone D is designated for areas where there are possible but undetermined flood hazards (FEMA 2023). Therefore, no impacts related to inundation from seiche and tsunami would occur.

e) *Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project is within the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The Santa Ana RWQCB adopted a Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan establishes water quality standards for the ground and surface waters of the region. It also includes an implementation plan describing the actions that are necessary to achieve and maintain the water quality standards.

As discussed in Section 4.10 Impact (a), because of the BMPs implemented during construction, Project construction has a less than significant impact to water quality. The renovations to the existing stormwater drainage channel would allow the channel to accommodate higher volumes of stormwater runoff. The Proposed Project would not result in water quality impacts that would conflict with the Basin Plan.

The Proposed Project would not add a significant amount of impervious surface such that it would affect groundwater infiltration. The Rialto-Colton Basin, which underlies the Project site, is designated as a low-priority basin under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and is not subject to an adopted Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) (DWR 2025). The proposed flood control channel improvements are confined to surface water management and would not result in substantial groundwater extraction, impediments to recharge, or conflicts with existing adjudication requirements. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with SGMA implementation or any applicable GSP, resulting in a less than significant impact.

4.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

11.	LAND USE/PLANNING Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.11.1 Environmental Setting and Regulatory Framework

State

State Planning Law

State planning law (California Government Code Section 65300) requires every county in California to adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for physical development of the county. A general plan should consist of an integrated and internally consistent set of goals and policies that are grouped by topic into a set of elements and are guided by a countywide vision. State law requires that a general plan address nine elements or topics (land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, safety, climate adaptation and resiliency, and environmental justice) but allows some discretion on the arrangement and content. Additionally, each of the specific and applicable requirements in the state planning law should be examined to determine if there are environmental issues within the county that a general plan should address. The San Bernardino Countywide Plan was adopted in 2020, replacing the previously adopted 2007 General Plan.

Local

City of Rialto General Plan

According to the City's General Plan Exhibit 2.2 – Land Use Policy Plan, the Project site is identified as a hydrologic feature. The Project site is designated as Public Facility under the City of Rialto General Plan and is zoned as Public Facility (City 2010; City 2025).

The City's General Plan contains the following policies and measures that apply to the Proposed Project:

- Policy 2-28.3: Design sidewalks, roads, and driveways to minimize impervious surfaces; provide flood control channels with permeable bottoms to help restore groundwater aquifers.
- Policy 5-2.2: Require the implementation of adequate erosion control measures for development projects to minimize sedimentation damage to drainage facilities.
- Policy 5-2.3: Continue to consult with the San Bernardino County Flood Control District regarding the establishment and maintenance of regional flood control facilities located within the City.
- Measure 8.78: San Bernardino County Flood Control District. Consult with San Bernardino County Flood Control District to regularly maintain flood control channels and structures within their

jurisdiction, and complete necessary repairs in a timely manner. Work with the San Bernardino County Flood Control District and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to identify needed flood control improvements and develop funding for improvements as needed.

4.11.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

No Impact. The Project involves enhancing an existing stormwater drainage channel and has no potential to divide an established community. All existing land uses near the Project area would continue to be accessible via current means. According to the City's General Plan, the Project site is located in an urbanized area, bordered by residential, light industrial, recreational open space, and school facility land uses (City 2010). However, improvements to the existing channel would not result in any new divisions to the established residential communities. Therefore, no impacts related to physically dividing an established community would occur.

b) Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No Impact. The Project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the Project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. All activities associated with the Proposed Project would occur within the existing Rialto Stormwater Drainage Channel and within flood control areas adjacent to the channel. The Proposed Project would not result in any change to established land uses surrounding the Project area (e.g., residences, RV storage, church). The Proposed Project would be consistent with the City's planning designations of Public Facility.

Additionally, the proposed improvements of the channel demonstrate implementation of the City's General Plan requirements that relate to the maintenance of flood control channels, detailed in Section 4.11.1 above. Therefore, the proposed channel improvements are consistent with the established and ongoing use of the land and would not introduce a new or incompatible land use. As such, the Project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan or regulation, and no impact would occur.

4.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

12.	MINERAL RESOURCES Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.12.1 Environmental Setting

Mineral Classification and Designation

Classification is the process of identifying lands containing significant mineral deposits. Designation is the formal recognition by the SMGB, after consultation with lead agencies and other interested parties, of areas containing mineral deposits of regional or statewide significance.

The objective of classification and designation processes is to ensure, through appropriate lead agency policies and procedures, that strategic mineral deposits of statewide or of regional significance are available when needed.

The California Geological Survey Mineral Resources Program provides information about California's nonfuel mineral resources. The Mineral Resources Project classifies lands throughout the state that contain regionally significant mineral resources as mandated by SMARA. Nonfuel mineral resources include metals such as gold, silver, iron, and copper; industrial minerals such as boron compounds, rare-earth elements, clays, limestone, gypsum, salt, and dimension stone; and construction aggregates, including sand, gravel, and crushed stone. Building and infrastructure development generally results in a demand for minerals, especially construction aggregates. Urban expansion over prime deposits and conflicts between mining and other incompatible land uses throughout California led to SMARA's guidelines for classification and designation of mineral lands, which require all cities and counties to incorporate MRMPs into their general plans and approval by the State Mining and Geology Board. The classification process has developed Production-Consumption (P-C) region boundaries based on identification of active aggregate operations (production) and the market areas served (consumption). The PC regional boundaries are modified to include only the parts of the region that are urbanized or are urbanizing and are classified for their aggregate resource significance. An aggregate resource appraisal further evaluates the presence or absence of important sand, gravel and dimension stone deposits that are suitable sources of construction aggregate.

The classification and designation of these mineral resources is a joint effort of the state and the local governments. It is based on geologic factors and requires that the State Geologist classify the mineral resources area as one of the four Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs), Scientific Resource Zones (SZ), or Identified Resource Areas (IRAs), described below.

- **MRZ-1**: Areas where adequate geologic information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence.

- **MRZ-2a**: Areas underlain by mineral deposits where geologic data show that significant measured or indicated resources are present.

- **MRZ-2b**: Areas underlain by mineral deposits where geologic information indicates that significant inferred resources are present.

- **MRZ-3a**: Areas containing known mineral deposits that may qualify as mineral resources

- **MRZ-3b**: Areas containing inferred mineral deposits that may qualify as mineral resources.

- **MRZ-4:** Areas where geologic information does not rule out either the presence or absence of mineral resources (SMGB 2019).

- **SZ Areas**: Contain unique or rare occurrences of rocks, minerals, or fossils that are of outstanding scientific significance.

- **IRA Areas**: County- or state-identified areas where production and information indicates that significant minerals are present

Existing Conditions

The Project site is within a region classified as MRZ-2 (DOC 2019; City 2010).

