

2.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This section of the EIR describes the purpose and type of EIR, the intended uses of the EIR, documents incorporated by reference, and the process and procedures governing the preparation of the environmental document. Included in this section is a discussion of issues determined to be less than significant. This section also identifies topic areas of discussion and analysis in the EIR and provides an outline of the document format.

2.1 PURPOSE

Approval of the proposed project requires a series of discretionary actions by the participating agencies. The actions include the certification of the EIR and adoption of the Santa Ana River Wash Land Management Plan by the District; exchange of Federal land administered by the BLM for private lands for the purpose of water conservation and mining, designation of acquired lands as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, and amendment of the South Coast Resource Management Plan by the BLM; approval of an Incidental Take Permit pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), approval of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and associated Habitat Management Plan (HMP), and approval of an Implementation Agreement by the USFWS (subsequent to the BLM land exchange); Consistency Determination by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) pursuant to Section 2080.1 of the Fish and Game Code (after the USFWS completes a Federal Environmental Assessment for the Incidental Take Permit); grant of recreational trail easement by the District to the Cities of Highland and Redlands; approval of General Plan Amendments and Conditional Use Permits for revised mining plans; and approval of reclamation plans by the Cities of Highland and Redlands.

Because of these discretionary actions to be considered, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that the proposed project be reviewed to determine the environmental effects that would result if the project is approved and implemented. The San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District (District) is the Lead Agency and has the responsibility for preparing and certifying this EIR prior to implementing the proposed project. The District will be using the EIR in its consideration of ongoing and potential future water conservation activities within the Planning Area. The Cities of Highland and Redlands will be using the EIR in their approval of General Plan Amendments regarding land use and open space and for consideration of Conditional Use Permits in the expansion of existing mine pits and reclamation of the mining once operations have ceased. The EIR also addresses the expansion of road rights-of-way for future roadway improvements and establishment of a linked trail system within the Planning Area. The County will be using the EIR in the consideration of any flood control activities and the USFWS may consult the EIR in its consideration of its approval of the HCP and the issuing of a take permit for effects to endangered species. All the agencies listed have the authority to make decisions regarding discretionary actions relating to implementation of the proposed project.

The objective of the EIR is to inform the District decision-makers, representatives of other affected/responsible agencies, the public, and other interested parties of the potential environmental consequences that may be associated with the approval and implementation of the proposed project. The EIR also examines various alternatives to the proposed project and describes potential impacts relating to a variety of environmental issues and methods in which these impacts can be mitigated or avoided. This EIR has been prepared in accordance with CEQA, California Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq.*; the *Guidelines for California Environmental Quality Act* (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3); and the rules, regulations, and procedures for implementing CEQA as adopted by the District.

2.1.1 Authorization

According to Section 15002 of *CEQA Guidelines*, the basic purposes of CEQA are to:

- Inform government decision-makers and the public about the potential significant environmental effects of proposed activities;
- Identify ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced;
- Prevent significant, avoidable damage to the environment by requiring changes in projects through the use of alternatives or mitigation measures when the governing agency finds the changes to be feasible; and
- Disclose to the public the reasons why a governmental agency approved the project in the manner the agency chose if significant environmental effects are involved.

2.1.2 Intended Use of This EIR

The District, as the Lead Agency, has the responsibility for reviewing and approving various aspects of the project-related actions. Under contract to the District and as permitted under *CEQA Guidelines* (§15084[d-e]), LSA Associates, Inc. (LSA), an independent environmental consulting firm, has prepared the EIR. Prior to certification, this EIR must be subjected to the District's independent review and analysis. The information and conclusions must represent the District's independent judgment. This EIR has been prepared utilizing information from the Cities of Redlands and Highland, the County of San Bernardino, and BLM planning and environmental documents, technical studies; and other publicly available data. Administrative drafts of this draft EIR have also been reviewed and commented upon by Wash Plan Task Force members. This Draft EIR is intended to provide the District with relevant information to use in considering approval of the proposed project, and will serve as an informational document to assess the environmental effects of the proposed project and mitigation measures recommended to avoid or minimize identified significant impacts. This EIR serves as both a Program EIR and Project EIR for certain components. The project-specific evaluations are identified in Chapter 4. As a public disclosure document, the EIR has been made available to public agencies and the public for review prior to the District's consideration of the discretionary actions required for project approval.

