# INITIAL STUDY AND MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

## North San Bernardino Channel Project

***Prepared for***

**San Bernardino County Flood Control District**

***Submitted by***

Aspen environmental group

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

| Acronyms/Abbreviations | Definition |
|---|---|
| AB | Assembly Bill |
| APSA | Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act |
| AR6 | Sixth Assessment Report |
| ARB | Air Resources Board |
| ASCE | American Society of Civil Engineers |
| ATP | Active Transportation Plan |
| BACT | Best Available Control Technology |
| BNSF | Burlington Northern Santa Fe |
| CAA | Clean Air Act |
| CAP | Climate Action Plan |
| CARB | California Air Resources Board |
| CBC | California Building Code |
| CCR | California Code of Regulations |
| CEQA | California Environmental Quality Act |
| CFR | Code of Federal Regulations |
| CGS | California Geological Survey |
| CI | Coccidioides immitis |
| CNEL | Community Noise Equivalent Level |
| CO | carbon monoxide |
| CUPA | Certified Unified Program Agency |
| CWA | Clean Water Act |
| CY | cubic yards |
| DMR | Division of Mine Reclamation |
| DOC | Department of Conservation |
| DOT | Department of Transportation |
| DPR | Department of Pesticide Regulation |
| DTSC | Department of Toxic Substance Control |
| EO | Executive Order |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| FMMP | Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program |
| FTA | Federal Transit Administration |
| GC | Government Code |
| GGERP | Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan |
| GWP | global warming potential |
| HMBP | Hazardous Materials Business Plans |
| HMMP | Hazardous Materials Management Plans |
| HMOD | Hillside Management Overlay District |
| HSC | Health and Safety Code |
| HSWA | Hazardous and Solid Waste Act |
| HWCL | Hazardous Waste Control Law |
| IBC | International Building Code |
| ICC | International Code Council |
| IS/MND | Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration |
| IWMB | Integrated Waste Management Board |
| LCFS | Low Carbon Fuel Standard |
| LOA | Local Oversight Agency |
| LOP | Local Oversight Program |
| LUST | leaking underground storage tank |
| MRDS | Mineral Resources Database System |

| Acronyms/Abbreviations | Definition |
|---|---|
| NCP | National Contingency Plan |
| NEHRPA | National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Act |
| NEPA | National Environmental Policy Act |
| $NF_3$ | nitrogen trifluoride |
| NFHL | National Flood Hazard Layer |
| NFIP | National Flood Insurance Program |
| NO | nitric oxide |
| $NO_2$ | nitrogen dioxide |
| NPDES | National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System |
| NPL | National Priorities List |
| NRCS | Natural Resources Conservation Service |
| NSHM | National Seismic Hazard Model |
| $O_3$ | ozone |
| OEHHA | Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment |
| OSHA | Occupational Safety and Health Administration |
| PCE | tetrachlorethylene |
| $PM_{2.5}$ | Fine Particulate Matter |
| $PM_{10}$ | Respirable Particulate Matter |
| PPV | peak particle velocity |
| PRC | Public Resources Code |
| RCNM | Roadway Construction Noise Model |
| RCRA | Resource Conservation and Recovery Act |
| RM | Residential Medium |
| RMS | root mean square |
| ROG | reactive organic gases |
| RPS | Renewables Portfolio Standard |
| SARA | Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act |
| SB | Senate Bill |
| SCAG | Southern California Association of Governments |
| SCAQMD | South Coast Air Quality Management District |
| SCE | Southern California Edison |
| $SF_6$ | sulfur hexafluoride |
| SHMP | State Hazard Mitigation Plan |
| SMARA | Surface Mining and Reclamation Act |
| SMGB | State Mining and Geology Board |
| $SO_2$ | sulfur dioxide |
| SR | State Route |
| SWPPP | Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan |
| SWRCB | State Water Resources Control Board |
| TAC | Toxic Air Contaminants |
| TCE | trichloroethylene |
| UCERF3 | Uniform California Earthquake Rupture Forecast |
| USEPA | United States Environmental Protection Agency |
| USGS | United States Geological Survey |
| UST | Underground Storage Tank |
| VMT | vehicle miles traveled |
| VOC | volatile organic compounds |
| WUI | Wildland Urban Interface |

# 1. NORTH SAN BERNARDINO CHANNEL MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

## 1.1. Introduction

The purpose of this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) is to inform responsible and trustee agencies, public agencies, and the public that the San Bernardino County Flood Control District (District), as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), prepared an analysis for the proposed North San Bernardino Channel Project (Proposed Project or Project). As Lead Agency, the District is responsible for approving the (MND) and if appropriate, approving or denying the Proposed Project.

This document was prepared in accordance with CEQA, (Public Resources Code [PRC] § 21000, et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 Cal. Code Regs. §15000, et seq.). Specifically, this document meets the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15000 and 15071, and the environmental checklist (Chapter 3) meets the requirements of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15063. An IS is prepared by a lead agency to determine if a project may have significant effects on the environment (CEQA Guidelines § 15063[a]), and to determine the appropriate environmental document. In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15070:

> A public agency shall prepare…a proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration…when:
>
> (a) *The initial study shows that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment, or*
>
> (b) *The initial study identifies potentially significant effects, but:*
>
> i. Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by, or agreed to by the applicant before a pro-posed mitigated negative declaration and initial study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, and
>
> ii. *There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.*

Based on the analysis in this IS, the District determined that all Project-related environmental impacts would be less than significant with mitigation, less than significant, or no impact would occur. Therefore, approval of an MND will satisfy the requirements of CEQA. The mitigation measures included in this MND are designed to reduce or eliminate the potentially significant environmental impacts described in the IS. Mitigation measures are structured in accordance with the criteria in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15370.

## 1.2. Public Review

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15073, the lead agency must provide a public review period pursuant to Section 15105 of at least 20 days. The notice of intent to adopt the proposed MND must include a copy of the proposed IS, and together, the IS/MND must be sent to the public, responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and the County Clerk of the county within which a proposed project is located. Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15072, the lead agency must notify, in writing, any public agency that provides comments on the proposed IS/MND of public hearings for the Project.

## 1.3. Document Organization

The IS/MND is organized as follows:

**Section 1. Introduction.** This section introduces the document and discusses the CEQA process and public review process.

**Section 2. Project Description.** This section provides a brief Project overview, describes the Project location, setting, land use, and zoning, and provides a detailed description of the Proposed Project and anticipated permits and approvals.

**Section 3. Environmental Checklist.** This section provides an analysis of environmental impacts that would potentially occur because of the Proposed Project. A list of applicable mitigation measures is provided.

**Section 4. List of Preparers.** This section identifies the report preparers.

**Section 5. References.** This section lists the references corresponding with the in-text citations used in preparation of this IS/MND.

# 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

## 2.1. Project Overview

The San Bernardino County Flood Control District (District) proposes to construct the North San Bernardino Channel Project (Proposed Project), which would include the construction of an 8-foot-high reinforced concrete rectangular ultimate channel to replace the existing channel and three street crossings/culverts, as well as the relocation of various utilities (primarily at the street crossings). While the final channel design could incorporate a soft bottom, this impact analysis under CEQA conservatively assumes a hard-bottom channel for a worst-case assessment of environmental impacts until the design is finalized. The proposed channel could have a soft bottom but for the purposes of this CEQA analysis, we are conservatively assuming a hard bottom. The existing rural and interim channel was constructed in the 1950s and intended to be a temporary flood control channel designed to provide flood protection for a 25-year storm event upstream and a 10-year storm event downstream. The Proposed Project is funded with federal funds through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance would be required through the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES). CalOES is the lead agency for NEPA compliance.

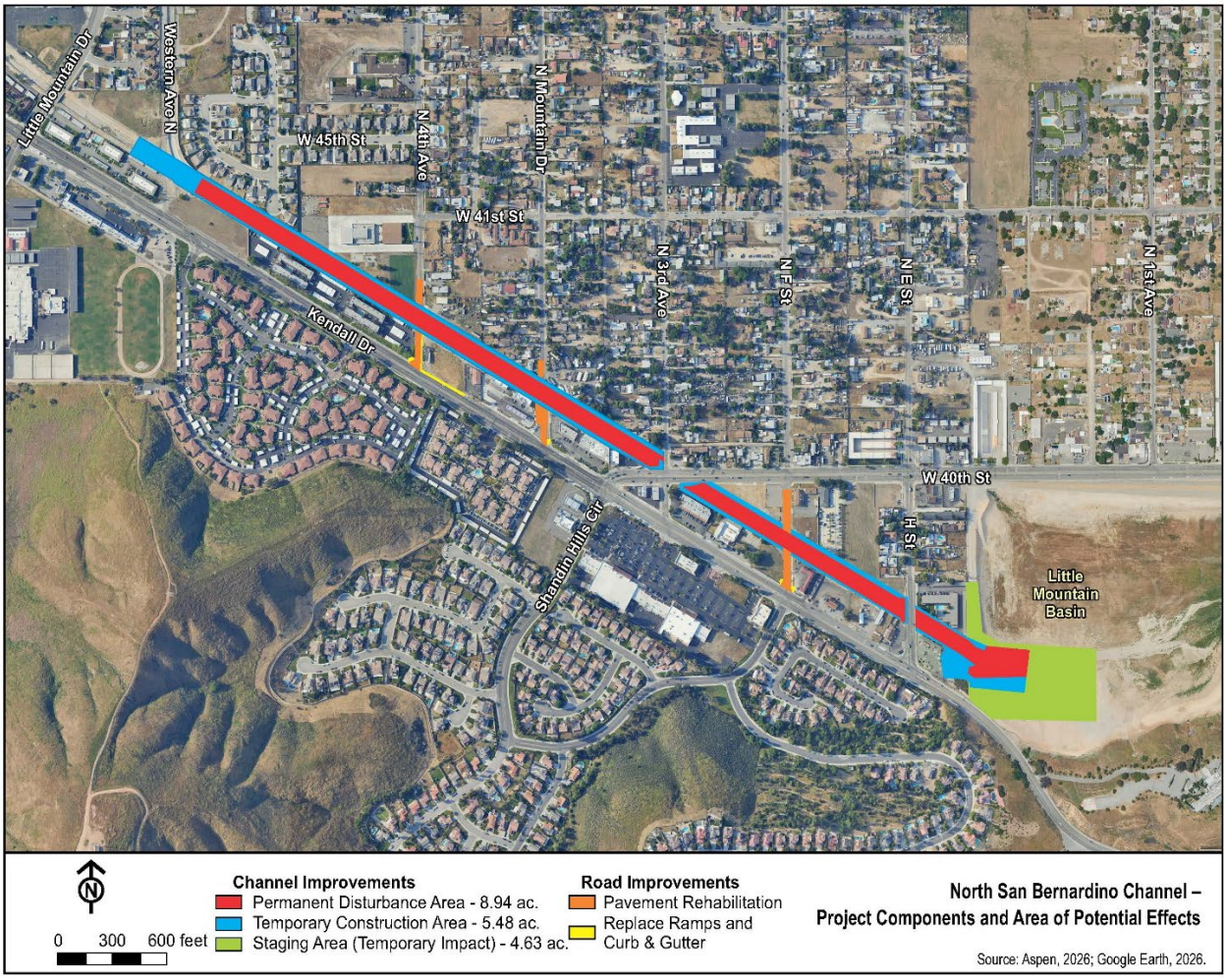
## 2.2. Project Location and Setting

The Proposed Project is located within the North San Bernardino Channel (formerly known as Devil Creek Channel) north of Kendall Drive, from Western Avenue to Little Mountain Basin (approximately 1 mile), in the City of San Bernardino, San Bernardino County (see Figure 1). The Project site is surrounded by residential and institutional development to the north and west, Little Mountain Basin (an earthen flood control basin maintained by the District) to the east, and residential and commercial development to the south. The Project site is approximately 1 mile south of Interstate 215 (I-215). Staging areas are included within the Project site totaling 4.63 acres at the eastern end of the channel, within Little Mountain Basin (see Figure 2).

**Figure 1. Project Location**



**Figure 2. Project Components and Area of Potential Effects**




## 2.3. Land Use and Zoning

The Project site is primarily within an area governed by the City of San Bernardino General Plan and the University District Specific Plan. The City of San Bernardino General Plan land use and zoning designations include Public Facilities (PF), Publicly Owned Flood Control (PFC), Commercial General (CG-1), and Residential Medium (RM) (City of San Bernardino, 2005; 2026a). The portion of the Project site between North 4th Avenue and North 3rd Avenue is in unincorporated San Bernardino County within the Low Density Residential (LDR) Land Use Category and the Multiple Residential (RM) Zoning District (San Bernardino County, 2026a).

## 2.4. Project Objectives

The Proposed Project aims to replace the existing North San Bernardino Channel, which has been deemed inadequate, see Section 2.2, *Background*, with a reinforced concrete channel to improve flood protection. Specifically, the improvements aim to increase flood protection from the current 25-year storm event upstream and 10-year storm event downstream to a uniform 100-year storm event protection, enhance protection for areas within the 100-year floodplain, and mitigate flooding risks for nearly 300 structures and over 200,000 residents.

## 2.5. Project Construction

Construction of the Proposed Project is anticipated to occur over approximately one year, beginning in April 2028 and concluding in May 2029. Construction would occur Monday through Saturday between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., consistent with the City of San Bernardino Municipal Code; construction would not occur on weekends or federal holidays. Construction activities may require temporary lane closures, localized detours, or short-term restrictions near work areas, including along Mountain Drive, 3rd Avenue, 4th Avenue, and Kendall Drive. However, these would be temporary and occur only during active construction. A maximum of 25 construction workers would be required on site. Fencing to provide site security during construction would be installed along the Project site perimeter, specifically along the existing Flood Control District right-of-way, the street crossing, and areas around the existing channel where it meets Little Mountain Basin. Electricity during construction would be required for a construction manager's trailer, and three generators would be used as backup power.

Access to the Project site and staging areas would be provided along H Street, F Street, 3rd Ave, Mountain Drive, 4th Avenue, and Western Drive. Two construction equipment staging and temporary stockpile areas would be located at the southwest corner of Little Mountain Basin within the right-of-way of the San Bernardino County Flood Control District. Approximately 62,220 cubic yards (CY) of material total (61,500 CY of aggregate material, 200 CY of concrete and asphalt, 20 CY of vegetation waste, and 300 CY of rock) would be excavated and approximately 16,200 CY of material total (600 CY of aggregate material, 8,800 CY of concrete and asphalt, 6,100 CY of engineered soil backfill, and 700 CY of rock) would be imported. No material would be required to be exported during construction. Imported materials would be obtained off-site within an approximately 6-mile radius.

Construction would include the replacement of street crossings/culverts at the intersections of Mountain Road with North 4th Avenue, Mountain Drive, and North F Street (see Figure 2). Utility relocations would include two water lines, one gas line, and one power pole along North 4th Avenue; one water line and three power poles along Mountain Drive; and one water line and one power pole at North F Street.

Typical construction equipment to be utilized would include the following:

- Pickup Trucks
- Water Trucks
- Dump Truck
- Water Pumps
- Generators
- Skidsteer
- Loader
- Air Compressor
- Sawcutter
- Street Sweeper

## 2.6. Operations and Maintenance

The North San Bernardino Channel would require routine maintenance, such as vegetation management, debris/sediment removal, channel bank and structure inspection, graffiti and encampment management, and access route upkeep to maintain flow capacity. These maintenance activities would occur on an annual basis, depending on need, for inspections and as needed following storm events. Maintenance activities would be performed using hand tools or light equipment to minimize disturbance. All work would follow established Best Management Practices (BMPs), including avoiding sensitive habitat, preventing sediment discharge, and properly managing waste and removed debris. Operation and maintenance would be carried out by existing County staff that are routinely trained in stormwater BMPs and environmental compliance.

## 2.7. Other Permits and Approvals

Table 2-1 presents the anticipated permits and approvals from regulatory agencies needed for the Proposed Project.

**Table 2-1. Anticipated Permits and Approvals Required for the Proposed Project**

| Agency | Permit/Approvals |
|---|---|
| **State Agencies** | |
| Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 8 | Clean Water Act Section 401, Water Quality Certification; Clean Water Act Section 402, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit |
| California Department of Fish and Wildlife | Streambed Alteration Agreement |
| California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) | Transportation Permit for the transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials requiring the use of oversized transport vehicles on State highways |
| **Local/Regional Agencies** | |
| City of San Bernardino | Lane/Road Closure, Excavation, and Encroachment Permit for closure of roads for transportation of heavy or oversized equipment and construction of facilities within public roadway rights-of-way and excavation activities. Temporary Structure Permit and Electrical Permit for construction trailer and required electricity. |

# 3. INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

| | |
|---|---|
| **1. Project Title:** | North San Bernardino Channel Project |
| **2. Lead Agency Name and Address:** | San Bernardino County Flood Control District<br>825 E. Third Street, Rm. 123<br>San Bernardino, California 92415-0835 |
| **3. Contact Person and Phone Number:** | Maryn Mineo-Wells, Project Manager<br>Environmental Management Division<br>San Bernardino County Department of Public Works<br>825 E. Third Street, Rm. 123<br>San Bernardino, California 92415-0835 |
| **4. Project Location:** | North of Kendall Drive, from Western Avenue to Little Mountain Basin (approx. 1 mile), San Bernardino, CA 92407 |
| **5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:** | San Bernardino County Flood Control District<br>825 E. Third Street, Rm. 123<br>San Bernardino, California 92415-0835 |
| **6. General Plan Designation:** | City of San Bernardino: Public Facilities (PF), Publicly Owned Flood Control (PFC), Commercial General (CG-1), and Residential Medium (RM)<br><br>San Bernardino County: Low Density Residential (LDR) |
| **7. Zoning:** | City of San Bernardino: Public Facilities (PF), Publicly Owned Flood Control (PFC), Commercial General (CG-1), and Residential Medium (RM)<br><br>San Bernardino County: Multiple Residential (RM) |
| **8. Description of Project:** | The San Bernardino County Flood Control District (District) proposes to construct an ultimate channel to replace the existing rural interim channel and three street crossings/culverts, as well as the relocate various utilities, within the North San Bernardino Channel (formerly known as Devil Creek Channel) north of Kendall Drive, from Western Avenue to Little Mountain Basin (approximately 1 mile), in the City of San Bernardino, San Bernardino County. |
| **9. Surrounding Land Uses/Setting** | The Project site is surrounded by residential and institutional development to the north and west, Little Mountain Basin to the east, residential and commercial development to the south. |
| **10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required** | Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 8 |
| **11. Have California Native American Tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code 21808.3.1?** | Yes (refer to Section 3.20, *Tribal Cultural Resources*) |

## 3.1. Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by the Proposed Project, requiring implementation of mitigation as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Aesthetics | ☐ Agriculture & 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 |

## 3.2. Environmental Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the Proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

☒ 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.

☐ I find that the Proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

☐ 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.

☐ 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.

**SCANNED SIGNATURE HERE**



10/23/26

Maryn Mineo-Wells, Project Manager
Environmental Management Division
San Bernardino County Department of Public Works

Date

# 3.3. Aesthetics

| **AESTHETICS**<br>**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) In non-urbanized areas, 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.3.1. Setting

### Regulatory Setting

#### *State*

**State Scenic Highways.** California's Scenic Highway Program was created in 1963 to protect and enhance the natural scenic beauty of California highways and adjacent corridors through special conservation treatment. A highway may be designated scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler's enjoyment of the view.

The State Scenic Highway System includes a list of highways that are eligible for designation as scenic highways or have been officially designated. The status of a proposed state scenic highway changes from eligible to officially designated when the local governing body applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, adopts a Corridor Protection Program, and receives notification that the highway has been officially designated a Scenic Highway.

When a jurisdiction nominates an eligible scenic highway for official designation, it must identify and define the scenic corridor of the highway. Scenic corridors consist of land visible from the highway right of way and are comprised primarily of scenic and natural features. Topography, vegetation, viewing distance, and/or jurisdictional lines determine the corridor boundaries. The city or county must also adopt ordinances, zoning and/or planning policies to preserve the scenic quality of the corridor or document such regulations that already exist in various portions of local codes. These ordinances and/or policies make up the Corridor Protection Program.

#### *Regional*

**San Bernardino County Development Code.** The following provisions from the San Bernardino County Development Code aim to minimize aesthetic and light and glare impacts associated with new development projects and are relevant to the Proposed Project.

- Chapter 83.02 (General Development and Use Standards). This chapter provides development standards that ensure an environment of stable and desirable character that is harmonious and compatible between existing and future development. Sections within this chapter detail requirements

pertaining to maximum building heights, screening and buffering, setbacks, and allowed projections/ structures within setbacks.

- Chapter 83.06 (Fences, Hedges, and Walls). This chapter establishes requirements for fences, hedges, and walls to ensure that these elements do not unnecessarily block views and sunlight; provide adequate buffering between different land uses, provide screening of outdoor uses and equipment; and provide for noise mitigation. Overall, the requirements are designed to provide aesthetic enhancement of the County. This chapter of the code discusses requirements for fences, hedges, and walls, including maximum height limit, walls required between different land uses, special wall/fencing for different uses, and prohibited fence materials.
- Chapter 83.07 (Glare and Outdoor Lighting). This chapter encourages outdoor lighting practices and systems that minimize light pollution, glare, and light trespass; conserve energy and resources while maintaining nighttime safety, visibility, utility and productivity; and curtail the degradation of the nighttime visual environment.

**San Bernardino County General Plan.** The following policies from the San Bernardino County General Plan Land Use Element (San Bernardino County, 2020a) and Natural Resources Element (San Bernardino County, 2020b) pertain to visual resources and aesthetics and are relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Policy LU-2.1: Compatibility with existing uses.** We require that new development is located, scaled, buffered, and designed to minimize negative impacts on existing conforming uses and adjacent neighborhoods. We also require that new residential developments are located, scaled, buffered, and designed so as to not hinder the viability and continuity of existing conforming nonresidential development.
- **Policy LU-2.2: Compatibility with planned uses.** We require that new residential development is located, scaled, buffered, and designed to minimize negative impacts both on and from adjacent areas designated for nonresidential land uses.
- **Policy LU-2.3: Compatibility with natural environment.** We require that new development is located, scaled, buffered, and designed for compatibility with the surrounding natural environment and biodiversity.
- **Policy LU-2.4: Land use map consistency.** We consider proposed development that is consistent with the Land Use Map (i.e., it does not require a change in Land Use Category), to be generally compatible and consistent with surrounding land uses and a community's identity. Additional site, building, and landscape design treatment, per other policies in the Policy Plan and development standards in the Development Code, may be required to maximize compatibility with surrounding land uses and community identity.
- **Policy LU-2.5: Hillside preservation.** We require that new development in sloping hillside areas preserve the natural character of the surrounding environment and does not further exacerbate natural hazards or erosion.
- **Policy NR-4.1: Preservation of scenic resources.** We consider the location and scale of development to preserve regionally significant scenic vistas and natural features, including prominent hillsides, ridgelines, dominant landforms, and reservoirs.

### Affected Environment

The proposed upgrades to the North San Bernardino Channel are primarily located in the City of San Bernardino, including the University District Specific Plan area, except for the portion of site in unincorporated San Bernardino County from North 3rd Street to North 4th Street. The Project site includes zoning and land use designations of Public Facilities (PF), Publicly Owner Flood Control (PFC),

Commercial General (CG-1), and Residential Medium (RM) by the City of San Bernardino, as well as a Low Density Residential (LDR) land use designation and a Multiple Residential (RM) zoning designation by San Bernardino County (City of San Bernardino, 2005; 2026a; San Bernardino County, 2026a). The existing flood channel is visible from some of the adjacent residences and streets. The Shandin Hills are located approximately 0.2 mile south of the Project site. The nearest designated scenic highway to the Project site is a portion of State Route (SR) 2 located over 23 miles away to the northwest (Caltrans, 2018). The nearest eligible scenic highway to the Project site is SR-18 located approximately 4.7 miles north (Caltrans, 2018).

## 3.3.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The City of San Bernardino 2050 Draft General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element states that several prominent hills offer vistas, including Badger Hills, Shandin Hills (approximately 0.2 mile south of the Project site), Kendall Hill, and Perris Hill (City of San Bernardino, 2025a). In addition, it is noted that although the City does not have designated scenic corridors, several roads offer vistas of the City, including most notably, Waterman Avenue as turns into SR 18 and enters the national forest (City of San Bernardino, 2025a). From the Project site, there are views of the Shandin Hills to the south and San Bernardino Mountains to the north. However, because the Proposed Project would replace the temporary channel with a permanent one and include other improvements that would be either at or below-grade flood channel structures, construction of the Proposed Project would not obstruct any viewsheds of adjacent hills or mountains. Therefore, Project construction would have a less-than-significant impact to scenic vistas.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As discussed above, the City of San Bernardino 2050 Draft General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element states that several prominent hills offer vistas, including Badger Hills, Shandin Hills (approximately 0.2 mile south of the Project site), Kendall Hill, and Perris Hill (City of San Bernardino, 2025a). In addition, several roads offer vistas of the City, including most notably, Waterman Avenue as turns into SR 18 and enters the national forest (City of San Bernardino, 2025a). From the Project site, there are views of the Shandin Hills to the south and San Bernardino Mountains to the north. However, because the Proposed Project would replace the temporary channel with a permanent one and include other improvements that would be either at or below-grade flood channel structures, operation and maintenance of the channel would not obstruct any viewsheds of adjacent hills or mountains. Therefore, Project operation would have no impact to scenic vistas.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Based on the distances to the nearest designated and eligible scenic highways, the Project site would not be visible from those locations. The Project site does not contain, nor would it impact, trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings. Construction of the channel would only require the

removal or trimming of trees if necessary and immediately adjacent to the existing flood channel. These changes (if needed) and construction activities are not expected to result in significant new visual contrast compared to existing views of the flood channel from adjacent residences and streets. Therefore, visual impacts associated with Project construction would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As noted above, the Project site would not be visible from the nearest designated and eligible scenic highways, and it does not contain, nor would it impact, trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings. Operation and maintenance of the channel would include vegetation management, which may require the removal of large tree species or tree thinning to ensure a healthy ecology and to allow access to the infrastructure. The removal or trimming of trees would only occur when necessary and immediately adjacent to the existing flood channel. These changes are not expected to result in significant new visual contrast compared to existing views of the flood channel from adjacent residences and streets. Therefore, visual impacts associated with the Project operation would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

(c) **In non-urbanized areas, would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the 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?**

### Construction and Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project is located in an urbanized area in the City of San Bernardino. The Project site is currently zoned Public Facilities (PF), Publicly Owner Flood Control (PFC), Commercial General (CG-1), and Residential Medium (RM) and would not conflict with any applicable zoning and land use regulations governing scenic quality. The Proposed Project would be compatible with the surrounding area, as it would replace an existing channel, such that it would not change the general appearance of the Project site. This would be consistent with the City of San Bernardino General Plan as well as the policies related to scenic quality within the San Bernardino County General Plan. All Proposed Project components would be consistent with the existing visual character of the area and would not contrast with neighboring development or impact a scenic vista. The Proposed Project activities do not involve the construction of any large obtrusive structures that would be substantially different from the existing channel and degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site or its surroundings. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

(d) **Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

### Construction

NO IMPACT. Construction would occur between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Construction on Saturdays shall be at the discretion of the County Flood Control District Engineer.

Nighttime construction is not anticipated, and no associated nighttime construction lighting would be necessary. Therefore, there would be no construction impacts from lighting or glare sources.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project would not introduce permanent lighting sources and would not include metallic or other surfaces that could introduce a new permanent source of glare. Operation of the Proposed Project would include regular inspections and maintenance activities. None of these activities would occur during the nighttime. Therefore, there would be no operational impacts from lighting or glare sources.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

# 3.4. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

| AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES<br>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) pre-pared 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 non-agricultural 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 §12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code §4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code §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 non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.4.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *State*

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) established the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) in 1982 to assess the location, quantity, and quality of agricultural lands and conversion of these lands to other uses. Every even-numbered year, FMMP issues a Farmland Conversion Report. FMMP data are used in elements of some county and city general plans, in regional studies on agricultural land conversion, and in environmental documents as a way of assessing project-specific impacts on Prime Farmland.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (formerly Soils Conservation Service), classifies notable agricultural lands as follows:

- **Prime Farmland:** Land that has the best combination of physical and chemical properties for the production of crops
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance:** Similar to Prime Farmland, but with minor shortcomings (e.g., steeper slopes, inability to hold water)

- **Unique Farmland:** Land of lesser quality soils, but recently used for the production of specific high economic value crops. Land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California.

### Affected Environment

According to the DOC Important Farmland Finder, the Project site is designated as Urban and Build-Up Land Urban and Built-Up Land. Per the San Bernardino Valley Agricultural Planning and Preservation Program's Williamson Act Contracts and Agricultural Preserves Map, the Project site is not currently under a Williamson Act contract (San Bernardino County, 2021a).

Regarding local land use designations, the portion of the Project site within the City of San Bernardino is designated Public Facilities (PF), Publicly Owner Flood Control (PFC), Commercial General (CG-1), and Residential Medium (RM) (City of San Bernardino, 2026a). The portion of the Project site between North 4th Avenue and North 3rd Avenue in unincorporated San Bernardino County has a Low Density Residential (LDR) land use designation and a Multiple Residential (RM) zoning designation (San Bernardino County, 2026a). None of the lands within the Project area are zoned for Agriculture.

## 3.4.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(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 Non-agricultural use?**

### Construction

NO IMPACT. The DOC Important Farmland Finder includes a classification system that combines technical soil ratings and current land use as the basis to identify Farmland. The DOC Important Farmland Finder identifies the Project site as Urban and Built-Up Land, which is defined as land occupied by residential, industrial, commercial, institutional, or other similar structures with a building density of approximately six structures to a ten-acre parcel (DOC, 2018). According to the DOC, the Project site does not contain any Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Construction of the Proposed Project would not convert Farmland to non-agricultural use. Therefore, Project construction would have no impact.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. As stated above, according to the DOC the Project site would be located on designated Urban and Built-Up Land and does not contain any Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Operation of the Proposed Project would not convert Farmland to non-agricultural use. Therefore, Project operation would have no impact.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. As discussed in Section 3.2.2(a), the Project site is located on Urban and Built-Up Land (DOC, 2018) and is zoned Public Facilities (PF), Publicly Owner Flood Control (PFC), Commercial General (CG-1), Residential Medium (RM), and Multiple Residential (RM) (City of San Bernardino, 2026a; San Bernardino

County, 2026a), not for agricultural use. In addition, the Project site is not currently under a Williamson Act contract (San Bernardino County, 2021a). As such, the Proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have no impact.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

**(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))?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. As discussed in Section 3.3.2(b), the Project site is zoned Public Facilities (PF), Publicly Owner Flood Control (PFC), Commercial General (CG-1), and Residential Medium (RM) (City of San Bernardino, 2026a). The Proposed Project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have no impact.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

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

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. Forest land is land that can support 10-percent native tree cover of any species and that allows for management of forest resources, such as timber, fish and wildlife, and other public benefits. The Proposed Project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have no impact.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

**(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 non-agricultural use?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. As discussed in Sections 3.4.2(a) through (d), no Farmland or forest land are included within the Project site. The surrounding area is also not designated as Farmland and does not allow for management of forest resources. The Proposed Project would not involve other changes in the existing environment that could result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have no impact.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

# 3.5. Air Quality

| AIR QUALITY<br>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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.5.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *Federal and State*

**U.S. EPA/CARB Off-Road Mobile Sources Emission Reduction Program.** The California Clean Air Act mandates that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) achieve the maximum degree of emission reductions from all off-road mobile sources in order to attain the state ambient air quality standards. Off-road mobile sources include construction equipment. Tier 1 standards for large compression-ignition engines used in off-road mobile sources went into effect in California in 1996. These standards and ongoing rulemaking jointly address emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) and toxic particulate matter from diesel combustion. CARB is also developing a control measure to reduce diesel particulate matter emissions as well as NOx from in-use (existing) off-road diesel equipment throughout the State.

**CARB Portable Equipment Registration Program.** This program allows owners or operators of portable engines and associated equipment commonly used for construction or farming to register their units under a statewide portable program that allows them to operate their equipment throughout California without having to obtain individual permits from local air districts.

#### SCAQMD Rules and Regulations

All projects are subject to South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) rules and regulations. Specific rules applicable to the Proposed Project include the following:

**Rule 401 – Visible Emissions**. A person shall not discharge into the atmosphere from any single source of emission whatsoever any air contaminant for a period or periods aggregating more than three minutes in any one hour that is as dark or darker in shade as that designated No. 1 on the Ringelmann Chart, as published by the United States Bureau of Mines.