4.12.2 Regulatory Framework

Surface Mining and Reclamation Act: California *Public Resources Code Sections 2710 et seq.*

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) is the primary regulatory framework for mining in the State. It delegates specific regulatory authority to local jurisdictions. The act requires the state geologist (California Geological Survey) to identify important mineral deposits in the state threatened by land uses that would be incompatible with future extraction and classify them into mineral resource zones. Local jurisdictions are required to enact specific procedures to guide mineral conservation and extraction at identified sites and to incorporate mineral resource management policies (MRMPs) into their general plans.

Executive Order 13817, Federal Strategy to Ensure *Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals*

President's Executive Order No. 13817 instructed the Secretaries of Interior and Defense to identify and publish a list of critical minerals, including rare earths, then develop a strategy to reduce the United States' reliance on other countries to supply these increasingly important ingredients to America's defensive and economic security. The United States Department of Commerce released "A federal strategy to ensure secure and reliable supplies of critical minerals," an interagency report that outlines a government-wide action plan to ensure the United States has secure and reliable supplies of critical minerals. According to the Department of Commerce, the United States is dependent on imports for more than 50 percent of domestic demand for 29 of the 35 minerals named on the US Geological Survey (USGS) critical list. In addition, the U.S. lacks any domestic production for 14 of the minerals and does not have domestic access to processing and manufacturing capabilities for many. The Mountain Pass Mine was once the world's leading supplier of rare earth minerals, but China began to dominate the market in the 1990s. Mountain

Pass has focused on achieving greater autonomy with a $1.7 billion separations process system that would allow it to refine and make rare earth products available for customers outside of China.

State Mining & Geology Board

The State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB) provides professional expertise and serves as a regulatory, policy, and hearing body representing the state's interest in the development, utilization, and conservation of mineral resources, the reclamation of mined lands, and the development and dissemination of geologic and seismic hazard information. The nine-member SMGB operates within the Department of Conservation and is granted certain autonomous responsibilities and obligations under several statutes, including the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act, and the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act.

Division of Mine Reclamation

The Division of Mine Reclamation (DMR) provides a measure of oversight for local governments as they administer SMARA within their respective jurisdictions. DMR may provide comments to lead agencies on a mining operation's reclamation plan and financial assurance and, jointly with SMGB, is charged with administering actions that encourage SMARA compliance. The primary focus is on existing mining operations and reclaiming mined lands to a usable and safe condition that is readily adaptable for alternative land uses. Issues related to abandoned legacy mines are addressed in the Abandoned Mine Lands program.

California Geological Survey

The California Geological Survey (CGS) provides objective geologic expertise and information about California's diverse nonfuel mineral resources, including their related hazards, through maps, reports, and other data products to assist governmental agencies, mining companies, consultants, and the public in recognizing, developing, and protecting important mineral resources.

4.12.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

b) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

a&b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** According to maps produced by the DOC and the City's General Plan, the Project site is classified as MRZ-2, which defines areas that contain valuable mineral resources that should be considered in planning and development decisions (DOC 2019; City 2010). However, the Project does not involve extensive grading or excavation that would preclude the extraction of any potential mineral resources in the future. Further, there are no active mines within the Project vicinity. According to the DOC, the closest active mine is located 1.6 miles southeast of the Project site (DOC 2025). Operations of the Project will not change the existing usage of the site as a stormwater runoff channel. The Project would not involve extensive grading, excavation, or mining activities that would substantially alter or remove mineral resources. As a result, the Proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the

region, the residents of the state, or the City. Construction activities would occur within the existing footprint of the channel. Any impact would be less than significant.

4.13 NOISE

13.	NOISE Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.13.1 Environmental Setting

The following analysis is based on the Noise Impact Analysis (Noise Report) prepared by Vista Environmental, dated December 13th, 2025 (Appendix D).

The Project site is located along Cactus Avenue in the City of Rialto (City), between Cactus Avenue's intersections with W 1st Street and Etiwanda Avenue. The Project site is located in a developed, mostly residential part of the City. The Rialto Channel runs alongside Cactus Avenue, a primary north-south transportation route. Surrounding uses around the Project site include Light Industrial, Residential, General Commercial land uses to the west, Open Space – Resources and Residential land uses to the north, Residential, General Commercial, and Light Industrial to the East, and Open Space – Resources and Light Industrial land uses to the south.

4.13.2 Regulatory Framework

The Proposed Project will be required to comply with the following regulatory conditions from the City, County and State, summarized below and detailed in Sections 1.4 and 4.0 of the Noise Report (Appendix D). Additionally, the City of Rialto General Plan: Safety and Noise Element and County of San Bernardino Countywide Plan: Noise Element provide applicable goals and policies for the Proposed Project, detailed in Section 4.3 of the Noise Report (Appendix D).

State

State of California Rules

The following lists the State of California noise regulations that are applicable, but not limited to, the Proposed Project.

- California Vehicle Code Section 2700-27207 – On Road Vehicle Noise Limits
- California Vehicle Code Section 38365-38350 – Off-Road Vehicle Noise Limits

Local

County of San Bernardino Development Code

The following lists the noise and vibration regulations from the Development Code that are applicable, but not limited to, the Proposed Project.

- Section 83.01.080(d) – Noise standards for adjacent mobile noise sources;
- Section 83.01.080(g) – Exempt noise;
- Section 83.01.090 – Vibration.

City of Rialto Municipal Code

The following lists the noise and vibration regulations from the Municipal Code that are applicable, but not limited to, the Proposed Project.

- Section 9.50.040 – Excessive noise and vibration emanating from a motor vehicle;
- Section 9.50.050 – Controlled hours of operation;
- Section 9.50.060 – Exemptions;
- Section 9.50.070 – Disturbances from construction activity.

4.13.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Noise Report (Appendix D) calculates the potential noise emissions associated with the temporary construction activities and long-term operations of the Proposed Project and compares the noise levels to the City and County standards.

Construction-Related Noise

Noise impacts from construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would be a function of the noise generated by construction equipment, equipment location, sensitivity of nearby land uses, and the timing and duration of the construction activities.

Section 9.08.050(I) of the City's Municipal Code limits construction activities to between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on weekdays, between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. on Saturdays, or anytime on Sundays or federal holidays. Section 83.01.080(g)(3) of the County's Development Code allows construction noise to exceed the County noise standards if construction activities occur between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., except Sundays and Federal holidays. Neither the City or the County construction noise provide any limits to the noise levels that may be created from construction activities during the allowable hours for construction, and as such, even with adherence to the City and County standards, the resultant construction noise levels may result in a significant substantial temporary noise increase to the nearby residents.