Figure 2.1 is a schematic of the agencies involved in the Land Management Plan and what their respective activities within the process will be. Refer to Section 3.7.2 for a more comprehensive listing of implementing actions.

2.1.3 Planning Documents

The EIR includes data derived from the existing General Plans and their supporting EIRs for the Cities of Highland and Redlands; and the Conservation District's Water Rights EIR. Information from these documents related to the condition of the natural and built environment of the Planning Area; the type and level of services provided to the cities and Planning Area; objectives, goals, and policies; thresholds for the evaluation of potential environmental impacts; and mitigation measures that have been referenced and/or utilized in the writing of this EIR. Due to the limited amount of unincorporated County land, this Draft EIR does not include discussion of policies for the San Bernardino County Land Use Services Department.

Biological information regarding the Slender-horned Spineflower Enhancement and Relocation Plan (SLERP) can be obtained from the USFWS.

The planning documents consulted during the preparation of this EIR and copies of this EIR are available for review at the following locations:

UPPER SANTA ANA RIVER WASH LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN



- Habitat Conservation Plan*
- Incidental Take Permit*

SBVWCD
Ongoing Water Conservation Activities
Land Exchange

SBCFCD
Ongoing Flood Control Activities
Land Exchange

EVWD
Ongoing Water Production Activities

City of Highland
General Plan Amendment
Roads/Trails/CUP for Mining

City of Redlands
General Plan Amendment
Roads/Trails/CUP for Mining

CEMEX
Revised Mining CUP
Reclamation

Robertson's
Revised Mining CUP
Land Exchange
Reclamation



- Land Exchange*
- South Coast Resources Management Plan Amendment*

Note: See Section 3.7.2 for a comprehensive list of implementive actions.

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FIGURE 2.1

SBVWCD - SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

SBCFCD - SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT

EVWD - EAST VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

*Under Separate Federal Environmental Documentation

*Upper Santa Ana River Wash
Land Management Plan
Environmental Impact Report
Process Overview*

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San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District
1630 West Redlands Boulevard, Suite A
Redlands, California 92373
(909) 793-2503
M–F 7:30–5:00
Or on the SBVWCD Web site at:
www.sbvxcd.dst.ca.us

A.K. Smiley Public Library
125 W. Vine Street
Redlands, California 92373
(909) 798-7565
M–Tu 9–9; W–Th 9–7; F–Sat 9–5

Highland City Hall
27215 Baseline Street
Highland, California 92346
(909) 864-6861
M–Th 7:30–5:30
Closed Fridays

Highland Branch Library
27167 Base Line
Highland, California 92346
(909) 862-8549
M–W 10–8; F 10–6; Sa 9–5

Redlands City Clerk’s Office
35 Cajon Street
Redlands, California 92373
(909) 798-7531

City of Redlands Community Development Department
35 Cajon Street, Suite 20
Redlands, California 92373

2.1.4 Appendices and Technical Reports

Various technical reports have been prepared to assess specific issues that may result from the proposed project. As relevant, information from these technical reports has been incorporated into the EIR. The technical reports and other information included as appendices to this EIR include:

- Appendix A: Initial Study, Notice of Preparation, Notice of Preparation Response Letters
- Appendix B: Visual Resources Management Worksheets
- Appendix C: Land Evaluation and Site Assessment
- Appendix D: Air Quality Analysis
- Appendix E: Biological Resources Report
- Appendix F: Cultural Resources Report
- Appendix G: Mine and Reclamation Plan for Cemex
- Appendix H: Mine And Reclamation Plan for Robertson’s
- Appendix I: Noise Impact Analysis
- Appendix J: Traffic Study

2.2 PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

This EIR has been distributed to responsible and trustee agencies, other affected agencies, and interested parties. Additionally, in accordance with Public Resources Code 21092(b) (3), the EIR has been provided to all parties who have previously requested copies. Notice of Completion and Availability of the EIR has been distributed as required by the CEQA. During the 60-day public review period, the EIR and technical appendices have been made available for review.