**Rule 402 – Nuisance**. A person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material that cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or that endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such persons or the public, or that cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property. The provisions of this rule do not apply to odors emanating from agricultural operations necessary for the growing of crops or the raising of fowl or animals.

**Rule 403 – Fugitive Dust**. SCAQMD Rule 403 governs emissions of fugitive dust during and after construction. Compliance with this rule is achieved through application of standard BMPs, such as application of water or chemical stabilizers to disturbed soils, covering haul vehicles, restricting vehicle speeds on unpaved roads to 15 miles per hour (mph), sweeping loose dirt from paved site access roadways, cessation of construction activity when winds exceed 25 mph, and establishing a permanent ground cover on finished sites.

Rule 403 requires project applicants to control fugitive dust using the best available control measures such that dust does not remain visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the emission source. In addition, Rule 403 requires implementation of dust suppression techniques to prevent fugitive dust from creating an off-site nuisance. Applicable Rule 403 dust suppression (and $PM_{10}$ generation) techniques to reduce impacts on nearby sensitive receptors may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Apply nontoxic, chemical soil stabilizers according to manufacturers' specifications to all inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for 10 days or more).
- Water active sites at least three times daily. Locations where grading is to occur shall be thoroughly watered prior to earthmoving.
- Cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials, or maintain at least 0.6 meters (2 feet) of freeboard (vertical space between the top of the load and top of the trailer) in accordance with the requirements of California Vehicle Code Section 23114.
- Reduce traffic speeds on all unpaved roads to 15 mph or less.
- Suspend all grading activities when wind speeds (including instantaneous wind gusts) exceed 25 mph.
- Provide bumper strips or similar BMPs where vehicles enter and exit the construction site onto paved roads or wash off trucks and any equipment leaving the site each trip.
- Replant disturbed areas as soon as practical.
- Sweep on-site streets (and off-site streets if silt is carried to adjacent public thoroughfares) to reduce the amount of particulate matter on public streets. All sweepers shall be compliant with SCAQMD Rule 1186.1, Less Polluting Sweepers.

### Affected Environment

**Criteria Pollutants.** Air quality is determined by measuring ambient concentrations of criteria pollutants. Air pollutants are those pollutants for which acceptable levels of exposure can be determined and for which standards have been set. The degree of air quality degradation is then compared to the current National and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS and CAAQS). Unique meteorological conditions in California and differences of opinion by medical panels established by the CARB and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) cause considerable diversity between State and Federal standards currently in effect in California. In general, the CAAQS are more stringent than the corresponding NAAQS. The standards currently in effect in California are shown in Table 3.5-1.

**Table 3.5-1. National and California Ambient Air Quality Standards**

| Pollutant | Averaging Time | California Standards | National Standards |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ozone | 1 hour | 0.09 ppm | — |
| | 8 hour | 0.070 ppm | 0.075 ppm |
| Respirable Particulate Matter ($PM_{10}$) | 24 hour | 50 µg/$m^3$ | 150 µg/$m^3$ |
| | Annual Mean | 20 µg/$m^3$ | — |
| Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) | 24 hour | — | 35 µg/$m^3$ |
| | Annual Mean | 12 µg/$m^3$ | 15 µg/$m^3$ |
| Carbon Monoxide (CO) | 1 hour | 20 ppm | 35 ppm |
| | 8 hour | 9.0 ppm | 9.0 ppm |
| Nitrogen Dioxide ($NO_2$) | 1 hour | 0.18 ppm | — |
| | Annual Mean | 0.030 ppm | 0.053 ppm |
| Sulfur Dioxide ($SO_2$) | 1 hour | 0.25 ppm | — |
| | 24 hour | 0.04 ppm | 0.14 ppm |
| | 3 hour | — | 0.5 ppm |
| | Annual Mean | — | 0.03 ppm |

Notes: ppm=parts per million; µg/m3= micrograms per cubic meter; "—" = no standard
Source: CARB, 2008.

## Health Effects of Criteria Air Pollutants

As shown in Table 3.5-1, the nonattainment designations for ozone ($O_3$) and respirable particulate matter ($PM_{10}$) indicate that the Project area experiences the adverse human health effects of exposure to criteria air pollutants. Because the CAAQS are set at levels to adequately protect the health of the public, and air quality management agencies have determined that concentrations of $O_3$ and $PM_{10}$ for the Project area are at nonattainment levels for the CAAQS, adverse health effects associated with exposure to $O_3$ and $PM_{10}$ are part of the baseline and existing ambient air quality conditions. The following information summarizes the adverse health effects of criteria air pollutants:

- Ozone. $O_3$ is not directly emitted from stationary or mobile sources but is formed as the result of chemical reactions in the atmosphere between directly emitted volatile organic compounds (VOC) including reactive organic gases (ROG), with NOx in the presence of sunlight. High $O_3$ concentrations can aggravate respiratory and cardio-vascular diseases, irritate eyes, impair cardiopulmonary function, and cause damage to vegetation.
- Respirable Particulate Matter and Fine Particulate Matter. $PM_{10}$ can be emitted directly or can be formed many miles downwind from emission sources when various precursor pollutants interact in the atmosphere. Fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) is derived mainly either from the combustion of materials, or from precursor gases (sulfur oxides [SOx], ROG, and NOx) through complex reactions in the atmosphere. $PM_{2.5}$ consists mostly of sulfates, nitrates, ammonium, elemental carbon, and a small portion of organic and inorganic compounds. $PM_{10}$ and $PM_{2.5}$ can aggravate respiratory diseases, result in reduced lung function, increase and cause chest discomfort, and cause reduced visibility.
- Carbon Monoxide. The highest concentrations of carbon monoxide (CO) result when low wind speeds and a stable atmosphere trap the pollution emitted at or near ground level. These conditions are frequently in the wintertime late in the afternoon, persist during the night and may extend one or two hours after sunrise. In the Project area, CO concentrations are well below the state and federal ambient air quality standards. CO can reduce tolerance from exercise, cause impairment of mental function, harm fetal development, aggravate some heart diseases (angina), and cause death at high levels of exposure.

- Nitrogen Dioxide. Approximately 90 percent of the NOx emitted from combustion sources is nitric oxide (NO), while the balance is nitrogen dioxide ($NO_2$). NO is oxidized in the atmosphere to $NO_2$, but some level of photochemical activity is needed for this conversion. The highest concentrations of $NO_2$ are typically in the fall. The winter atmospheric conditions can trap emissions near the ground level, but lacking substantial photochemical activity (sunlight), $NO_2$ levels are relatively low. In the summer, the conversion rates of NO to $NO_2$ are high, but the relatively high temperatures and windy conditions disperse pollutants, preventing the accumulation of $NO_2$. The $NO_2$ concentrations in the Project area are well below the state and federal ambient air quality standards. $NO_2$ can aggravate respiratory diseases, reduce visibility, reduce plant growth, and form acid rain.
- Sulfur Dioxide. $SO_2$ is typically emitted as a result of the combustion of fuel containing sulfur. Overall $SO_2$ emissions are limited due to the reduced number of major stationary sources and the regulatory limits on motor vehicle fuel sulfur content. The $SO_2$ concentrations in the Project area are well below the state and federal ambient air quality standards. $SO_2$ can irritate the upper respiratory tract and be injurious to lung tissue causing reduced lung function, including asthma and emphysema. $SO_2$ can cause plant leaves to be yellow, and be destructive to metals, textiles, leather, finishes, and coatings. $SO_2$ can also limit visibility.

**Attainment Status and Air Quality Plans.** The USEPA, CARB, and the local air district classify an area as attainment, unclassified, or nonattainment. The classification depends on whether the monitored ambient air quality data show compliance, insufficient data available, or non-compliance with the ambient air quality standards, respectively. The Proposed Project would be primarily located in the City of San Bernardino, with a portion of the site located in unincorporated San Bernardino County, under the jurisdiction of the SCAQMD. Table 3.5-2 summarizes attainment status for the criteria pollutants in the South Coast with both the federal and state standards.

**Table 3.5-2. Attainment Status for South Coast**

| Pollutant | Federal Designation | State Designation |
|---|---|---|
| Ozone (1 hour) | Nonattainment | Nonattainment |
| Ozone (8 hour) | Nonattainment | Nonattainment |
| $PM_{10}$ | Attainment | Nonattainment |
| $PM_{2.5}$ | Nonattainment | Nonattainment |
| CO | Attainment | Attainment |
| $NO_2$ | Attainment | Attainment |
| $SO_2$ | Attainment | Attainment |

Source: SCAQMD, 2018.

## 3.5.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

### Construction and Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The SCAQMD and Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) have developed Air Quality Management Plans (AQMPs) to meet the requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA). AQMPs were developed in 2003, 2007, 2012, 2016, and 2022 to address various federal non-attainment and attainment/maintenance planning requirements. There are no applicable emissions reduction measures in these plans that are not already part of approved regulations and apply to the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project does not include stationary emissions sources, so very few SCAQMD regulations would apply, and the Proposed Project would comply with all applicable SCAQMD rules and regulations. Additionally, the Proposed Project would not cause new growth during construction or operation. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct the applicable air quality plans.

**(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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Project construction activities would create criteria air pollutant emissions, including ozone precursors, from on-road vehicles and off-road equipment utilized during construction, and fugitive particulate matter emissions resulting from earthmoving activities and vehicle travel. Construction would occur Monday through Saturday between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., consistent with the City of San Bernardino Municipal Code. Construction would not occur on weekends or federal holidays. A maximum of 25 construction workers would be required on site. This analysis uses the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) to derive emission estimates based on the fleet of off-road equipment types that would be used, the amount of materials that would be hauled to and from the Project site, and the estimated number of construction employees for each work task. Approximately 62,220 CY of material would be excavated and approximately 16,200 CY of material would be imported. No material would be required to be exported during construction.

The SCAQMD regional emissions significance thresholds for construction are as follows (SCAQMD, 2023a):

- Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) – 75 lbs/day
- Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) – 100 pounds per day (lbs/day)
- Carbon Monoxide (CO) – 550 lbs/day
- Sulfur Oxides (SOx) – 150 lbs/day
- Particulate Matter ($PM_{10}$) – 150 lbs/day
- Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$) – 55 lbs/day

Analysis of the Proposed Project uses the most-recent version of CalEEMod (version 2022.1.1) with Project-specific data to quantify the maximum daily rates of criteria air pollutant emissions. An emissions estimate of the worst-case daily activity, using CalEEMod, is provided in Table 3.5-3.

**Table 3.5-3. Maximum Daily Unmitigated Construction Emissions, Regional Thresholds**

| | VOC | NOX | CO | SOX | $PM_{10}$ | $PM_{2.5}$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs/day) | 3.49 | 22.04 | 31.78 | 0.10 | 5.87 | 1.33 |
| SCAQMD Regional Significance Thresholds (lbs/day) | 75 | 100 | 550 | 150 | 150 | 55 |
| Exceeds Thresholds? | No | No | No | No | No | No |

Source: Appendix A; SCAQMD, 2023a.

Table 3.5-3 compares the maximum daily unmitigated construction emissions of the Proposed Project with the SCAQMD regional emissions significance thresholds. As shown, the maximum daily construction emissions have been determined to be well below all SCAQMD regional significance thresholds. Therefore, Proposed Project construction regional emissions impacts are less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Project operation maximum daily emissions, as shown in Table 3.5-4, would be lower than construction emissions due to substantially less on-road vehicles, including less heavy truck travel. These emissions would also go down overtime as on-road vehicle and off-road equipment emissions decline due to the ongoing regulatory measures controlling emissions from these sources. No permanent on-site employees would be required, and the Proposed Project includes very limited regular ongoing operations and maintenance activities.

**Table 3.5-4. Maximum Daily Unmitigated Operation Emissions, Regional Thresholds**

| | VOC | NOX | CO | SOX | $PM_{10}$ | $PM_{2.5}$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs/day) | 1.15 | 8.33 | 10.62 | 0.03 | 0.27 | 0.25 |
| SCAQMD Regional Significance Thresholds (lbs/day) | 55 | 55 | 550 | 150 | 150 | 55 |
| Exceeds Thresholds? | No | No | No | No | No | No |

Source: Appendix A; SCAQMD, 2023a.

Table 3.5-4 compares the maximum daily unmitigated operation emissions of the Proposed Project with the SCAQMD regional emissions significance thresholds. As shown, the maximum daily operation emissions have been determined to be well below all SCAQMD regional significance thresholds. Therefore, the operation regional emissions would be well below the SCAQMD operation regional daily emissions significance thresholds.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Table 3.5-5 compares the maximum daily unmitigated on-site construction emissions of the Proposed Project with the applicable SCAQMD Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs). The LSTs were determined using the SCAQMD look up table (SCAQMD, 2009) for Source Receptor Area 34. The LSTs used were for the closest receptor distance which is 25 meters, and the largest project size which is 5 acres. While there are sensitive receptors closer than 25 meters, as the existing channel runs along the backyard of residences, the linear nature of the Proposed Project would ensure that no one sensitive receptor would be exposed to construction emissions for the entirety of Project construction. Appendix A includes detailed assumptions for the construction phases, including equipment assumptions used to generate the maximum daily localized (on-site) emissions.

**Table 3.5-5. Maximum Daily Unmitigated Construction Emissions, Localized Thresholds**

| | VOC | NOX | CO | SOX | $PM_{10}$ | $PM_{2.5}$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs/day) | 3.49 | 22.04 | 31.78 | 0.10 | 5.87 | 1.33 |
| SCAQMD Localized Significance Thresholds (lbs/day) | -- | 270 | 1,746 | -- | 14 | 8 |
| Exceeds Thresholds? | No | No | No | No | No | No |

Source: Appendix A; SCAQMD, 2009.

The maximum unmitigated daily on-site localized Project construction emissions were determined to be below all SCAQMD LSTs for the worst-case conditions where construction activities are located adjacent to residences.

**Valley Fever Risk Analysis**

Coccidioidomycosis, often referred to as San Joaquin Valley Fever or Valley Fever, is one of the most studied and oldest known fungal infections. Valley Fever most commonly affects people who live in hot dry areas with alkaline soil and varies with the season. This disease, which affects both humans and animals, is caused by inhalation of arthroconidia (spores) of the fungus *Coccidioides immitis* (CI). CI spores are found in the top few inches of soil and the existence of the fungus in most soil areas is temporary. The cocci fungus lives as a saprophyte (an organism, especially a fungus or bacterium, which grows on and derives its nourishment from dead or decaying organic matter) in dry, alkaline soil. When weather and moisture conditions are favorable, the fungus "blooms" and forms many tiny spores that lie dormant in the soil until they are stirred up by wind, vehicles, excavation, or other ground-disturbing activities and become airborne. Agricultural workers, construction workers, and other people who are outdoors and exposed to wind, dust, and disturbed topsoil are at an elevated risk of contracting Valley Fever (CDC, 2020).

Most people exposed to the CI spores will not develop the disease and out of 100 people who are infected approximately 60 will have no symptoms, 40 will have some symptoms, and 2 to 4 will have the more serious disseminated forms of the disease (Guevara, 2014). After recovery, nearly all, including the asymptomatic, develop a life-long immunity to the disease (Guevara, 2014). African Americans, Asians, women in the third trimester of pregnancy, and persons whose immunity is compromised are most likely to develop the most severe form of the disease (CDC, 2020). In addition to humans, a total of 70 different species are known to be susceptible to Valley Fever infections, including dogs, cats, and horses, with dogs being the most susceptible (LACPH, 2007).

The southwestern United States, including Southern California, are known to be endemic for Valley Fever by the Center for Disease Control (CDC, 2018). The annual incidence rates reported from 2016-2022, by the State Department of Public Health, indicate that San Bernardino County has relatively moderate rates (ranging from 1.8 to 11.4 cases per 100,000 population) of reported Valley Fever infections, below the average rate of 14.2 to 23.0 for the entire state during the same range (CDPH, 2022).

Substantial exposure to the CI spores could cause construction workers and area residents to contract the disease. The primary way to avoid Valley Fever, which is not transmittable person to person, is to limit exposure to the CI spores. Mitigation Measure (MM) AQ-1 would provide substantial control of the fugitive dust emissions during construction. The potential for the Proposed Project to increase incidence of Valley Fever infection during construction would be less than significant with mitigation.

### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM AQ-1** **Fugitive Dust Control.** All construction and site preparation operations shall be conducted in compliance with all applicable South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rules and Regulations with emphasis on Rule 401 – Visible Emissions, Rule 402 – Nuisance, and Rule 403 – Fugitive Dust. Additional measures to mitigate Valley Fever are included. The following specific dust control measures, unless more strict measures are implemented for SCAQMD rule compliance, shall be implemented:

- Apply environmentally safe chemical stabilization, which can be water or other non-toxic soil binder(s), at sufficient concentration and frequency to maintain a stabilized surface starting from the point of intersection with public paved surface to the working areas of the Project site, with an acceptable width to accommodate traffic ingress and egress from the site.

- Minimize areas of grading, excavation, earth moving, and surface disturbance to the extent feasible.
- Apply nontoxic chemical soil stabilizers according to manufacturers' specifications to all inactive construction areas (previously graded areas inactive for 10 days or more).
- Water active sites at least three times daily. Locations where grading is to occur shall be thoroughly watered prior to earthmoving.
- Cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials, or maintain at least 0.6 meters (2 feet) of freeboard (vertical space between the top of the load and top of the trailer) in accordance with the requirements of California Vehicle Code Section 23114.
- Pre-water areas to be graded or excavated, and water during grading/excavation activities so that soils being handled are moist (12% moisture or greater).
- Maintain stabilized surfaces on inactive graded/excavated areas by using water, rolling, or other non-toxic soil binders; and revegetate or perform other long-term surface stabilization within a week after active construction activities are completed.
- Install a properly functioning and well-maintained track-out control device(s) that prevents track-out of soil onto paved public roads.
- Remove track-out from pavement as soon as possible but no later than one hour after it has been deposited on the paved road.
- Use properly secured tarps or covering that covers the entire surface area of the earthen fill, or other fine bulk material, truck loads.
- Water or use environmentally safe chemical stabilization to treat earthen fill storage piles to minimize wind erosion emissions.
- Limit vehicle speeds, including off-road scrapers, on unpaved roads and work areas to 15 miles per hour (mph). Speed limit signs shall be posted on site at locations of the point of initial ingress to the unpaved areas and within unpaved work areas.
- Discontinue work activities, including all grading activities, except for fugitive dust control activities, as necessary to prevent nuisance dust conditions during high wind events (25 mph for more than 5 minutes in any hour).
- Provide National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health-approved respirators for workers.
- Conduct a job hazard analysis in compliance with Cal/OSHA regulations for any worker that will be exposed to dust.
- Require half-face respirators equipped with N-100 or P-100 filters to be used during digging if determined to be warranted after conducting a job hazard analysis.
- Require employees to wear respirators when working near earthmoving machinery if determined to be warranted after conducting a job hazard analysis.
- Require employees to be medically evaluated, fit-tested, and properly trained on the use of the respirators, and implement a full respiratory protection program in accordance with the applicable Cal/OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard (8 CCR § 5144).
- Thoroughly clean construction tools, equipment, and vehicles with water before they are moved off-site to other work locations.

- Wheel-washing facilities with water-recycling systems shall be provided at all site egress points. Vehicles leaving the site daily shall utilize wheel-washing facilities in order to reduce dust migration off the Project site.
- On-site workers shall be required to change clothes after work every day before leaving the work site, to prevent distribution of Coccidioides to non-endemic areas. As an alternative, disposable Tyvek® or equivalent work suits and work boots for use on-site shall be provided for workers.
- Work with a medical professional to develop a protocol to medically evaluate employees who develop symptoms of Valley Fever. Reporting of symptoms of Valley Fever and diagnosed cases of Valley Fever must occur consistent with Cal/OSHA requirements.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project's maximum daily operational emissions, as shown in Table 3.5-6, would be lower than the maximum daily construction emissions, as operation of the Proposed Project would include routine maintenance, such as vegetation management, debris and trash removal, channel bank and structure inspection, access route upkeep, and sediment and obstruction cleaning to maintain flow capacity. These maintenance activities would occur on a weekly and monthly scheduled basis for inspections and as needed following storm events. Maintenance activities would be performed using hand tools or light equipment to minimize disturbance.

**Table 3.5-6. Maximum Daily Unmitigated Operation Emissions, Localized Thresholds**

| | VOC | NOX | CO | SOX | PM10 | PM2.5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Maximum Daily Emissions (lbs/day) | 1.15 | 8.33 | 10.62 | 0.03 | 0.27 | 0.25 |
| SCAQMD Localized Significance Thresholds (lbs/day) | -- | 270 | 1,746 | -- | 4 | 2 |
| Exceeds Thresholds? | No | No | No | No | No | No |

Source: Appendix A; SCAQMD, 2009.

The SCAQMD LSTs were developed to identify substantial emissions that could cause near-field ambient air pollutant concentrations that could cause or contribute to a violation of short-term ambient air quality standards. The ambient air quality standards are set at levels meant to be health protective, and per the findings above that the Proposed Project would not have emission of a magnitude that would directly cause substantial increases in ambient pollutant levels surrounding the Project area. Additionally, the Proposed Project would not have the potential to substantially affect secondary pollutant formation that could cause substantial health effects. Therefore, the Proposed Project's criteria pollutant emissions would not be of a magnitude to cause substantial adverse health effects.

#### Toxic Air Contaminants (TAC) Health Risk Analysis

TAC emissions, primarily in the form of diesel particulate matter, would result during the short-term construction period, and then intermittently during the limited operations and maintenance activities required for the Proposed Project. However, the amount of TAC emissions that would be emitted from the Proposed Project's activities is minimal. Table 3.5-6 compares the LSTs to the operation emissions, and the total $PM_{10}$ and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions are below the LST. The exhaust specific PM emissions are much lower than the total; therefore, the Project's construction and operation TAC emissions would cause less-than-significant health risk impacts.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction and Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Typical objectionable odors during construction include ammonia, chlorine, and hydrogen sulfide; however, the Proposed Project would not create these pollutants in measurable quantities. Diesel equipment exhaust could be a potential source of odor during construction activities, although only for people immediately adjacent to the source. The odor from construction equipment is similar to on-road vehicles and would not be expected to be much different from typical conditions in the area. These odors would not affect a substantial number of people, would only result from the Proposed Project during short periods of time, and would be consistent with general construction activities that are not out of the ordinary.

Land uses generally associated with emissions leading to adverse odors typically include agricultural uses, landfills, composting operations, wastewater treatment plants, and food and chemical processing plants. The Proposed Project does not include any land uses typically associated with objectionable odor emissions. During Project operation, routine maintenance would occur, including vegetation management and sediment removal. These activities would be limited and would be performed using hand tools or light equipment when possible, minimizing odors from diesel exhaust. Operational activities involving diesel-powered equipment and vehicles would not be a source of notable odors because of the mandatory use of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel. Project-related activities would comply with local air district rules and regulations and would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

# 3.6. Biological Resources

| BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES<br>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 Wildlife 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 Wildlife 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.6.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

The following federal, state, and local regulations apply to development projects in the vicinity of the Project area. The applicability of these regulations is discussed below.

- **Federal Endangered Species Act**

  The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and its subsequent amendments protect plants and wildlife listed as endangered or threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The FESA also provides for the designation of critical habitat, which is defined as the specific areas within the geographical range occupied by a listed species that possess the physical or biological features essential for the conservation of the species and that may require special management protection. Section 9 of the FESA specifically prohibits the taking of FESA-protected wildlife and lists prohibited actions. The FESA defines take as "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, collect, or attempt to engage in such conduct (50 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 17.3). The FESA also governs the removal, possession, malicious damage, or destruction of endangered plants on federal land. Pursuant to the requirements of the FESA, an agency proposing a project or reviewing a proposed project within its jurisdiction (action agency) must determine whether any federally listed species may be present in the proposed project area and determine whether the proposed project will have a significant effect upon such species or its habitat.

- **Migratory Bird Treaty Act**

  The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) implements international treaties between the United States and other nations to protect migratory birds and their parts, eggs, and nests from activities such as hunting, pursuing, capturing, killing, selling, and shipping, unless expressly authorized by regulation or permit. Regulations governing migratory bird permits are found in 50 CFR 13 – General Permit Procedures and 50 CFR 21 – Migratory Bird Permits.

- **Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act**

  Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA), originally passed in 1940 and amended in 1962. The BGEPA prohibits the take, possession, sale, purchase, barter, offer to sell, transport, export, or import of any bald or golden eagle, alive or dead, including any part, nest, egg, unless allowed by permit (15 U.S.C. 668[a]; 50 CFR 22). The USFWS regulates activities that may take bald eagles or golden eagles. Take is defined as "pursuing, shooting, shooting at, poisoning, wounding, killing, capturing, trapping, collecting, molesting, and disturbing" bald or golden eagles, and as activities causing: "(1) injury to an eagle, (2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or (3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior" (USFWS, 2007).

- **California Environmental Quality Act**

  The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires state agencies, local governments, and special districts to evaluate and disclose impacts from projects in the state. Section 15380 of the CEQA Guidelines clearly indicates that plant and wildlife species designated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as Fully Protected (FP) or Species of Special Concern (SSC) should be included in an analysis of project impacts if they can be shown to meet the criteria of sensitivity outlined therein.

- **California Endangered Species Act**

  The California Endangered Species Act (CESA) provides that certain species of plants and wildlife that are of ecological, educational, historical, recreational, aesthetic, economic, and scientific value to the people of California are of statewide concern and should be conserved, protected, and enhanced along with their habitats. The CESA establishes policy that state agencies should not approve projects that would jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of habitats essential to the continued existence of those species if there are reasonable and prudent alternatives consistent with conserving the species or its habitat that would prevent jeopardy.

- **Fully Protected Designations**

  California Fish and Game Code (FGC) Sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515 designate 36 fish and wildlife species as FP from take, including hunting, harvesting, and other activities. The FGC sections dealing with FP species state that these species "…may not be taken or possessed at any time and no provisions of this code or any other law shall be construed to authorize the issuance of permits or licenses to take any fully protected species." Most of the species on these lists have been subsequently listed under the FESA or CESA.

  California Senate Bill 618 (signed by Governor Brown in October 2011) authorizes take of FP species, where pursuant to a Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP), approved by CDFW. The legislation gives FP species the same level of protection as is provided under the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act for endangered and threatened species.

California Senate Bill 147 (signed by Governor Newsom July 2023) amends 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515 and Section 395, and adds Section 2081.15 to the FGC. Fish and Game Commission is required to establish a list of endangered species and a list of threatened species and to add or remove species if the action is warranted. "The act prohibits the taking of endangered or threatened species, except in certain situations, including, if specific conditions are met, through the issuance of a permit commonly known as an incidental take permit." CDFW is authorized to issue a permit under CESA that would authorize the take of FP species resulting from impact attributable to the implementation of specified projects if certain conditions are met. This remains in effect until December 31, 2033. Furthermore, the bill removes the American peregrine falcon, brown pelican, and thicktail chub as FP species.

- **Native Bird Protections**

  FGC Sections 3503, 3503.3, and 3513 prohibit take, possession, or needless destruction of birds, nests, or eggs except as otherwise provided by the FGC. Section 3513 provides for the adoption of MBTA's provisions.

- **Furbearing Mammal Protections**

  FGC Section 251.1 prohibits the harassment of any furbearing mammal. Harass is defined as an intentional act which disrupts an animal's normal behavior patterns, which includes, but is not limited to, breeding, feeding or sheltering.

- **California Code of Regulations Title 14**

  Title 14 Cal. Code of Regulations Section 460 states that fisher, marten, river otter, desert kit fox, and red fox may not be taken at any time. Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 14, Section 362 - Nelson Bighorn Sheep regulates the taking of Nelsons Bighorn Sheep.

- **California Native Plant Protection Act**

  The California Native Plant Protection Act (CNPPA) of 1977 (FGC Sections 1900-1913) was created with the intent to "preserve, protect, and enhance rare and endangered plants in California." The CNPPA is administered by CDFW while the Fish and Game Commission has the authority to designate native plants as "endangered" or "rare" and to protect endangered and rare plants from take.

- **San Bernardino County General Plan**

  The San Bernardino County General Plan Natural Resources Element (San Bernardino County, 2022), NR-5 Biological Resources, establishes policies to preserve and protect biological resources, including:

  - **Policy NR-5.1 Coordinated habitat planning:** Participate in landscape-scale habitat conservation planning and coordinate with existing or proposed habitat conservation and natural resource management plans for private and public lands to increase certainty for both the conservation of species, habitats, wildlife corridors, and other important biological resources and functions; and for land development and infrastructure permitting.
  - **Policy NR-5.2 Capacity for resource protection and management:** Coordinate with public and non-governmental agencies to seek funding and other resources to protect, restore, and maintain open space, habitat, and wildlife corridors for threatened, endangered, and other sensitive species.
  - **Policy NR-5.3 Multiple-resource benefits:** Prioritize conservation actions that demonstrate multiple resource preservation benefits, such as biology, climate change adaptation and resiliency, hydrology, cultural, scenic, and community character.
  - **Policy NR-5.4 Off-base recovery efforts:** Coordinate with military installations to facilitate off-base recovery of threatened and endangered species and landscape-scale conservation.

- **Policy NR-5.5 Mitigation and future responsibilities:** Require that new development satisfy habitat conservation responsibilities without shifting conservation responsibilities onto military property.
- **Policy NR-5.6 Mitigation banking:** Support the proactive assemblage of lands to protect biological resources and facilitate development through private or public mitigation banking. Require public and private conservation lands or mitigation banks to ensure that easement and fee title agreements provide funding methods sufficient to manage the land in perpetuity.
- **Policy NR-5.7 Development review, entitlement, and mitigation:** Comply with state and federal regulations regarding protected species of animals and vegetation through the development review, entitlement, and environmental clearance processes.
- **Policy NR-5.8 Invasive species:** Require the use of non-invasive plant species with new development and encourage the management of existing invasive plant species that degrade ecological function.

■ **City of San Bernardino General Plan**

The City of San Bernardino County General Plan Natural Resources and Conservation Element (City of San Bernardino, 2005) establishes goals and policies to maintain, improve, and preserve the quality and supply of the City's natural resources, including:

- **Goal 12.1:** Conserve and enhance San Bernardino's biological resources.
  - **Policy 12.1.1:** Acquire and maintain current information regarding the status and location of sensitive biological elements (species and natural communities) within the planning area, as shown on Figure NRC-1.
  - **Policy 12.1.2:** Site and develop land uses in a manner that is sensitive to the unique characteristics of and that minimizes the impacts upon sensitive biological resources.
  - **Policy 12.1.3:** Require that all proposed land uses in the "Biological Resource Management Area" (BRM) be subject to review by the Environmental Review Committee (ERC).
  - **Policy 12.1.4:** Require that development in the BRM:
    (a) Submit a report prepared by a qualified professional(s) that addresses the proposed project's impact on sensitive species and habitat, especially those that are identified in State and Federal conservation programs;
    (b) Identify mitigation measures necessary to eliminate significant adverse impacts to sensitive biological resources;
    (c) Define a program for monitoring, evaluating the effectiveness of, and ensuring the adequacy of the specified mitigation measures; and
    (d) Discuss restoration of significant habitats.
- **Goal 12.2:** Protect riparian corridors to provide habitat for fish and wildlife.
  - **Policy 12.2.1:** Prohibit development and grading within fifty (50) feet of riparian corridors, as identified by a qualified biologist, unless no feasible alternative exists.
  - **Policy 12.2.2:** Generally permit the following uses within riparian corridors: (a) Education and research, excluding buildings and other structures; (b) Passive (non-mechanized) recreation; (c) Trails and scenic overlooks on public land(s); (d) Fish and wildlife management activities; (e) Necessary water supply projects; (f) Resource consumptive uses as provided for in the Fish and Game Code and Title 14 of the California Administrative Code; (g) Flood control projects where no other methods are available to protect the public safety; (h) Bridges and pipelines when supports are not in significant conflict with corridor resources.