In order to determine if the proposed construction activities would create a significant substantial temporary noise increase, the FTA construction noise criteria thresholds detailed in Section 4.1 of the Noise Report have been utilized, which shows that a significant construction noise impact would occur if construction noise exceeds 80 dBA during the daytime at any of the nearby homes, churches and schools (Appendix D). Construction noise levels to the nearby sensitive receptors have been calculated based on the methodology detailed in Section 6.1 of the Appendix D. The results are shown below in Table 4-3.

Table 4-3: Construction Noise Levels at the Nearby Sensitive Receptors

	Construction Noise Level (dBA Leq) during:					
Receptor Location	Grubbing & Land Clearing	Grading & Excavation	Drainage, Utilities & Sub-Grade	Paving	FTA Noise Standard[1]	Exceed Standard?
Homes South of Etiwanda Ave	75.9	77.6	77.7	75.1	80	No
Homes South of Rosewood St	76.7	78.4	78.6	75.9	80	No
Homes North of Pacific Electric Tr	76.7	78.4	78.6	75.9	80	No
Homes South of Merrill Ave	75.1	76.8	77.0	74.3	80	No
Joe Sampson Park	76.7	78.4	77.0	75.9	80	No
Homes North of Bloomington Ave	77.6	79.3	79.5	76.8	80	No
Inland Lighthouse Church	77.6	79.3	79.5	76.8	80	No
Simpson Elementary School	62.7	64.4	64.6	61.9	80	No
Homes West of Lilac Ave	77.6	79.3	79.5	76.8	80	No

Notes:
[1] FTA Construction Noise Threshold obtained from **Error! Reference source not found.**: FTA Construction Noise Criteria in Appendix D.
Source: RCNM, Federal Highway Administration, 2006

Table 4-3 shows that the greatest noise impacts would occur during the "Drainage, Utilities, & Sub-Grade" phase of construction, with a noise level as high as 79.5 dBA Leq. All calculated construction noise levels shown in Table 4-3 are within the FTA daytime construction noise standard of 80 dBA. Therefore, through adherence to the limitation of allowable construction times provided in Section 9.08.050(I) of the City's Municipal Code and Section 83.01.080(g)(3) of the County's Development Code, construction-related noise levels would not exceed any standards established in the General Plan or Noise Ordinance nor would construction activities create a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels from construction of the Proposed Project. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operational-Related Noise

The on-going operation of the Proposed Project would not result in a long-term operational increase in noise. The only noise source associated with the long-term operations would be from weekly routine maintenance trips to the Project site by County personnel in a small truck. No change in the routine maintenance schedule would occur from implementation of the Proposed Project. Therefore, a less than significant noise impact is anticipated from operation of the Proposed Project.

b) *Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would not expose persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. The Noise Report analyzes the potential vibration impacts associated with the construction and operations of the Proposed Project, detailed in Appendix D and summarized below.

Construction-Related Vibration Impacts

Vibration impacts from construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would typically be created from the operation of heavy off-road equipment. The nearest sensitive receptors to the Project site are single-family homes located as near as 5 feet from the proposed area to be disturbed, north of San Bernardino Avenue and south of Randall Avenue. Since the City does not provide any vibration standards, Section 83.01.090 of the County's Development Code that restricts the creation of vibration which produces a particle velocity greater than 0.2 inch-per-second PPV, has been utilized in the analysis detailed in Section 6.2 of the Noise Report (Appendix D).

The primary source of vibration during construction would be from the operation of a small dozer, since the Project area in the vicinity of the nearest homes is not large enough to operate a large dozer. According to Section 6.2 of the Noise Report, a small dozer would create a vibration level of 0.003 inch per second PPV at 25 feet. Based on typical propagation rates, the vibration level at the nearest structure (5 feet away) would be 0.02 inch per second PPV. The vibration level at the nearest home would be below the County's 0.2 inch per second PPV threshold detailed above. Impacts would be less than significant.

Operations-Related Vibration Impacts

The Proposed Project would consist of improvements to the Rialto Channel. The on-going operation of the Proposed Project would not include the operation of any known vibration sources. Therefore, a less than significant vibration impact is anticipated from the operation of the Proposed Project.

c) *For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels from aircraft. San Bernardino International Airport is the nearest airport to the Project site, located seven miles east of the Project site. Therefore, the Project site is located outside

of the 60 dBA CNEL noise contours of San Bernardino International Airport and the Proposed Project would not include any sensitive receptors. No impact would occur from aircraft noise.

4.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

14.	POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.14.1 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

No Impact. The Proposed Project involves enhancements to the Rialto Storm Water Drainage Channel and is intended to address increased stormwater runoff resulting from ongoing urban development in the surrounding area. There is no proposed residential or business component that could result in substantial population growth in the area. Construction workers would come from the existing local labor pool. Implementation of the Project would not result in the generation of new permanent jobs and would not contribute to any substantial population growth. Therefore, Project implementation would not induce growth, either directly or indirectly. No impact would occur.

b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. The Project involves enhancing an existing storm water drainage channel. The Project site does not include any residential uses; therefore, proposed improvements to the channel would not adversely affect or displace any of the people that reside in the surrounding urbanized area. Given implementation of the Project would not displace any people or existing housing, no impact would occur.

4.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

15.	PUBLIC SERVICES.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
	i) Fire Protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	ii) Police Protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	iii) Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	iv) Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
	v) Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.15.1 Environmental Setting

San Bernardino County Fire Department

The San Bernardino County Fire Department (County Fire) provides emergency mitigation and management for fire suppression, emergency medical services (paramedic and nonparamedic), ambulance services, hazardous materials (HAZMAT) response, arson investigation, technical rescue, winter rescue operations, hazard abatement, and terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. County Fire's services and programs include helicopter rescue, a dozer, fire abatement hand crews, an inmate hand crew specialized program, and an honor guard. County Fire also provides for the management of community safety services such as fire prevention, building construction plans and permits, household hazardous waste, and local oversight and collection program for hazardous materials. As of 2016, County Fire covers a territory of 16,500 square miles and operates over 75 fire stations and 11 facilities that serve more than 60 unincorporated communities; the cities of San Bernardino, Twentynine Palms, Grand Terrace; and the Town of Yucca Valley. Additionally, County Fire provides fire protection services through contracts to five cities—Adelanto, Needles, Victorville, Hesperia, and Fontana's independent fire protection district.

Fire protection for the Proposed Project is provided by the San Bernardino County Fire Department.

San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department

The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department is the chief law enforcement agency for the county. The department's general law enforcement mission is carried out through the operation of 15 stations and a centralized headquarters, gangs, narcotics and homicide investigations, a crime laboratory and identification bureau, central records, specialized enforcement detail, technical services division, training division, employee resources division, two dispatch communication centers, and an aviation division for general patrol and search/rescue operations. The Coroner's Division is tasked with investigating the cause and manner of deaths, and the Public Administrator manages estates of persons who die without

appointing an executor. The Courts Civil Division is in charge of imposing court-ordered settlements and providing security to the San Bernardino Superior Court system. The department is also mandated to perform search and rescue operations in the county through its mountain rescue, desert rescue, swift water, and dive teams.