Written comments regarding this EIR should be addressed to Marv Shaw at the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District at the address identified above.

After the 60-day public review period, written responses to all significant environmental issues raised will be prepared. These responses will be available for review for a minimum of 10 days prior to the public hearing before the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District Board of Directors, at which time the certification of the Final EIR will be considered. The Final EIR, which includes the EIR, the public comments and responses to the EIR, and findings will be included as part of the environmental record for consideration by the District decision-makers.

2.2.1 Public Comment

The District formally initiated the environmental process with circulation of a Notice of Preparation (NOP), which was sent to responsible agencies and interested individuals for a 47-day review period from April 26 to June 11, 2004. At the close of the public review period, the District had received ten comment letters on the NOP. Summaries of the comments received during the NOP comment period have been previously identified in Table 1.A of this EIR. The NOP and the responses to the NOP from agencies and individuals are included in Appendix A of this EIR.

Two public scoping meetings were held to solicit public comment as to the scope of the EIR. The first scoping meeting was held in the City Council Chambers of the City of Highland on May 12, 2004. The second was held on May 19, 2004, in the City Council Chambers of the City of Redlands. Opportunity for public comment (both oral and written) was provided. Summaries of the comments received during the Public Scoping meeting have been previously identified in Table 1.B of this EIR. The Scoping meeting sign-in sheets, as well as the written responses received during the meeting are included in Appendix A of this EIR. Additional input regarding the scope and content of the EIR was provided through review of the Administrative Draft EIR by the Task Force members in March 2007.

2.3 POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT DISCUSSED IN THE EIR

This EIR includes an analysis of potential environmental effects associated with the following issues:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Traffic and Circulation
- Utilities
- Land Use and Planning

2.4 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

As required under the CEQA (§15128), an EIR is to contain a statement supporting the Lead Agency's determination that some of the possible effects of a project are not significant and, therefore, are not discussed in detail in the EIR. The District has determined that potential impacts related to all issue areas discussed in the CEQA Initial Study Checklist were potentially significant and would be evaluated in the EIR. A copy of the Initial Study is provided in Appendix A of the EIR.

2.5 CUMULATIVE PROJECTS

Substantial changes are anticipated to occur as the result of population and employment as well as the development of other projects in the region. *CEQA Guidelines* (Section 15130) require that an EIR include a discussion of the potential cumulative impacts of a proposed project. Cumulative impacts are defined as two or more individual effects that, when considered together, are considerable or that compound or increase other environmental impacts (Section 15355). The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment that results from the incremental impact of the project when added to the impacts of other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable or probable future developments. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, projects taking place over a period of time. The discussion of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. The discussion should be guided by standards of practicality and reasonableness, and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact (Section 15130(b)).

The cumulative baseline for this project includes past, present, and probable future projects, which are either approved or being considered for approval, or anticipated to be submitted for consideration, including projects in the design phase or under construction. In determining the cumulative impacts of a proposed project with other area projects, an EIR may either consider a list of past, present, and probable future projects, or it may consider a summary of projections method or a combination of both.¹ This EIR utilizes the list method. To assess cumulative impacts on the other issues, a list of future projects that are either under construction, approved, or in the design phase was prepared. An inventory of these projects was acquired from the public agency staff. The cumulative projects are identified in Table 2.A and Figure 2.2