- **Policy 12.2.3:** Pursue voluntary open space or conservation easements to protect sensitive species or their habitats.
- **Policy 12.2.4:** Development adjacent to riparian corridors shall: (a) Minimize removal of vegetation; (b) Minimize erosion, sedimentation, and runoff by appropriate protection or vegetation and landscape; (c) Provide for sufficient passage of native and anadromous fish as specified by the California Department of Fish and Game; (d) Minimize wastewater discharges and entrapment; (e) Prevent groundwater depletion or substantial interference with surface and subsurface flows; and provide for natural vegetation buffers.
- **Policy 12.2.5:** Permit modification of the boundaries of the designated riparian corridors based on field research and aerial interpretation data as part of biological surveys.

- **Goal 12.3:** Establish open space corridors between and to protect wildlands.
  - **Policy 12.3.1:** Identify areas and formulate recommendations for the acquisition of property, including funding, to establish a permanent corridor contiguous to the National Forest via Cable Creek and/or Devil Canyon. The City shall consult with various federal, state and local agencies and City departments prior to the adoption of any open space corridor plan.
  - **Policy 12.3.2:** Seek to acquire real property rights of open space corridor parcels identified as being suitable for acquisition.
  - **Policy 12.3.3:** Establish the following habitat types as high priority for acquisition as funds are available: (a) Habitat of endangered species; (b) Alluvial scrub vegetation; (c) Riparian vegetation dominated by willow, alder, sycamore, or native oaks; and (d) Native walnut woodlands.
  - **Policy 12.3.4:** Preserve and enhance the natural characteristics of the Santa Ana River, City Creek, and Cajon Creek as habitat areas.
  - **Policy 12.3.5:** Prevent further loss of existing stands of Santa Ana River Wooly-star (*Eriastrum densifolium sanctorum*) and Slender-horned centrostegia (*Centrostegia leptoceras*).

### Affected Environment

This section describes the biological resources that occur in the Proposed Project area. It includes a description of the existing biotic environment, including common plants and wildlife, sensitive habitats, special-status species and their locations in relation to the Proposed Project. Section 3.6.2 presents an analysis of potential impacts to biological resources and, where necessary, specifies mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to less-than-significant levels. Information used in preparing this section was derived from the results of a field survey conducted on May 7, 2026, and the following sources:

- CDFW Sensitive Natural Communities (CDFW, 2026b);
- CDFW Special Animals List (CDFW, 2026c);
- CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (CNPS, 2026);
- Consortium of California Herbaria (CCH) records for plants in the vicinity of the Project area (CCH, 2026);
- iNaturalist observations of special-status species observed within the vicinity of the Project area (iNaturalist, 2026); and
- eBird observations of special-status birds documented within the vicinity of the Project area (eBird, 2026).

### Vegetation Communities

No vegetation communities of adequate size for mapping were identified within the Project area. Two other land cover types were present and mapped and are discussed below. These land cover types do not match any cover types described in *A Manual of California Vegetation*.

- **Disturbed/Developed.** Disturbed/Developed areas within the Project area include paved and dirt roads and other unvegetated areas. Vegetation, when present includes ruderal species such as treasure flower (*Gazania linearis*), redstem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), and London rocket (*Sisymbrium irio*), and scattered ornamental species such as oleander (*Nerium oleander*).
- **Flood Control Channel.** The flood control channel was used to map portions of the Project area that are maintained by the District after large storm events and as needed to remove trash and debris. This includes the existing channel and Little Mountain Basin. These areas are largely unvegetated with some scattered non-native species such as water speedwell (Veronica anagallis-aquatica), white sweetclover (*Melilotus albus*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*). Several native species are also present such as watercress (*Nasturtium officinale*), common knotweed (*Persicaria lapathifolia*), and seep monkey flower (*Erythranthe guttata*).

### Special-Status Plants and Animals

The Project site contains limited suitable habitat for special-status species. As discussed in the Biological Resources Technical Report (Appendix B), no special-status plants have the potential to be present, and eight special-status wildlife species have at least a moderate potential to be present including the following species:

- Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*)
- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)
- Western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*)
- Coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*)
- Loggerhead shrike (Lanius ludovicianus)
- Cooper's hawk (*Astur cooperii*)
- Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)
- San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*)

Potential impacts to these species, should they be present, are discussed below.

### Jurisdictional Waters

The Project site contains three drainage features consisting of the North San Bernardino Channel, Western Avenue Channel, and an unnamed storm drain near the downstream end of the Project site. These three aquatic resources are expected to fall under the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (SARWQCB) and CDFW. Approximately 3.69 acres of SARWQCB waters of the State were mapped within the Project footprint and include 0.72 acres of temporary impacts and 2.96 acres of permanent impacts. Approximately 7.23 acres of CDFW jurisdictional streambeds were mapped within the Project footprint and include 1.58 acres of temporary impacts and 5.65 acres of permanent impacts. Additional details on aquatic resources can be found in the Aquatic Resources Delineation Report (Appendix C).

## 3.6.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(a) Would the project 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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?**

### Construction and Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED.

### Special-Status Plants

As described in the Biological Resources Technical Report, no special-status plants were observed within the Project site, and none have the potential to be present. Therefore, no impacts to special-status species are expected to occur.

### Special-Status Wildlife

As described in the Biological Resources Technical Report, one candidate for listing under FESA, monarch butterfly, and two candidates for state listing under CESA, Crotch's bumble bee and western burrowing owl are known from the region and have a potential to be present. Furthermore, several CDFW species of special concern, are known from the region and have a potential to be present and include coastal whiptail, loggerhead shrike, Cooper's hawk, merlin, and San Diego desert woodrat.

The Proposed Project has the potential to result in both direct and indirect impacts to the special-status wildlife species listed above. The Project site supports a limited amount of wildlife habitat that provides breeding and foraging habitat for special-status wildlife. Construction activities such as vegetation clearing, grading, and increased human presence have the potential to disturb or displace wildlife and degrade habitat quality.

The Proposed Project is expected to result in both direct and indirect impacts to special-status pollinators, including Crotch's bumble bee and monarch butterfly. Direct impacts include the removal of native flowering plants which serve as nectar sources for both species, and are essential for foraging, reproduction, and survival. Ground disturbance and vegetation clearing may also destroy nesting or overwintering sites for Crotch's bumble bees. Indirect impacts include increased human activity, which may lead to trampling of native flowering plants and a potential increase in invasive species. Avoidance and mitigation measures such as providing workers training and implementing pre-construction surveys would be required to minimize potential impacts these species.

The Proposed Project has the potential to result in both direct and indirect impacts to western burrowing owl. Direct impacts include the destruction or collapse of active or potential burrows during grading, excavation, or heavy equipment use, which can lead to injury or mortality of adults, juveniles, or eggs. Construction activities near occupied burrows may also cause nest abandonment or reproductive failure, particularly during the breeding season. Indirect impacts include habitat degradation from vegetation removal, which reduces prey availability and cover, and increased human disturbance, which can lead to displacement or increased predation risk. To mitigate these impacts, mitigation measures including pre-construction surveys, worker training, biological monitoring, and seasonal avoidance buffers would be implemented.

Project activities pose direct and indirect threats to special-status reptiles, including coastal whiptail. Direct impacts include the destruction of habitat through grading, vegetation removal, and soil compaction, which can result in the mortality or displacement of individuals. Indirect impacts include increased human activity, which can lead to harassment, trampling, and predation, as well as habitat degradation from the spread of invasive plant species and altered microclimatic conditions. These changes

can reduce prey availability and disrupt thermoregulation. To mitigate these impacts, mitigation measures including pre-construction surveys, providing workers training, and biological monitoring during all ground-disturbing activities would be implemented.

Nesting birds and special-status birds including loggerhead shrike and Cooper's hawk have the potential to be directly and indirectly impacted by the Project. Direct impacts may include the disturbance or destruction of active nests during vegetation clearing, grading, or equipment operation. Ground-nesting and shrub-nesting species are particularly vulnerable to direct mortality or nest abandonment if construction occurs during the breeding season (typically February 1 through August 15). In addition to direct impacts, the Proposed Project may result in indirect impacts to nesting birds due to increased human activity, noise, and habitat disturbance associated with trail construction and recreational use. These disturbances can lead to nest abandonment, reduced reproductive success, and increased vulnerability to predators. Noise and visual disturbance from construction equipment or trail users may disrupt normal breeding behavior, particularly for species that are sensitive to human presence. To minimize these impacts, pre-construction nesting bird surveys would be conducted. If active nests are identified, appropriate no-disturbance buffers (generally 50 to 500 feet, depending on species and activity) would be established and maintained until the young have fledged or the nest is no longer active.

Project activities pose a variety of direct and indirect threats to special-status mammals, including San Diego desert woodrat. Direct impacts include the destruction of habitat through grading, vegetation removal, and soil compaction, which can result in the mortality or displacement of individuals. Indirect impacts include increased human activity, which can lead to harassment, trampling, and predation, as well as habitat degradation from the spread of invasive plant species and altered microclimatic conditions. To mitigate these impacts, mitigation measures including pre-construction surveys, providing workers training, and biological monitoring during all ground-disturbing activities will be implemented.

Potential impacts to the special-status species discussed above would be avoided or minimized with the implementation of MMs BIO-1 through BIO-5. These measures include pre-construction surveys, protective buffers, biological monitoring, and, where necessary, acquiring an Incidental Take Permit.

### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM BIO-1** **Qualified Biologist.** A Qualified Biologist shall monitor the construction crew and remain on site during initial ground disturbing and vegetation removal. Once the initial ground disturbing and vegetation removal activities have been completed, the frequency of monitoring can be reduced to one monitoring day per week. The Qualified Biologist shall ensure that impacts to special-status species and other sensitive biological resources are avoided or minimized. The Qualified Biologist shall have the authority, and obligation, to immediately stop any activity that could impact special-status species and other sensitive biological resources or that does not comply with proposed mitigation measures.

At a minimum, the responsibilities of the Qualified Biologist shall include:

- Implementing a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) for all construction personnel prior to conducting any work in sensitive areas. This will also include daily morning training to remind crews of the sensitive resources that occur in the Project site.
- Conduct pre-construction sweeps within the designated work area prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities. These sweeps will be performed by a qualified biologist to ensure that no special-status plant or wildlife species, including nesting birds, are present.

- Ensuring the proposed mitigation measures and any additional regulatory permit conditions are properly implemented.
- Ensuring that all Project activities occur within approved Project site limits and access roads.
- Inspecting all open holes and trenches regularly and just prior to back-filling or covering and ensuring all open excavations are backfilled prior to crews leaving the work area.
- Immediately stop work if any special-status wildlife species are observed within 50 feet of active work areas and ensure that no work activities occur until the animal has left the area under its own volition.

**MM BIO-2** **Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP**). A WEAP training shall be prepared and provided to all Project personnel prior to the commencement of any on-site activities. The training shall include an overview of special-status species (i.e., protected wildlife and nesting birds) that are known to occur or have the potential to occur within the Project site. It will also cover sensitive habitat types, applicable regulatory requirements, and the specific mitigation measures that must be followed during construction to prevent unauthorized impacts. The WEAP shall emphasize the roles and responsibilities of all personnel, the importance of complying with environmental permits, and the procedures for reporting wildlife encounters or environmental concerns. Upon completion of the training, all Project personnel shall be required to sign a log sheet confirming that they have received the training and understand the mitigation measures and environmental compliance expectations.

**MM BIO-3** **Crotch's Bumble Bee.** A pre-construction survey shall be conducted no more than 14 days prior to the start of any ground-disturbing activities. Surveys shall be performed by a Qualified Biologist during the species' active season (typically late spring through early fall) and shall cover the entire Project footprint, including a 50-foot buffer. Surveys shall follow the most current guidance provided by California Department of Fish and Wildlife. If a Crotch's bumble bee nest is found, the District shall obtain an Incidental Take Permit from California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**MM BIO-4** **Nesting Birds.** If Project activities cannot occur outside the bird breeding season, then pre-construction surveys for active nests shall be conducted within 500 feet of the Project site no more than seven days before the initiation of construction that would occur between February 1 and August 15. Active nests must be monitored during construction. If Project activities disturb nesting, the Biological Monitor shall notify the construction manager. The Biological Monitor has the authority to implement measures to reduce disturbance in the vicinity. If any special-status wildlife nests are found during the survey, a 500-foot avoidance buffer shall be established. The avoidance buffer shall be maintained until the young have fledged. The frequency of the monitoring visits will be determined by the Biological Monitor.

**MM BIO-5** **Western Burrowing Owl.** Within 14 days prior to the start of Project activities, a qualified biologist shall conduct burrowing owl surveys within 500 feet of the Project site. If an active burrow is detected, a 500-foot avoidance buffer shall be established around each burrow during the nesting season (February 1 through August 31). If active burrowing owl burrows are observed outside of the nesting season, a minimum 150-foot no-disturbance buffer shall be established around each burrow. Occupied burrows shall not be disturbed during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31) unless an approved biologist verifies, through non-invasive methods, that both (1) the birds have not begun egg-laying

and incubation, and (2) that juveniles from the occupied burrow are foraging independently and are capable of independent survival. If burrowing owl are present and have potential to be impacted by the Project, the District shall obtain an Incidental Take Permit from California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

**(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, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. Sensitive natural communities, including riparian habitat, were not observed within the Project area (see Appendix B). Proposed Project activities are not expected to result in permanent or temporary impacts to sensitive natural communities or any regulated riparian habitat. Therefore, no impacts are expected, and no mitigation is required.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

**(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.) either individually or in combination with the known or probable impacts of other activities through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?**

### Construction and Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. There are approximately 3.69 acres of non-wetland water of the State within the Project site. There is approximately 7.23 acres of CDFW jurisdictional streambeds present on the Project site that are regulated under Section 1600 of the California Fish and Game Code. The Proposed Project is expected to permanently impact approximately 2.96 acres of non-wetland water of the State and 5.65 acres of CDFW jurisdictional streambeds. The Proposed Project is also expected to temporarily impact approximately 0.72 acres of non-wetland water of the State and 1.58 acres of CDFW jurisdictional streambeds. The non-wetland water of the State and CDFW jurisdictional streambeds within the Project site are highly developed and urbanized and provide very little wildlife habitat or stream function. The loss of these features would likely be considered less than significant because of their location and condition. Regardless of the insignificance of the loss of these features, any impact on these jurisdictional features would require the District to obtain regulatory permits from the following agencies:

- Santa Ana River Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) under Section 401 of the CWA.
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), under Section 1600 of the California Fish and Game Code.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

**(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 wildlife nursery sites?**

### Construction and Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED. Wildlife may use the Project site on occasion to move through the general area or to travel along the flood control channel. The Project site is located in a highly urbanized area that is not expected to support a significant wildlife population. Regardless, the Proposed Project would not erect permanent or long-term barriers to wildlife movement, although there would be

some short-term interruption of potential movement during Project activities. These short-term impacts would not prevent fish or wildlife access to important resources or habitat areas and therefore would be less than significant.

Wildlife nursery sites such as shrubs for birds; bare ground for ground-nesting birds; and burrows or other nesting areas for ground-dwelling vertebrates are present. Project activities would remove vegetation that birds could nest in and would also disturb bare ground and burrows that other wildlife could utilize for nesting. Due to the poor quality of the habitat and availability of similar habitats surrounding the Project area, any loss of habitat would be negligible and less than significant.

There is a potential for nesting birds to be present on the Project site and to be impacted by Project activities. MM BIO-4 would require pre-construction nesting bird surveys on the Project area and would require avoidance of nests until the nestlings fledge or the nest is no longer active. Nesting bird buffers would be established, as needed to further avoid impacts on any nesting birds should they be present during Project activities. By implementing MM BIO-4, the Proposed Project would avoid or minimize disturbance to nesting birds and any potential effects to these wildlife nursery sites would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM BIO-4 Nesting Birds.** See Section 3.6.2(a) for the full measure text.

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

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project is not located within any designated open space or wildlife corridors identified in the San Bernardino County General Plan Open Space Element (San Bernardino County, 2007). The Plant Protection and Management Section (Section 88.01.070) of the San Bernardino County Development Code regulate the removal of native trees with a minimum size of six inch or greater stem diameter measured 4.5 feet above natural grade level. The Plant Protection and Management Section (Section 88.01.080) of the San Bernardino County Development Code regulate the removal of riparian plants within 200 feet of a stream bank. The City of San Bernardino County General Plan Natural Resources and Conservation Element also establishes goals and policies to maintain, improve, and preserve the quality and supply of the City's natural resources. These County Development Codes and the City General Plan do not apply to the San Bernardino County Flood Control District and therefore the Proposed Project would have no impacts to any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. No impact would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

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

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project is not located within an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Communities Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. No impact would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

# 3.7. Cultural Resources

| CULTURAL RESOURCES<br>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 dedicated cemeteries? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.7.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *State*

**California Register of Historical Resources (PRC § 5024.1)**

The California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) establishes the following criteria for listing as a historical resource:

(a) is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage

(b) is associated with the lives of persons important to our past

(c) embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values

(d) has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

The CRHR also includes the following:

- properties determined eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)
- a resource included in a local register of historical resources or identified in a historical resources survey
- any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that a lead agency determines to be historically significant
- Points of Historical Interest and State Historical Landmarks with a number greater than No 770.

**California Environmental Quality Act (PRC § 21084.1)**

CEQA requires that lead agencies determine if a project could have a significant impact on historical or unique archaeological resources. CEQA establishes that an impact that results in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is considered a significant impact on the environment. A substantial adverse change could result from physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of the historical resource would be materially impaired (14 CCR § 15064.5 (b)(1)). Material impairment is defined as demolition or alteration in an adverse manner [of] those characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the CRHR or a local register (14 CCR § 15064.5(b)(2)(A)).

In 2014, CEQA was expanded to include the category tribal cultural resource. A project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that

may have a significant effect on the environment (PRC § 21084.2). It further states the CEQA lead agency shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effects to any tribal cultural resource (PRC § 21084.3).

Unique Archaeological Resources (PRC § 21083.2). If an archaeological resource does not qualify as a historical resource, it may meet the definition of a "unique archaeological resource." PRC Section 21083.2(g) defines a unique archaeological resource as an artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

(a) contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.

(b) has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type

(c) is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person

**Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5**

In the event of the discovery of human remains outside of the context of a formal cemetery, the California Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5, requires that construction be halted and that the coroner be notified. Requires the coroner to notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) if remains are determined to be Native American in origin.

**Public Resources Code, Section 5097.98**

In the event human remains are discovered, PRC Section 5097.98 authorizes the NAHC to assign a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). This section also requires that the landowner ensure the discovery is not further damaged and the MLD then may, with the landowner's permission, inspect the find and make recommendations for the culturally appropriate treatment or disposition of the human remains and any associated grave goods. The landowner shall confer with the MLD all reasonable options regarding the MLD's preferences for treatment. Where the parties are unable to agree on the appropriate treatment measures, the Native American human remains and associated items shall be reinterred on the property with appropriate dignity.

### *Local*

**San Bernardino County Policy Plan**

The Cultural Resources Element of the San Bernardino County Policy Plan contains the following applicable goals and policies:

- **Policy CR-1.1 Tribal Notification and Coordination:** Requires the County to notify and coordinate with tribal representatives in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Coordination must address avoidance of Native American archaeological sites and burials, treatment of inadvertent discoveries, and consideration of avoidance alternatives early in project planning.
- **Policy CR-1.2 Tribal Planning:** Requires the County to collaborate with local tribes during countywide planning efforts and, when permitted or required, during planning efforts initiated by tribes.
- **Policy CR-1.3 Mitigation and Avoidance:** Requires consultation with local tribes to develop project-specific mitigation measures and resource-specific treatment procedures. Applicants must design projects to avoid known tribal cultural resources whenever possible. When avoidance is infeasible, appropriate mitigation must be implemented to minimize impacts.
- **Policy CR-1.4 Resource Monitoring:** Encourages coordination with and active participation by local tribes as monitors during cultural resources surveys, testing, excavation, grading, and other project activities that could affect tribal resources.

- **Policy CR-2.1 National and State Historic Resources:** Encourages preservation of archaeological sites and structures of state or national significance in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.
- **Policy CR-2.2 Local Historic Resources:** Encourages property owners to maintain the historic integrity of locally significant resources. Treatment should follow the County's stated order of preference: preservation, adaptive reuse, and memorialization.
- **Policy CR-2.3 Paleontological and Archaeological Resources:** Requires new development to avoid archaeological and paleontological resources whenever possible. When avoidance is infeasible, appropriate mitigation must be implemented to salvage and preserve affected resources and maintain their quality and integrity.
- **Policy CR-2.4 Partnerships:** Encourages partnerships that support and fund the preservation and restoration of historic sites, structures, and districts.
- **Policy CR-2.5 Public Awareness and Education:** Directs the County to increase public awareness and provide education concerning historic, natural, tribal, and cultural resources through the San Bernardino County Museum and collaboration with other organizations.

**San Bernardino County Development Code**

Chapter 82.12 of the San Bernardino County Development Code establishes the Cultural Resources Preservation (CP) Overlay and contains the following requirements:

- **Section 82.12.010 – Purpose:** Establishes the CP Overlay to identify and preserve important archaeological and historical resources because these resources are unique and nonrenewable and contribute to an understanding of county history**.**
- **Section 82.12.020 – Location Requirements:** Allows the CP Overlay to be applied where archaeological or historic resources warranting preservation are known or likely to occur. Known resources may be identified through the California Archaeological Inventory, California Historical Resources Inventory, California Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, or National Register of Historic Places.
- **Section 82.12.030 –** Application Requirements: Requires applications for projects within a CP Overlay to include a cultural resources report prepared by a qualified professional. The report must determine whether archaeological or historical resources are present and recommend appropriate protection or data-recovery measures. Required measures may include:
  - Site recordation;
  - Mapping and surface collection;
  - Artifact analysis and curation;
  - Excavation of subsurface deposits;
  - Preservation through an open-space easement;
  - Dedication to an appropriate institution; or
  - Curation of recovered materials and documentation at the San Bernardino County Museum.
- **Section 82.12.040 – Development Standards:** Requires the proposed project to incorporate all protection and data-recovery measures recommended in the qualified professional's report. Resources determined to be extremely important should, when possible, be preserved as open space or dedicated to a public institution.

- **Section 82.12.050 – Native American Monitor:** Requires notification of the appropriate local tribe when Native American cultural resources are discovered during grading or excavation or when a project site is within a high-sensitivity CP Overlay area. If requested by the tribe, a Native American monitor must be present during grading or excavation to ensure that cultural materials are appropriately protected or recovered.

**City of San Bernardino General Plan**

The City of San Bernardino General Plan establishes the local policy framework for identifying, evaluating, preserving, and managing cultural resources within the City. Chapter 11, Historical and Archaeological Resources, recognizes that archaeological sites, historic buildings, structures, districts, and other culturally significant properties are nonrenewable community resources that may be affected by development.

- **Goal 11.1** directs the City to develop a program to protect, preserve, and restore sites, buildings, and districts possessing architectural, historical, archaeological, or cultural significance.
  - **Policy 11.1.2** calls for the City to maintain and update its Historic Resources Reconnaissance Survey database and integrate the resulting information into the City's ordinance and environmental-review processes.
  - **Policy 11.1.4** directs the City to maintain an inventory of significant historic, architectural, and cultural resources. Both policies recognize the need to consult California Native American tribes before publicly distributing information that may raise confidentiality concerns.
  - **Policy 11.1.9** requires environmental review of grading, building, demolition, and other applications involving resources that are designated or potentially eligible for designation as significant. This review is intended to ensure that significant resources are identified, preserved, and protected before project approval or ground disturbance occurs.
- **Goal 11.4** directs the City to protect and enhance its historic and cultural resources.
  - **Policy 11.4.1** encourages the preservation, maintenance, enhancement, and adaptive reuse of existing buildings within redevelopment and commercial areas. The policy also supports retaining and renovating existing residential buildings or relocating such buildings when onsite preservation is determined infeasible.
- **Goal 11.5** addresses archaeological resources specifically.
  - **Policy 11.5.1** calls for an inventory of archaeologically sensitive areas, with tribal consultation conducted before sensitive information is publicly distributed.
  - **Policy 11.5.2** directs the City to develop mitigation measures for projects within archaeologically sensitive areas. Such measures may include protecting archaeological locations, recovering cultural materials when appropriate, and consulting California Native American tribes regarding the treatment and disposition of Native American cultural materials.

## Affected Environment

### *Cultural Setting*

**Precontact history.** The chronological framework used for the San Bernardino Valley divides the regional precontact record into five broad periods based on changes in settlement, subsistence, technology, and material culture (Aspen, 2026).

**Paleoindian Period (13,000 to 10,000 cal. BCE)**

Evidence of Paleoindian occupation in inland southern California is limited. Early populations were highly mobile hunter-gatherers who used flaked-stone tools and relied on diverse plant and animal resources.

Environmental changes and the extinction of many large-bodied animals near the end of the Pleistocene encouraged a broader reliance on plant foods and smaller game, contributing to the development of Archaic adaptations (Aspen, 2026).

**Early Archaic Period (10,000 to 8,000 cal. BCE)**

The Early Archaic Period is associated with the San Dieguito tradition, characterized by stemmed projectile points, crescents, and bifacial tools. Milling implements appeared by approximately 7,500 years before present, reflecting an increased emphasis on plant processing. Coastal communities relied more heavily on marine resources, while inland populations focused on wild seeds, acorns, and other plant foods (Aspen, 2026).

**Archaic Period (8,000 to 3,000 cal. BCE)**

The Archaic Period was marked by the widespread use of milling stones and manos for processing seeds and other plant foods. Hunting remained important, as demonstrated by projectile points and animal remains. Archaeological assemblages may also include chopping tools, hammerstones, scrapers, worked bone, beads, cogged stones, discoidals, and stone balls. Coastal sites frequently contain shellfish and fish remains (Aspen, 2026).

**Intermediate Period (3,000 to 1350 cal. BCE)**

The Intermediate Period is characterized by the introduction of mortars and pestles for processing acorns, seeds, greens, and other plant resources. Hunting was conducted primarily with atlatls and large projectile points. Settlement patterns were likely semi-sedentary, with winter residential bases near dependable water sources and seasonal camps used for resource procurement (Aspen, 2026).

**Late Precontact Period (1350 cal. BCE to Historic)**

The Late Precontact Period included the introduction of the bow and arrow, the adoption of ceramic technology after approximately A.D. 1000, and increasingly intensive use of acorns and other plant foods. Warmer and drier conditions during the Medieval Climatic Anomaly may have encouraged concentrated resource use and the establishment of permanent or semi-permanent settlements near reliable water sources. Late-period assemblages may include bedrock mortars, milling tools, small triangular projectile points, shell beads, pottery, pictographs, cremation urns, and Euro-American materials dating to the early historic era (Aspen, 2026).

**Ethnography.** The Area of Potential Effect (APE) is located near the southwestern extent of traditionally documented Serrano territory and the eastern extent of Tongva (Gabrieleño) territory. The traditional lands of these groups adjoined and may have overlapped within the San Bernardino Valley. The term Gabrieleño historically referred to Indigenous communities associated with Mission San Gabriel, while many contemporary descendants identify as Tongva. Serrano territory is generally associated with the San Bernardino Mountains, adjacent foothills and deserts, and areas extending east toward Twentynine Palms and south into Yucaipa Valley (Aspen, 2026).

The Tongva and Serrano practiced hunting and gathering economies and maintained semi-sedentary settlement systems. Permanent villages were generally established near reliable water sources, while temporary camps were used for seasonal plant gathering and communal hunting. Archaeological evidence of these activities may include midden deposits, bedrock milling features, lithic artifacts, and temporary habitation deposits. Tongva communities also used marine and estuarine resources available along the Pacific Coast and offshore islands (Aspen, 2026).

**Regional History.** The City of San Bernardino occupies part of Rancho San Bernardino, a Mexican-era land grant awarded in 1842. Mormon settlers purchased part of the rancho in 1851 and established the community of San Bernardino, although most returned to Utah several years later. San Bernardino County

was formed in 1853, with San Bernardino selected as the county seat. The community was incorporated as a town in 1868 and as a city in 1886 (Aspen, 2026).

San Bernardino remained primarily an agricultural community until railroad construction stimulated rapid growth during the late nineteenth century. The California Southern Railroad reached San Bernardino in 1883 and connected the city with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway's transcontinental system in 1885. Competition between regional railroads encouraged migration, land speculation, subdivision development, and substantial increases in property values during the late 1880s (Aspen, 2026).

San Bernardino experienced an economic decline during the Great Depression but expanded during World War II because of its strategic inland location and connections to regional transportation and communication networks. Major military facilities included Camp Ono and the San Bernardino Army Air Depot, later renamed Norton Air Force Base. Norton Air Force Base remained an important component of the regional economy until its closure in 1994 (Aspen, 2026).

## Record Searches

### South Central Information Center

A cultural resources records search was conducted by staff at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at California State University, Fullerton, California, on July 6, 2026, and included a search of the APE and a surrounding 0.25-mile buffer area. All applicable historic topographic maps, photographs, and determinations of eligibility were also consulted. The record search results indicated that eight previously prepared reports fell within the record search buffer, with one covering a portion of the APE. Additionally, the record search identified two previously recorded resources within the 0.25-mile records search buffer, neither of which are mapped within the APE.

### Native American Heritage Commission-Sacred Lands File Search

On April 30, 2026, Aspen requested that the NAHC complete a search of its Sacred Lands File (SLF) to determine if resources significant to Native Americans have been recorded within 0.5-miles of the Project APE. On May 5, 2026, Aspen received a response from the NAHC stating that the results of the SLF search were positive. The NAHC also suggested contacting specific tribes and provided an additional contact list of Native American tribal governments that might have information regarding cultural resources in the Project area. San Bernardino County Flood Control District is responsible for all outreach and tribal consultation.

### Survey Methods and Results

On July 13, 2026, Aspen Cultural Resources Specialists surveyed the Project APE under the direction of Aspen's Principal Investigator and Aspen's Architectural Historian. This included the North San Bernardino Channel (formerly known as Devil Creek Channel) north of Kendall Drive, from Western Avenue to Little Mountain Basin (approximately 1 mile). Transects varied according to ground surface but were no more than 15 meters and no less than 5 meters apart. The ground surfaces surveyed were inspected for elements of precontact and historic uses. The archaeological survey did not identify any precontact or historic era archaeological resources within the APE.

Historical research and record search information identified the Little Mountain Dam (P-36-031704) as a 45+ year old historic-age resource, previously determined with State Historic Preservation Office concurrence to not qualify as eligible to the CRHR or NRHP. The Little Mountain Dam includes both the Little Mountain Basin, and North San Bernardino Channel as was resurveyed in support of Proposed Project. Aspen concurs with the previous assessment that Little Mountain Dam does not meet the criteria for listing in the NRHP or CRHR, therefore, this resource is not considered a historic property (Section 106) or a historical resource (CEQA).

## 3.7.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource pursuant to §15064.5 [§15064.5 generally defines historical resource under CEQA]?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. No known register eligible historical resources have been recorded within the Project site. The components of the Little Mountain Dam (P-36-031704) have been surveyed and recommended ineligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Places. While there are no known register eligible historical resources within the Project site, there is always a possibility of encountering buried cultural resources during construction. MM CUL-1 sets forth guidelines should unanticipated cultural resources be discovered, reducing impacts to a less-than-significant level.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM CUL-1** **Inadvertent Discovery of Cultural Resources.** A professional archaeologist meeting the Secretary of Interior qualifications should be contacted to identify and evaluate previously unidentified cultural resources discovered during construction activities. Upon inadvertent discovery of a potential resource, avoidance measures will be implemented by construction crews. These should include halting construction work within 100 feet of the find and directing construction away from the discovery until the archaeologist assesses the significance of the resource. The archaeologist will consult with the appropriate responsible public agency regarding necessary plans for treatment of the find(s), and for the evaluation and mitigation of impacts.

Additionally, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed within MM 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 significant pre-contact cultural resources, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, 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 MM TCR-1. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the Project and implement the Plan accordingly. If 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 Section 7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the Project pursuant to MM CUL-2 *Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains*.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. While there are no known register eligible historical resources within the Project site, there is always a possibility of encountering buried cultural resources during earth moving activities during operation of the Proposed Project. MM CUL-1 sets forth guidelines should unanticipated cultural resources be discovered, reducing impacts to a less-than-significant level.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM CUL-1** **Inadvertent Discovery of Cultural Resources.** See Section 3.7.2(a), *Construction*, for the full measure text.