Police services for the Proposed Project are provided by the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

San Bernardino County Parks

There are no regional parks in Rialto. However, the Glen Helen Regional Park is located adjacent to Rialto's Sphere of Influence in the Devore area of San Bernardino County.

City Parks

Adjacent city parks to the Project site include Jerry Eaves Park, Jackson Street Park, Flores Park, Cactus Basin Park, Anderson Park, Cactus/Randal Park, and Rialto City Park.

4.15.2 Impact Analysis

(a)

i) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for fire protection?

No Impact. The Proposed Project involves enhancing an existing stormwater drainage channel that runs parallel to North Cactus Avenue. During construction, traffic control would likely occur on North Cactus Avenue as heavy construction vehicles move on and off the Project site. The Traffic Control plan will identify alternative routes during construction to effectively and safely move drivers through the Project site. This will ensure that there will be adequate emergency vehicle access throughout the area.

Once operational, the Proposed Project would have no effect on emergency vehicle access. As discussed in Section 4.9 Impact (g), implementation of the Proposed Project would not create a potential fire hazard or result in an increase in the occurrence of fires. There would be no increase in the demand for fire protection that would result in the need for new or expanded fire protection facilities. No impact would occur.

ii) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for police protection?

No Impact. The Proposed Project involves enhancing an existing stormwater drainage channel. During construction, traffic control would occur on North Cactus Avenue as construction vehicles

move on and off the Project site. This will ensure that there will be adequate police vehicle access throughout the nearby area.

Once operational, the Proposed Project would not affect police vehicle access. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not result in an increase in the occurrence of crime, an increase in the demand for police protection, or the need for new or expanded police protection facilities. No impact would occur.

iii) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for schools?

No Impact. The Proposed Project does not include or induce residential development and would not result in an increased demand for additional schools in the area. There would be no impact on existing schools or the need to build additional schools.

iv) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for parks?

No Impact. The Proposed Project involves enhancing an existing stormwater drainage channel and does not include residential or other development that would result in either direct or indirect impacts to existing parks. Therefore, the Project would not result in an increase in demand requiring additional local or regional park facilities. No impact would occur.

vi) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for other public facilities?

No Impact. No other public services would be impacted by the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project is not expected to adversely affect any other governmental services in the area. Therefore, no impacts related to other public facilities would occur.

4.16 RECREATION

16.	RECREATION. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(b)	Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.16.1 Environmental Setting

San Bernardino County Parks

There are no regional parks in Rialto. However, the Glen Helen Regional Park is located adjacent to Rialto's Sphere of Influence in the Devore area of San Bernardino County.

City Parks

Adjacent city parks to the Project site include Jerry Eaves Park, Jackson Street Park, Flores Park, Cactus Basin Park, Anderson Park, Cactus/Randal Park, and Rialto City Park.

4.16.2 Impact Analysis

a) *Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?*

No Impact. There are no regional parks or recreational facilities within the Project vicinity. The nearest park is Flores Park, located 0.38 miles west of the Project site. The Proposed Project involves improvements to an existing storm water drainage channel and does not include residential or other development that would result in either direct or indirect impacts to existing regional parks or other recreational facilities. Therefore, the Project would not result in an increase in the use of local or regional parks or recreational facilities; no impact would occur.

b) *Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?*

No Impact. The Project involves the improvement of an existing storm water drainage channel. There are no recreational facilities within the Project vicinity. The Project does not include the development of new recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of other recreational facilities which might have an adverse impact on the environment. Therefore, no impact would occur.

4.17 TRANSPORTATION

17.	TRANSPORTATION. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(d)	Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.17.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is located along Cactus Street within the City, in an area served by a network of local and regional transportation facilities. Cactus Street functions as a local roadway that provides north–south circulation and connects to major arterials such as Foothill Boulevard (State Route 66) and Baseline Road, which in turn provide access to Interstate 10 and Interstate 215. Sidewalks are present along portions of Cactus Street and surrounding roadways, supporting pedestrian circulation, while bicycle facilities in the immediate area are limited, with designated routes available on regional arterials. Public transit service is provided by Omnitrans, which operates fixed-route bus lines within the City, with bus stops located on nearby arterials offering local and regional connectivity. Emergency access is accommodated through the existing street network, which is designed to support police, fire, and medical response vehicles.

4.17.2 Regulatory Framework

State

California Transportation *Commission*

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) administers the public decision-making process that sets priorities and funds projects envisioned in long-range transportation plans. The CTC's programming includes the State Transportation Improvement Program, a multiyear capital improvement program of transportation projects on and off the state highway system, funded with revenues from the State Highway Account and other funding sources. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages the operation of state highways.

California Department of Transportation

Caltrans is the primary state agency responsible for transportation issues. One of its duties is the construction and maintenance of the state highway system. Caltrans approves the planning, design, and construction of improvements for all state-controlled facilities, including I-10, I-15, I-40, I-215, US-395, SR-18, SR-58, SR-62, SR-247, and the associated interchanges for these facilities in the County. Caltrans has established standards for roadway traffic flow and developed procedures to determine if state-controlled facilities require improvements. For projects that may physically affect facilities under its administration,

Caltrans requires encroachment permits before any construction work may be undertaken. For projects that would not physically affect facilities but may influence traffic flow and LOS at such facilities, Caltrans may recommend measures to mitigate the traffic impacts of such projects.

Caltrans also prepares comprehensive planning documents, including Corridor System Management Plans and Transportation Concept Reports, which are long-range planning documents that establish a planning concept for state facilities. They identify a concept LOS, or "target" LOS, for the applicable highway facility. A deficiency or need for improvement is triggered when the actual LOS falls below the concept LOS.