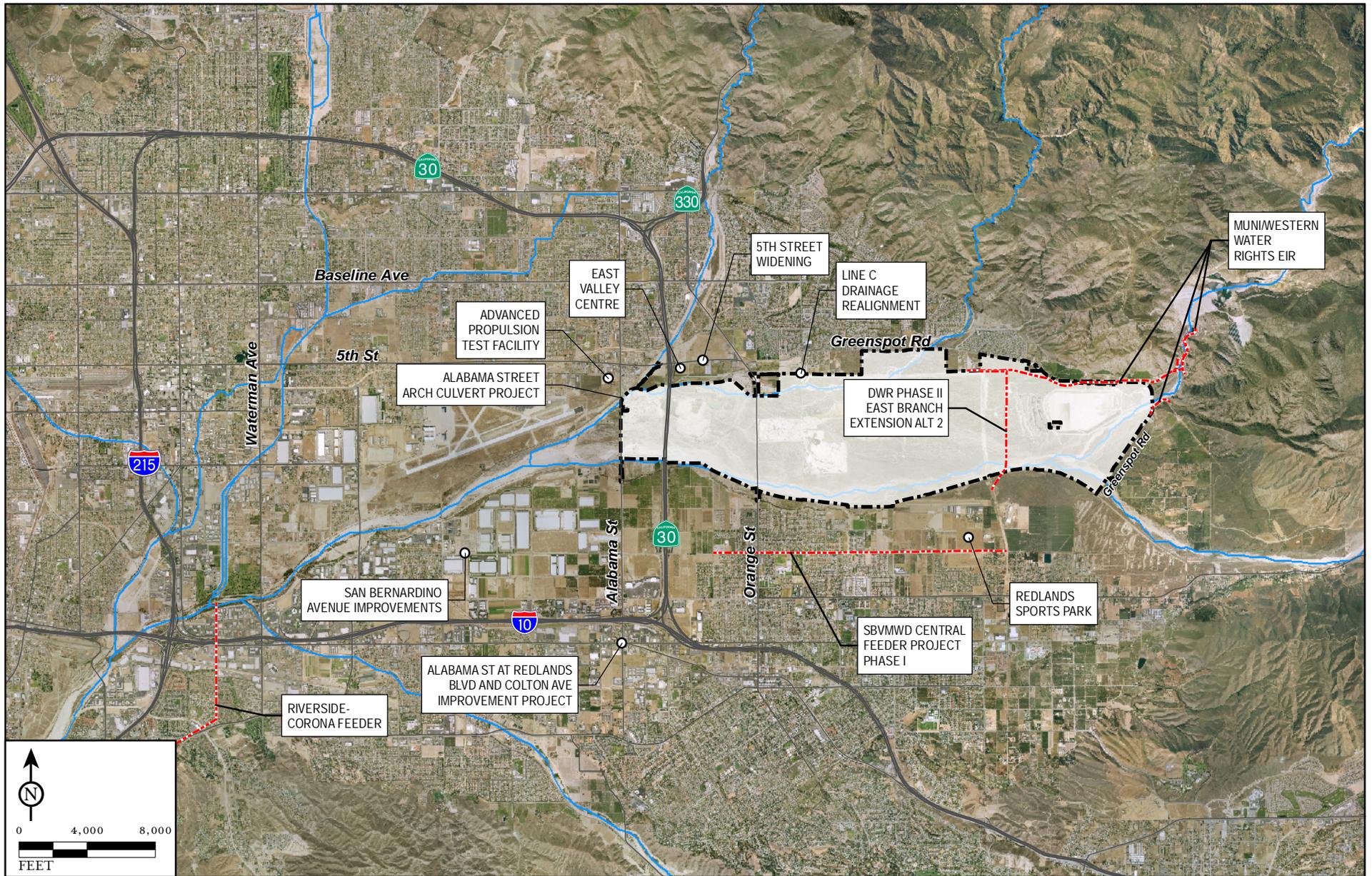
The cumulative analyses are provided following the discussion of the individual components of the proposed project, which in turn follow each significance threshold in Section 4.0. For example, the discussion of cumulative impacts of Water Conservation Operations and Maintenance Activities of the District in regard to light and glare would be discussed in Section 4.1 following the project-specific analysis for Water Conservation activities. Similarly, the cumulative impact analysis of flood control activities related to light and glare would follow the project-specific analysis for flood control activities. Depending on the issue discussed, the area addressed in the cumulative analysis varies. For example, because of the cumulative nature of regional air quality emissions, the cumulative area for air quality impacts would encompass the South Coast Air Basin, while the cumulative area associated with the aesthetic resources would be limited to areas in the proximity of the Planning Area. Because of the nature of the various cumulative discussions, the consideration of all the cumulative projects in every cumulative analysis is not warranted.