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. The Project site is in an area settled and utilized for hunting and food gathering by the Gabrieleño and Serrano for millennia. While there are no archaeological resources within the Project site, there is always a possibility of encountering buried cultural resources during construction that could be considered unique archaeological resources under CEQA. MM CUL-1 sets forth guidelines should unanticipated cultural resources be discovered, reducing impacts to a less-than-significant level.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM CUL-1** **Inadvertent Discovery of Cultural Resources.** See Section 3.7.2(a), *Construction*, for the full measure text.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. While there are no archaeological resources within the Project site, there is always a possibility of encountering buried cultural resources during earth moving operation activities. MM CUL-1 sets forth guidelines should unanticipated cultural resources be discovered, reducing impacts to a less-than-significant level.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM CUL-1** **Inadvertent Discovery of Cultural Resources.** See Section 3.7.2(a), *Construction*, for the full measure text.

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. No human remains are known or recorded in the Project area. However, in the event human remains are uncovered during earth moving construction activities, this could constitute a significant impact. MM CUL-2 is recommended, which provides a clear process for treating human remains upon discovery, reducing impacts to a less-than-significant level.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM CUL- 2** **Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains.** In the event human remains, or potential human remains are discovered, construction activities within 100 feet of the find shall be immediately halted. The construction Project Manager shall immediately notify the appropriate responsible public agency and the San Bernardino County Coroner. The San Bernardino County Coroner will make a determination as to the origin of the remains and, if determined to be of Native American origin, will contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) by telephone within 24 hours. If the remains are not of Native American origin, the County Coroner will make a determination as to the disposition of the remains. Once contacted by the County Coroner, the NAHC shall immediately identify and notify the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD has 48 hours to make recommendations to the landowner for treatment or disposition of the human remains. If the descendant does not make recommendations within 48 hours, the appropriate responsible public agency shall reinter the remains in an area of the property secure from further disturbance. If the responsible public agency does not accept the descendant's recommendations, the appropriate responsible public agency or the descendant may

request mediation by the NAHC. Construction may continue once compliance with all relevant sections of the California Health and Safety Code have been addressed and authorization to proceed is issued by the San Bernardino County Coroner and the responsible public agency.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION**.** No human remains are known or recorded in the Project area. However, in the event that human remains are uncovered during earth moving construction activities, which could constitute a significant impact. MM CUL-2 is recommended, which provides a clear process for treating human remains upon discovery, reducing impacts to a less-than-significant level.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM CUL- 2** **Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains.** See 3.7.2(c), *Construction,* for full measure text.

# 3.8. Energy

| ENERGY<br>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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.8.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

Energy efficiency is regulated at the federal, State, and local levels. For California, many of the federal energy efficiency standards are repeated in the California regulations. The State of California's Code of Regulations has several building standards (Title 24) and appliance efficiency regulations (Title 20); however, none of these regulations apply to infrastructure projects such as the Proposed Project which does not include the construction of habitable structures or have permanent on-site energy consuming operating equipment, such as pumps.

There are no standards that would directly apply to the Proposed Project related to the sources that would consume energy, on-road vehicles and off-road vehicles. There are federal and State standards related to fuel efficiency that apply to various types of on-road vehicles that would indirectly apply to the Proposed Project and personal commuting vehicles used during construction. While there are emissions reduction regulations related to off-road equipment, there are no regulations specifically related to fuel or energy consumption efficiency. However, there are construction waste recycling policies and regulations that are related to the State's Climate Change Scoping Plan. Compliance and conformance with these waste recycling regulations and policies is discussed in Section 3.10, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*.

### Affected Environment

All construction- and operation-related activities would involve use of energy-consuming equipment and processes. This analysis presents a qualitative discussion of the Proposed Project's energy use. As set forth in the State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix F: Energy Conservation, the goal of conserving energy implies the wise and efficient use of energy including:

- Decreasing overall per capita energy consumption;
- Decreasing reliance on fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas and oil; and
- Increasing reliance on renewable energy sources.

Lead agency actions that are consistent with these goals would not be likely to cause an energy-related impact. The energy impact analysis emphasizes avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy resources, and whether the Proposed Project would result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy.

The Proposed Project would directly consume motor fuels from on-road vehicles (passenger vehicles, delivery vehicles, and heavy haul trucks) and off-road equipment during construction and operation. These fuels would primarily be diesel and gasoline, but natural gas may also be used. Motor vehicle fuels, primarily gasoline and diesel fuel, would come from public and private refueling stations (a.k.a. "gas stations") located throughout the Project area, or in the case of the construction off-road equipment,

fuels would be delivered directly to the Project site for equipment refueling. Additionally, some of the energy used by on-road vehicles and commuting vehicles during construction and operation could be in the form of electrical energy. However, the Proposed Project would not otherwise use electricity during construction or operation. Electricity for vehicle use during Project operations would come from the Southern California Edison (SCE) transmission system, which serves 15 million people in central, coastal, and southern California, excluding the City of Los Angeles and certain other cities (CAISO, 2018).

## 3.8.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(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?**

### Construction and Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would consume energy via on- and off-road vehicle fuel during construction and operation. The Proposed Project would replace the existing inadequate North San Bernardino Channel with a reinforced concrete channel to improve flood protection, handle a 100-year storm event, enhance protection for socially vulnerable and high hazard areas, and mitigate flooding risks for nearly 300 structures and over 200,000 residents, and increase flood protection from the current 25-year storm event upstream and 10-year storm event downstream to a uniform 100-year storm event protection. This would reduce future flood-related damage and demolition/reconstruction needs and would reduce future energy consumption that would be required without implementation of the Proposed Project. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not include the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during construction or operation, and impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

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

### Construction and Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project does not include renewable energy infrastructure, restrict renewable energy projects, or restrict the use of renewable energy. The Proposed Project does not include energy consumption sources during construction or operation that are directly subject to State or local energy efficiency plans. Indirectly, on-road vehicles used during construction and operation would have to meet the ongoing federal and State fuel efficiency requirements. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, and impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

# 3.9. Geology and Soils

| GEOLOGY AND SOILS<br>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 geologic units 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? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |

*Geology and Soils question (d) reflects the current 2016 California Building Code (CBC), which is based on the International Building Code (2015), effective January 1, 2017. The CBC is updated every three years.
Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.9.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *Federal*

**Clean Water Act.** The Clean Water Act (CWA) establishes the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States. Section 402 of the CWA establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program to regulate point-source discharges of pollutants into waters of the US. Discharges or construction activities that disturb one or more acres are regulated under the NPDES stormwater program and are required to obtain coverage under a NPDES Construction General Permit.

Projects that disturb one or more acres are required to obtain NPDES coverage under the California General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP describes BMPs the discharger will use to protect stormwater runoff. The SWPPP must contain a visual monitoring program and a chemical monitoring program for "non-visible" pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs.

**International Building Code.** The International Building Code (IBC) is published by the International Code Council (ICC). The provisions of the IBC apply to the construction, alteration, relocation, enlargement, replacement, repair, equipment, use and occupancy, location, maintenance, removal, and demolition of buildings or structures, as well as any appurtenances connected to applicable buildings or structures. The IBC also incorporates the requirements and regulations set forth in several other ICC codes including the International Energy Conservation Code, International Existing Building Code, International Fire Code, and International Fuel Gas Code. The International Building Code has replaced the Uniform Building Code as the basis for the California Building Code (CBC) and contains provisions for structural engineering design. The IBC addresses the design and installation of structures and building systems through requirements that emphasize performance. The IBC includes codes governing structural as well as fire- and life-safety provisions covering seismic, wind, accessibility, egress, occupancy, and roofs.

**Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act.** Congress enacted the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act in October 1977 to mitigate future earthquake risks to life and property in the United States by establishing an earthquake hazards reduction program. Accordingly, the act created the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program, which was amended in November 1990 through the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program Act (NEHRPA) that refined outlined agency roles, program goals, and objectives. Under NEHRPA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is designated as the lead agency of the program, and responsibilities pertaining to planning, coordinating, and reporting are assigned. Additionally, NEHRPA includes other agencies such as the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the National Science Foundation, and the USGS.

**Occupational Safety and Health Administration Regulations.** Excavation and trenching are among the most hazardous construction activities. Requirements for these construction activities and operations are included in Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Excavation and Trenching Standard, Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1926, Subpart P. Additionally, OSHA mandates that excavations in which employees might be at risk of cave-ins must be safeguarded through methods such as sloping or benching the excavation sides, supporting the excavation sides, or positioning a protective shield between the excavation side and the work area.

### *State*

**Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act.** The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act of 1972, PRC Sections 2621–2630 (formerly the Special Studies Zoning Act) regulates development and construction of buildings intended for human occupancy to avoid the hazard of surface fault rupture. While this act does not specifically regulate components not intended for human occupancy; it does help define areas where fault rupture, and thus related damage, is most likely to occur. This act groups faults into categories of active, potentially active, and inactive. Historic and Holocene age faults are considered active, Late Quaternary and Quaternary age faults are considered potentially active, and pre-Quaternary age faults are considered inactive. These classifications are qualified by the conditions that a fault must be shown to be “sufficiently active” and “well defined” by detailed site-specific geologic explorations in order to determine whether building setbacks should be established.

**Seismic Hazard Mapping Act.** The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (the Act) of 1990 (PRC, Chapter 7.8, Division 2, Sections 2690–2699) directs the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology (now called California Geological Survey [CGS]) to delineate Seismic Hazard Zones. The purpose of the Act is to reduce the threat to public health and safety and to minimize the loss of life and property by identifying and mitigating seismic hazards. Cities, counties, and state agencies are directed to use seismic hazard zone maps developed by CGS in their land- use planning and permitting processes. The Act requires that site-specific geotechnical investigations be performed prior to permitting most urban development projects within seismic hazard zones.

**California Building Code.** State regulations designed to protect structures from geo-seismic hazards are detailed in the CBC (24 CCR Part 2), which is updated every three years. These regulations are applicable to both public and private buildings in California. Prior to January 1, 2008, the CBC was based on the Uniform Building Code and included additions, amendments, and repeals tailored to California's building conditions and structural requirements. The 2025 CBC, effective January 1, 2026, incorporates the 2024 IBC of the ICC, along with necessary amendments for California.

Chapters 16 and 16A of the 2025 CBC outline structural design requirements for seismically resistant construction, specifically including factors and coefficients that determine seismic site class and seismic occupancy category for the soil/rock at the building location and the proposed building design. Chapters 18 and 18A address foundation and soil investigations (Sections 1803 and 1803A); excavation, grading, and fill (Sections 1804 and 1804A); damp-proofing and water-proofing (Sections 1805 and 1805A); allowable load-bearing values of soils (Sections 1806 and 1806A); design of foundation walls, retaining walls, embedded posts and poles (Sections 1807 and 1807A); foundations (Sections 1808 and 1808A); and design of shallow foundations (Sections 1809 and 1809A) and deep foundations (Sections 1810 and 1810A). Chapter 33 provides safeguarding requirements for work sites to ensure stable excavations and cut or fill slopes (Section 3304).

Construction activities must adhere to occupational safety standards for excavation and trenching as outlined by California Safety and Health Administration regulations (Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations) and Chapter 33 of the CBC. These regulations detail the measures required for excavation and trench work to protect workers in unstable soil conditions. The Proposed Project would require implementation of these safety measures during excavation and trenching activities.

**California Health and Safety Code.** California Health and Safety Code Sections 17922 and 17951 through 17958.7 mandate that cities and counties adopt and enforce the latest edition of the CBC, which includes a section on grading. Specific sections of Volume II of the CBC are applicable to certain geological hazards.

**California Occupational Safety and Health Administration Regulations.** The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) is responsible for enforcing federal worker safety regulations in California, including those concerning slope protection during construction excavations. Cal/OSHA's rules are more protective than the federal OSHA standards. CCR, Title 8, Chapter 4, Division of Industrial Safety, includes excavation and trenching requirements and safety standards for any work related to the construction, alteration, painting, repairing, maintenance, renovation, removal, or demolition of any fixed structure or its parts.

### *Regional*

**San Bernardino County General Plan.** The Hazards Element of the San Bernardino County General Plan, adopted in 2020 and last updated in 2022, identifies potential natural and human-caused hazards and establishes policies focused on guiding development to reduce risks from geologic hazards and minimize potential impacts to people and property (San Bernardino County, 2022a).

The Cultural Resources Element of the San Bernardino County General Plan includes the following goals and policies that pertain to paleontological resources relevant to the Proposed Project (San Bernardino County, 2020):

- **Goal CR-2. Historic and Paleontological Resources:** Historic resources (buildings, structures, or archaeological resources) and paleontological resources that are protected and preserved for their cultural importance to local communities as well as their research and educational potential.
  - **Policy CR-2.3: Paleontological and archaeological resources.** We strive to protect paleontological and archaeological resources from loss or destruction by requiring that new development include appropriate mitigation to preserve the quality and integrity of these resources. We require new

development to avoid paleontological and archeological resources whenever possible. If avoidance is not possible, we require the salvage and preservation of paleontological and archaeological resources.

- **Policy CR-2.5: Public awareness and education.** We increase public awareness and conduct education efforts about the unique historic, natural, tribal, and cultural resources in San Bernardino County through the County Museum in collaboration with other entities.

**San Bernardino County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.** The San Bernardino County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, last updated in 2022, identifies key geologic and seismic hazards, and establishes strategies to reduce potential impacts to public safety, property, and the environment (San Bernardino County, 2022b).

**San Bernardino County Building Code.** The County has adopted the 2025 CBC, which establishes minimum standards for structural design, construction, and site preparation, including provisions addressing geologic and soil hazards, as amended by local regulations.

***Local***

**City of San Bernardino General Plan.** In 2007, the City adopted an updated General Plan (City of San Bernardino, 2005) that includes various goals and policies aimed at reducing risks from geologic hazards, including the following:

- **Goal 10.7:** Protect life, essential lifelines, and property from damage resulting from seismic activity.
  - **Policy 10.7.1:** Minimize the risk to life and property through the identification of potentially hazardous areas, establishment of proper construction design criteria, and provision of public information.
  - **Policy 10.7.2:** Require geologic and geotechnical investigations for new development in areas adjacent to known fault locations and approximate fault locations as part of the environmental and/or development review process and enforce structural setbacks from faults identified through those investigations.
  - **Policy 10.7.3:** Enforce the requirements of the California Seismic Hazards Mapping and Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Acts when siting, evaluating, and constructing new projects within the City.
  - **Policy 10.7.4:** Determine the liquefaction potential at a site prior to development, and require that specific measures be taken, as necessary, to prevent or reduce damage in an earthquake.
  - **Policy 10.7.5:** Evaluate and reduce the potential impacts of liquefaction on new and existing lifelines.
- **Goal 10.8:** Protect life, essential lifelines, and property from damage resulting from seismic activity.
  - **Policy 10.8.1:** Enforce the requirements of the California Seismic Hazards Mapping and Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Acts when siting, evaluating, and constructing new projects within the City.
  - **Policy 10.8.2:** Require that lifelines crossing a fault be designed to resist the occurrence of fault rupture.
- **Goal 10.9:** Minimize exposure to and risks from geologic activities.
  - **Policy 10.9.1:** Minimize risk to life and property by properly identifying hazardous areas, establishing proper construction design criteria, and distribution of public information.
  - **Policy 10.9.2:** Require geologic and geotechnical investigations in areas of potential geologic hazards as part of environmental and/or development review process for all new structures.

- **Policy 10.9.3:** Require that new construction and significant alterations to structures located within potential landslide areas be evaluated for site stability, including potential impact to other properties during project design and review.

**City of San Bernardino Municipal Code.** The City of San Bernardino Municipal Code, Chapter 15, Buildings and Construction, adopts the California Building Standards Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24) and establishes local requirements for building design, construction, permitting, and inspection.

**City of San Bernardino Building Code.** The City of San Bernardino operates under Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, with enforcement by the City's Building & Safety Division through plan review, permitting, and compliance oversight.

### Affected Environment

#### *Regional Geologic Setting*

The Project area is located near the northern portion of the San Bernardino Valley, northwest of the Santa Ana River. The Project area is located on gently west sloping, coalescing alluvial fan formed at the base of the San Bernardino Mountains emanating from Bailey, Devil, Badger, and Sycamore Canyons. The San Bernardino Valley is situated between the Transverse Ranges geomorphic province and the San Andreas Fault Zone to the northeast, and the Peninsular Ranges geomorphic province and the San Jacinto Fault Zone to the southwest.

### Local Geology

Regional geologic mapping from the USGS indicates the Project site is underlain by late Holocene very young alluvial fan deposits (Qf) and late Holocene very young wash deposits (Qw) (Miller et al., 2001). Very young alluvial fan deposits consist of unconsolidated to locally cemented, undissected to loosely compacted deposits of gravel and sand that form active parts of alluvial fans (Miller et al., 2001). Very young wash deposits consist of unconsolidated to locally cemented sand, gravel, and boulder deposits in active washes of streams and on active surfaces of alluvial fans (Miller et al., 2001).

### Soils

Three soil units are mapped underlying the Project site, Hanford sandy loam, Soboba stony loamy sand, and Tujunga gravelly loamy sand (NRCS, 2026). These soils exhibit a low shrink-swell (expansive) potential (NRCS, 2026). The erosion potential of Hanford sandy loam is rated as moderate, whereas the Soboba stony loamy sand and Tujunga gravelly loamy sand are both rated as slight (NRCS, 2026). The soils do not exhibit a high collapse potential at the Project site (NRCS, 2026).

### Slope Stability

Important factors that affect the slope stability of an area include the steepness of the slope, the relative strength of the underlying soil or rock material, and the thickness and cohesion of the overlying soil. The steeper the slope and the thicker the colluvium or soil, the more likely the area is susceptible to landslides or debris flows. Another indication of unstable slopes is the presence of old or recent landslides or debris flows. According to the USGS Landslide Inventory and Susceptibility Map, most of the Project site is not mapped for landslide susceptibility, while the eastern end of the Project site, including the construction staging areas at Little Mountain Basin are mapped as areas of low landslide susceptibility (USGS, 2025). The City of San Bernardino maps the eastern end of the Project site and most of Little Mountain Basin as areas of moderate relief with low to moderate landslide susceptibility (City of San Bernardino, 2005).

### Seismicity

The Project site is located in a seismically active area of Southern California, and in close proximity to two significant active fault zones (USGS and CGS, 2022; CGS, 2024). The closest Alquist-Priolo zoned faults are associated with the San Andreas and San Jacinto Fault Zones (CGS, 2024). The San Bernardino Mountains section of the San Andreas Fault Zone, located approximately 1.4 miles northeast of the Project site, has an estimated maximum earthquake magnitude of M 7.56 (USGS and CGS, 2022; USGS, 2023). The San Bernardino Valley section of the San Jacinto Fault Zone, located approximately 2.5 miles southwest of the Project site, has an estimated maximum earthquake magnitude of M 7.52 (USGS and CGS, 2022; USGS, 2023). The Uniform California Earthquake Rupture Forecast (UCERF3) estimates the 30-year probability for a magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquake in Southern California at approximately 93 percent, considering the known active seismic sources in the region (Field, E.H., and 2014 Working Group on California Earthquake Probabilities, 2015).

The intensity of the seismic shaking, or strong ground motion, during an earthquake is dependent on the distance between the Project area and the epicenter of the earthquake, the magnitude of the earthquake, and the geologic conditions underlying and surrounding the Project area. Earthquakes occurring on faults closest to the Project area would most likely generate the largest ground motion.

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) 7 Hazard Tool, assuming a default site class, was used to estimate peak ground accelerations (PGAs) at the Project site for a large regional or local earthquake (ASCE, 2026). Peak ground acceleration is the maximum acceleration experienced by a particle on the Earth's surface during the course of an earthquake, and the units of acceleration are most commonly measured in terms of fractions of g, the acceleration due to gravity (980 cm/sec2). This hazard tool uses data from USGS, specifically the National Seismic Hazard Model (NSHM) to interpolate peak ground accelerations with a two percent probability of exceedance in 50 years which corresponds to a return interval of 2,475 years for a maximum considered earthquake. Peak ground accelerations at the Project site is approximately 0.94 g, which corresponds to strong to severe ground shaking.

### Paleontology

Paleontological resources (i.e., fossils) are limited, non-renewable resources that hold scientific and educational significance. Fossils, or evidence of past life, include the remains of plants and animals (including microscopic remains in sediments) and indirect evidence such as animal tracks and burrows. Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, PRC § 21000 et seq.), a paleontological resource is considered significant if it "has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history" (PRC § 25064.5, [a][3][D]).

The paleontological sensitivity of geologic units can be assessed using classification schemes developed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM, 2009) and the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP, 2010). These schemes include general recommended mitigation measures for the different paleontological sensitivity classes. A paleontological sensitivity analysis was conducted for the exposed geologic units across the different regions of San Bernardino County and the results were used to generate paleontological sensitivity maps of the County (Bell, 2018).

Geologic mapping from the USGS depicts the Project area as underlain by very young deposits that include late Holocene alluvial fan deposits (Qf) and late Holocene wash deposits (Qw) (Miller et al., 2001). These surface deposits are too young to preserve fossils because they are less than 5,000 years old (SVP, 2010). However, the ages of these sediments increase with depth, and they may overlie older geologic units, such as Pleistocene-aged alluvium (Qoa). The transition to fossil-bearing units is variable across San Bernardino County, with fossiliferous sediments documented in some localities as shallow as 5 feet below the surface (Reynolds and Reynolds, 1991). Due to this potential, a paleontological sensitivity rating of low to high can apply to Holocene deposits across San Bernardino (Bell, 2018). The mapped deposits

underlying the Project area therefore have been mapped as low to high paleontological sensitivity (Bell, 2018).

## 3.9.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(a) Would the project 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.**

### Construction

NO IMPACT. Although the Project site is located in a very seismically active area of Southern California, no known active or Alquist-Priolo zoned faults cross or are in the immediate vicinity of the Project site (USGS and CGS, 2022; CGS, 2024). The closest Alquist-Priolo zoned faults are associated with the San Andreas and San Jacinto Fault Zones (CGS, 2024). The San Bernardino Mountains section of the San Andreas Fault Zone and the San Bernardino Valley section of the San Jacinto Fault Zone are located approximately 1.4 miles northeast and 2.5 miles southwest of the Project site, respectively (USGS and CGS, 2022). The Proposed Project would not include habitable structures and would therefore not result in a change or increase in the seismic hazard to people. No active or potentially active faults cross or are near the Project site. Therefore, there is no potential impact from surface fault rupture during Project construction.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. As stated above, no known active, potentially active, or Alquist-Priolo zoned faults cross the Project site (USGS and CGS, 2022; CGS, 2024). The Proposed Project would not include habitable structures and would therefore not result in a change or increase in the seismic hazard to people. Therefore, there is no potential impact from surface fault rupture during Project operation.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

ii. **Strong seismic ground shaking?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Project site is in a seismically active area of Southern California in proximity to active faults of the San Andreas and San Jacinto Fault Zones (CGS, 2024). The Project site is not located within a mapped Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, nor do any active faults cross the Project site (USGS and CGS, 2022; CGS, 2024). The closest Alquist-Priolo zoned faults are associated with the San Andreas and San Jacinto Fault Zones and are mapped 1.4 miles northeast and 2.5 miles southwest of the Project site, respectively (CGS, 2024). Strong to severe ground shaking should be expected in the event of a large earthquake on any of the major faults in the region or on the faults near the Project site.

Although the Project site is likely to experience strong to severe ground shaking within its lifetime, the Proposed Project would not include habitable structures and would therefore not result in a change or increase in the seismic hazard to people. Therefore, impacts related to strong seismic ground shaking would be less than significant during Project construction.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As stated above, although the Project site is likely to experience strong to severe ground shaking during its lifetime due to its location within a seismically active area, the Proposed Project would not include any habitable structures. Therefore, Project operation would not result in a change or increase in the seismic hazard to people. Project features would be designed and constructed per the City of San Bernardino Municipal Code Chapter 15.04 (Building Codes), which adopts the 2025 CBC. The Proposed Project would be subject to Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, which requires appropriate seismic design. Impacts related to strong seismic ground shaking would be less than significant during Project operation.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

iii. **Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Liquefaction is the phenomenon in which saturated granular sediments temporarily lose their shear strength during periods of earthquake-induced strong ground shaking. The susceptibility of a site to liquefaction is a function of the depth, density, and water content of the granular sediments, and the magnitude and frequency of earthquakes in the surrounding region. Saturated, unconsolidated silts, sands, and silty sands within 50 feet of the ground surface are most susceptible to liquefaction. The Project site is underlain by loose unconsolidated sandy alluvial sediments. Groundwater in the Project area is approximately 150 feet below ground surface, although levels may vary seasonally and in wet years (DWR, 2026).

The Project site is not mapped within a liquefaction zone (CGS, 2024). Although the Project site is underlain by young unconsolidated sediments, liquefaction is unlikely to occur at the Project site due to the deep groundwater levels (150 feet below ground surface) (Miller et al., 2001; DWR, 2026). The Proposed Project does not include any habitable structures and would be designed and constructed in compliance with State and local design guidelines. Therefore, impacts related to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, would be less than significant during Project construction.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. As stated above, the Project site is not mapped within a liquefaction zone and groundwater depths are approximately 150 feet below ground surface, limiting the potential for liquefaction (CGS, 2024; DWR, 2026). Project features would be designed and constructed per the City of San Bernardino Municipal Code Chapter 15.04 (Building Codes), which adopts the 2025 CBC. The Proposed Project would be subject to Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, which requires appropriate seismic design. Therefore, impacts related to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, would be less than significant during Project operation.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

iv. **Landslides?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. According to the USGS Landslide Inventory and Susceptibility Map, the majority of Project site is not mapped for landslide susceptibility, while the eastern end of the Project site, including the construction staging area at Little Mountain Basin are mapped as areas of low landslide susceptibility (USGS, 2025). The City of San Bernardino maps the eastern end of the Project site and most of Little Mountain Basin as areas of moderate relief with low to moderate landslide susceptibility (City of San Bernardino, 2005). Additionally, the CGS does not map any earthquake-induced landslide zones within the Project site (CGS, 2026).

The Project site is located on primarily flat to gently sloping terrain and would not be subject to seismically induced or naturally triggered landslides. The existing channel consists of a relatively flat bottom with gently sloping sides stabilized with rip rap, which serves to stabilize the channel and reduce the potential for slope instability. Although the eastern end of the Project site and the construction staging area are mapped as having low to moderate landslide susceptibility, the existing channel and Little Mountain Basin have been engineered and stabilized (USGS, 2025; City of San Bernardino, 2005). As a result, the potential for slope instability is low.

Project construction would occur within the existing channel and would improve existing slope stability through the installation of a concrete lining and structural channel walls. Temporary slopes created during Project construction would be shallow inclination and properly stabilized in accordance with standard engineering and construction practices. Impacts related to earthquake-induced landslides or landslides triggered by other factors would be less than significant during Project construction.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As stated above, the Proposed Project is located on flat to gently sloping terrain and would not be subject to seismically induced, naturally triggered landslides, or slope stability issues. Post-construction, the improved channel would be stabilized by permanent concrete lining and structural side walls, maintaining slope stability. Earth slopes, where present, would be engineered to ensure slope stability. Project features would be designed and constructed per the City of San Bernardino Municipal Code Chapter 15.04 (Building Codes), which adopts the 2025 CBC. The Proposed Project would be subject to Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations and would ensure that engineered Project features are designed to maintain slope stability; thereby minimizing the potential for slope failure and landslide impacts. Furthermore, Project operation would include routine maintenance and would not involve any ground disturbance. Project operation activities would not adversely affect slope stability or result in landslides at the Project site. Impacts related to landslides would be less than significant during Project operation.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Project construction, including excavation and grading for the channel and trenching for utility relocation could result in erosion at the Project site. Construction vehicles and equipment may degrade and disturb soils, which may subsequently be transported by wind and/or surface water runoff

(in response to precipitation), accelerating the erosion processes. The soils underlying the Project site exhibit a slight to moderate erosion potential (NRCS, 2026). It is not anticipated that Project construction would result in substantial soil erosion, but temporary and site-specific impacts may occur. The Proposed Project would be constructed in compliance with a Construction SWPPP, which includes BMPs to reduce or avoid effects associated with erosion. Implementation of the Construction SWPPP and associated BMPs would reduce potential erosion. Additionally, the NPDES permit obtained for the Proposed Project would require BMP measures to control erosion during construction. Therefore, potential impacts related to substantial erosion or the loss of topsoil would be less than significant during Project construction.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Project operation would not require grading or earthwork, activities that would disturb and expose on-site soils to wind and water erosion. Due to the absence of any ground disturbing activities as well as the Project site's relatively flat topography, the Proposed Project would not have the potential to result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil. Post-construction, the improved channel would be stabilized by permanent concrete lining and structural walls, maintaining slope stability and minimizing erosion potential. Impacts from substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil would be less than significant during Project operation.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(c) Would the project be located on geologic units 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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The potential for on- or off-site landslides is discussed above in Section 3.9.2(a)(iv). The Project site is not subject to slope stability issues due to the relatively flat to gently sloping topography, the absence of mapped earthquake-induced landslide hazard zones, and the presence of existing channel stabilization features, such as gently sloping sides stabilized with riprap (CGS, 2026). Although the eastern end of the Project site and the construction staging area are mapped as having low to moderate landslide susceptibility, the existing channel and Little Mountain Basin have been engineered and stabilized (USGS, 2025; City of San Bernardino, 2005). Therefore, the potential for slope instability is low.

The potential for liquefaction and liquefaction-related phenomena, such as lateral spreading, is discussed above in Section 3.9.2(a)(iii). The Project site is not located within a mapped liquefaction hazard zone (CGS, 2024). Although the Project site is underlain by young unconsolidated sediments, liquefaction and liquefaction-related phenomena are unlikely to occur at the Project site due to the deep groundwater levels (150 feet below ground surface) (Miller et al., 2001; DWR, 2026). In addition, the relatively flat topography at the Project site limits the potential for lateral spreading.

Subsidence is the loss of surface elevation due to the removal of subsurface support. Subsidence is the reduction of pore space in the ground that was formerly occupied by a fluid such as water or oil, caused by activities that contribute to the loss of support materials within the underlying soils, such as agricultural practices or the overdraft of an aquifer. As the fluid is withdrawn, the pore fluid pressure in the sediments decreases allowing the weight of the overlying sediment to permanently compact or compress the fine-grained units. This effect is most pronounced in younger, unconsolidated sediments. Land subsidence is generally characterized by a broad zone of deformation where differential settlements are small.

According to the USGS Land Subsidence map, the Project site is mapped as an area of land subsidence due to groundwater pumping (USGS, 2026a). The Proposed Project would not include extraction of groundwater or petroleum products and would therefore not create or contribute to land subsidence.

The mapped soils at the Project site do not exhibit a high collapse potential, indicating there is a low risk of soil collapse and sudden ground sinking or settling (NRCS, 2026).

Construction of the Proposed Project would require standard engineering recommendations per the 2025 CBC design criteria relative to seismic and geologic hazards and would be subject to applicable State and local building codes, including CBC and municipal code provisions. Compliance with the above-mentioned requirements would prevent the soils under the Project site from becoming unstable or potentially resulting in off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant during Project construction.

***Mitigation Measures***

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Project operation would not require grading or earthwork that would cause a geologic unit to become unstable and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant during Project operation.

***Mitigation Measures***

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(d) Would the project 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?**

### Construction

NO IMPACT. Expansive soils are characterized by their ability to undergo significant volume change (shrink and swell) due to variation in soil moisture content. Changes in soil moisture could result from multiple factors, including rainfall, landscape irrigation, utility leakage, and/or perched groundwater. Expansive soils are typically very fine grained with a high to very high percentage of clay. Soils with moderate to high shrink-swell potential would be classified as expansive soils. The three soils units mapped by the NRCS underlying the Project site, the Hanford sandy loam, Soboba stony loamy sand, and Tujunga gravelly loamy sand, exhibit a low shrink-swell (expansive) potential and would therefore not be defined as expansive soils (NRCS, 2026). Project construction would not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property associated with expansive soils; no impact would occur.

***Mitigation Measures***

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. As stated above, the soils underlying the Project site are not defined as expansive soils (NRCS, 2026). Project operation would not include grading or earthwork that would disturb underlying soil deposits. Project operation would not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property associated with expansive soils; no impact would occur.