Local

San Bernardino County Transportation and Mobility Element

The San Bernardino County Transportation and Mobility Element is a component of the Countywide Plan that establishes policies and strategies for an efficient, safe, and sustainable transportation system across the county (County 2022). Polices relevant to the Proposed Project are detailed below:

- Policy TM-1.1 Roadway level of service (LOS). We require our roadways to be built to achieve the following minimum level of service standards during peak commute periods (typically 7:00-9:00 AM and 4:00-6:00 PM on a weekday):
    - LOS D in the Valley Region
    - LOS D in the Mountain Region
    - LOS C in the North and East Desert Regions
- Policy TM-1.2 Interjurisdictional roadway consistency. We promote consistent cross-sections along roads traversing incorporated and unincorporated areas.
- Policy TM-1.3 Freeways and highways. We coordinate with Caltrans and regional transportation agencies and support the use of state, federal, and other agency funds to improve freeways and highways.
- Policy TM-1.8 Emergency access. When considering new roadway improvement proposals for the CIP or RTP, we consider the provision of adequate emergency access routes along with capacity expansion in unincorporated areas. Among access route improvements, we prioritize those that contribute some funding through a local area funding and financing mechanism.
- Policy TM-2.2 Roadway improvements. We require roadway improvements that reinforce the character of the area, such as curbs and gutters, sidewalks, landscaping, street lighting, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. We require fewer improvements in rural areas and more improvements in urbanized areas, consistent with the Development Code. Additional standards may be required in municipal spheres of influence.
- Policy TM-2.5 Context-based features. When making road improvements, we provide feasible, context based transportation features such as:
    - Chain installation and inspection areas in the Mountain Region
    - Slow-vehicle turnouts on roadways with steep grades
    - Limited on-street parking areas to serve snow-plow or emergency services

- Passing lanes in rural areas
- Vista areas along scenic routes

4.17.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadways, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project involves improvements to an existing flood control channel along Cactus Street, which is entirely within a public works/flood control right-of-way managed by the San Bernardino County Flood Control District. During construction, the Project would temporarily increase traffic volumes on local roadways and may slightly reduce their performance. Construction activities may require periodic and temporary lane closures on adjacent streets; however, if necessary, traffic control plans would be implemented to manage circulation within the street network and minimize impacts to vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles.

Once construction is complete, operational activities would only require periodic maintenance trips, which would not substantially affect roadway capacity or circulation. The Project would not remove or relocate existing transit stops, bicycle lanes, or pedestrian facilities, nor would it conflict with the City of Rialto's General Plan Circulation Element or any applicable local, regional, or state transportation plans.

Because temporary construction impacts would be managed through standard traffic control measures and operational activities would not generate significant traffic, the Project's impact on the circulation system would be less than significant.

b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project involves improvements to an existing flood control channel along and is not a traffic-generating land use. During construction, there would be temporary increases in vehicle trips associated with construction equipment and worker travel, and periodic lane closures may slightly affect local traffic performance. However, these effects are short-term and temporary, and the Project would not result in long-term increases in traffic volumes or VMT. Operational activities would involve periodic maintenance trips, which are minimal and do not substantially affect VMT. Because the Project would not substantially increase VMT, impacts are less than significant.

c) Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project would not alter the alignment or geometric design of adjacent roadways, nor would it introduce new intersections, sharp curves, or other roadway hazards. Construction activities may require temporary lane closures on adjacent streets, but these would be managed through traffic control plans to ensure safe circulation for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles.

Operational activities include periodic maintenance trips along existing access routes, which do not involve incompatible uses such as farm equipment or oversized vehicles that could create hazards. A less than significant impact would occur.

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

Less Than Significant Impact. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project may require temporary and periodic lane closures on adjacent streets to accommodate equipment and worker access. However, if lane closures are necessary, a traffic control plan would be implemented in coordination with the City of Rialto and emergency service providers to ensure emergency access routes remain available at all times. Construction staging would occur within the existing public works/flood control right-of-way, and no complete road closures are anticipated.

Once construction is complete, the Project would not alter roadway configurations, restrict access, or introduce barriers to emergency vehicles. Operational activities would involve only periodic maintenance trips, which would not interfere with emergency response times or emergency access. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in inadequate emergency access, and impacts would be less than significant.

4.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

18.	**TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:**	**Potentially Significant Impact**	**Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated**	**Less Than Significant Impact**	**No Impact**
(a)	Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

4.18.1 Environmental Setting and Regulatory Framework

Federal

Archaeological Resources Protection Act

The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 regulates the protection of archaeological resources and sites on federal and Indian lands.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)

NAGPRA is a federal law passed in 1990 that mandates museums and federal agencies to return certain Native American cultural items—such as human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony—to lineal descendants or culturally affiliated Indian tribes.

State

Public Resources Code

Archaeological resources are protected pursuant to a wide variety of state policies and regulations enumerated under the California Public Resources Code (PRC). In addition, cultural resources are recognized as nonrenewable resources and therefore receive protection under the PRC and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). PRC Sections 5097.9 to 5097.991 provide protection to Native American historical and cultural resources and sacred sites and identify the powers and duties of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). These sections also require notification to descendants of discoveries of Native American human remains and provide for treatment and disposition of human remains and associated grave goods

Health and Safety Code

The discovery of human remains is regulated by California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5:

> In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation…until the coroner…has determined…that the remains are not subject to…provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible…. The coroner shall make his or her determination within two working days from the time the person responsible for the excavation, or his or her authorized representative, notifies the coroner of the discovery or recognition of the human remains. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and…has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission.

California Senate Bill 18

Senate Bill (SB) 18 (California Government Code, Section 65352.3) incorporates the protection of California traditional tribal cultural places into land use planning for cities, counties, and agencies by establishing responsibilities for local governments to contact, refer plans to, and consult with California Native American tribes as part of the adoption or amendment of any general or specific plan proposed on or after March 1, 2005. SB18 requires public notice to be sent to tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's SB18 Tribal Consultation list within the geographical areas affected by the proposed changes. Tribes must respond to a local government notice within 90 days (unless a shorter time frame has been agreed upon by the tribe), indicating whether or not they want to consult with the local government. Consultations are for the purpose of preserving or mitigating impacts to places, features, and objects described in Sections 5097.9 and 5097.993 of the Public Resources Code that may be affected by the proposed adoption or amendment to a general or specific plan.

Assembly Bill 52

The Native American Historic Resource Protection Act (AB 52) took effect July 1, 2015, and incorporates tribal consultation and analysis of impacts to tribal cultural resources (TCR) into the CEQA process. It requires TCRs to be analyzed like any other CEQA topic and establishes a consultation process for lead agencies and California tribes. Projects that require a Notice of Preparation of an EIR or Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration are subject to AB 52. A significant impact on a TCR is considered a significant environmental impact, requiring feasible mitigation measures.