The majority of the projects listed in Table 2.A are within the Planning Area. The project as a whole, as well as the individual components of the proposed project, are not expected to impede the implementation of the listed cumulative projects that take place within the Planning Area, such as the DWR Phase II East Branch Extension, Alternate 1. Plans such as the ACOE San Bernardino Lakes and Streams Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study, and the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, have not been included in the list of cumulative projects. Each of these plans identifies a series of potential, conceptual, future improvements, but at this time the nature, design, selection, funding, and timing of such improvements remains too speculative for meaningful analysis.

¹ State *CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15130(b) (1).

Table 2.A – Cumulative Projects

| Project | Project Impact Location |
|--|---|
| Advanced Propulsion Test Facility | Southwest corner of Alabama and 3 rd Streets in City of San Bernardino. |
| Greenspot Road Widening | Greenspot Road between State Route 30 and Boulder Avenue in City of Highland – scheduled to be completed by early 2008. |
| Line “C” Drainage Realignment | Drainage Realignment on Church Street from the intersection of Church Street and Merris Street approximately 1,020 feet south to outlet into Elder Creek within the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Basin. |
| San Bernardino Avenue Improvements | Widen San Bernardino Avenue from Marigold Avenue to Mountain View Avenue in Redlands. |
| Redlands Sports Park | Northwest corner of Wabash Avenue and San Bernardino Avenue in City of Redlands anticipated to be completed by 2010. |
| Alabama Street at Redlands Boulevard and Colton Avenue Improvement Project | Widen and realign Alabama Street and Redlands Boulevard at the intersection in the City of Redlands. Improve and realign Colton Avenue at the Redlands Boulevard intersection in the City of Redlands. |
| East Valley Centre | Southeast of the intersection of State Route 30 and 5 th Street in the City of Highland. |
| DWR East Branch Extension Phase II | Located within or adjacent to the Planning Area and extending east to connect with Phase I of the East Branch Extension near the Mill Creek pump station. Phase II consists of approximately 6 miles of new large diameter pipeline, a new pump station (Citrus Pump Station), a 525–950 acre-foot reservoir (Citrus Reservoir) and expansion of the existing Crafton Hills Pump Station. |
| Western MWD Riverside-Corona Feeder | The project includes construction of 20 wells and 28 miles of pipeline starting in the City of San Bernardino and ending in the City of Corona. |
| Muni/Western Water Rights EIR | Santa Ana River Area, which includes Plunge Pool Pipeline, a 15-foot diameter pipe extending 3.3 miles to the inland feeder, the Low Flow Connector Pipeline connecting from near the Plunge Pool at Seven Oaks Dam to the Greenspot Pipeline south of the Greenspot Road Bridge, and the Morton Canyon Connector II Pipeline, connecting the Redlands aqueduct to the SARC pipeline. |
| Central Feeder Project Phase 1 | 6.5-mile water transmission pipeline which runs east to west through the center of the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District. Generally located within the City of Redlands from Texas Street in the west to just beyond Opal Avenue in the east. |
| Alabama Street Arch Culvert Project | Alabama Street north of San Bernardino Avenue, south of Third Street, near the borders of San Bernardino, Highland, and Redlands. |



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PLAN BOUNDARY

CUMULATIVE IMPACT LOCATION

CUMULATIVE IMPACT LINEAR FEATURES

SOURCE: Thomas Bros., 2006; SBV Water Conservation District; SBV Municipal Water District; AirPhotoUSA, 2007.