***Mitigation Measures***

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

### Construction

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project does not include installation of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. No impact would occur during Project construction.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project does not include installation of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. No impact would occur during Project operation.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED. The Proposed Project would primarily disturb late Holocene deposits (to a maximum depth of 10 feet) with low to high paleontological sensitivity. Surficial deposits have low paleontological sensitivity, but sediments with moderate to high sensitivity may be encountered at depth, which could constitute a significant impact should paleontological resources be encountered. MM PALEO-1, *Paleontological WEAP and Monitoring*, would train workers on protocols for unanticipated discoveries of paleontological resources and allow observance of these deeper sediments to ensure a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature is not impacted. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have a less-than-significant impact to a unique paleontological resource or geologic feature.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM PALEO-1** **Paleontological WEAP and Monitoring.** Ground disturbance exceeding the depth of the low sensitivity surficial sediments (i.e., below 5 feet from surface) should be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor, as designated by and under the supervision of a Qualified Paleontologist. Monitoring will include assessing and documenting exposed sediments at these depths and the monitor will have the authority to temporarily divert construction activities from any exposed fossils. Exposed fossils will be evaluated for significance and, if deemed significant by the Qualified Paleontologist, will be recovered in an efficient and timely manner following professional standards. Sediment samples for microfossil screening may also be collected from fossil localities.

The Qualified Paleontologist should oversee worker awareness training to prepare construction workers for unanticipated fossil discoveries while working in low sensitivity depths (i.e., shallower than 5 feet from surface). Monitoring is not required when working at these shallower depths, but the Qualified Paleontologist should remain on-call for unanticipated discoveries.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. Project operation would not include grading or earthwork that would disturb underlying sediment deposits. No impact would occur during Project operation.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

# 3.10. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

| GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS<br>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 any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.10.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *Federal*

#### United States Environmental Protection Agency

The USEPA is responsible for implementing federal policy to address global climate change. The federal government administers a wide array of public-private partnerships to reduce GHG intensity generated by the U.S. These programs focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy, methane and other non-$CO_2$ gases, agricultural practices, and implementation of technologies to achieve GHG reductions. The USEPA implements several voluntary programs that substantially contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions. Programs include the State Climate and Energy Partner Network that allows for the exchange of information between federal and state agencies regarding climate and energy, the Climate Leaders program for companies, the Energy Star labeling system for energy-efficient products, and the Green Power Partnership for organizations interested in buying green power. All these programs play a significant role in encouraging voluntary reductions from large corporations, consumers, industrial and commercial buildings, and many major industrial sectors.

In *Massachusetts versus (v.) Environmental Protection Agency* (Docket No. 05–1120), the U.S. Supreme Court held in April of 2007 that the USEPA has authority to regulate GHGs and should be required to do so under Section 202(a)(1) of the federal CAA.

The USEPA issued a Final Rule for mandatory reporting of GHG emissions in October of 2009 (USEPA, 2025c). This Final Rule applies to fossil fuel suppliers, industrial gas suppliers, direct GHG emitters, and manufacturers of heavy-duty and off-road vehicles and vehicle engines, and requires annual reporting of emissions. This rule does not regulate the emission of GHGs, but requires monitoring and reporting of GHG emissions for those sources above certain thresholds. On May 13, 2010, the USEPA issued a Final Rule that established a commonsense approach to addressing GHG emissions from stationary sources under the CAA permitting programs (USEPA, 2025a). This final rule set an initial threshold of 75,000 tons per year (tpy) for GHG emissions. In other words, newly constructed or modified emissions sources that result in an increase of 75,000 tpy $CO_2e$ or greater are required to determine the Best Available Control Technology (BACT) for their GHG emissions. Additionally, operating facilities that emit at least 100,000 tpy will be subject to CAA Title V permitting requirements.

#### Federal Clean Air Act

The USEPA is responsible for implementing federal policy to address GHGs. On December 7, 2009, the Administrator signed the following two findings regarding GHGs under Section 202(a) of the CAA, which were a prerequisite for implementing GHG emission standards for vehicles:

1. Endangerment Finding: The Administrator finds that the current and projected concentrations of six GHGs ($CO_2$, $CH_4$, $N_2O$, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride ($SF_6$) in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations (USEPA, 2025b).
2. Cause or Contribute Finding: The Administrator finds that the combined emissions of these GHGs from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the GHG pollution, which threatens public health and welfare.

### *State*

#### California Air Resources Board

CARB, 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. CARB conducts research, sets the CAAQS, compiles emission inventories, develops suggested control measures, and provides oversight of local programs. CARB establishes emissions standards for motor vehicles sold in California, consumer products (such as hairspray, aerosol paints, and barbecue lighter fluid), various types of commercial equipment, and sets fuel specifications to further reduce vehicular emissions.

#### Senate Bill 100

SB 100 (The 100 Percent Clean Energy Act of 2018) sets a 2045 goal of powering all retail electricity sold in California and state agency electricity needs with renewable and zero-carbon resources, such as solar and wind energy, that do not emit GHGs. SB 100 also updates the State's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) to ensure that at least 60 percent of California's electricity is renewable by 2030. Under SB 100, the California Energy Commission, CPUC, and CARB are also required to use programs under existing laws to achieve 100 percent clean electricity and issue a joint policy report on SB 100 every four years beginning in 2021.

#### Senate Bill 32

In 2017, SB 32 added Health and Safety Code (HSC) Section 38566 requiring statewide GHG emissions reductions to 40 percent below emissions in 1990 by the year 2030. As outlined in SB 32, achieving the required reductions involves increasing renewable energy use, imposing tighter limits on carbon content of gasoline and diesel fuel, increasing use of EVs, improving energy efficiency, and reducing emissions from key industries.

#### Assembly Bill (AB) 32

In 2006, the California State Legislature enacted the California Global Warming Solutions Act (HSC Section 38500, et seq.), also known as AB 32. As required by AB 32, CARB was directed to determine statewide GHG emissions in 1990 and set that as a limit to be achieved statewide by 2020. AB 32 mandated that CARB establish a quantified emissions cap, institute a schedule to meet the cap, implement regulations to reduce statewide GHG emissions from stationary sources, and develop tracking, reporting, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure that reductions are achieved.

#### Executive Order S-3-05

Executive Order (EO) S-3-05 included the following GHG emission reduction targets: by 2010, reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels; by 2020, reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; and by 2050, reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels (Office of the Governor, 2005). To meet the targets, then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger directed several State agencies to cooperate in the development of a Climate Action Plan (CAP). The Secretary of the CalEPA leads the Climate Action Team, whose goal is to implement global warming emission reduction programs identified in the CAP and to report biannually on the progress made toward meeting the emission reduction targets established in the EO.

**Executive Order S-1-07**

EO S-1-07, California's Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), was issued in 2007 and adopted in 2009. The LCFS program requires a minimum 10 percent reduction in the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels by the year 2020. The LCFS was identified by CARB as a discrete early action item in the adopted Climate Change Scoping Plan that complements other AB 32 measures and is a key part of achieving the State's 2030 petroleum reduction goals. The LCFS program was re-adopted in 2015 and amended in 2018. Under the LCFS program, the 2030 standard of a 20 percent carbon intensity decline will be imposed for all years post-2030.

**Executive Order B-30-15**

EO B-30-15 was issued in 2015, creating an interim statewide GHG emission reduction target to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The interim standard was established to ensure that California would meet its target of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

**Executive Order B-55-18**

EO B-55-18 was issued in 2018 to establish a statewide goal to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible, but no later than 2045, and to achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter. Based on this executive order, CARB would work with relevant state agencies to develop a framework for implementation and accounting that tracks progress towards this goal as well as ensuring future scoping plans identify and recommend measures to achieve the carbon neutrality goal.

### *Regional*

**San Bernardino County Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan (GGERP)**

San Bernardino County adopted a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan (San Bernardino County, 2021b) that includes a number of GHG emissions reduction strategies. The Plan notes reduction goals for cities in the County, including a goal to reduce the City of San Bernardino community GHG emissions to a level that is 40% below its 2016 GHG emissions level by 2030. The Plan discusses GHG reduction measures, including those that were proposed by the 2005 City of San Bernardino General Plan. However, only a few would apply to the Proposed Project. San Bernardino County also published a Greenhouse Gas Emission Development Review Process Screening Tables document that was revised in September of 2021 and established a screening threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year for small projects to be considered consistent with the County's GGERP (San Bernardino County, 2021c).

## Affected Environment

GHGs are inherently a global concern, in contrast with criteria air pollutants or toxic air contaminants, which are of regional and local concern. Scientific research indicates that observed climate change is most likely a result of increased GHG emissions associated with human activity (IPCC, 2023). Global climate change describes a collection of phenomena, such as increasing temperatures and rising sea levels, that have been observed across the globe. GHGs contribute to climate change by allowing ultraviolet radiation to enter the atmosphere and warm the Earth's surface but preventing some infrared radiation from the Earth from escaping back into space. Anthropogenic GHG emissions are largely caused by the combustion of fossil fuels, which results in $CO_2$ emissions.

GHGs are defined as any gas that absorbs infrared radiation in the atmosphere. GHGs include, but are not limited to, $CO_2$, $CH_4$, $N_2O$, HFCs, PFCs, $SF_6$, and nitrogen trifluoride ($NF_3$). These GHGs lead to the trapping and buildup of heat in the atmosphere near the Earth's surface, commonly known as the greenhouse effect. Overwhelming scientific consensus has been reached among actively publishing climate scientists (i.e., scientists that study the Earth's climate system, focusing on long-term weather patterns, climate variability, and the impacts of climate change) that human-related emissions of GHGs above natural levels

have contributed significantly to global climate change by increasing the concentrations of the gases responsible for the GHG effect, which causes atmospheric warming above natural conditions.

Because GHG emissions are known to increase atmospheric concentrations of GHGs, and increased GHG concentrations in the atmosphere exacerbate global warming, a project that adds to the atmospheric load of GHGs adds to the problem. To avoid disruptive and potentially catastrophic climate change, annual GHG emissions must be substantially reduced. The impact on climate change due to the increase in ambient concentrations of GHGs differs from criteria pollutants (see Section 3.5, *Air Quality*), in that GHG emissions from a specific project do not cause direct adverse localized human health effects. Rather, the direct environmental effect of GHG emissions is the cumulative effect of an overall increase in global temperatures, which in turn has numerous indirect effects on the environment and humans.

The IPCC completed a Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) in 2023 that contains information on the state of scientific, technical, and socio-economic knowledge about climate change. The AR6 includes working group reports on the basics of the science, potential impacts and vulnerability, and mitigation strategies. Global climate change has caused physical, social, and economic impacts in California, such as land surface and ocean warming, decreasing snow and ice, rising sea levels, increased frequency and intensity of droughts, storms, and floods, and increased rates of coastal erosion (IPCC, 2023).

The potential of a gas or aerosol to trap heat in the atmosphere is called global warming potential (GWP). The GWP of different GHGs varies because they absorb different amounts of heat. $CO_2$, the most abundant GHG, is used to relate the amount of heat absorbed to the amount of the gas emissions; this is referred to as $CO_2$ equivalent ($CO_2e$). $CO_2e$ is the amount of GHG emitted multiplied by the GWP. The GWP of $CO_2$, as the reference GHG, is 1. Methane has a GWP of 25; therefore, 1 pound of methane equates to 25 pounds of $CO_2e$.

California regulates GHGs, including $CO_2$, $CH_4$, $N_2O$, HFCs, PFCs, and $SF_6$. California is a substantial contributor to global GHG emissions. In 2023, the annual California statewide GHG emissions were 360.4 million metric tons of $CO_2$ equivalent ($MMTCO_2e$). The transportation sector accounts for approximately 38 percent of statewide GHG emissions. The industrial and electric power sectors account for approximately 22 percent and 16 percent, respectively, of the total statewide GHG emissions. The dominant GHG emitted is $CO_2$, primarily from fossil fuel combustion (CARB, 2025).

## 3.10.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

### Construction and Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Construction-phase activities include mobilizing vehicles and equipment for construction, crews, and materials. The site work would include site preparation, grading, and tank construction. These activities during construction would cause GHG emissions due to fuels used by the construction vehicles and equipment. Diesel- and gasoline-powered construction equipment would include trucks for materials and crews, and the following types of equipment: cranes, dozers, graders, excavators, loaders, and tractors. Equipment and motor vehicles would directly emit $CO_2$, $CH_4$, and $N_2O$ due to fuel use and combustion. Motor vehicle fuel combustion emissions in terms of $CO_2e$ would consist of approximately 95 percent $CO_2$, and $CH_4$ and $N_2O$ emissions would be at rates of less than one percent of the mass of combustion emissions.

SCAQMD's GHG working group has suggested that a threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year could be applied to non-industrial projects (SCAQMD, 2008). The County also has adopted a project review standard of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year, where projects with emissions below this level being "considered to be consistent with the County's GHG Emissions Reduction Plan and determined to have a less-than-significant individual

and cumulative impact for GHG emissions" (San Bernardino County, 2021c). Therefore, a significance threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year has been used to determine the Proposed Project's GHG emissions significance.

The GHG emissions estimate calculations for the Proposed Project's direct construction emissions are provided in Appendix A and summarized as $CO_2e$ emissions in Table 3.10-1.

**Table 3.10-1. Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

| Construction Activity | GHG Emissions ($MTCO_2e$/year) |
|---|---|
| Total Construction Emissions | 851 |
| Amortized Construction Emissions | 28 |
| Annual Operation Emissions | 25 |
| **Total Annual GHG Emissions** | **53** |
| GHG Emissions Significance Threshold | 3,000 |
| Exceeds Thresholds? | No |

The annual maintenance emissions would be a small fraction of the estimated construction emissions shown in Table 3.10-1, so the Proposed Project's annual construction and operation emissions would be well below the significance criteria of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year. Impacts would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

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

### Construction and Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. GHG emissions for the Proposed Project would be generated from off-road equipment uses and on-road vehicle trips during construction and as noted above, would be minimal. Operational GHG emissions would be generated from vehicle trips for maintenance and would also be minimal. Estimated GHG emissions of the Proposed Project would be well below the threshold of the federal, 25,000 $MTCO_2e$, and state, 10,000 $MTCO_2e$, mandatory reporting regulation. The Proposed Project's GHG emissions would not trigger regulatory action under 40 CFR Part 52 and the State Cap-and-Trade regulations.

The majority of construction emissions would be from mobile sources, including the off-road equipment and on-road motor vehicles, that would not be directly subject to GHG controls but would be users of transportation fuels from refiners and suppliers that are required to comply with CARB Cap-and-Trade and Low Carbon Fuel Standard regulations to reduce GHG emissions. The short-term construction-phase GHG emissions would not interfere with the long-term goal of SB 32 to reduce GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. Additionally, as described in Section 3.5, *Air Quality*, compliance with applicable airborne toxic control measures would ensure offroad construction equipment and on-road vehicles would be operated and maintained in an efficient manner, which would reduce GHG emissions consistent with the County's GGERP goals. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions, and impacts would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

# 3.11. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

| HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS<br>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 §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 has not been adopted, within two 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.11.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

Hazardous substances are defined by federal and State regulations that aim to protect public health and the environment. Hazardous materials have certain chemical, physical, or infectious properties that cause them to be considered hazardous. Hazardous substances are defined in the federal CERCLA Section 101(14), and also in the CCR, Title 22, Chapter 11, Article 2, Section 66261, which provides the following definition:

> *A hazardous material is a substance or combination of substances which, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical or infectious characteristics, may either (1) cause, or significantly contribute to, an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible, or incapacitating reversible, illness; or (2) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or environment when improperly treated, stored, transported or disposed of or otherwise managed.*

For this analysis, soil that is excavated from a site containing hazardous materials would be considered to be a hazardous waste if it exceeded specific CCR Title 22 criteria or criteria defined in CERCLA or other relevant federal regulations. Remediation (cleanup and safe removal/disposal) of hazardous wastes found at a site is required if excavation of these materials occurs; it may also be required if certain other activities occur. Even if soils or groundwater at a contaminated site do not have the characteristics required to be defined as hazardous wastes, remediation of the site may be required by regulatory agencies subject to jurisdictional authority. Cleanup requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis by the agency taking lead jurisdiction.

### *Federal*

**Toxic Substances Control Act (1976) and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA).** The federal Toxic Substances Control Act (1976) and the RCRA of 1976 established a program administered by USEPA for the regulation of the generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste. RCRA was amended in 1984 by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Act (HSWA), which affirmed and extended the "cradle to grave" system of regulating hazardous wastes. The use of certain techniques for the disposal of some hazardous wastes are specifically prohibited by HSWA.

CERCLA, including the Superfund program, was enacted by Congress on December 11, 1980. This law provided broad federal authority to respond directly to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances that may endanger public health or the environment. CERCLA established requirements concerning closed and abandoned hazardous waste sites; provided for liability of persons responsible for releases of hazardous waste at these sites; and established a trust fund to provide for cleanup when no responsible party could be identified. CERCLA also enabled the revision of the National Contingency Plan (NCP). The NCP provided guidelines and procedures needed to respond to releases and threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, and/or contaminants. The NCP also established the National Priorities List (NPL). CERCLA was amended by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) on October 17, 1986.

### *State*

**California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA)**. Cal/EPA was created in 1991, which unified California's environmental authority in a single cabinet-level agency and brought the Air Resources Board (ARB), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs), Integrated Waste Management Board (IWMB), Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC), Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), and Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) 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. Their mission is to restore, protect and enhance the environment, to ensure public health, environmental quality, and economic vitality.

**California Hazardous Waste Control Law (HWCL).** The HWCL is administered by Cal/EPA to regulate hazardous wastes. While the HWCL is generally more stringent than RCRA, until the USEPA approves the California program, both the State and federal laws apply in California. The HWCL lists 791 chemicals and about 300 common materials that may be hazardous; establishes criteria for identifying, packaging and labeling hazardous wastes; prescribes management controls; establishes permit requirements for treatment, storage, disposal and transportation; and identifies some wastes that cannot be disposed of in landfills.

**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. DTSC regulates hazardous waste in California primarily under the authority of RCRA and the California Health and Safety Code. Other laws that affect hazardous waste are specific to handling, storage, transportation, disposal, treatment, reduction, cleanup, and emergency planning.

**California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA).** Cal/OSHA is the primary agency responsible for worker safety in the handling and use of chemicals in the workplace. Cal/OSHA standards are generally more stringent than federal regulations. The employer is required to monitor worker exposure to listed hazardous substances and notify workers of exposure (8 CCR §§ 337-340). The regulations specify requirements for employee training, availability of safety equipment, accident-prevention programs, and hazardous substance exposure warnings.

### *Regional*

**San Bernardino County Fire Department – Hazardous Materials Division.** The San Bernardino County Fire Department – Hazardous Materials Division (SBCFD HMD) is the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) for the Project site pursuant to Division 20, Chapter 6.11 of the California Health and Safety Code. CUPAs administer and enforce California's Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program, which consolidates the following six hazardous materials and waste programs into a single local agency:

- Hazardous Materials Business Plans (HMBP)
- Hazardous Waste Generator and Onsite Treatment requirements
- Underground Storage Tank (UST) permitting and compliance (operational, not cleanup)
- Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act (APSA)
- California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP)
- Hazardous Materials Management Plans (HMMP) and Inventory Statements

In addition to its CUPA role, SBCFD HMD also serves as a Local Oversight Agency (LOA) under the SWRCB Local Oversight Program (LOP); the HMD can provide regulatory oversight of investigation and cleanup activities for petroleum releases. This includes review and approval of site investigation workplans, corrective action plans, and closure requests. The SBCFD HMD also provides oversight for select non-petroleum remediation cases, although oversight may fall under jurisdiction of the RWQCB or DTSC.

**San Bernardino County General Plan.** The Hazards Element of the San Bernardino County General Plan, adopted in 2020 and last updated in 2022, identifies potential natural (wildfire) and human-caused hazards (hazardous materials and airports) and establishes policies focused on guiding development to reduce risks (San Bernardino County, 2022a).

**San Bernardino County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.** The San Bernardino County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, last updated in 2022, identifies key hazards, including wildfire risks, and establishes strategies to reduce potential impacts to public safety, property, and the environment (San Bernardino County, 2022b).

### *Local*

**City of San Bernardino General Plan.** In 2007, the City adopted an updated General Plan (City of San Bernardino, 2005) that includes various goals and policies aimed at reducing risks from hazardous materials and waste, emergency preparedness and response, and wildfire, including the following:

- **Goal 10.1:** Protect the environment, public health, safety, and welfare from hazardous wastes.
  - **Policy 10.1.1:** Employ effective emergency preparedness and emergency response strategies to minimize the impacts from hazardous materials emergencies, such as spills or contamination.
  - **Policy 10.1.2:** Ensure the protection of surface and groundwater quality, land resources, air quality, and environmentally sensitive areas through safe transportation of waste through the City and comprehensive planning of hazardous materials, wastes, and sites.
  - **Policy 10.1.3:** Execute long-range planning programs to protect resources and the public from the potential impacts that could be created by the use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous waste and materials.
  - **Policy 10.1.4:** Continue to support the role that the Fire and the Police Departments play in the on-site identification of hazardous wastes and emergency response to hazardous waste accidents in cooperation with the County Department of Environmental Health Services.

- **Goal 10.2:** Promote proper operations of hazardous waste facilities and ensure regulations applicable to these facilities are enforced.
  - **Policy 10.2.1:** Require the proper handling, treatment, movement, and disposal of hazardous materials and hazardous waste.
  - **Policy 10.2.3:** Implement federal, state, and local regulations for the disposal, handling, and storage of hazardous materials.
  - **Policy 10.2.5:** Participate in the process of selecting routes that are the most acceptable for the safe transportation of hazardous waste material within the City limits. Streets with high concentrations of people, such as the downtown, or with sensitive facilities, such as schools and parks, should be avoided to the maximum extent possible.
- **Goal 10.11:** Protect people and property from urban and wildland fire hazards.
  - **Policy 10.11.1:** Continue to conduct long-range fire safety planning efforts to minimize urban and wildland fires, including enforcement of stringent building, fire, subdivision and other Municipal Code standards, improved infrastructure, and mutual aid agreements with other public agencies and the private sector.
- **Goal 10.11.3:** Require that development in the High Fire Hazard Area, as designated on the Fire Hazards Areas Map be subject to the provisions of the Hillside Management Overlay District (HMOD) and the Foothill Fire Zones Overlay. Goal 10.12: Ensure the availability and effective response of emergency services in the event of a disaster.
  - **Policy 10.12.1:** Maintain a functional City emergency response plan that addresses all hazards.
  - **Policy 10.12.2:** Implement the City of San Bernardino Hazard Mitigation Plan.
  - **Policy 10.12.5:** Prevent serious damage and injuries through effective hazard mitigation.

### Affected Environment

Hazardous materials are generally substances that by their nature and reactivity have the capacity to cause harm or health hazards during normal exposure, accidental release, or other mishaps. Hazardous materials are characterized as being toxic, corrosive, flammable, reactive, irritant, or strong sensitizers. The term hazardous substance encompasses chemicals regulated by both the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) hazardous materials regulations and the USEPA hazardous waste regulations, including emergency response. Hazardous waste requires special handling and disposal because of their potential to impact public health and the environment. A designation of “acutely” or “extremely” hazardous refers to specific listed chemicals and quantities.

#### *Emergency Services*

The Project site is located largely within the City of San Bernardino, with a small portion within unincorporated San Bernardino County, and is serviced by the San Bernardino Police Department and the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District.

#### *Schools*

Three schools are located within one-quarter mile of the Project site. Shandin Hills Middle School is approximately 0.1-mile southwest, Bob Holcomb Elementary School is 0.2-mile northwest, and Newmark Elementary School is approximately 0.25-mile north.

### *Aviation Hazards*

There are no public or private airports or airstrips within 2 miles of the Project site. The closest airport is the San Bernardino International Airport which is located approximately 5 miles southeast of the Project site at its closest point.

### *Wildland Fire*

There are no wildlands within the Project site; however, the Shandin Hills, which contain wildland areas, are mapped south and adjacent to the Project site. According to the U.S. Forest Service Wildfire Hazard Potential website, much of the Project site is classified as "non-burnable", while a portion is classified as "moderate" and a portion classified as "high" (USFS, 2023). Additionally, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) map of Fire Hazard Severity Zones, a portion of the Project site is within an area of moderate to high risk, while the remainder of the Project site is outside of the mapped hazard areas (CAL FIRE, 2026). The Project site is located outside the State Responsibility Area and within a Local Responsibility Area, served by the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (CAL FIRE, 2026).

### *Environmental Contamination*

Based on reviews of publicly available historical images and maps, the Project site and surrounding area were depicted as largely rural and undeveloped. Historically the Project site was comprised partially of agricultural land and of a natural channel. By 1959, the Project site appeared as a linear man-made channel, similar to present-day. The 1969 topographic map depicts a basin at the southern terminus of the Project site and is labeled as Little Mountain Basin by 2012.

The Project area is generally bound by residential land to the north and commercial and residential land to the south. Environmental data and reports documenting environmental contamination and remediation, obtained from the DTSC EnviroStor and the SWRCB GeoTracker websites, were reviewed to assess the potential to encounter contaminated soil or groundwater during construction of the Proposed Project. A summary of relevant information obtained is listed below. Note that several underground storage tanks are mapped adjacent to the Project site and are not summarized below due to no association with leaks or spills (i.e. no contamination).

- Newmark Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site is an approximately 8-square-mile groundwater plume that includes the Project site. According to the USEPA website for the site, the site is an active federal Superfund site (also listed on the SWRCB Cortese list); contaminants of concern include VOCs, including tetrachlorethylene (PCE) and trichloroethylene (TCE) (USEPA, 2026). Groundwater is approximately 150 feet below the Project site (SWRCB, 2026). Three groundwater treatment plants are actively treating groundwater (USEPA, 2026).
- Met Gasoline Service is listed on the GeoTracker website (GeoTracker ID T0607100622) as a closed leaking underground storage tank (LUST) site with no further action (SWRCB, 2026). The site is located about 80 feet southwest of the Project site at 1030 Kendall Drive. An unauthorized release was reported at the facility in 1999 with potential contaminants of concern including gasoline and media of concern listed as soil (SWRCB, 2026). The San Bernardino County Fire Protection District issued a "Case Closure Summary" letter in 2003 that indicated investigation and soil removal had been completed (SWRCB, 2026).

## 3.11.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Project construction would not involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials in any substantial quantities. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would use hazardous materials such as gasoline, diesel fuel, oil, coolants, and lubricants associated with construction equipment and other vehicles. Hazardous materials such as mineral oil, cleaning solvents, paints, adhesives, vehicle fuels, oil, hydraulic fluid, and other vehicle and equipment maintenance fluids would be used and stored in the temporary construction yard. These hazardous materials would be transported, used, and disposed of in accordance with applicable rules, regulations, and local standard protocols designed to protect the environment, workers, and the public.

Minor spills or releases of hazardous materials could occur due to improper handling or storage practices during construction activities. Improperly maintained equipment could leak fluids during construction and while parked. Spills and leaks of hazardous materials during construction activities could potentially result in soil or groundwater contamination.

The Project site consists of unpaved and paved surfaces. The North San Bernardino Channel and the temporary construction yard are primarily unpaved, while the street crossings within the Project site are paved. An accidental release of potentially harmful or hazardous material onto asphalt or pavement covered roads and surfaces would not directly affect soil or water quality. However, accidental spills or releases of hazardous materials on unpaved surfaces would directly affect soil or water quality. Because the North San Bernardino Channel and temporary construction yard are unpaved, a release of a hazardous material has the potential to infiltrate the soil. Additionally, accidental spills or releases of hazardous materials during Project construction activities within the North San Bernardino Channel could affect water quality if spilled materials were mobilized by runoff during a subsequent storm event (see also Section 3.12, *Hydrology and Water Quality*). Accidental spills or releases of hazardous materials could also indirectly affect the soil and/or groundwater through leaching. Hazardous material spills that are left on the ground surface for an extended period or that are followed quickly by a storm event could leach through the soil and into the groundwater, thereby resulting in the degradation of groundwater quality (see also Section 3.12, *Hydrology and Water Quality*).

Normal maintenance and refueling of construction equipment would be conducted at the temporary construction yard, which would include designated zones for equipment parking, refueling, and material storage (San Bernardino County Flood Control District, 2026a). Refueling would take place within a clearly marked and bermed fueling zone located away from the existing channel and equipped with secondary containment, spill kits, and covered storage for operational fluids (San Bernardino County Flood Control District, 2026a). No fueling or maintenance activities would take place within or adjacent to the channel or buffer zones (San Bernardino County Flood Control District, 2026a).

During Project construction, potential impacts would be avoided through implementation of a SWPPP and training construction personnel in the handling and storage of hazardous materials. The Construction SWPPP prepared for the Proposed Project would provide the locations for storage of hazardous materials during construction, as well as protective measures including secondary containment, notifications, and cleanup requirements for any incidental spills or other potential releases of hazardous materials. All refueling, maintenance, and storage of fuels and other hazardous materials would be in accordance with the Construction SWPPP. In addition, safety data sheets for any hazardous material to be used for the Proposed Project would be made available to all crew workers at the Project site.

Implementation of the Construction SWPPP and compliance with applicable hazardous materials regulations would require proper transport, use, disposal, and spill response procedures for hazardous materials. Impacts related to routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be less than significant during Project construction.

***Mitigation Measures***

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

**Operation**

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Project operation would not involve routine transport, use, or disposal of significant quantities of hazardous materials. Operational activities would be limited to routine maintenance, such as the removal of accumulated sediment from the channel. Any hazardous materials would be transported, used, and disposed of in accordance with applicable rules, regulations, and local standard protocols designed to protect the environment, workers, and the public. Impacts related to routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials would be less than significant during Project operation.

***Mitigation Measures***

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

**Construction**

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Spills of hazardous materials could occur due to improper handling and storage practices during Project construction could potentially cause soil or groundwater contamination, or contamination of the Project site. Implementation of the Construction SWPPP, as described in Section 3.11.2(a), as well as compliance with applicable hazardous materials regulations, would ensure proper transport, use, disposal, and spill response procedures for hazardous materials are implemented. Therefore, the potential for Project construction to create a significant hazard to the public or environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment would be less than significant.

***Mitigation Measures***

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

**Operation**

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Project operation would not involve the use of significant quantities of hazardous materials. Any hazardous materials used would be associated with routine maintenance. Any hazardous materials would be transported, used, and disposed of in accordance with applicable rules, regulations, and local standard protocols designed to protect the environment, workers, and the public. Therefore, the potential for Project operation to create a significant hazard to the public or environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment would be less than significant.