TCRs must have certain characteristics:

1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes (must be geographically defined), sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historic Resources or included in a local register of historical resources. (PRC § 21074[a][1])

2) The lead agency, supported by substantial evidence, chooses to treat the resource as a TCR. (PRC § 21074[a][2])

The first category requires that the TCR qualify as a historical resource according to PRC Section 5024.1. The second category gives the lead agency discretion to qualify that resource—under the conditions that it support its determination with substantial evidence and consider the resource's significance to a California tribe. The process is similar to SB 18 with more defined timing (PRC §§ 21080.3.1–3.3):

- A California Native American tribe asks agencies in the geographic area with which it is traditionally and culturally affiliated to be notified about projects. Tribes must ask in writing.
- Within 14 days of deciding to undertake a project or determining that a project application is complete, the lead agency must provide formal written notification to all tribes who have requested it.
- A tribe must respond within 30 days of receiving the notification if it wishes to engage in consultation.
- The lead agency must initiate consultation within 30 days of receiving the request from the tribe.
- Consultation concludes when both parties have agreed on measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect to a TCR, OR a party, after a reasonable effort in good faith, decide that mutual agreement cannot be reached.
- Regardless of the outcome of consultation, the CEQA document must disclose significant impacts on TCRs and discuss feasible alternatives or mitigation that avoid or lessen the impact

4.18.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?

b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?

a&b) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** Chambers Group submitted a request to the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search on June 4, 2025. The SLF search results, received June 27, 2025, were negative for the study area, indicating that no sacred sites were identified within a half-mile radius of the Project site. These results were conveyed to the County upon receipt and are included in the Cultural Survey (Appendix C).

Pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1 (AB 52), California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with a Project area can request notification of projects in their traditional cultural territory.

In accordance with AB 52, letters explaining the Project and providing an opportunity to consult were sent via certified mail on April 10, 2025, to the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, the Twentynine Palms Band of Mission Indians and the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (YSMN).

All aforementioned tribes either did not respond or declined to consult on the Proposed Project, except for the YSMN, who requested to consult and view the cultural resources report. A copy of the report was sent to the YSMN on October 2, 2025. YSMN responded that they do not have any concerns with the Project's implementation; however, they requested inclusion of extra protection measures to insure that no significant impacts occur as a result of the Project. Those measures have been included in Section 4.18, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Section 4.5, Cultural Resources. Based on input from the tribes and the absence of known tribal cultural resources, a less than significant impact would occur with MM TCR-1 and MM TCR-2 incorporated.

MM TCR-1 The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Management Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed in CUL-1, of any pre-contact cultural resources discovered during Project implementation, and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), a Cultural Resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with YSMN, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents YSMN for the remainder of the Project, should YSMN elect to place a monitor on-site.

MM TCR-2 Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be supplied to the applicant and Lead Agency for dissemination to YSMN. The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with YSMN throughout the life of the project.

4.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

19.	UTILITIES/SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(e)	Negatively impact the provision of solid waste services or impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(f)	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid wastes?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.19.1 Environmental Setting

The Project site is located within the service area of the City of Rialto and is served by existing public utility systems and infrastructure. Potable water service in the area is provided by West Valley Water District, while wastewater collection and treatment are managed by the Rialto Utility Authority, with regional treatment capacity provided by the City of Rialto Wastewater Treatment Plant. Solid waste collection and disposal services are provided under franchise agreement with Burrtec Waste Industries, with disposal directed to permitted regional landfills. Electricity and natural gas are supplied to the area by Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Company, respectively, through existing distribution infrastructure. Telecommunications services, including cable, internet, and telephone, are available from regional private providers. The utility systems serving the Project area are part of an established urban network designed to accommodate residential, commercial, and industrial land uses in the City of Rialto.

The Proposed Project will require relocation of several existing utilities, including waterlines, gas lines, fiber optic and cable television (CATV) lines, Southern California Edison (SCE) duct banks, and sewer lines.

4.19.2 Regulatory Framework

Federal

Clean Water Act

The federal Clean Water Act (CWA), United States Code, Title 33, Section 1251 et seq. establishes regulations to control the discharge of pollutants into the waters of the United States and regulates water quality standards for surface waters. Under the CWA, the US Environment Protection Agency (EPA) is authorized to set wastewater standards for industry and runs the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program. Under the NPDES program, permits are required for all new developments that generate discharges that go directly into "Waters of the United States." Additionally, Section 1251 et seq. of the CWA require wastewater treatment of all effluent before it is discharged into surface waters.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

Under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program (under Section 402 of the CWA), all facilities that discharge pollutants from any point source into waters of the United States must have a NPDES permit. The term "pollutant" broadly applies to any type of industrial, commercial, residential municipal, and agricultural waste discharged into water. Point sources can be publicly owned treatment works (POTWs), industrial facilities, and urban runoff. (The NPDES program addresses certain agricultural activities, but the majority are considered nonpoint sources and are exempt from NPDES regulation.) Direct sources discharge directly to receiving waters, and indirect sources discharge to POTWs, which in turn discharge to receiving waters. Under the national program, NPDES permits are issued only for direct point-source discharges. NPDES issues two basic permit types: individual and general. Also, the EPA has recently focused on integrating the NPDES program further into watershed planning and permitting. All construction sites one acre or more in size must file for and obtain an NPDES permit. Another measure, Phase I Final Rule, requires an operator (such as a city) of a regulated municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) to develop, implement, and enforce a program to reduce pollutants in post-construction runoff. The San Bernardino County Public Works Department enforces conditions of the MS4 NPDES permit on development and redevelopment projects in the County's jurisdiction.

State

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act (Water Code § 13000 et seq.) is the basic water quality control law for California. Under this act, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has primary responsibility for coordination and control of water quality. In California, the EPA has delegated authority to issue NPDES permits to the SWRCB. The state is divided into nine regions related to water quality and quantity characteristics. The SWRCB, through its nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs), carries out the regulation, protection, and administration of water quality in each region. Each regional board is required to adopt a Water Quality Control Plan or Basin Plan that recognizes and reflects the regional differences in existing water quality, the beneficial uses of the region's ground and surface water, and local water quality conditions and problems.

General Waste Discharge Requirement

On May 2, 2006, the SWRCB adopted a General Waste Discharge Requirement (Order No. 2006-0003) for all publicly owned sanitary sewer collection systems in California with more than one mile of sewer pipe. The order provides a consistent statewide approach to reducing sanitary sewer overflows by requiring public sewer system operators to take all feasible steps to control the volume of waste discharged into the system, to prevent sanitary sewer waste from entering the storm sewer system, and to develop a Sanitary Sewer Master Plan. The General Waste Discharge Requirement also requires that storm sewer overflows be reported to the SWRCB using an online reporting system.

Sanitary District Act of 1923

The Sanitary District Act of 1923 (Health and Safety Code Section 6400 et seq.) authorizes the formation of sanitation districts and empowers the districts to construct, operate, and maintain facilities for the collection, treatment, and disposal of wastewater. The act was amended in 1949 to allow the districts to also provide solid waste management and disposal services, including refuse transfer and resource recovery.