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FIGURE 2.2

Upper Santa Ana River Wash
Land Management Plan
Environmental Impact Report
Cumulative Projects

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2.6 EIR MITIGATION MONITORING

A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) will be prepared to comply with the requirements of State law (Public Resources Code, Section 21081.6). State law requires the adoption of an MMRP when mitigation measures are required to avoid significant impacts. The monitoring program is intended to ensure compliance during implementation of the program. An MMRP will be adopted by the District concurrent with certification of the Final EIR for the proposed project.

2.7 DOCUMENT FORMAT

To assist the reader's review of the document, the following describes the format of this EIR.

- Section 1.0* *Executive Summary* provides a summary of the EIR document; identifies potentially significant impacts and mitigation measures in Table 1.C; describes the level of significance of each impact following mitigation; and summarizes the alternatives with a relative comparison of impacts.
- Section 2.0* *Introduction and Purpose* provides a discussion of the EIR's purpose, focus, legal requirements, and an outline of the document's format and content.
- Section 3.0* *Project Description* provides a detailed description of the proposed project.
- Section 4.0* *Existing Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures* evaluates the impacts associated with the proposed project. This section is organized by issue area and follows the following framework:
- *Existing Setting.* Information in the existing setting contains a discussion of the local and regional environment conditions (environmental and man-made) in existence at the time this EIR was prepared. Existing setting information provides the reader with the "baseline" 2007, from which future impacts are analyzed, and provides a standard against which to measure these impacts. For purposes of analysis of environmental impacts in the EIR and in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15125, the existing baseline is considered to be the date the Notice of Preparation was published (April 26, 2004).
 - *Existing Policies and Regulations.* Regulatory requirements and policies (Federal, State, and local) applicable to the issue area are summarized.
 - *Thresholds of Significance.* Determinations regarding the significance of potential impacts resulting from implementation of the proposed project are provided. These thresholds represent the criteria used in this EIR to determine whether identified impacts are significant.
 - *Impacts.* Potential impacts are identified based on implementation of the proposed project.
 - *Impact Analysis.* An analysis of potential impacts of the proposed project is presented in this section. This discussion focuses on the impacts of implementation of the proposed project, and includes potential short-term/long-term and direct/indirect project impacts, and consistency with applicable planning documents or regulations.
 - *Mitigation Measures.* The measures proposed to mitigate any potential impacts of the proposed project are identified.
 - *Level of Significance after Mitigation.* Provides a conclusion as to whether implementation of the proposed project will reduce the project-related and cumulative impacts to a level that is less than significant.

- *Cumulative Impacts.* This discussion focuses on the potential environmental effect of the proposed project combined with the effects of reasonably foreseeable development within the project study area.

Section 5.0 Additional Topics Required by CEQA contains discussions of additional topics required by CEQA, including effects found not to be significant, unavoidable effects of the proposed project, significant irreversible environmental changes, growth inducing impacts, and consistency with regional plans. A summary of the potential cumulative impacts of the proposed project is included in this section.

Section 6.0 Alternatives contains discussion of alternatives to development of the proposed project. As allowed by CEQA, the impacts of these alternatives are evaluated at a more general level than the analyses of the proposed project that is contained in Section 4.0. This section also evaluates the proposed effects of the No Project Alternative and identifies any environmentally superior alternative.

Section 7.0 Contains listings of organizations and persons consulted in preparation of the EIR, and references cited in the EIR.

Section 8.0 Lists the EIR preparers.

Section 9.0 Contains a glossary of terms used in the EIR.

The *Appendices* contain a copy of the NOP, NOP mailing list, NOP comment letters and responses, public scoping meeting information, technical reports, and other relevant information utilized during the preparation of the EIR.