***Mitigation Measures***

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. There are three schools located within one-quarter mile of the Project site: Shandin Hills Middle School (0.1-mile southwest), Bob Holcomb Elementary School (0.2-mile northwest) and Newmark Elementary School (0.25-mile north). Project construction is not expected to result in the release of significant hazardous emissions (see Section 3.5, *Air Quality*). Project construction would handle limited quantities of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste, as described in Section 3.11.2(a). Hazardous materials would be transported, used, and disposed of in accordance with applicable rules, regulations, and local standard protocols designed to protect the environment, workers, and the public. Impacts to existing or proposed schools due to hazardous emissions or handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste would be less than significant during Project construction.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As stated above, three schools are located within one-quarter mile of the Project site. Project operation is not expected to result in the release of hazardous emissions and would not involve hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. Operational activities would be limited to routine maintenance. Impacts to existing or proposed schools due to hazardous emissions or handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste would be less than significant during Project operation.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(d) Would the project be located on a site that 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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, the Project site is listed on the DTSC Hazardous Waste and Substances Site (Cortese) List (DTSC, 2026). The Project site is located within the Newmark Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site, an approximately 8-square-mile groundwater plume that is an active federal Superfund site. Contaminants of concern include VOCs, including PCE and TCE (USEPA, 2026). Groundwater is approximately 150 feet below the Project site, and three groundwater treatment plants are currently operating to treat groundwater (SWRCB, 2026; USEPA, 2026). The shallow depth of soil disturbance during construction (maximum 10 feet) would not encounter the contaminated groundwater located at approximately 150 feet below the Project site. Construction of the Proposed Project would not create a hazard to the public or the environment related to existing listed hazardous waste sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant during Project construction.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As stated above, the Proposed Project is listed on the DTSC Hazardous Waste and Substances Site (Cortese) List (DTSC, 2026). Operational activities would be limited to routine maintenance and would not interfere with the groundwater plume located approximately 150 feet below the Project site. Ongoing remediation and monitoring of the Newmark Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site would continue independently of Project operations. Operation of the Proposed Project would not create a hazard to the public or the environment related to existing listed hazardous waste sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant during Project operation.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(e) For a project located within 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 result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?**

### Construction

NO IMPACT. The Project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport. The nearest airport is the San Bernardino International Airport, located approximately 5 miles southeast. Project construction would not result in an airport-related safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area (see also Section 3.15 *Noise*). Therefore, no impact would occur during Project construction.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. As stated above, the Project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within 2 miles of a public airport. Operational activities would be limited to routine maintenance and require a small temporary workforce. Project operation would not result in an airport-related safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area (see also Section 3.15, *Noise*). Therefore, no impact would occur during Project operation.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Project site does not serve as an emergency evacuation route, nor does it contain any emergency facilities. The Proposed Project would be serviced by the San Bernardino Police Department and the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District. Project construction activities, including staging, equipment storage, and the use of a temporary construction yard would occur within the Project site. During Project construction, temporary lane closures, localized detours, or short-term restrictions near work areas may be required along Mountain Drive, 3rd Avenue, 4th Avenue, and Kendall Drive. However, these would be temporary and occur only during active construction and would utilize adjacent local roadways to maintain circulation through the Project vicinity. Additionally, the contractor would be required to maintain adequate emergency access for emergency vehicles as required by the City

of San Bernardino. The Project site is located approximately 1 mile northeast of I-215 and approximately 1.5 miles north of SR 210, which serve as evacuation routes during emergencies (San Bernardino County, 2020c). Project construction would not impair implementation or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts would be less than significant during Project construction.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As stated above, the Project site does not serve as an emergency evacuation route, nor does it contain any emergency facilities. During Project operation, the San Bernardino Police Department and the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District would provide emergency services. Operational activities would be limited to routine maintenance and would be confined entirely within the Project site. Project operation would not impair implementation or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts would be less than significant during Project operation.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Portions of the Project site are classified as “non-burnable”, “moderate”, and “high” wildland fire risk (USFS, 2023). Portions of the Project site are located within CAL FIRE mapped areas of moderate to high wildland fire risk, while the remainder of the Project site is located outside of mapped hazard areas (CAL FIRE, 2026). The Project site is within a Local Responsibility Area, served by the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (CAL FIRE, 2026). Project construction activities would incorporate standard fire prevention and safety measures to minimize wildfire risk. These measures would include implementation of fire-safety protocols, suspension or prohibition of hot work when conditions create an unreasonable fire risk during construction, and availability of fire suppression equipment on the Project site at all times. With these measures in place, Project construction would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant during Project construction.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. As stated above, portions of the Project site are located in areas of moderate to high wildland fire risk (USFS, 2023; CAL FIRE, 2026); however, Project operation would be subject to and comply with applicable fire safety codes, regulations, and standards enforced by the San Bernardino Fire Protection District. Operation and maintenance activities would exacerbate wildfire risks. Project operation would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. Therefore, no impact would occur during Project operation.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

# 3.12. Hydrology and Water Quality

| HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY<br>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 flooding on- or offsite; | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.12.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *Federal*

**Clean Water Act.** The CWA (CWA; 33 U.S.C. Section 1251 et seq.), formerly the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972, was enacted with the intent of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the waters of the United States. The CWA requires states to set standards to protect, maintain, and restore water quality through the regulation of point source and certain non-point source discharges to surface water. Those discharges are regulated by the NPDES permit process (CWA Section 402). In California, NPDES permitting authority is delegated to the SWRCB and administered by its nine RWQCB. The Proposed Project is under the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana RWQCB and the SWRCB.

Projects that disturb one or more acres are required to obtain NPDES coverage under the California General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a SWPPP. The SWPPP describes BMPs the discharger will use to protect stormwater runoff. The SWPPP must contain a visual monitoring program and a chemical monitoring program for "non-visible" pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program.** FEMA administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and publishes Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that identify areas subject to flooding. Portions of the Project area are located within a FEMA mapped special flood hazard area designated as Zone AE (with base flood elevation [BFE] or depth) (FEMA, 2025). Coordination with FEMA may be required if the Proposed Project modifies the stormwater infrastructure

and surrounding floodplain as currently mapped, which may include submittal of a Letter of Map Revision. Any required coordination would occur outside of the CEQA process.

### *State and Regional*

**Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.** The Porter-Cologne Act of 1967 (California Water Code Section 13000 et seq.) serves as the fundamental water quality control law in California, as it set forth the legal and regulatory framework for water quality control in the state. Under the California Water Code, the SWRCB can enforce CWA provisions, which involve waste disposal regulation and cleanup of hazardous material discharges and other pollutants. As mentioned above, the Proposed Project is within the Santa Ana RWQCB. The Porter-Cologne Act requires that activities not degrade water quality or adversely affect beneficial uses of water resources. Criteria for the Project area are specified in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin (Basin Plan), as amended.

**Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan.** The Santa Ana RWQCB Basin Plan establishes water quality standards designed to protect the beneficial uses of surface water and groundwater within the Santa Ana Region (Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Board, 2026). The Basin Plan identifies beneficial uses, establishes water quality objectives, and outlines implementation programs to ensure protection of water resources. Projects within the region are required to be consistent with the Basin Plan and to avoid degradation of water quality.

**San Bernardino County MS4 Permit.** Discharges from stormwater and urban runoff conveyance systems, including flood control facilities, within San Bernardino County are regulated under the NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit issued by the Santa Ana RWQCB (Order No. R8-2010-0036, as amended). The permit establishes requirements for the control of pollutants in stormwater discharges through implementation of BMPs, inspection, monitoring, and maintenance activities. Compliance with the MS4 permit is intended to protect receiving water quality and ensure consistency with Basin Plan objectives.

Water Quality Management Plans (WQMPs) are required under the MS4 permit for certain development and redevelopment projects that meet Priority Project thresholds and that generate new post-construction stormwater runoff. Flood control facilities, such as channels and basins, function as part of the municipal stormwater conveyance system and are intended to convey existing stormwater flows rather than generate new runoff. Accordingly, flood control projects that do not include pollutant-generating development components are not subject to WQMP requirements, and stormwater quality protection for such projects is addressed through MS4 program compliance and standard operational and maintenance practices.

**San Bernardino County Flood Control District.** The Proposed Project is a San Bernardino County Flood Control District flood control facility. As such, the Proposed Project would be designed in accordance with San Bernardino County Flood Control District standards, including the District's Standard Plats, the San Bernardino County Hydrology Manual (San Bernardino County Flood Control District, 2026b), and applicable design manuals referenced therein.

## Affected Environment

The Project area includes the North San Bernardino Channel (formerly known as Devil Creek Channel) between Western Avenue and Little Mountain Basin. The Project area is within the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed and located approximately 2 miles to the south of the San Bernardino Mountains. Average annual precipitation ranges from approximately 12 to 18 inches, with most rainfall occurring between November and March. Near the Project area, stormwater is generated in the steep upland terrain of the San Bernardino Mountains and conveyed mostly through engineered flood control facilities, including basins, dams, and diversion channels. The North San Bernardino Channel is a flood control channel that receives stormwater flows from the San Bernardino Mountains to the north, the Shandin Hills to the

south, and the developed areas between. Flows from the channel discharge to Little Mountain Basin. The existing channel has the capacity to convey runoff from between a 10-year and 25-year storm event. The proposed improvements increase the channel capacity to provide protection for a uniform 100-year storm event.

The Proposed Project also includes the rehabilitation of pavement immediately to the north and south of the channel at North 4th Avenue, Mountain Drive, and North F Street related to improvements of three street crossings/culverts and the relocation of various utilities.

## 3.12.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. There is the potential during construction for sediments originating in the Project area to be carried downstream, especially during a storm event. To reduce these potential impacts to surface water quality, prior to Project construction, a SWPPP would be prepared and implemented in accordance with the SWRCB Construction General Permit (NPDES Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ). The Construction General Permit is administered by the SWRCB, with compliance oversight provided by the Santa Ana RWQCB. The SWPPP would identify erosion and sediment control measures, good housekeeping practices, and other BMPs to minimize pollutant discharges during construction. Implementation of a SWPPP would reduce impacts to water quality to a less-than-significant level.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. Operation of the proposed flood control channel improvements would not result in the discharge of pollutants, generation of wastewater, or introduction of new sources of contamination to surface water or groundwater. The improved channel would function as part of an existing flood control conveyance system designed to safely route storm flows and would not alter drainage patterns, increase pollutant loads, or affect downstream water quality conditions. Furthermore, it is assumed that the pavement rehabilitation at the three street crossing/culvert locations would not increase the existing paved footprint nor change the purpose of paved area and therefore would not be subject to the creation of a WQMP. The Proposed Project would not generate post construction runoff, require waste discharge permits, or interfere with compliance with applicable water quality standards. Accordingly, operation of the flood control channel would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, and no impact to surface or groundwater quality would occur.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

### Construction

NO IMPACT. Limited groundwater resources may be required for dust suppression during construction of the Proposed Project. However, required groundwater supplies would be minimal. No impact would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project does not involve the pumping of local groundwater resources or interfere with groundwater recharge. The proposed improvements facilitate the conveyance of precipitation and runoff flows to Little Mountain Basin, which contributes to infiltration and groundwater recharge at the 29th Street basins further downstream. No significant impact to groundwater resources would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(c) 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:**

v. **result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Some temporary increase in erosion potential could occur during construction. To reduce this erosion potential prior to Project construction, a SWPPP would be prepared and implemented in accordance with the SWRCB Construction General Permit (NPDES Order No. 2022-0057-DWQ). The SWPPP would identify erosion and sediment control measures, good housekeeping practices, and other BMPs. Implementation of a SWPPP would reduce impacts related to erosion to a less-than-significant level.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. No changes to the existing drainage pattern are proposed. The proposed channel design includes hardened bed and banks and permanent erosion-control measures, reducing erosion and siltation from the Project area. No impact would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

vi. **substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. 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. Bypass measures of stormwater flow would be implemented during construction of the stormwater channel upgrades to maintain local protection against flooding. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. The purpose of the Proposed Project is flood control and stormwater conveyance. The channel is designed to convey the 100-year recurrence interval storm event in accordance with San Bernardino County hydrology standards and the San Bernardino Flood Control District standards. The Proposed Project reduces risks associated with the 100-year storm event. Additionally, the rehabilitation of pavement outside of the channel at the three street crossings/culverts would not increase the amount of impervious surface at the site. Therefore, no impact would occur.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

vii. **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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. During construction, normal flow conditions within the channel may be temporarily altered as work areas are isolated and bypassed. A water diversion plan would be prepared and implemented to route flows around or through active work areas using temporary diversion features such as cofferdams, excavated basins, pipelines, flumes, or bermed portions of the existing channel. These systems would be designed to safely convey anticipated flows during the construction period and would be routinely inspected and maintained to prevent flow obstruction or capacity exceedance. Construction staging, equipment parking, fueling, and material storage would be confined to a designated staging area located outside of the active channel and buffer zones. No equipment, materials, or stockpiles would be placed within the channel, preventing obstruction of surface flow paths or displacement of runoff to adjacent areas. All equipment would be returned to the staging area during non-work periods, maintaining clear drainage conditions at all times.

Temporary construction surfaces would be managed with perimeter stormwater controls to prevent uncontrolled runoff from disturbed areas. Operational fluids, including diesel fuel and small quantities of hydraulic fluids, lubricants, oils, and coolants, would be stored in sealed containers with secondary containment. Fueling and routine maintenance would occur only within a designated, bermed fueling area equipped with spill kits and covered storage, and daily equipment inspections would identify and address leaks prior to operation. Waste fluids would be properly collected and transported off site for disposal, and no fueling, maintenance, or material storage would occur within or adjacent to the active channel. With implementation of the water diversion plan, controlled equipment staging, and standard stormwater management practices, construction would not generate runoff volumes or pollutant sources that exceed the capacity of existing drainage systems. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. The purpose of the Proposed Project is flood control and stormwater conveyance. It is designed to receive and convey stormwater flows. Therefore, no impact would occur.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

viii. **impede or redirect flood flows?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As mentioned above, a water diversion plan would be prepared and implemented to route flows around or through active work areas. Implementation of temporary diversion features, such as cofferdams, excavated basins, pipelines, flumes, or bermed portions of the existing channel, would be designed to safely convey anticipated flows during the construction period and would be routinely inspected and maintained to prevent flow obstruction or capacity exceedance. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The purpose of the Proposed Project is flood control and stormwater conveyance. It is designed to receive and convey stormwater flows. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Project site is located within a riverine flood hazard area but is not within a tsunami or seiche hazard zone. Construction-phase activities would be temporary in nature and would not involve the placement or long-term storage of hazardous materials within areas subject to inundation. Only small quantities of standard operational fluids would be present on site, which would be stored in sealed containers with secondary containment in designated staging areas located outside of the active channel. Fueling and maintenance would not occur within flood-prone areas, and spill prevention measures would be implemented at all times. Although temporary water diversion measures may be used during construction, these measures would be monitored and managed to maintain safe flow conveyance and prevent inundation of staging or storage areas. As a result, impacts related to flood hazards would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Project site is in a flood zone and would be subject to inundation during a large flood event. The proposed channel is designed to convey the 100-year recurrence interval event and does not introduce new sources of pollutants. The Proposed Project is not in a tsunami or seiche zone. Impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As mentioned above, some temporary increase in erosion potential and conveyance of sediments originating in the Project area could occur during construction, especially during a storm event. This erosion potential and sediment conveyance would be addressed by compliance with the development and implementation of a SWPPP. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. Also as mentioned above, the purpose of the Proposed Project is flood control and stormwater conveyance within a concrete channel that would reduce erosion. Implementation of the Proposed Project would not introduce pollutants to surface or ground waters. As such, impacts would occur.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

# 3.13. Land Use and Planning

| LAND USE PLANNING<br>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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.13.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *Regional*

**San Bernardino County General Plan.** The Infrastructure & Utilities Element of the San Bernardino County General Plan (San Bernardino County, 2020d) includes the following goals and policies that pertain to land uses specifically relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Goal IU-3. Stormwater Drainage:** A regional stormwater drainage backbone and local stormwater facilities in unincorporated areas that reduce the risk of flooding.
  - **Policy IU-3.1: Regional flood control.** We maintain a regional flood control system and regularly evaluate the need for and implement upgrades based on changing land coverage and hydrologic conditions in order to manage and reduce flood risk. We require any public and private projects proposed anywhere in the county to address and mitigate any adverse impacts on the carrying capacity and stormwater velocity of regional stormwater drainage systems.
  - **Policy IU-3.2: Local flood control.** We require new development to install and maintain stormwater management facilities that maintain predevelopment hydrology and hydraulic conditions.

#### *Local*

**City of San Bernardino General Plan.** The following policies from the City of San Bernardino 2050 Draft General Plan Utilities and Infrastructure Element (City of San Bernardino, 2025b) pertain to land uses specifically relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Goal UI-2: Storm Drain and Flood Control.** Provision and financing of orderly, well-planned, and sufficient storm drain and flood control facilities that meet the needs of existing and future residents and business in San Bernardino.
  - **Policy UI-2.1: Drainage infrastructure.** Ensure that adequate storm drainage and flood control facilities are provided and regularly maintained in a timely manner to protect people and property from flooding hazards.
  - **Policy UI-2.2: Infrastructure management.** Provide for the timely maintenance, renovation, replacement, and expansion of storm drain and flood control facilities to eliminate existing or future service deficiencies and protect property and development from flooding.
  - **Policy UI-2.4: Flood control project design.** Design and implement flood control projects and improvements that maintain the integrity of riparian and other habitats, minimize disturbance of natural water bodies or drainage systems, and provide multiple benefits.

- **Policy OSC-1.4: Waterways.** Preserve the integrity of the City's streams, rivers, playas, washes, channels, water bodies, and other waterways and riparian areas to the greatest extent possible for their intrinsic and habitat value.
- **Policy LU-12.1: Infrastructure Provision.** Provide adequate water, sewer, telecommunication, flood control, and transportation infrastructure to support San Bernardino land uses in accordance with the goals and policies of the Utilities and Infrastructure and Circulation Elements.

### Affected Environment

The Project site is primarily within the City of San Bernardino and University District Specific Plan area, with a portion of it from North 3rd Avenue to North 4th Avenue within unincorporated San Bernardino County. The site is surrounded by residential and institutional development to the north, Little Mountain Basin to the east, residential and commercial development to the south, and additional residential and institutional areas to the west.

The City of San Bernardino General Plan and University District Specific Plan land use designations include Public Facilities (PF), Publicly Owner Flood Control (PFC), Commercial General (CG-1), and Residential Medium (RM) (City of San Bernardino, 2005). The portion of the site within unincorporated San Bernardino County has a land use designation of Low Density Residential (LDR) (San Bernardino County, 2026a). As a linear piece of infrastructure, the Project site spans multiple parcels, which hold zoning designations of PFC, PF, CG-1, and RM, corresponding with the land use designations listed above, as well as Multiple Residential (RM) by the County of San Bernardino (City of San Bernardino, 2026a; San Bernardino County, 2026a).

## 3.13.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(a) Would the project physically divide an established community?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. A community may be divided if a project were to introduce a new physical barrier through that community (e.g., a highway or railroad). The Proposed Project would involve improvements to the existing North San Bernardino Channel, and all Project-related activities would occur within disturbed areas adjacent to the North San Bernardino Channel as illustrated in Figure 2. The Proposed Project would not introduce any new infrastructure that could create a barrier across an existing community. No impact would occur.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

**(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?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. All activities associated with the Proposed Project would occur within the existing North San Bernardino Channel and within disturbed areas adjacent to the adjacent to the channel. The Proposed Project would not result in any change to established land uses surrounding the Project area. The Proposed Project would be consistent with the City, University District, and County land use and zoning designations of Public Facilities (PF), Publicly Owner Flood Control (PFC), Commercial General (CG-1), Residential Medium (RM), Low Density Residential (LDR), and Multiple Residential (RM) and there would be no conflict, as the use of the Project site would not change. As a flood control improvement project, the

proposed activities would be consistent with the City's and County's goals and policies for its watersheds and flood control infrastructure. Therefore, no impact would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

# 3.14. Mineral Resources

| MINERAL RESOURCES<br>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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.14.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *State*

**Surface Mining and Reclamation Act.** The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA), California PRC Section 2710 et seq., is the primary regulatory framework for mining in the State and 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 (MRZs). 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.

**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.

### *Regional*

**San Bernardino County General Plan.** The Natural Resources Element of the San Bernardino County General Plan, adopted and last updated in 2020 (San Bernardino County, 2020b), provides guidance and support for mining operations while minimizing negative impacts on the public and natural environment.

### *Local*

**City of San Bernardino General Plan.** In 2007, the City adopted an updated General Plan (City of San Bernardino, 2005) that includes various goals and policies aimed at conserving areas identified as containing significant mineral deposits for potential future use, including the following:

- **Goal 12.4:** Properly manage designated areas for mineral extraction to meet the needs of the area.
  - **Policy 12.4.1:** Continue to document current extraction sites, including sand and gravel quarries, including the status and duration of existing permits and approvals.
  - **Policy 12.4.2:** Impose conditions and enforce mitigation measures on mining operations to reduce dust, noise, and safety hazards associated with removal of construction aggregate and minimize impacts on adjacent properties and environmental resources.
  - **Policy 12.4.3:** Determine and designate approved access routes to and from mineral resource sectors to minimize the impacts to vehicular circulation on City streets.
  - **Policy 12.4.4:** Require that any applications to permit uses other than mineral extraction or the interim uses defined in areas designated IE, Industrial Extractive, include findings to be prepared by the project proponent outlining the reasons why mining is not a feasible use and how the deletion of the area as a potential mineral resource supply impacts the regional supply of aggregate resources.
  - **Policy 12.4.5:** Require that the operation and reclamation of surface mines be consistent with the State Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) and the Development Code.
  - **Policy 12.4.6:** Designate post aggregate extraction reclamation procedures to mitigate potential environmental impacts and safety hazards. Long-term monitoring of the effectiveness of the reclamation procedures should be considered as an integral part of the program.
  - **Policy 12.4.7:** Restrict incompatible land uses within the impact area of existing or potential surface mining areas.
  - **Policy 12.4.8:** Require that new, non-mining land uses adjacent to existing mining operations be designed to provide a buffer between the new development and the mining operations. The buffer distance shall be based on an evaluation of noise, aesthetics, drainage, operating conditions, biological resources, topography, lighting, traffic, operating hours, and air quality.

## Affected Environment

Mineral resources are broadly divided in California into fuel and non-fuel. Fuel resources consist of oil and gas resources and non-fuel resources include metals, industrial minerals, and construction aggregate. Mineral resources are varied in San Bernardino County with many active mines; materials actively being mined include rare earth minerals, clay, gold, silver, talc, iron, silicates, evaporites, carbonates, borates, volcanic cinder, sand and gravel, and decorative rock (San Bernardino County, 2026b). The Project site is underlain by geologic units that may contain mineral resources, primarily sand and gravel (aggregate). In the Project area, the identified mineral resource of interest is aggregate.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Mineral Resources Database System (MRDS) provides data on metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources, including deposit name, location, commodity, deposit description,

geologic characteristics, production, reserves, resources, and references (USGS, 2026b) and the San Bernardino County list of active mines (San Bernardino County, 2026b) were reviewed for the presence of known and active mineral resource sites at or adjacent to the Project site. The review indicates that there are no mapped mineral resource sites or mines at or adjacent to the Project site (USGS, 2026b; San Bernardino County, 2026b). Several former sand and gravel quarries (past producers) are located over 2 miles to the south and southwest of the Project site, and a former limestone quarry that produced crushed rock is located approximately 2 miles to the north (USGS, 2026b).

The State Geologist, under the SMARA, has mapped and classified areas of non-fuel mineral resources in California into four categories based on: available geologic information, likelihood of mineral resources being present, and whether they have areas of known mineral resources. The Project area is located within a mapped MRZ-3 zone, which indicates the presence of known or inferred mineral resources; however, the significance of these resources cannot be determined with the available data (CGS, 1995).

## 3.14.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Although the Project site is located within a mapped MRZ-3 area of known or inferred mineral resources of undetermined significance, Project construction would be temporary and limited to the existing channel and immediate surrounding area. Project construction would consist of constructing an ultimate channel to replace the existing interim channel, installing three street crossings/ culverts, and relocating various utilities. There are no active quarrying operations at or adjacent to the Project site that would be affected by Project construction. Therefore, Project construction would result in a less-than-significant impact related to the loss of availability of known mineral resources.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As discussed above, the Project site is within a mapped MRZ-3 area of known or inferred mineral resources of undetermined significance (CGS, 1995). Project operation would consist of routine maintenance activities within the North San Bernardino Channel, such as the periodic removal of accumulated sediment. Project operation activities would not involve ground disturbance or land use changes that could affect mineral resource availability. There are no active quarrying operations at or adjacent to the Project site that would be affected by Project operation. Therefore, Project operation would result in a less-than-significant impact related to the loss of availability of known mineral resources.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Project site is located in an area classified by the CGS as MRZ-3, indicating the presence of mineral resources of undetermined significance (CGS, 1995). The Project site is not identified as a locally important mineral resource recovery area in any applicable local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan (City of San Bernardino, 2005; San Bernardino County, 2020b). Project construction

would consist of constructing an ultimate channel to replace the existing interim channel, installing three street crossings/culverts, and relocating various utilities. Project construction would occur within the existing channel and immediate surrounding area. Project construction would not restrict access to or recovery of mineral resources, nor would it affect their availability for future extraction. Therefore, Project construction would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Impacts would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As discussed above, the Project site is located in an area classified by the CGS as MRZ-3, indicating the presence of mineral resources of undetermined significance, and this area is not identified as a locally important resource area on any local plans (CGS, 1995; City of San Bernardino, 2005; San Bernardino County, 2020b). Project operation would consist of routine maintenance within the channel and immediate surrounding area, including sediment removal, vegetation management, debris removal, and minor repairs. Project operation would not involve ground disturbance or the construction of new structures or improvements that could affect mineral resource availability. Project operation would not restrict access to or recovery of mineral resources, nor would it affect their availability for future extraction. Therefore, Project operation would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Impacts would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

# 3.15. Noise

| NOISE<br>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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.15.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

Regulating environmental noise is generally the responsibility of local governments. The USEPA once published guidelines on recommended maximum noise levels to protect public health and welfare (USEPA, 1974), and the State of California maintains recommendations for local jurisdictions in the General Plan Guidelines published by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR, 2003). The following summarizes the local requirements.

#### *Local*

**City of San Bernardino Municipal Code Section 83.01.080 Noise.** The City of San Bernardino Municipal Code, Chapter 7, *Noise Abatement and Control*, regulates construction noise primarily through restrictions on hours of operation. Construction activities are generally permitted during daytime hours and are prohibited between 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., except for emergency work (§ 24.0706(d), Special Sound Source Standards). During allowable hours, construction noise associated with certain public-agency construction, maintenance, and repair operations is typically considered exempt from the standards outlined Chapter 7 of the code (§ 24.0707). The ordinance does not establish specific dBA thresholds for construction noise. Instead, it relies on time-of-day restrictions and general nuisance provisions, which prohibit excessive or disturbing noise that interferes with the peace and comfort of nearby residents.

Under Article III – General, Chapter 19.20, *Property Development Standards*, specifically section 19.20.030(15), the Code prohibits loudspeakers, mechanical equipment, and other attention-attracting or communication devices associated with a land use from being discernible beyond the property boundary, with limited exceptions for emergency and similar devices. In addition, the code establishes noise standards for residential areas, requiring exterior noise levels not to exceed 65 dBA and interior noise levels not to exceed 45 dBA.

**City of San Bernardino General Plan Noise Element.** The City of San Bernardino General Plan Noise Element establishes policies intended to minimize nuisance noise and protect sensitive land uses from excessive noise exposure. Goal 14.3 of the Noise Element specifically seeks to protect residents from "spill over" and nuisance noise through implementation of operational and construction-related noise controls. Policy 14.3.1 requires that construction activities adjacent to residential uses be limited, as necessary, to avoid adverse noise impacts, while Policy 14.3.2 requires the use of feasible and practical construction techniques to minimize noise exposure at nearby sensitive receptors.

**City of San Bernardino 2050 Draft General Plan – Draft Noise Element.** The latest General Plan Noise Element (draft 2025 version) references Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidance for construction noise and vibration standards. Table N-6 of the draft Noise Element identifies construction noise thresholds applicable to residential receptors and other sensitive land uses. Consistent with FTA guidance, the draft Noise Element establishes a daytime construction noise threshold of 80 dBA Leq and a nighttime threshold of 70 dBA Leq (City of San Bernardino, 2025c).

The draft Noise Element also includes policies intended to reduce construction-related noise impacts at sensitive receptors. Policy N-5.1, Construction Near Sensitive Uses, requires that construction activities adjacent to residential units and other sensitive land uses be limited as necessary to prevent adverse noise impacts. Policy N-5.2, Feasible Options to Reduce Noise from Construction, requires that construction activities employ feasible and practical techniques to minimize noise impacts on adjacent land uses. In addition, Policy N-5.3, Exterior Noise Standard for Construction Activities, adopts the applicable FTA construction noise and vibration standards at receiving land uses, as identified in Table N-6 of the draft General Plan Noise Element.

The draft Noise Element references FTA guidance for the evaluation of construction-related vibration impacts. Table N-6 of the draft Noise Element identifies applicable vibration criteria for sensitive receptors, including thresholds intended to protect against human annoyance and potential building damage resulting from construction activities. Consistent with FTA guidance, the draft Noise Element identifies a vibration threshold for building damage of 0.2 inches per second PPV for fragile buildings and 0.5 inches per second PPV for conventional buildings. Construction vibration impacts are evaluated at the receiving land use based on these PPV criteria. (City of San Bernardino, 2025c).

In addition, the draft Noise Element includes policies intended to minimize construction-related noise and vibration impacts at sensitive land uses. Policy N-5.1, Construction Near Sensitive Uses, requires that construction activities adjacent to residential units and other sensitive land uses be limited as necessary to prevent adverse noise and vibration impacts. Policy N-5.2, Feasible Options to Reduce Noise from Construction, requires that construction activities employ feasible and practical techniques to minimize noise and vibration impacts on adjacent land uses. Policy N-5.3, Exterior Noise Standard for Construction Activities, adopts the applicable FTA construction noise and vibration standards at receiving land uses, as identified in Table N-6 of the draft Noise Element.

## Affected Environment

### *Community Noise*

To describe environmental noise and to assess project impacts on areas that are sensitive to community noise, a measurement scale that simulates human perception is used. The A-weighted scale of frequency sensitivity accounts for the sensitivity of the human ear, which is less sensitive to low frequencies, and correlates well with human perceptions of the annoying aspects of noise. The A-weighted decibel scale (dBA) is cited in most noise criteria. Decibels are logarithmic units that can be used to conveniently compare wide ranges of sound intensities.

Community noise levels can be highly variable from day to day as well as between day and night. For simplicity, sound levels are usually best represented by an equivalent level over a given time period (Leq) or by an average level occurring over a 24-hour day-night period (Ldn). The Leq, or equivalent sound level, is a single value (in dBA) for any desired duration, which includes all of the time-varying sound energy in the measurement period, usually one hour. The L50, is the median noise level that is exceeded fifty percent of the time during any measuring interval. The Ldn, or day-night average sound level, is equal to the 24 hour A-weighted equivalent sound level with a 10 decibel penalty applied to nighttime sounds occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is another metric that is the average equivalent A-weighted sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of 5

decibels to sound levels in the evening from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and after addition of 10 decibels to sound levels in the night from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. To easily estimate the day-night level caused by any noise source emitting steadily and continuously over 24 hours, the Ldn is 6.4 dBA higher than the source's Leq. For example, if the expected continuous noise level from equipment is 50.0 dBA Leq for every hour, the day-night noise level would be 56.4 dBA Ldn.

Community noise levels are usually closely related to the intensity of human activity. Noise levels are generally considered low when below 45 dBA, moderate in the 45 to 60 dBA range, and high above 60 dBA. In wilderness areas, the Ldn noise levels can be below 35 dBA. In small towns or wooded and lightly used residential areas, the Ldn is more likely to be around 50 or 60 dBA. Levels around 75 dBA are more common in busy urban areas, and levels up to 85 dBA occur near major freeways and airports. Although people often accept the higher levels associated with very noisy urban residential and residential-commercial zones, they nevertheless are considered adverse to public health.

Surrounding land uses dictate what noise levels would be considered acceptable or unacceptable. Lower levels are expected in rural or suburban areas than would be expected for commercial or industrial zones. Nighttime ambient levels in urban environments are about 7 decibels lower than the corresponding daytime levels. In rural areas away from roads and other human activity, the day-to-night difference can be considerably less. Areas with full-time human occupation and residency are often considered incompatible with substantial nighttime noise because of the likelihood of disrupting sleep. Noise levels above 45 dBA at night can result in the onset of sleep interference. At 70 dBA, sleep interference effects become considerable (U.S. EPA, 1974).

### *Noise Environment in the Project Area*

The Project site consists of a linear channel corridor located within an urbanized area of the City of San Bernardino and is surrounded by a mix of single- and multi-family residential, commercial, and institutional land uses. The existing ambient noise environment in the Project vicinity is dominated by vehicular traffic along Kendall Drive, which is located approximately 200 feet south of the Project alignment. Kendall Drive is classified as a major arterial roadway in the City of San Bernardino General Plan and is designed to accommodate high traffic volumes and serve as a primary circulation route.

Ambient noise levels measured adjacent to Kendall Drive near residential receptors have been documented at approximately 72 to 76 dBA Leq during daytime hours and 65 to 75 dBA Leq during nighttime hours, with an overall noise exposure of approximately 77 to 80 dBA CNEL (City of San Bernardino, 2023). Although these measurements were collected for a separate project, noise levels along the Project segment of Kendall Drive are expected to be similar due to comparable roadway characteristics and traffic volumes. Considering the setback distance between the channel and Kendall Drive, typical attenuation of traffic noise with distance, and the presence of intervening structures, existing noise levels at the Project site are conservatively estimated to range from approximately 65 to 75 dBA Leq during daytime hours, 60 to 70 dBA Leq during nighttime hours, and approximately 70 to 75 dBA CNEL. This is also consistent with the existing and future noise contours established in the San Bernardino Countywide Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (San Bernardino County, 2019), as well as those of the updated Draft 2050 City of San Bernardino General Plan Noise Element.

### *Noise Sensitive Areas*

Sensitive noise receptors in the Project vicinity include single- and multi-family residences located immediately north and south of the channel, the Gateway Education Center located adjacent to the site's northern boundary, as well as a school located approximately 430 feet to the south. These receptors are subject to existing urban noise conditions associated with roadway traffic and surrounding residential and commercial activities, which vary throughout the day and are generally highest during weekday daytime

hours. Other receptors in the area would experience lower noise levels due to increased distance from construction activities and shielding provided by intervening structures.