AB 885

The SWRCB implements regulations to reduce the impact of wastewater sources on groundwater quality in accordance with state law (AB 885) through its water quality control policy for siting, design, operation, and maintenance of onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS) (septic systems) (Resolution No. 2012-0032). This policy establishes a statewide, risk-based, tiered approach for the regulation and management of OWTS installations and replacements that have affected, or will affect, groundwater or surface water to a degree that makes it unfit for drinking water or other uses or cause a health or public nuisance condition. RWQCBs incorporated the standards established in the OWTS policy or standards that are more protective of the environment and public health into their water quality control plans. Implementation is overseen by the state and regional water quality boards and local agencies (e.g., county and city departments and independent districts).

As described above, NPDES waste discharge requirements for effluent released from wastewater treatment facilities to Waters of the United States are established through permits issued by the RWQCBs. The Santa Ana RWQCB is the permitting authority for such facilities within the Project region.

Santa Ana RWQCB

The Santa Ana RWQCB is responsible for maintaining and enhancing water quality, protecting beneficial uses of both surface water and groundwater, setting and enforcing water quality standards, and issuing permits such as NPDES (for stormwater), waste discharge permits, and water quality certifications. For flood control channel improvement projects, this means that discharges of stormwater, dredged or fill materials, or channel modifications may trigger requirements under the Clean Water Act (e.g., Section 401 water quality certification) and under California state law, including compliance with the region's Basin Plan, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for impaired water bodies, and MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) permits for stormwater runoff. Additionally, San Bernardino County and the San Bernardino County Flood Control District are co-permittees under the MS4 permit managed by the Santa Ana RWQCB, which imposes obligations for controlling pollutant runoff, monitoring, public education, and maintenance of drainage infrastructure.

CALGreen Standards (CCR Title 24, Part 11)

On July 17, 2008, the California Building Standards Commission adopted the nation's first green building standards. The California Green Building Standards Code (Title 24, Part 11) was adopted as part of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24, California Code of Regulations). CALGreen established planning and design standards for sustainable site development, energy efficiency (in excess of the California Energy Code requirements), water conservation, material conservation, and internal air contaminants. The mandatory provisions of CALGreen became effective January 1, 2011. The building efficiency standards are enforced through the local building permit process. The code was updated again in 2013, effective January 1, 2014, except energy-based measures whose implementation was delayed until July 1, 2014.

The purpose of CALGreen is to improve public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a reduced negative impact or positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories:

- Planning and design
- Energy efficiency
- Water efficiency and conservation
- Material conservation and resource efficiency
- Environmental quality

4.19.3 Impact Analysis

a) *Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or expansion of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project would require the relocation of several existing utilities, including waterlines, gas lines, fiber optic and cable television (CATV) lines, Southern California Edison (SCE) duct banks, and sewer lines. These utility relocations would occur within the previously disturbed footprint of the Project area and would be incorporated into the overall construction activities. Additionally, as noted in Section 4.6 Impact (a) and detailed in the Air Quality, Energy, and GHG Report (Appendix A), since there are currently power lines in the vicinity of the Project site, it is anticipated that only nominal improvements would be required to SCE distribution lines and equipment with development of the Proposed Project.

Although the existing stormwater drainage channel will be temporarily disturbed during construction, the renovated and improved channel will, once operational, effectively manage increased stormwater runoff from ongoing urban development in the surrounding area, as well as additional flows generated by the construction of State Route 210 (SR-210). Because the utilities would be relocated within the existing disturbed right-of-way and no expansion of off-site facilities would be required, impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal dry and multiple dry years?

Less Than Significant Impact. Construction and some maintenance/repair activities would require the temporary use of water for dust suppression and possibly equipment wash down, soil compaction, and other miscellaneous uses (such as concrete or grout production). However, water used for these purposes would be temporary and not in quantities that could impact water supplies, regardless of seasonal rainfall, snowmelt, and groundwater recharge.

The proposed channel improvement Project would not induce population growth that would increase the use of water in the County. Stormwater within the Project area would continue to flow through the existing channel, and no water from the channel would be diverted or used for Project operations. Project implementation would not require a permanent water supply, and only minimal amounts of water would be needed during construction activities. Given the short-term and limited nature of this demand, the Proposed Project would not place a substantial burden on local water supplies. Therefore, impacts related to water demand would be less than significant.

c) Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

No Impact. As discussed in Impact (b) above, the Proposed Project would not induce population growth. The Project does not require wastewater treatment and, thus, would not impact capacity of the wastewater treatment system.

d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

e) Would the project negatively impact the provision of solid waste services or impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

d & e) Less Than Significant Impact. The demolition and construction required for the Proposed Project would generate solid waste. Waste-generating activities include clearing of vegetation and grading activities.

The Proposed Project would adhere to the California Green Building Standards Code, which requires covered projects to reuse, salvage, or divert the minimum amount of waste produced. The remaining waste would not be substantial and could be received by the local landfill. Operations of the Project would not generate solid waste. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact regarding solid waste generation in excess of State or local stands or the capacity of local infrastructure.

f) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

No Impact. As discussed in Impacts (d) and (e) above, the waste remaining after complying with State construction and demolition requirements would not be substantial. The Proposed Project would comply with all federal, state, and local waste management and reductions requirements. Therefore, no impacts would occur related to solid waste-related federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations.

4.20 WILDFIRE

20.	WILDFIRE. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(b)	Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
(d)	Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.20.1 Environmental Setting and Regulatory Framework

State

California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9 of the California Code of Regulations)

The California Fire Code (Title 24, Part 9 of the California Code of Regulations) establishes minimum fire safety standards for buildings and structures in California, with specific provisions aimed at mitigating the risk of fire hazards. This code incorporates fire prevention measures related to building construction, materials, occupancy, and operational procedures, including the installation of fire detection and suppression systems, emergency access, and fire-resistive barriers. The Fire Code mandates compliance with specific fire protection standards in high-risk areas, including defensible space requirements, vegetation management, and fire-resistant materials for structures exposed to wildfires. It integrates provisions from the California Building Standards Code and aligns with nationally recognized standards such as those from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Regular updates to the Fire Code ensure its relevance in addressing emerging wildfire risks and new technologies. Enforcement of these regulations is critical for reducing fire-related risks in both urban and wildland-urban interface zones.

California Government Code Section 65302(g)

California Government Code Section 65302(g) requires that the safety element of a city or county general plan address the protection of the community from unreasonable risks associated with various hazards, including wildfires. The section mandates that jurisdictions identify fire hazard severity zones, establish evacuation routes, and incorporate policies and programs to reduce the risk of wildfire and ensure public safety. It also requires coordination with fire protection agencies and consideration of climate change impacts that could exacerbate fire risk. The intent is to ensure that land use planning decisions account for and mitigate wildfire hazards to protect lives, property, and natural resources.

