

CHAPTER 5

Growth Inducement and Other CEQA Topics

5.1 Growth Inducement/Population and Housing

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14 Section 15126.2(d) requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed action. A growth-inducing impact is defined as follows:

[T]he way in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are [public works] projects which would remove obstacles to population growth.... It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

A project can have direct and/or indirect growth-inducement potential. Direct growth would result if a project, for example, involved construction of new housing. A project would have indirect growth-inducement potential if it established substantial new permanent employment opportunities (e.g., commercial, industrial, or governmental enterprises) or if it involved a substantial construction effort with substantial short-term employment opportunities and indirectly stimulate the need for additional housing and services to support the new employment demand. Similarly, a project would indirectly induce growth if it would remove an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public service.

The environmental effects of a proposed project's induced growth are secondary or indirect impacts. Secondary effects of growth can result in significant increased demand on community and public service infrastructure; increased traffic and noise; degradation of air and water quality; and conversion of agricultural land to urban uses.

The objectives of the proposed project are to:

- Construct improvements to reduce the risk to public safety and property resulting from the execution of an emergency operation to drawdown Lake Perris;
- Reduce the risk to Department of Water Resources (DWR) Operations and Maintenance staff from operating the emergency release structure; and
- Improve the emergency release structure such that it can be reliably operated to drawdown Lake Perris to meet Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD) emergency drawdown requirements.

Therefore, the proposed project's purpose and the subsequent implementation would have no potential to directly foster population growth or to result in the construction of additional housing.

Project construction is not expected to involve employment opportunities substantially beyond the level normally available to construction workers in the area, and, in general, workers are expected to be drawn from the local labor pool. The project may require a limited amount of accommodations for construction workers during construction. However, this impact would be less than significant because of the available rental housing that exists in the area relative to the potential temporary increase in demand.

The proposed project would enhance safety downstream and limit property impacts that would result from an emergency release, but is not expected to encourage additional development. The proposed project would not result in an expansion of the local water supply, or other public services, and would not displace any existing housing or necessitate the construction of new housing. Therefore, the proposed project has no potential to directly foster population growth.

5.2 Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes

CEQA Guidelines 21100(b) (2) and 15126.2(b) specify that any significant effect on the environment that would be irreversible if the project is implemented must be identified. A project would generally result in a significant irreversible impact if:

- Primary and secondary impacts (such as roadway improvements that provide access to previously inaccessible areas, etc.) would commit future generations to similar uses
- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources
- The project would involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project

In accordance with Section 21100(b)(2)(B) of CEQA and Sections 15126(c) and 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines, the purpose of this section is to identify significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by implementation of the proposed program. Construction and operational impacts associated with implementation of the program would result in an irretrievable and irreversible commitment of natural resources through the use of fossil fuels and construction materials. However, operation of the facility would not consume energy or other resources. The installation of the levee and channel would permanently alter the topography of the area and would commit the corridor to a water conveyance usage. Efforts have been made in the design to incorporate dual uses of the facility within each segment. The SRA Segment would accommodate natural habitat use, the Fairgrounds Segment would accommodate parking and some recreational uses, and the Western Segment would provide storm water conveyance consistent with the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Drainage Area Master Plan. These permanent changes are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan, City of Perris General Plan, and the Perris Lake SRA.

5.3 Significant Unavoidable Impacts

The following is a summary of potentially significant and unavoidable impacts identified and discussed in the technical sections of this EIR contained in Chapter 3. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) states that an EIR must include a description of those impacts identified as potentially significant and unavoidable should the proposed project be implemented. These impacts are unavoidable because it has been determined that either no mitigation, or only partial mitigation, is feasible. The final determination of significance of impacts and of the feasibility of mitigation measures would be made by DWR as part of the certification action.

The potential environmental impacts that would result from implementation of the proposed project are presented in Chapter 3 of this Draft EIR and summarized in the Executive Summary. Those impacts that cannot be feasibly mitigated to a less-than-significant level would remain as potentially significant and unavoidable adverse impacts. Impacts found to be potentially significant and unavoidable will require adoption of a Statement of Overriding Consideration by DWR prior to adoption of the EIR. Those impacts found to be potentially significant and unavoidable are listed below.

Aesthetics

3.1-3: The project could have a significant impact if it would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.

Construction activities will likely impact the visual character of the area and would be considered significant and unavoidable during the construction period.

Noise

3.11-1: The project could have a significant impact if it would expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.

Construction activities will likely generate noise levels in excess of established standards during nighttime construction and would be considered significant and unavoidable during the construction period.

3.11-4: The project could have a significant impact if it would result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.

Construction activities will likely create a temporary increase in ambient noise levels and would be considered significant and unavoidable during the construction period.

Transportation and Traffic

3.14-1: The project could have a significant impact if it would conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the

circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit.

Construction activities will likely cause delays to heavy commuter routes and would be considered significant and unavoidable during construction of bridge structures.

Cumulative Impacts

Noise

The proposed project's short-term noise impacts are cumulatively considerable even with incorporation of mitigation measures, and would be considered significant and unavoidable.

Transportation and Traffic

The proposed project's construction impacts are cumulatively considerable impacts on traffic/circulation even with incorporation of mitigation measures and the establishment of a Traffic Management Plan, and would be considered significant and unavoidable.