### *Methodology and Thresholds of Significance*

Construction noise impacts were evaluated using reference noise levels from the Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM) for typical equipment expected to be used along the linear Project corridor (FHWA, 2006). Consistent with FTA guidance, a conservative modeling approach was applied in which all construction equipment associated with a given phase was assumed to operate at the center of the construction area, with the loudest piece of equipment modeled at the closest feasible distance to nearby sensitive receptors. Where receptors were immediately adjacent to construction activities, a conservative minimum equipment-to-receptor separation distance of 15 feet was assumed. Equipment usage factors were applied to account for the intermittent nature of construction activity. Resulting noise levels were compared to the FTA construction noise reference level of 80 dBA Leq at the property boundary of nearby residential receptors in the absence of adopted local construction noise thresholds, and for consistency with the 2050 Draft General Plan Noise Element standards (FTA, 2018; Table N-6 in City of San Bernardino, 2025c).

Construction-related traffic noise was evaluated based on the potential for Project-generated vehicle trips to substantially increase roadway traffic noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors. Consistent with guidance from the FHWA, a doubling of traffic volumes on a roadway results in an approximate 3 dBA increase in traffic noise levels, which represents the minimum change generally considered readily perceptible to most observers. Therefore, a significant impact would occur if Project-generated construction traffic would increase traffic volumes on a roadway segment by 100 percent or more, resulting in an approximate 3 dBA increase in traffic noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors (FHWA 2011).

Construction-related groundborne vibration impacts were evaluated using reference vibration levels for typical construction equipment, as provided in the Draft General Plan Noise Element (City of San Bernardino, 2025c) and FTA guidance, with attenuation applied to estimate vibration levels at nearby receptors. Predicted vibration levels were compared to FTA criteria for both human perception and structural response. FTA guidance identifies a threshold of approximately 78 vibration decibel (VdB) as the level at which vibration becomes distinctly perceptible and potentially annoying to occupants in residential settings during daytime hours, 84 VdB for office spaces, and 90 VdB for industrial workshops (FTA, 2018). For structural considerations, more conservative thresholds of approximately 0.2 inches per second peak particle velocity (PPV) for fragile structures and 0.5 inches per second PPV for typical residential buildings were used as screening criteria for potential cosmetic damage (FTA, 2018). Given the temporary and intermittent nature of construction activities, vibration impacts were assessed relative to these thresholds.

## 3.15.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Construction noise typically occurs intermittently and varies depending upon the nature or phase (e.g., demolition/land clearing, grading, excavation, and erection) of the activity. Noise generated by construction equipment, including earthmovers, material handlers, and portable generators, can reach high levels. Noise levels commonly associated with off-road equipment anticipated to be used during Project construction are summarized in Table 3.15-1.

**Table 3.15-1. Typical Construction Equipment Noise Levels**

| Equipment | Noise Level (dBA at 50 feet) | |
|---|---|---|
| | $L_{max}$ | $L_{eq}$ |
| Backhoes | 78 | 74 |
| Bulldozers | 82 | 78 |
| Excavator | 81 | 77 |
| Generator | 81 | 78 |
| Gradall | 83 | 79 |
| Grader | 85 | 81 |
| Front End Loaders | 79 | 75 |
| Pneumatic Tools | 85 | 82 |
| Scrapers | 84 | 80 |
| Tractor | 84 | 80 |
| Compressor | 80 | 73.7 |

Based on measured instantaneous noise levels (Lmax), average equipment usage rates, and calculated average-hourly (Leq) noise levels derived from the FHWA Road Construction Noise Model (FHWA, 2008)

As noted in Table 3.15-1, instantaneous noise levels generated by individual pieces of off-road equipment typically range from approximately 77 to 90 dBA Lmax at 50 feet (FHWA, 2008). Typical operating cycles may involve two minutes of full power, followed by 3 or 4 minutes at lower settings. Based on typical off-road equipment usage rates, average hourly noise levels for individual equipment would be approximately 83 dBA Leq, or less, at 50 feet. Assuming that multiple pieces of equipment could be operating simultaneously, predicted average-hourly noise levels could reach levels of approximately 85 dBA Leq at 50 feet.

Nearby noise-sensitive land uses in the Project area include residential homes located directly adjacent to the northern and southern boundaries of the channel, with additional receptors located approximately 600 feet west of the Project site. Table 3.15-2 presents predicted construction noise levels at the nearest residential receptors. To conservatively evaluate potential impacts, construction activities associated with the Proposed Project were assumed to occur at the closest feasible point along the Project boundary adjacent to existing residential land uses, with a minimum equipment-to-receptor distance of 15 feet. Other receptors in the area would experience lower noise levels due to increased distance from construction activities and shielding provided by intervening structures.

**Table 3.15-2. Typical Construction Equipment Noise Levels**

| Project Phase | Distance to Receptors (ft) | | Predicted Noise Level (dBA $L_{eq}$)[1] | Threshold (dBA $L_{eq}$) | Exceed Threshold? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Center of Site | Site Boundary | | | |
| Clearing & Grubbing | 45 | 15 | **87** | 80 | Yes |
| Grading & Excavation | 45 | 15 | **89** | 80 | Yes |
| Structural | 45 | 15 | **90** | 80 | Yes |
| Road Work | 50 | 10 | **94** | 80 | Yes |

1. Threshold exceedances bolded.
Noise levels were calculated using the FHWA Roadway Construction Noise Model, Version 1.1 (2008). Assumes all equipment operating simultaneously from the center of the site, with the loudest piece of equipment operating at the closest distance to the nearest receptor.
Distances are approximate based on aerial photo interpretation.

As noted in Table 3.15-2, construction noise levels could exceed the FTA 80 dBA screening criterion at nearby receptors, construction activities would be temporary in nature and conducted during allowable

daytime hours. Significance was therefore evaluated based on the potential to create a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels or a nuisance condition pursuant to the City's general noise standards and the 2050 Draft General Plan Noise Element standards. The Proposed Project would not require nighttime work and therefore construction-generated noise was not analyzed for work being done outside of the City's allowed construction times. To reduce noise levels associated with construction activities at the Project site, MM NOI-1 is recommended to reduce noise generated during permitted construction hours (7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.) through implementation of construction noise BMPs and equipment controls.

If work were to occur during nighttime hours in the case of emergencies, that work would be a substantial temporary increase in noise levels throughout the Project vicinity. With regard to residential dwellings, activities occurring during the more noise-sensitive nighttime hours would be of particular concern given the potential for increased levels of annoyance and sleep disruption to building occupants. Therefore, MM NOI-1 is recommended to reduce construction noise generated during prohibited hours of the day.

MM NOI-1 would reduce the potential for noise exposure, including the use of noise attenuating barriers situated between construction activities and nearby noise-sensitive receptors, alternatively powered equipment, the use of exhaust mufflers, and engine shrouds. Implementation of these noise-reduction features can reduce construction noise levels by approximately 15 dBA or more. MM NOI-1 would also limit the periods during which construction activities would occur to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily. These hourly restrictions are based on the City of San Bernardino Municipal Code hourly limitations. With the implementation of MM NOI-1, predicted construction noise levels at sensitive receptors would not exceed the applicable noise standards or hourly restrictions. For these reasons and given that construction activities would be short-term, this impact would be considered less than significant with the implementation of mitigation.

### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM NOI-1** **Construction Noise Reduction.** The following measures shall be implemented to reduce short-term construction noise impacts:

(a) Construction activities shall be prohibited between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. daily.

(b) Construction equipment shall be properly maintained and equipped with exhaust mufflers and engine shrouds in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.

(c) To the extent locally available, electrified or alternatively powered construction equipment shall be used.

(d) All mobile or stationary internal-combustion-engine powered equipment or machinery shall be equipped with suitable exhaust and air-intake silencers in proper working order.

(e) When not in use, all construction equipment shall be turned off and shall not be allowed to idle. Provide clear signage that posts this requirement for workers at the entrances to the site.

(f) The installation of a 10-foot-tall temporary noise barrier shall be required along the property line adjacent to nearby residential land uses along the channel corridor. The barrier shall consist of outdoor-rated quilted acoustic blankets, composite sound-absorptive panels, or equivalent materials capable of providing a minimum 10 dBA reduction in construction noise levels. The barrier shall be designed to break the line of sight between construction activities and nearby sensitive receptors, consist of

continuous material with no gaps or openings, and be placed between construction activities occurring within 100 feet of any noise-sensitive receptor property.

(g) To the extent feasible, construction equipment during the road work phase shall be shielded from nearby receptors when construction activities occur within 50 feet of a residence. Barriers shall be consistent with the parameters outlined in part (f) above.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project would require routine maintenance activities to maintain flow capacity and channel function, including vegetation management, debris removal, channel bank and structure inspections, access route maintenance, and sediment or obstruction removal. These activities would occur periodically, including routine inspections and maintenance following storm events, and would generally be conducted using hand tools and light-duty equipment. Given the limited intensity, short duration, and intermittent nature of these activities, operational noise would not be expected to result in a substantial increase above existing ambient noise conditions in the urban environment surrounding the Project site. Maintenance activities would be conducted in accordance with applicable local noise ordinance requirements during permitted daytime hours and would generate noise levels similar to those commonly associated with routine maintenance and service activities in urban settings. Therefore, maintenance-related operational activities would not be expected to exceed applicable noise standards or substantially increase ambient noise levels, and a detailed operational noise analysis was not warranted.

The Proposed Project would make improvements to an existing section of the North San Bernardino Channel. There are no new sources of noise proposed that would increase ambient noise levels in the vicinity beyond occasional inspections and maintenance visits to the site that would have a negligible effect on ambient noise levels. Thus, there would be no impact in this area, and no mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

### Off-site Traffic Noise

Project vicinity roadways that would be used by construction workers, haul trucks, and material deliveries are located within a highly urbanized area of the City and currently accommodate substantial daily traffic volumes. The temporary increase of trips on Project-vicinity roadways from the maximum 25 workers and minimal deliveries would not result in a doubling of traffic volumes on nearby roadways. A doubling of traffic volumes is generally required to result in a perceptible increase of approximately 3 dBA in roadway noise levels (FHWA, 2011). Therefore, construction traffic generated by the Proposed Project would not substantially increase ambient roadway noise levels in the Project vicinity, and impacts related to off-site traffic noise during construction would be less than significant.

Operation of the Proposed Project would not generate substantial long-term vehicle trips, as operational activities would be limited to infrequent maintenance visits occurring only a few times per year. Therefore, operation of the Proposed Project would not result in a measurable increase in roadway noise levels, and no operational traffic noise impact would occur.

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION. Construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would require the use of various tractors, trucks, compactors, and rollers that could result in intermittent

increases in groundborne vibration levels. The use of major groundborne vibration-generating construction equipment/processes (i.e., blasting, pile driving) is not anticipated to be required. Groundborne vibration levels commonly associated with construction equipment are summarized in Table 3.15-3.

**Table 3.15-3. Representative Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment**

| | Reference PPV/$L_v$ at 25 Feet | |
|---|---|---|
| Equipment | PPV[1] (in/sec) | $L_v$(VdB)[2] |
| Vibratory Rollers | 0.210 | 94 |
| Large Bulldozers | 0.089 | 87 |
| Loaded Trucks | 0.076 | 86 |
| Jackhammer | 0.035 | 79 |
| Small Bulldozers | 0.003 | 58 |

Source: FTA, 2018; Caltrans, 2020

1. Peak Particle Velocity (ppv) is the maximum speed at which a particle of soil or rock moves back and forth as a vibration wave passes through it. It is typically expressed in inches per second (in/sec) and is the primary metric used to evaluate the potential for groundborne vibration to cause building or structural damage.

2. Lv is a vibration metric used to describe groundborne vibration levels based on the root mean square (RMS) vibration velocity. Lv is typically expressed in vibration decibels (VdB) and is commonly used to evaluate human perception of vibration and potential annoyance within buildings. VdB is a logarithmic unit used to quantify groundborne vibration velocity relative to a reference vibration level of 1 micro-inch per second ($1\times10^{-6}$ inches/second RMS). VdB is commonly used in FTA guidance to evaluate the potential for human annoyance and disturbance from construction and operational vibration sources.

As identified above, groundborne vibration levels generated by construction equipment would be approximately 0.210 in/sec PPV, or less, at 25 feet during operation of a vibratory roller, or similar vibratory equipment, in the proposed Road Work phase. The nearest structures are located approximately 10 feet, or more, from work occurring along North Mountain Drive. Assuming a reference vibration level of 0.210 in/sec PPV at 25 feet, predicted vibration levels at the nearest structure would be approximately 0.830 in/sec PPV, or less, based on the following equation:

$$PPVequip = PPVref \times (Dref/Drec)1.5$$

Therefore, predicted vibration levels at nearby structures could exceed the FTA recommended threshold of 0.20 in/sec PPV for potential damage to fragile structures, as well as the 0.50 in/sec PPV threshold for conventional structures, where construction activities occur in close proximity to buildings. As a result, construction activities associated with operation of vibratory rollers within approximately 15 feet of nearby structures could result in significant groundborne vibration impacts related to potential structural damage.

Groundborne vibration levels generated by construction activities with the potential to result in human annoyance would be approximately 94 VdB, or less, at 25 feet during use of vibratory rollers in the road work phase. As discussed above, the nearest structures are located approximately 10 feet from work occurring along North Mountain Drive. Assuming a reference vibration level of 94 VdB at 25 feet, predicted construction vibration levels at the nearest structure would be approximately 106 VdB, or less, based on the following equation:

$$Lv = Lvref - 30log10(Drec/Dref)$$

Therefore, use of vibratory rollers within approximately 85 feet of nearby residences would exceed the applicable 78 VdB residential threshold and could result in potentially significant impacts related to human annoyance.

Vibration-generating activities during the Road Work phase would be temporary, intermittent, and limited to the City's allowable daytime construction hours (7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.). Implementation of MM N-2 would reduce the likelihood of structural damage, and in turn human annoyance, resulting from excessive

groundborne vibrations by limiting the use of vibratory rollers or similar vibratory equipment within close proximity of vibration-sensitive structures and residences. Because the use of vibratory rollers would occur only during discrete periods of the Road Work phase and would cease upon completion of that work, the temporary vibration exposure, with the implementation of MM N-2**,** would not result in a substantial or prolonged disturbance. As a result, this impact would be considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM NOI-2** **Construction Vibration Reduction.** To reduce short-term construction groundborne vibrations impacts, construction activities that generate substantial groundborne vibration, including the use of vibratory rollers, large bulldozers, or similar heavy construction equipment, shall not occur within 25 feet of occupied residences or other vibration-sensitive receptors or structures unless a qualified acoustical engineer or vibration specialist demonstrates through site-specific analysis that vibration levels would remain below applicable significance thresholds. Where predicted vibration levels would exceed applicable thresholds, feasible measures shall be implemented to reduce vibration impacts, including but not limited to: limiting the use of high-vibration equipment near sensitive receptors; utilizing smaller or lower-vibration equipment; reducing vibration amplitude settings; minimizing the duration of vibration-generating activities; maintaining setback distances; installing temporary isolation measures where feasible; and/or conducting real-time vibration monitoring to ensure vibration levels remain below applicable thresholds

### Operation

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project does not include any stationary equipment or ongoing activities that would generate operational groundborne vibration or groundborne noise. As a result, there is no impact with respect to operational groundborne vibrations.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

### Construction and Operations

NO IMPACT. The Project site is not located within 2 miles of a public or private airport that would expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive aircraft-related noise levels. San Bernardino International Airport, located approximately 5 miles southeast of the Project site, is the nearest airport. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not expose nearby receptors to excessive noise associated with airport operations during either construction or operation, and no impact would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

# 3.16. Population and Housing

| POPULATION AND HOUSING<br>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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.16.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

Regulating population and housing is generally the responsibility of local governments. However, no City or County regulations or policies related to population and housing are applicable to the Proposed Project.

### Affected Environment

The proposed upgrades to the North San Bernardino Channel are located in the City San Bernardino, San Bernardino County. The North San Bernardino Channel is surrounded by residential areas to the north, south, and west.

## 3.16.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(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)?**

### Construction

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project would not include the development of new homes or businesses or the extension of roads. Although the construction of a channel can be considered infrastructure development, the Proposed Project would not be accommodating unplanned population growth. As discussed in Section 2.4, *Project Objectives*, the Proposed Project is intended to replace the existing inadequate North San Bernardino Channel with a permanent channel to improve flood protection, specifically aiming to handle a 100-year storm event, enhance protection for socially vulnerable and high hazard areas, and mitigate flooding risks for nearly 300 structures and over 200,000 current residents, and increase flood protection from the current 25-year storm event upstream and 10-year storm event downstream to a uniform 100-year storm event protection. Therefore, the proposed channel would not accommodate unplanned population growth. The Proposed Project's construction period is anticipated to last approximately one year and would not require a substantial number of construction personnel (an estimated 25 personnel maximum). Additionally, San Bernardino County has a considerable construction workforce of approximately 76,134 employees, so it is likely that the construction workforce would be residents of San Bernardino County and would not need to relocate (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024). Because the Project site is generally located in proximity to a well-established, heavily populated urban community, existing housing stock should be sufficient to meet the needs of construction personnel. Construction of the Proposed Project would not directly or indirectly induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area. Therefore, the Project construction would have no impact.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. Operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project would not require any new employees, as maintenance activities would be conducted by existing County staff. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have no impact.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project would replace an existing flood channel that travels along the border of existing residential communities. Construction activities would be conducted primarily within the existing easement of the channel and would not displace existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Therefore, construction of the Proposed Project would have no impact.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. As stated above, the Proposed Project would replace an existing flood channel that travels along the border of existing residential communities. Operation and maintenance of the channel would be conducted within the existing easement of the channel and would not displace existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Therefore, operation of the Proposed Project would have no impact.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

# 3.17. Public Services

| PUBLIC SERVICES<br>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: | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) Fire protection? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| (b) Police protection? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| (c) Schools? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| (d) Parks? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| (e) Other public facilities? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.17.1. Setting

### Regulatory Setting

Regulating public services is generally the responsibility of local governments. However, no City or County regulations or policies related to public services are applicable to the Proposed Project.

### Affected Environment

The following describes key public services serving the Project site and surrounding area:

- The San Bernardino County Fire Department provides fire suppression and emergency medical services to the Project area. The nearest fire station to the Project site is Station 227, located at 282 West 40th Street, approximately 0.6 miles east.
- The San Bernardino Police Department provides police protection to the Project area. The Department's station is located at 710 North D Street, approximately 3.4 miles south of the Project site.
- The San Bernardino City Unified School District provides public school services to the City of San Bernardino and Project area. Several private and parochial schools and preschools also serve the immediate area.
- Public parks near the Project site include Lionel E. Hudson Park approximately 0.60 miles west of the site and Blair Park approximately 1.2 miles south of the site.

## 3.17.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**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:**

**a. Fire protection?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Construction of the Proposed Project would not affect the area's population, and therefore, the Proposed Project would not create a need for new or altered fire protection facilities. San Bernardino County Fire Department Station 227 is located approximately 0.6 miles east of the Project site. Although temporary construction access and detours along 4th Avenue, Mountain Drive, and F Street could adversely affect emergency service and response times during Project construction, notification would be provided to emergency service providers to ensure that emergency response is not impaired. Alternative public routes would be available. While construction vehicles and equipment would be accessing the Project site during construction, no long-term interruptions would occur such that emergency access to and from the area would be rendered inadequate. As such, construction of the Proposed Project would have a less-than-significant impact on fire protection services.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As stated above, the Proposed Project would not affect the area's population and create a need for new or altered fire protection facilities. Once construction is completed, any potential impacts to emergency service response times would cease, as operation and maintenance activities would be limited to infrequent inspection and maintenance activities. Routine maintenance of the Proposed Project is not expected to significantly increase the risk of fire. Vegetation management associated with maintenance activities would ensure the site is maintained in a manner to reduce the risk of fire occurring within the Project site. Furthermore, maintenance activities would include debris and trash removal and repairs of the facilities. These activities would reduce the potential for fires and fire service calls to the Project site. Therefore, operation of the Proposed Project would have a less-than-significant impact on fire protection services.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**b. Police Protection?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. As discussed in Section 3.16.2(a), the Proposed Project would not induce any population growth that would require expanded police protection. Thus, no new or altered police facilities would be needed as a result of the Proposed Project. Therefore, operation and construction of the Proposed Project would have no impact on police or sheriff protection services.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

**c. Schools?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. The need for new schools is generally associated with an increase in the school-aged population or a decrease in the accessibility and availability of existing schools. Residential development would not occur under the Proposed Project, and the school-aged population would not increase. As such, construction and operation of the Proposed Project would not affect the operation of existing school facilities, and new or physically altered facilities would not be needed. Therefore, no impact would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

**d. Parks?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project would not develop new parks or reduce existing park facilities. Furthermore, the Project site would be confined to the Project boundaries and would not induce population growth that would increase demand for parks beyond the existing facilities. Therefore, no impact to existing parks or the need for new parks would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

**e. Other Public Facilities?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. As discussed in Section 3.16.2(a), the Proposed Project does not include development that would induce substantial unplanned population growth that would increase the use of libraries, community centers, hospitals, or other public facilities. As such, a substantial increase in use of these public facilities would not occur. Therefore, no impact to other public facilities would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

# 3.18. Recreation

| RECREATION | 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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.18.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

Regulating recreational resources is generally the responsibility of local governments. However, no City or County regulations or policies related to recreation are applicable to the Proposed Project.

### Affected Environment

The Proposed Project is located within the City of San Bernardino in a developed urbanized area. The nearest public recreational facilities include Lionel E. Hudson Park, located approximately 0.60 miles west of the site, and Blair Park, located approximately 1.2 miles south.

### Regulatory Background

## 3.18.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(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?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. The demand for neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities is generally associated with an increase in the number of permanent residents in the area. No residential facilities or features would be developed under the Proposed Project that would result in an increase in the number of residents at existing recreational facilities. As such, increased use of existing parks or other recreational facilities would not occur. Therefore, no impact would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

**(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?**

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. As discussed in Section 3.16.2(a), the Proposed Project would not impact the area's population, and thus no increase in the demand for recreational facilities would occur. Additionally, the Proposed Project would not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, no impact to recreational facilities would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

# 3.19. Transportation

| TRANSPORTATION<br>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, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
| (b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines §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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.19.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *State*

**Senate Bill (SB) 743.** At the State level, CEQA Guidelines Appendix G provides criteria for evaluating transportation impacts associated with proposed projects. Pursuant to SB 743 and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is the primary metric used to evaluate transportation impacts under CEQA. However, because the Proposed Project consists of passive flood control infrastructure improvements that would not generate substantial long-term operational vehicle trips, the Proposed Project would not result in a measurable increase in VMT. Accordingly, the transportation analysis focuses primarily on temporary construction-related circulation, access, and roadway considerations.

#### *Local*

**The City of San Bernardino Draft General Plan.** The City of San Bernardino Draft General Plan Circulation and Mobility Element (City of San Bernardino, 2025d) establishes the framework for development and maintenance of a balanced multimodal transportation network that supports vehicular circulation, active transportation, transit accessibility, roadway safety, and Complete Streets principles throughout the City. The element identifies roadway classifications, including major arterials, secondary arterials, collectors, and local streets, and includes policies intended to improve mobility, connectivity, and safety for all roadway users. The Circulation and Mobility Element also promotes implementation of the City's Active Transportation Plan and Local Roadway Safety Plan to improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and enhance multimodal circulation throughout the City.

**The City of San Bernardino Active Transportation Plan (ATP).** The City of San Bernardino ATP provides guidance for improving pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, accessibility, and safety throughout the City. The ATP identifies existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities, multimodal corridors, and neighborhood connector routes intended to support non-motorized transportation and improve access to transit, schools, employment centers, and community destinations.

### Affected Environment

The Proposed Project is located within the City of San Bernardino in a developed urbanized area north of Kendall Drive, extending along the existing North San Bernardino Channel corridor between Western

Avenue and Little Mountain Basin. The Project corridor traverses a primarily residential area with surrounding institutional, commercial, and flood control land uses. Primary roadway access to the Project area is provided by Kendall Drive, 40th Street, Little Mountain Drive, Mountain Drive, F Street, 3rd Avenue, and 4th Avenue (San Bernardino County, n.d.).

According to the City of San Bernardino draft Circulation and Mobility Element and Truck Route Study, Kendall Drive and 40th Street are classified as Major Arterials, while Little Mountain Drive and 3rd Street are classified as Secondary Arterials. F Street is classified as a Collector roadway, and the remaining surrounding roadways primarily consist of Local Streets serving adjacent residential neighborhoods. Major arterials within the City generally accommodate regional traffic movement and connect to freeways and other major transportation corridors, while secondary arterials and collector streets provide circulation between neighborhoods and the City's larger roadway network (City of San Bernardino, 2025c).

The Project vicinity roadway network currently accommodates residential traffic, commercial deliveries, transit vehicles, emergency service vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians typical of a highly urbanized portion of the City. I-215 is located approximately 1 mile south of the Project area and provides regional connectivity throughout the Inland Empire (City of San Bernardino, 2022).

The City's transportation planning framework emphasizes development of a multimodal transportation network supporting pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular circulation through implementation of Complete Streets principles and active transportation improvements. Existing pedestrian infrastructure in the Project vicinity generally consists of sidewalks, curb ramps, and marked crossings along developed roadway corridors. Bicycle facilities in the surrounding area include a combination of Class II bicycle lanes, Class III routes, and neighborhood connector routes identified in the City's Active Transportation Plan and Bicycle Network mapping (City of San Bernardino, 2022).

Public transit service in the Project vicinity is provided by Omnitrans bus routes operating along major roadway corridors, including Kendall Drive and University Parkway. The City's transportation planning documents identify Kendall Drive as an important multimodal corridor with existing pedestrian, bicycle, and transit activity. Community outreach conducted as part of the City's Active Transportation Plan identified Kendall Drive as one of the most frequently referenced corridors associated with walking and bicycling concerns and improvement opportunities (City of San Bernardino, 2022).

The Proposed Project consists of passive flood control infrastructure improvements and would not generate long-term operational traffic. Construction activities would temporarily generate worker trips, haul truck trips, equipment deliveries, and temporary roadway detours associated with culvert installation, pavement rehabilitation, curb ramp reconstruction, and channel improvements. Temporary traffic control measures and detours may occur along portions of Mountain Drive, 3rd Avenue, 4th Avenue, and Kendall Drive during active construction periods.

### *Highways*

Regional access to the Project area is primarily provided by I-215, which is located approximately 1 mile south of the Project corridor. I-215 provides north-south regional connectivity through the Inland Empire and connects the City of San Bernardino to I-10 and SR 210. SR 210 is also located within the northern portion of the City and provides regional east-west access. The City's roadway network is designed to provide connectivity between local neighborhoods, commercial areas, institutional land uses, and regional transportation corridors (City of San Bernardino, 2022).

### *Arterial Roads*

Primary roadway access to the Project area is provided by Kendall Drive, 40th Street, Little Mountain Drive, Mountain Drive, F Street, 3rd Avenue, and 4th Avenue. According to the City of San Bernardino roadway classification system, Kendall Drive and 40th Street are classified as Major Arterials, while Little

Mountain Drive and 3rd Street are classified as Secondary Arterials. F Street is classified as a Collector roadway, and the remaining surrounding roadways primarily consist of Local Streets serving adjacent residential neighborhoods. These roadways currently accommodate residential traffic, commercial deliveries, transit vehicles, emergency service vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians typical of a highly urbanized portion of the City (City of San Bernardino, 2025d).

### *Mass Transit*

Public transit service in the Project vicinity is provided by Omnitrans, which operates local and regional bus routes throughout the City of San Bernardino. Existing transit routes operate along major roadway corridors in the Project vicinity, including Kendall Drive and University Parkway, providing connections to residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, educational facilities, and regional transit hubs (City of San Bernardino, 2022). The nearest transit routes to the Project site, Omnitrans Route 2 and SBX, is located along Kendall Drive, which is located 200 feet south of the site. The closest bus stop is located at the intersection of Kendall Drive and Little Mountain Drive for the SBX route, and Kendall Drive and Western Avenue North, both within 1,000 feet south of the site (Omnitrans, 2026a).

### *Rail*

The City of San Bernardino is served by regional freight and passenger rail facilities operated by Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF), Metrolink, and Arrow commuter rail services. Regional rail facilities are located primarily south of the Project area within central San Bernardino. The Project site itself is not located adjacent to active rail infrastructure and would not interfere with regional rail operations (City of San Bernardino, 2022).

### *Bicycle*

Existing bicycle facilities in the Project vicinity include a combination of Class II bicycle lanes, Class III bicycle routes, and neighborhood connector routes identified in the City of San Bernardino Active Transportation Plan and Bicycle Network mapping. The City's Active Transportation Plan identifies Kendall Drive and surrounding corridors as important multimodal routes supporting bicycle and pedestrian circulation throughout northern San Bernardino. Existing pedestrian infrastructure in the Project vicinity generally includes sidewalks, curb ramps, and marked crossings along developed roadway corridors (City of San Bernardino, 2022).

### *Air Transportation*

The nearest airport to the Project site is San Bernardino International Airport, located approximately 5 miles southeast of the Project area. Additional regional aviation facilities serving the Inland Empire include Ontario International Airport and regional general aviation facilities located throughout San Bernardino County. The Project site is not located within an airport land use compatibility zone or airport safety review area (City of San Bernardino, 2022).

## 3.19.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As mentioned previously, the Proposed Project would construct flood control improvements along the existing North San Bernardino Channel corridor. Project construction would temporarily generate worker trips, haul truck trips, equipment deliveries, and localized traffic control or detours associated with channel improvements, culvert installation, utility relocation, pavement rehabilitation, and curb ramp reconstruction. The Project area is located in a highly urbanized portion of the City

and is served by an established roadway network that includes Major Arterials, Secondary Arterials, Collectors, and Local Streets. Kendall Drive and 40th Street are classified as Major Arterials, Little Mountain Drive and 3rd Street are classified as Secondary Arterials, F Street is classified as a Collector, and the remaining surrounding roadways are primarily Local Streets serving adjacent residential neighborhoods. The City's Circulation and Mobility Element identifies these roadway classifications as part of the City's planned roadway network and establishes a multimodal framework addressing vehicular circulation, active transportation, transit, goods movement, emergency access, and Complete Streets (City of San Bernardino, 2025d).

Construction activities may require temporary lane closures, localized detours, or short-term restrictions near work areas, including along Mountain Drive, 3rd Avenue, 4th Avenue, and Kendall Drive. However, these effects would be temporary and would occur only during active construction. Work within the public right-of-way would be subject to City permit requirements for encroachment, lane closures, haul routes, and traffic control. The City's right-of-way permit materials require a traffic control plan for excavation, lane closure, and encroachment activities, and identify W.A.T.C.H. or California MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) accepted traffic control standards (City of San Bernardino, n.d.). The City's Engineering Division also identifies right-of-way permits for oversized loads, excavation, lane closure, temporary encroachment, traffic control, and haul routes (City of San Bernardino, 2026b). Compliance with these requirements would ensure that temporary construction activities are managed in a manner that maintains circulation, access, and safety for vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

The Proposed Project would not permanently alter roadway classifications, remove an existing travel lane, eliminate pedestrian or bicycle facilities, or conflict with planned multimodal improvements identified in the City's Active Transportation Plan (City of San Bernardino, 2022). The City's Active Transportation Plan is intended to improve walkability and bikeability by creating a connected bicycle and pedestrian network, and includes strategies for improving connectivity, local access, mobility, safety, health, and environmental outcomes. The City's Circulation and Mobility Element also emphasizes Complete Streets principles, including safe access for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities (City of San Bernardino, 2025d). Because construction-related disruptions would be temporary and would be managed through City-required traffic control measures, the Proposed Project would not conflict with applicable policies addressing bicycle or pedestrian circulation.