Local

San Bernardino Countywide Plan

The San Bernardino Countywide Plan establishes the following relevant polies to the Proposed Project:

- Policy HZ-1.9 Hazard areas maintained as open space: We minimize risk associated with flood, geologic, and fire hazard zones or areas by encouraging such areas to be preserved and maintained as open space.
- Policy HZ-1.13 Fire protection planning: We require that all new development in County-designated Fire Safety Overlay and/or CAL FIRE-designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones meet the requirements of the California Fire Code and the California Building Code as amended by the County Fire Protection District, including Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations fire safety requirements for any new development within State Responsibility Areas, as well as provide and maintain a Fire Protection Plan or Defensible Space/Fuel Modification Plan and other pre-planning measures in accordance with the County Code of Ordinances
- Policy HZ-1.14 Long-term fire hazard reduction and abatement: We require proactive vegetation management/hazard abatement to reduce fire hazards on existing private properties, along roadsides of evacuation routes out of wildfire prone areas, and other private/public land where applicable, and we require new development to enter into a long-term maintenance agreement for vegetation management in defensible space, fuel modification, and roadside fuel reduction in the Fire Safety Overlay and/or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.
- Policy HZ-1.15 Evacuation route adequacy: We coordinate with CAL FIRE, California's Office of Emergency Services, and other local fire districts to identify strategies that ensure the maintenance and reliability of evacuation routes potentially compromised by wildfire, including emergency evacuation and supply transportation routes.
- Policy PP-4.1 Emergency management plans: We maintain, update, and adopt the Emergency Operations Plan, Continuity of Operations Plan, and the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Plan updates are coordinated with wildfire hazard planning efforts of outside agencies, such as CALFIRE Strategic Fire Plan, Community Wildfire Protection Plans, U.S. Forest Service, military institutions, California Fire Safe Council and other nonprofit stakeholder groups, and other applicable local, state, and federal agencies.

4.20.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project site is subject to the County of San Bernardino Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Project site is not located within, nor adjacent to a Fire Hazard Severity Zone in a local, state, or federal responsibility area (CAL FIRE 2025). The Project would not alter existing land uses, introduce new habitable structures, or significantly increase human presence or ignition sources. Fire risks and the level of emergency response readiness during operations will be similar to existing conditions.

During construction, traffic control would occur on North Cactus Avenue. The Traffic Control plan will identify alternative routes during construction to effectively and safely move drivers near the Project

site when heavy construction vehicles are entering or existing the site. This will ensure that there will be adequate emergency vehicle access throughout the intersection. Once operational, the Project will not impair emergency vehicle access.

Furthermore, the Project would not alter existing land uses or introduce new ignition sources and thus would not result in any increase in wildfire risk. As discussed in Section 4.9 Impact (g), fire hazard conditions and the level of emergency response readiness during operations will remain consistent with pre-Project conditions. Therefore, the Project has a less than significant impact on emergency response and emergency evacuation plans.

b) *Would the project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Project involves enhancing an existing stormwater drainage channel. The Project site is located in an urbanized area within a desert environment characterized by dry vegetation and high temperatures, conditions that can contribute to an elevated wildfire risk.

The Project site is not located within, nor adjacent to a Fire Hazard Severity Zone in a local, state, or federal responsibility area (CAL FIRE 2025). The Project would not alter existing land uses, introduce new habitable structures, or significantly increase human presence or ignition sources. Fire risks and the level of emergency response readiness during operations will be similar to existing conditions. The Project would not exacerbate the uncontrolled spread of wildfire due to slope, prevailing wind, or other factors. Impacts associated with wildfires would be less than significant.

c) *Would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?*

No Impact. The Proposed Project would not require installation of any additional infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risks. The Project would not alter existing land uses or introduce new ignition sources and thus would not result in any increase in wildfire risk. Fire hazard conditions and the level of emergency response readiness during operations will remain consistent with pre-Project conditions. No impact would occur.

d) *Would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability or drainage changes?*

No Impact. The Project is relatively flat and undeveloped, aside from the existing stormwater drainage channel that runs through it. The Proposed Project involves improvements to an existing flood control channel that are specifically designed to enhance its capacity to convey stormwater flows. By increasing channel efficiency, the Project would reduce the potential for localized flooding and would not result in drainage changes that increase risks to people or structures downstream. The Project does not involve grading or development on steep slopes that could be susceptible to landslides or post-fire slope instability. Because the Project would improve channel performance and does not introduce new conditions that could generate geologic or hydrologic hazards, no impacts related to flooding, landslides, or drainage changes would occur.

4.21 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

21.	MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
(a)	Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
(b)	Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects?)	☐	☐	☒	☐
(c)	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

4.21.1 Impact Analysis

a) *Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?*

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

As discussed in Section 4.4, the Biological Assessment Report (Appendix B) did not identify any Project-related impacts to special status wildlife species as a result of Project implementation. However, implementation of MM BIO-1 will minimize potential impacts to nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) within the Project site.

As discussed in Section 4.5 and 4.18, Project impacts towards cultural resources would be mitigation with incorporation of MM CUL-1, MM CUL-2, MM TCR-1, and MM TCR-2, which establish procedures to be followed in the event of the inadvertent discovery of cultural and/or tribal cultural resources.

As discussed in Section 4.7, potential impacts towards paleontological resources would be mitigated with incorporation of MM PAL-1 and MM PAL-2. MM PAL-1 requires that prior to grading, the County shall retain a Qualified Project Paleontologist to remain on call during ground-disturbing activities and, if requested, prepare and implement a County-approved Paleontological Mitigation Plan (PMP) that outlines monitoring, recovery, and curation procedures for any fossil resources encountered. MM PAL-2 requires that upon completion of construction, the Project Paleontologist shall submit a final

report summarizing monitoring activities, discoveries, and mitigation conducted in accordance with the PMP.

In summary, implementation of the mitigation measures described above would reduce potential impacts to biological, cultural, tribal cultural, and paleontological resources to a less than significant level (see Section 1.5 for a comprehensive summary).

b) *Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects?)*

Less Than Significant Impact. The Proposed Project involves improvements to an existing flood control channel within a previously disturbed right-of-way. As analyzed throughout this Initial Study, the Project would not result in significant impacts related to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hydrology, transportation, or other environmental issue areas.

Construction activities would be temporary and localized, and operational activities would be limited to occasional maintenance trips that would not generate long-term environmental effects. Because the Project's impacts are minor, short-term, and largely confined to the construction period, they would not combine with the effects of past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future projects to create cumulatively considerable impacts. Therefore, the Project's contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

c) *Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Substantial adverse effects on human beings directly or indirectly are primarily resulting from impacts to air quality, geology and soil, greenhouse gas emissions, hazardous materials, land use, noise, and wildfire. Given the Proposed Project would have no significant impacts relating to these categories, it is reasonable to assume there would be no substantial adverse effects on human beings either directly or indirectly**.**

SECTION 5.0 – REFERENCES

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