Public transit service in the Project vicinity is provided by Omnitrans. Omnitrans Route 2 serves Cal State San Bernardino and Loma Linda via Kendall Drive, E Street, Hospitality Lane, and Tippecanoe, and Anderson, while Route SBX serves Palm Avenue, Kendall Drive, Cal State, and the VA Hospital (Omitrans, 2026b). Construction activities could temporarily affect travel conditions along roadways used by transit vehicles, but the Proposed Project would not remove transit stops, modify transit routes, or permanently interfere with transit service. Any temporary traffic control or detour measures would be coordinated through the City's right-of-way permitting process, as applicable. Thus, impacts in this area would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. The Proposed Project would not include a land use or operational component that would generate regular daily vehicle trips. Following construction, operation would be limited to periodic inspection and maintenance visits associated with the flood control facility. Therefore, Project operations would not increase traffic volumes, modify roadway operations, interfere with transit, or alter bicycle or pedestrian circulation. The Proposed Project would improve flood control infrastructure and would not

conflict with the City's circulation system or applicable programs, plans, ordinances, or policies addressing roadway, transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities. Therefore, there would be no impact in this area.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction and Operation

NO IMPACT. SB 743 amended CEQA to require evaluation of transportation impacts based on VMT rather than roadway congestion or level of service. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 identifies VMT as the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts for land use and transportation projects.

The Proposed Project consists of improvements to existing flood control infrastructure within the North San Bernardino Channel corridor and does not include residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional development that would generate substantial long-term vehicle trips. Temporary construction-related vehicle trips associated with workers, equipment hauling, and material deliveries would occur intermittently throughout the construction period and would not represent a permanent increase in travel demand. Construction activities are not considered a project impact under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 because temporary construction traffic does not constitute a long-term operational transportation impact.

Following construction, operation of the Proposed Project would be limited to infrequent inspection and maintenance activities associated with the flood control facility. As such, the Proposed Project would not result in a measurable increase in VMT or induce additional vehicle travel within the City or region.

Accordingly, the Proposed Project would not conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) during either construction or operation, and no impact would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction or operation.

**(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)?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would consist of improvements to existing flood control infrastructure within a developed urbanized area of the City of San Bernardino and would not introduce new permanent roadway alignments, modify existing roadway geometry in a manner that would create hazardous conditions, or introduce incompatible transportation-related land uses. Construction activities would occur primarily within the existing channel corridor and adjacent roadway areas and would include temporary lane closures, detours, excavation activities, utility relocation, culvert installation, pavement rehabilitation, and curb ramp reconstruction.

Temporary construction activities could result in localized circulation disruptions and temporary changes to traffic patterns in the immediate Project vicinity. However, construction activities occurring within the public right-of-way would be subject to City permit requirements for traffic control, lane closures, detours, and encroachment activities. Temporary traffic control measures would be implemented in accordance with applicable City requirements and CA MUTCD standards to maintain safe circulation for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles, and emergency responders during construction activities.

Temporary detours and traffic control measures would be implemented during construction activities associated with culvert installation and roadway improvements near Mountain Drive and 4th Avenue.

Temporary detours would utilize adjacent local roadways, including 3rd Avenue, 40th Street, and Mountain Drive, to maintain circulation through the Project vicinity during active construction periods (San Bernardino County, n.d.). Construction activities would also include temporary pavement rehabilitation and curb ramp reconstruction within the surrounding roadway network. Access for local residents, emergency vehicles, and surrounding land uses would be maintained throughout construction to the extent feasible through implementation of temporary traffic control measures and signage.

The Proposed Project would not create new hazardous intersections, roadway design deficiencies, or incompatible uses that would substantially increase transportation hazards. Therefore, impacts associated with hazardous roadway design features or incompatible uses during the construction period would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. Operation of the Proposed Project would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible use. The Proposed Project consists of passive flood control infrastructure improvements and would not introduce new roadways, modify existing roadway geometry in a manner that would create hazardous conditions, or generate operational traffic that could affect roadway safety. Following construction, operation of the proposed flood control facilities would be limited to infrequent inspection and maintenance activities and would not interfere with existing circulation patterns or transportation facilities. Therefore, no operational impact related to hazardous roadway design features or incompatible uses would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As mentioned, construction activities associated with the Proposed Project would occur within and adjacent to existing roadway corridors and could require temporary lane closures, localized detours, temporary traffic control measures, and intermittent restrictions along portions of Mountain Drive, 3rd Avenue, 4th Avenue, Kendall Drive, and surrounding local streets during active construction periods. Temporary detours associated with culvert installation activities would utilize adjacent local roadways to maintain circulation through the Project vicinity. Construction activities would also include pavement rehabilitation and curb ramp reconstruction within portions of the surrounding roadway network (San Bernardino County, n.d.).

Although temporary construction activities could intermittently affect local circulation, access to surrounding residential neighborhoods, commercial land uses, institutional uses, and emergency service routes would be maintained throughout construction to the extent feasible through implementation of temporary traffic control measures, signage, and detour routing. Construction activities occurring within the public right-of-way would be subject to City permit requirements and traffic control standards intended to maintain safe circulation and emergency access during temporary lane closures and roadway work.

Upon completion of the road work phase of construction, all temporary modifications to roadway conditions would cease, and any temporary impediments to traffic circulation or emergency access routes would be removed. Roadways affected by construction activities would be restored to conditions similar

to those existing prior to construction activities. The Proposed Project would not permanently alter roadway access or impede emergency response routes following construction. Therefore, impacts related to inadequate emergency access during construction would be less than significant.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. Operation of the Proposed Project would not result in inadequate emergency access. The Proposed Project consists of passive flood control infrastructure improvements and would not permanently alter existing roadway circulation patterns, obstruct emergency response routes, or restrict access to surrounding residential, commercial, or institutional land uses. Following construction, operation of the proposed flood control facilities would be limited to infrequent inspection and maintenance activities that would not interfere with emergency vehicle access or roadway operations. Therefore, no operational impact related to emergency access would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

# 3.20. Tribal Cultural Resources

| TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code §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: | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| i) 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 §5020.1(k), or | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |
| ii) 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 Resource Code §5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.20.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

**Assembly Bill (AB) 52.** This bill changes sections of the PRC to add consideration of Native American culture within the CEQA. The goal of AB 52 is to promote the involvement of California Native American Tribes in the decision-making process when it comes to identifying and developing mitigation for impacts to resources of importance to their culture. To reach this goal, the bill establishes a formal role for tribes in the CEQA process. CEQA lead agencies are required to consult with tribes about potential Tribal Cultural Resources (TCR) in the study area, the potential significance of project impacts, the development of project alternatives, and the type of environmental document that should be prepared. AB 52 specifically states that a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a TCR is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment (PRC § 21084.2).

TCRs can be sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, and sacred places or objects that have cultural value or significance to a Tribe. To qualify as a TCR, it must either be (1) listed on or eligible for listing on the CRHR or a local historic register or, (2) a resource that the lead agency, at its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, determines should be treated as a TCR (PRC § 21074). TCRs can include "non-unique archaeological resources" (see "unique archaeological resource" below) that, rather than being important for "scientific" value as a resource, can also be significant because of the sacred and/or cultural tribal value of the resource. Tribal representatives are considered experts appropriate for providing substantial evidence regarding the locations, types, and significance of tribal cultural resources within their traditionally and cultural affiliated geographic area (PRC § 21080.3.1(a)).

**Public Resources Code (PRC), Section 5097.9 et seq. (1982)** establishes that both public agencies and private entities using, occupying, or operating on state property under public permit, shall not interfere with the free expression or exercise of Native American religion and shall not cause severe or irreparable damage to Native American sacred sites. This section also creates the NAHC, charged with identifying and cataloging places of special religious or social significance to Native Americans, identifying and cataloging known graves and cemeteries on private lands, and performing other duties regarding the preservation and accessibility of sacred sites and burials.

### Affected Environment

The APE is located in San Bernardino County near the southwestern extent of traditionally documented Serrano territory and the eastern extent of Tongva (Gabrieleño) territory. Available ethnographic information indicates that the traditional territories of these groups adjoined and may have overlapped within the San Bernardino Valley (Aspen 2026).

The term "Gabrieleño" was historically applied to Indigenous communities associated with Mission San Gabriel, although many contemporary descendants identify as Tongva. During the ethnohistoric period, Tongva territory encompassed portions of present-day Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and northwestern Riverside counties. The term "Serrano," derived from the Spanish word for "mountaineer" or "highlander," was applied to Indigenous communities inhabiting the mountainous interior. Although the precise boundaries of Serrano territory are not clearly defined, the territory is generally associated with the San Bernardino Mountains east of Cajon Pass, the northern foothills and adjacent desert near Victorville, areas extending east toward Twentynine Palms, and lands extending south into Yucaipa Valley (Aspen 2026).

The Tongva and Serrano practiced hunting and gathering economies and maintained broadly similar semi-sedentary settlement patterns. Permanent villages were typically established near dependable water sources and areas that provided access to a variety of plant and animal resources. Smaller groups periodically established temporary camps to collect seasonally available plants and hunt deer, rabbits, and other animals. Communities were generally organized around clans, lineages, and other kinship-based groups (Aspen 2026).

Unlike the primarily inland territory associated with the Serrano, Tongva territory extended to the Pacific Coast and included offshore islands, providing access to marine and estuarine resources such as shellfish, fish, marine mammals, and waterfowl. Archaeological evidence associated with permanent villages and temporary resource-processing camps may include midden deposits, bedrock mortars, grinding slicks, lithic artifacts, and other habitation-related materials (Aspen 2026).

#### *AB 52 Consultation Summary*

On April 2, 2024, the San Bernardino County Environmental Management Division mailed notification pursuant to AB 52 to the following tribes: Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, and Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation. The County received a request for consultation from the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation. Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians determined the Proposed Project is outside of the known Chemehuevi Traditional Use Area, and no response was received from the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians.

## 3.20.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(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:**

i. **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)?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED. The Project area exists within Serrano ancestral territory. However, no known TCRs have been recorded within the Project site or identified through pedestrian survey. The Yuhaaviatam of the San Manuel Nation requested MMs TCR-1 and TCR-2 in the event tribal cultural resources are found during Project construction.

### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM TCR-1** **Inadvertent Discovery of Tribal Cultural Resources.** The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Management Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed in MM 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** **Tribal Consultation and Cultural Resources Documentation.** 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.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. No known TCRs have been recorded within the Project site or identified through pedestrian survey. In addition, operation of the Proposed Project would not require excavation or other ground disturbing activities that could result in the discovery or substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource. Therefore, no impacts to TCRs would result from operation of the Proposed Project.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

ii. **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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED. The Project area exists within Serrano ancestral territory. However, no known TCRs have been recorded within the Project site or identified through pedestrian survey. The Yuhaaviatam of the San Manuel Nation requested MMs TCR-1 and TCR-2 in the event tribal cultural resources are found during Project construction.

### *Mitigation Measures*

**MM TCR-1** **Inadvertent Discovery of Tribal Cultural Resources.** See Section 3.20.2(a) for full measure text.

**MM TCR-2** **Tribal Consultation and Cultural Resources Documentation.** See Section 3.20.2(a) for full measure text.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. No known TCRs have been recorded within the Project site or identified through pedestrian survey. In addition, operation of the Proposed Project would not require excavation or other ground

disturbing activities that could result in the discovery or substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource. Therefore, no impacts to TCRs would result from operation of the Proposed Project.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

# 3.21. Utilities and Service Systems

| UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS<br>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) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.21.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *State*

**Assembly Bill (AB) 939 (AB 939; Integrated Solid Waste Management Act of 1989; Public Resources Code 40050 et seq.)**. AB 939 established an integrated waste-management system emphasizing reduction, recycling, composting, and land disposal. Under AB 939, cities and counties in California were required to divert 50 percent of waste from landfills by 2000, with compliance based on disposal rate comparisons. AB 939 also requires counties to demonstrate 15 years of disposal capacity or provide a plan for waste diversion or transformation.

#### *Regional*

**San Bernardino County General Plan.** The San Bernardino County General Plan Infrastructure and Utilities Element (San Bernardino County, 2020d) identifies the following policy related to utilities and service systems that are relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Policy IU-5.6: Dig once approach.** We encourage infrastructure, telecommunication, and utility planning and projects to coordinate so that improvements are made concurrently or in such a manner that minimizes disruption to rights-of-way and reduces costs.

#### *Local*

**City of San Bernardino General Plan.** The City of San Bernardino 2050 Draft General Plan provides the following goals and policies related to utilities and service systems that are relevant to the Proposed Project:

- **Goal UI-6: Utility Infrastructure.** Ensure an adequate, safe, and orderly supply of electricity, natural gas, and communication infrastructure is available to support existing and future land uses within the City on a project level.

- **Policy UI-6.1: Project development approval.** Require that approval for new development, expansions, and reuses be contingent on the availability of adequate electricity, natural gas, and communications.
- **Policy UI-6.3: Interagency consultation.** Work with all public utilities providers to ensure that adequate electricity, natural gas, and communication facilities are available to meet the demands of the city, including new developments.
- **Policy UI-6.4: Underground utilities.** Require undergrounding of on-site utilities (e.g., gas, electricity, communications) and connections to facilities unless infeasible due to environmental, topography, or cost constraints.
- **Policy UI-6.7: Utility equipment.** Require that utility boxes, aboveground equipment, and utility entrances be at the rear or side of the building and do not interfere with the effective use of sidewalks and streets.

- **Goal UI-7: Infrastructure Financing.** Provision and financing of orderly, well-planned, and sufficient infrastructure that meets the needs of existing and future residents and business in San Bernardino.
- **Policy UI7.7: Infrastructure resiliency.** Ensure that the City's water, wastewater, storm drain, and energy infrastructure system is designed, improved, and upgraded as needed to mitigate damage from potential hazards.

### Affected Environment

The Project site is an existing flood control channel, and adjacent development is served by existing wastewater, potable water, electrical, natural gas, and telecommunication service providers. Utility relocations that are proposed would include two water lines, one gas line, and one power pole along North 4th Avenue; one water line and three power poles along Mountain Drive; and one water line and one power pole at North F Street.

## 3.21.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

**(a) Would the project 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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Wastewater generation would be limited to construction workers and would be contained within portable toilet facilities or at approved public facilities, both of which would dispose of wastewater with the local treatment provider. Construction would require the temporary use of water for dust suppression. The District would utilize two water trucks to support construction activities. However, water used for these purposes would be temporary and not in quantities requiring the construction of new or expanded water supplies. The Proposed Project itself would expand and improve storm water drainage and not require the construction of any new or expanded utilities or service systems. However, water, gas, power lines and associated poles, as specified above, would need to be relocated during construction along North 4th Avenue, Mountain Drive, and North F Street. The relocation of these would be done in urban developed area and concurrently to minimize impacts and disruption to rights-of-way. Additionally, the Proposed Project would not induce population or other facilities that may place increased demands on these utility services. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. Project operation would consist of regular maintenance activities for the proposed channel and would not require or result in the need for new or expanded utilities or service systems. Therefore, operation of the Proposed Project would not have any related impacts.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As described in Section 3.21.2(a), construction activities would require the temporary use of water for dust suppression. 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. Additionally, due to the type and amount of water required, it is likely that non-potable (reclaimed) water would be utilized if available to serve Project needs. Construction of the Proposed Project would not induce population or other facilities that may place increased demands on water supplies. Impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. Under operation of the Proposed Project, regular maintenance activities would not require the temporary use of water. Operation of Proposed Project would not induce population or other facilities that may place increased demands on water supplies. No impact would occur.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As described in Section 3.21.2(a), wastewater generation during construction be limited to construction workers and would either be contained within portable toilet facilities or at approved public facilities, both of which would dispose of wastewater with the local treatment provider. Due to the temporary and short-term nature of construction, the volume of wastewater generated would not impact the capacity of wastewater treatment providers serving the Project area. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. No wastewater would be generated during Project operation, as no restrooms or similar wastewater-generating facilities are proposed. Therefore, no impact during operation of the Proposed Project would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(d) Would the project 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?**

### Construction

NO IMPACT. No material would be required to be exported during construction. Therefore, no impact related to solid waste during construction of the Proposed Project would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Routine maintenance activities would generate waste in the form of vegetation and trash. Vegetation and other simple waste (trash, etc.) would likely be disposed of locally at waste disposal facilities accepting green waste. Waste generated during operation of the Proposed Project would be limited and is not expected to be at a level that could impact daily throughput or overall capacity of any waste disposal facility.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

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

### Construction

NO IMPACT. As stated in Section 3.21.2(d), no material would be exported during construction. Therefore, no impact related to solid waste regulations during construction of the Proposed Project would occur.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Operation of the Proposed Project would generate solid waste during routine maintenance activities, thus requiring the consideration of waste reduction and recycling measures. The 1989 California Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939) requires San Bernardino County to attain specific waste diversion goals. The Proposed Project would recycle material to the extent feasible. Waste generated during construction and maintenance would be green waste (vegetation, unrecyclable trash, and recyclable materials (plastic and aluminum trash, other metals, etc.). Therefore, the Proposed Project is consistent with AB 939, resulting in a less-than-significant impact with respect to compliance with applicable regulations.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

# 3.22. Wildfire

| WILDFIRE<br>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? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

## 3.22.1. Setting

### Regulatory Background

#### *Federal*

**National Fire Plan.** The Department of the Interior's National Fire Plan is intended to ensure an appropriate federal response to severe wildland fires, reduce fire impacts to rural communities, and ensure sufficient firefighting capacity in the future. The plan addresses six key points: Firefighting, Rehabilitation, Hazardous Fuels Reduction, Community Assistance, Accountability, and Research and Development. The Rural Fire Assistance Program is funded to enhance the fire protection capabilities of rural fire districts and safe and effective fire suppression in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The program promotes close coordination among local, state, tribal, and federal firefighting resources by conducting training, equipment purchase, and prevention activities on a cost-shared basis.

**Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy.** The Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy was developed in 1995, updated in 2001, and updated again in 2009 by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, a federal multi-agency group that establishes consistent and coordinated fire management policy across multiple federal jurisdictions. An important component of the Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy is the acknowledgment of the essential role of fire in maintaining natural ecosystems.

The Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy and its implementation are founded on the following guiding principles, found in the Guidance for Implementation of Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy (NWCG, 2009):

- Firefighter and public safety is the priority in every fire management activity.
- The role of wildland fire as an essential ecological process and natural change agent will be incorporated into the planning process.
- Fire management plans, programs, and activities support land and resource management plans and their implementation.
- Sound risk management is a foundation for all fire management activities.
- Fire management programs and activities are economically viable, based upon values to be protected, costs, and land and resource management objectives.

- Fire management plans and activities are based upon the best available science.
- Fire management plans and activities incorporate public health and environmental quality considerations.
- Federal, state, tribal, local, interagency, and international coordination and cooperation are essential.
- Standardization of policies and procedures among federal agencies is an ongoing objective.

***State***

**State Hazard Mitigation Plan.** The California State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) represents the state's primary hazard mitigation guidance document and provides comprehensive details on California's historical and current hazards. Natural hazards of interest in the 2023 SHMP include earthquakes, flooding, extreme heat or cold, severe weather, sea-level rise, landslides, drought, and wildfire. Gas pipeline hazards or other hazardous materials releases are also covered. The scope of the SHMP includes: an overview of each potential hazard, previous hazard occurrences, vulnerability analysis, and mitigation goals. The 2023 SHMP is set to expire on August 29, 2028, based on an approval cycle of every five years set by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (Cal OES, 2023). The SHMP provides a statewide perspective as guidance to local jurisdictions developing their own hazard mitigation plans.

**California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.** CAL FIRE protects the people of the state from fires; responds to emergencies; and protects and enhances forest, range, and watershed values providing social, economic, and environmental benefits to rural and urban citizens. CAL FIRE is the primary emergency response agency responsible for fire suppression and prevention within SRAs. The Office of the State Fire Marshal within CAL FIRE focuses on fire prevention. It provides support through a wide variety of fire safety responsibilities including by regulating buildings in which people live, congregate, or are confined; by controlling substances and products which may, in and of themselves, or by their misuse, cause injuries, death, and destruction by fire; by providing statewide direction for fire prevention in wildland areas; by regulating hazardous liquid pipelines; by reviewing regulations and building standards; and by providing training and education in fire protection methods and responsibilities (CAL FIRE, 2025).

Pursuant to PRC Sections 4201 to 4204 and Government Code (GC) Sections 51175 to 51189, CAL FIRE created FHSZ maps for the state that identify areas for preventing or suppressing fires that are within SRAs or LRAs. These maps identify areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors. The FHSZs then define the application of various mitigation strategies to reduce risks associated with wildland fires. The financial responsibility for preventing and suppressing fires in SRAs has been determined to be primarily on the state (PRC § 4201) and the responsibility of preventing and suppressing fires in LRAs is primarily on local agencies, including cities and counties (GC Sections 51175 to 51189). SRAs were originally mapped by CAL FIRE in 1985 and LRAs were mapped in 1996. The fire maps do not outline the potential for life safety hazard risks during evacuations, nor do they outline the potential maximum extent of wind-driven wildfire events in built-up areas of the WUI.

Within SRAs, the Director of CAL FIRE has designated areas as moderate, high, and very high FHSZs (PRC § 4202). Within LRAs, the Director of CAL FIRE was charged with recommending the locations of moderate, high, and very high FHSZs (GC Section 51178). These recommendations must be reviewed and adopted in ordinances by local agencies (GC Section 51179). CAL FIRE continues to refine and map LRAs, with recommended designations released in 2025. These updates are subject to review with local jurisdictions and are not official until formally adopted by the local jurisdictions (CAL FIRE, 2025). Local governing agencies must designate very high, high, and moderate FHSZs within 120 days following recommendations from CAL FIRE, but may not downgrade the levels of severity proposed by the State Fire Marshal (Govt. Code, § 51179(a)).

**Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation Fire Hazard Planning Technical Advisory.** The Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (formerly known as the Governor's Office of Planning and Research) released the Fire Hazard Planning Technical Advisory (Technical Advisory), a planning document to help cities and counties in California reduce wildfire risk (OPR, 2022). The Technical Advisory provides recommendations and example policies to integrate fire hazard planning into local general plans, as well as emphasizes the importance of evacuation routes in wildfire-prone areas, specifically requiring local governments to identify and evaluate them for capacity, safety, and viability under various emergency scenarios.

### *Regional*

**San Bernardino County Fire Protection District Community Safety Division's Fire Prevention Standard, Construction Site Fire Safety.** This standard aims to establish minimum safeguards for new development to provide a reasonable degree of safety to life and property from fire. Requirements within this standard are based on the provisions for fire safety during construction as provided in Chapter 33 of the California Fire Code (San Bernardino County Fire Protection District, 2023).

**San Bernardino County General Plan.** The Hazards Element of the San Bernardino County General Plan, adopted in 2020 and last updated in 2022 (San Bernardino County, 2022a), identifies potential natural (wildfire) and establishes policies focused on guiding development to reduce risks.

**San Bernardino County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.** The San Bernardino County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, last updated in 2022, identifies key hazards, including wildfire risks, and establishes strategies to reduce potential impacts to public safety, property, and the environment (San Bernardino County, 2022b).

### Affected Environment

The North San Bernardino Channel is located just north of Kendall Drive, beginning from Western Avenue in the northwest and ending at Little Mountain Basin in the southeast, in the City of San Bernardino. The existing channel is immediately surrounded by urban development, including primarily residential, commercial, and institutional uses to the north, south, and west. The southeast end of the site is adjacent to Little Mountain Basin, an earthen flood control basin maintained by the San Bernardino County Flood Control District. There are no wildlands within the Project site; however, the site is approximately 1 mile south of the San Bernardino Mountains foothills and approximately 0.2 mile north of Shandin Hills, which contain wildland areas.

According to the U.S. Forest Service Wildfire Hazard Potential website, much of the Project site is classified as "non-burnable", while a portion is classified as "moderate" and a portion classified as "high" (USFS, 2023). Additionally, according to the CAL FIRE map of Fire Hazard Severity Zones, a portion of the Project site is within an area of moderate to high risk, while the remainder of the Project site is outside of the mapped hazard areas (CAL FIRE, 2026). The Project site is located outside the State Responsibility Area and within a Local Responsibility Area, served by the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District (CAL FIRE, 2026).

## 3.22.2. Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Project site does not serve as an emergency evacuation route nor does it contain any emergency facilities. The Proposed Project would be serviced by the San Bernardino Police

Department and the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District. Project construction activities, including the use of staging areas, would occur within the Project site. During Project construction, temporary lane closures, localized detours, or short-term restrictions near work areas may be required along Mountain Drive, 3rd Avenue, 4th Avenue, and Kendall Drive. However, these would be temporary and occur only during active construction and would utilize adjacent local roadways to maintain circulation through the Project vicinity. Additionally, the contractor would be required to maintain adequate emergency access for emergency vehicles as required by the City of San Bernardino. The Project site is located approximately 1 mile northeast of I-215 and approximately 1.5 mile north of SR 210, which serve as evacuation routes during emergencies (San Bernardino County, 2020c). Project construction would not impair implementation or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts would be less than significant during Project construction.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As stated above, the Project site does not serve as an emergency evacuation route, nor does it contain any emergency facilities. During Project operation, the San Bernardino Police Department and the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District would provide emergency services. Operational activities would be limited to routine maintenance and would be confined entirely within the Project site. Project operation would not impair implementation or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts would be less than significant during Project operation.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Project site is not located within a wildland area, includes primarily flat to gently sloping terrain, and does not have other landscape features that exacerbate fire risks or make the site more susceptible to wildfire. Construction of the Proposed Project would include the use of motorized vehicles and equipment adjacent to the Shandin Hills, which include some wildland areas. However, because the Proposed Project includes upgrades to an existing flood control channel within a previously disturbed easement, sparks or heat from vehicle and equipment engines are not expected to create a significant potential for fire ignition that could spread outside the immediate work area. Additionally, the Project site, including staging areas, would be clear of flammable vegetation and all construction would be conducted in accordance with standard safety measures to reduce the potential for fire ignition. Furthermore, construction of the Proposed Project would adhere to the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District Community Safety Division's Fire Prevention Standard, Construction Site Fire Safety. This document provides minimum safeguards for new development projects to provide safety to life and property from fire. As such, construction of the Proposed Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose Project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As stated above, the Project site is not located within a wildland area, includes primarily flat to gently sloping terrain, and does not have other landscape features that exacerbate fire risks or make the site more susceptible to wildfire. Operation of the Proposed Project would utilize hand tools or light equipment during maintenance activities adjacent to the Shandin Hills, which includes some wildland areas. However, because the Proposed Project would upgrade an existing flood channel within a previously disturbed easement, sparks or heat from any necessary vehicle and equipment engines are not expected to create a significant potential for fire ignition that could spread outsize the immediate work area. Additionally, the Project site would be clear of flammable vegetation, and all maintenance activities would be conducted in accordance with standard safety measures to reduce the potential for fire ignition. As such, operation of the Proposed Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose Project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would replace an existing flood control channel and include the relocation of water, gas, and power lines. However, because the Project proposes to relocate these utilities and not provide additional utilities, fire risk would not be exacerbated beyond existing conditions. Additionally, construction would occur within a previously disturbed easement, such that sparks or heat from vehicle and equipment engines are not expected to create a significant potential for fire ignition that could spread outside the immediate work area. To further reduce fire risk associated with utility relocation, construction activities would be conducted in accordance with standard safety measures and adhere to the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District Community Safety Division's Fire Prevention Standard, Construction Site Fire Safety. Therefore, construction impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Proposed Project would replace an existing flood control channel and include the relocation of water, gas, and power lines. However, because the Proposed Project proposes to relocate these utilities and not provide additional utilities, fire risk associated with operation would not be exacerbated beyond existing conditions. Additionally, the Project site is within a previously disturbed easement, such that sparks or heat from any vehicle and equipment engines needed intermittently during operation are not expected to create a significant potential for fire ignition that could spread outside the immediate work area. To further reduce fire risk associated with relocated utilities, maintenance activities would be conducted in accordance with standard safety measures. Therefore, operational impacts would be less than significant.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

**(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?**

### Construction

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. The Project site is not located within a wildland area, includes primarily flat to gently sloping terrain, and does not have other landscape features that exacerbate fire risks or make the site more susceptible to wildfire. As discussed in Section 3.9, *Geology and Soils*, according to the USGS Landslide Inventory and Susceptibility Map, the majority of Project site is not mapped for landslide susceptibility, while the eastern end of the Project site, including the construction staging area at Little Mountain Basin are mapped as areas of low landslide susceptibility (USGS, 2025). The City of San Bernardino maps the eastern end of the Project site and most of Little Mountain Basin as areas of moderate relief with low to moderate landslide susceptibility (City of San Bernardino, 2005). Additionally, the CGS does not map any earthquake-induced landslide zones within the Project site (CGS, 2026). The Project site is located on primarily flat to gently sloping terrain and would not be subject to seismically induced or naturally triggered landslides. The existing channel consists of a relatively flat bottom with gently sloping sides stabilized with rip rap, which serves to stabilize the channel and reduce the potential for slope instability. Although the eastern end of the Project site and the construction staging area are mapped as having low to moderate landslide susceptibility, the existing channel and Little Mountain Basin have been engineered and stabilized (USGS, 2025; City of San Bernardino, 2005). As a result, the potential for slope instability is low. Therefore, construction of the Proposed Project would have a less-than-significant impact on exposing people and structures to downslope flooding or landslides as a result of post-fire slope instability and drainage changes.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project construction.

### Operation

NO IMPACT. Once completed, operation of the Proposed Project would improve an existing flood control channel, thus improving storm water flows to decrease flooding of the adjacent area. This is considered a beneficial impact with respect to drainage changes to the area. Finally, the Proposed Project would not introduce new development or population and would not expose people or structures to flooding or landslide risks due to post-fire instability. As such, no impact would occur.

#### *Mitigation Measures*

No mitigation measures are required during Project operation.

# 3.23. Mandatory Findings of Significance

| 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 that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |

Significance criteria established by CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G.

**(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 WITH MITIGATION. As discussed in Section 3.6, *Biological Resources*, the Project site and surrounding areas are developed, contain limited suitable habitat for special-status species, and were not observed to contain any listed plant or wildlife species. Although eight special-status wildlife species have the potential to be present in the Project site, potential impacts to these species would be avoided or minimized with the implementation of MMs BIO-1 through BIO-5 by implementing measures, including pre-construction surveys, protective buffers, biological monitoring, and, where necessary, acquisition of an Incidental Take Permit. In addition, there is a potential for nesting birds to be present on the Proposed Project site and to be impacted by Proposed Project activities. MM BIO-4 would require pre-construction nesting bird surveys on the Proposed Project area and would require avoidance of nests until the nestlings fledge or the nest is no longer active. By implementing MM BIO-4, the Proposed Project would avoid or minimize disturbance to nesting birds and any potential effects to these wildlife nursery sites would be less than significant. As such, the Proposed Project would not 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, or substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal with mitigation.

As discussed in Section 3.7, *Cultural Resources*, there are no known registered eligible historical or archeological resources within the Project site. However, there is always a possibility of encountering buried cultural resources during construction or operation. MM CUL-1 sets forth guidelines that should unanticipated cultural resources be discovered, reducing impacts to a less-than-significant level. As such, impacts to major examples of California history or prehistory would be less than significant with mitigation.

Overall, the Proposed Project would have less-than-significant impacts with mitigation incorporated regarding the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, reduce habitat and wildlife populations, eliminate plant or animal communities, reduce the range of special-status species, and eliminate California historical resources.

**(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, effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)**

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. As discussed in Sections 3.3 through 3.22, the Proposed Project would have no potentially significant impacts, and mitigation would reduce impacts to less than significant for air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, tribal cultural resources, geology and soils, and noise. In the absence of significant Project-level impacts and a relatively small area of impact, the incremental contribution of the Proposed Project would not be cumulatively considerable. Generally, contributions to air quality and greenhouse gas emissions impacts are cumulative due to the regional and global nature of air pollution and climate change, respectively. As described in Sections 3.5, *Air Quality*, and 3.10, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, the Proposed Project would have less-than-significant impacts to these issue areas. All projects in the region would comply with applicable laws, further reducing their cumulative impacts to air quality and GHG emissions. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not have a cumulatively considerable impact regarding these issues. Impacts are less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

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

LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT. Based on the analyses in Sections 3.3 through 3.22, the Proposed Project would not have any significant impacts that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. All impacts related to adverse effects on human beings, such as aesthetics, GHG emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, and wildfire are less than significant. Impacts to air quality would be less than significant with implementation of MM AQ-1.

# 4. LIST OF PREPARERS

A consultant team headed by Aspen Environmental Group prepared this document under the direction of the San Bernardino Flood Control District. The preparers and technical reviewers of this document are presented below.

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