

4.6 SOCIOECONOMICS, POPULATION AND HOUSING, AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

This section discusses potential socioeconomic and Environmental Justice impacts from the Proposed Action/Projects, and alternatives. This includes impacts to existing minority and/or low-income populations within the Plan Area. The social and economic conditions are characterized by the needs, demands, and values of the local, regional, and national public as well as the economic opportunities, benefits, and constraints. This section also discusses the potential of the Proposed Action/Projects and alternatives to induce population growth or displace existing housing or people.

Economic impacts are defined as expected gains or losses from market transactions on local jobs and income, and market and non-market value of resources to users. Social impacts are defined as the consequences to human populations that alter the way in which people live, work, recreate, relate to one another, organize to meet their needs, and generally cope as members of society. Social impacts also include cultural impacts involving changes to the norms, values, and beliefs that guide and rationalize their cognition of themselves and their society (Inter-organizational Committee on Principles and Guidelines 2003¹). Social impacts are defined as direct, meaning that they would potentially result from the action taken, or secondary, meaning that they result from primary or direct impacts and often are separated from direct impact in terms of both time and geographic distance.

Key economic impact variables that were considered as part of the analysis include employment, income, economic dependency, and market and non-market economic value of resources to users within the social and economic Plan Area and vicinity and at the regional and national levels.

THRESHOLDS AND CRITERIA

Although the State CEQA Guidelines exclude discussion of significance criteria for economic impacts, the guidelines include questions related to population growth and displacement. However, we have combined the socioeconomic impact discussion to comply with NEPA and CEQA.

An alternative would result in significant impacts related to population or housing if implementation would do any of the following:

- Induce substantial 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).
- Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

¹ <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/cgg/unpan026197.pdf>

- Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

4.6.1 DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

4.6.1.1 Alternative A: No Action Alternative

In the No Action Alternative, the USFWS would not issue an incidental take permit. Current mining and water conservation would continue.

Aggregate mining operations would continue producing an average of 4.0 to 4.5 million tons per year (MTPY) of aggregate materials. The total average MTPY is the average production numbers of both Cemex and Robertson's operations within the Plan Area. The existing permitted mining would be mined to completion, but no additional mining permitting is presumed.

Prohibitions or restrictions would continue to potentially affect the development of valid existing mineral rights, and, thereby, associated potential economic gain and social change. Site-specific impacts and mitigation would be identified through case-by-case analysis of future proposed activities.

Currently, Cemex has ten (10) to twelve (12) employees (combined permanent and contract).² Currently, Robertson's employs a total of approximately 175 employees, 50 employees associated with the quarry, approximately 47 employees associated with the batch plant, and approximately 70 to 80 employees at the maintenance shop.³

The No Action Alternative would result in a gradual slowing of mining activities in the Plan Area as aggregate resources are depleted under existing permits and leases. The aggregate sources currently available to Robertson's are expected to be depleted in the next 1-2 years and upon depletion aggregate mining by Robertson's operations in the Plan Area would be shut down and the approximate 175 jobs would be lost. The aggregate sources currently available to Cemex are expected to be depleted in the next 10-15 years (dependent on the market) and upon depletion aggregate mining would be shut down and approximately 10-12 jobs would be lost.

Secondary impacts to the development community resulting from the declining availability of the aggregate resources could include relocation of mining operations to other areas and associated price fluctuations. Other secondary impacts would likely include impacts to other businesses associated with Robertson's existing operations that are located just west of the current mining operations, which include Pro Cast Products (manufacture pipes, k-rails, and septic tanks), ProParts (provides the transport of mined product), and a recycled asphalt batch plant, all of which depend on Robertson's production.⁴

² Per email from Christine Jones at Cemex on September 26 & 29, 2017.

³ Per phone call with Christine Goeysvarts at Robertson's on September 20, 2017.

⁴ Per phone call with Christine Goeysvarts at Robertson's on May 8, 2015.

With implementation of the No Action Alternative, the beneficial social and economic impacts of mining (jobs and industry transactions) would decline overtime as the aggregate resources are depleted under the current permits and leases, adversely affecting these commercial entities and their employees.

No environmental justice impacts would occur with implementation of Alternative A, since current mining operations would continue as they normally do. Increased mining activity would not occur with Alternative A, and potential new or increased impacts to minority and/or low-income populations residing near the Plan Area would not be anticipated.

Determination: As the aggregate resources are depleted under the current permits and leases, adverse effects from the loss of approximately 175 Robertson's jobs in the next 1-2 years and 10-12 Cemex jobs in the next 10-15 years would result. However, this loss is not expected to have a significant impact on the local economy, and therefore potential impacts are less than significant. No environmental justice impacts would occur with this alternative.

4.6.1.2 Alternative B: Proposed Action/Projects

POP-1 Would the Project induce substantial 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)? **Determination: Less Than Significant Impact.**

POP-2 Would the Project displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? **Determination: No Impact.**

POP-3 Would the Project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? **Determination: No Impact.**

The Proposed Action/Projects would allow expanded mining operations to occur. Specifically, Cemex is expected to increase its average annual production rate of 2 to 2.5 million tons per year (MTPY) to 3 MTPY, and Robertson's is expected to increase its production from 2 to 2.5 MTPY to 3 MTPY. Combined, the increase in annual production would be from approximately 4.0 to 4.5 MTPY to 6 MTPY. The Proposed Action/Projects would result in an expansion of the existing mining production, which would translate to a beneficial economic impact. The economic gains would not represent a significant economic increase, however, would still result in an economic benefit the local area, in the form of additional jobs (described in detail below), as well as additional revenue for the Cities of Highland and Redlands from sales taxes on the increased aggregate production.

Employment growth associated with expanded mining operations would occur under the Proposed Action/Projects. Cemex anticipates adding approximately 18-20 additional job positions (combination of permanent and contract employees) with the proposed expansion. Robertson's does not anticipate adding job positions with the proposed expansion, rather it would retain its existing approximately 175 employees longer, beyond the anticipated 1-2 years in which currently available resources would be

depleted and those job positions lost. This increase would represent a very small amount employment within the Plan Area and surrounding communities. This increase in employment, although beneficial, would not be of great enough magnitude to indirectly induce substantial population growth. Due to the unemployment rate of approximately 8.8 percent in San Bernardino County (refer to Section 3.6), it is anticipated that at least the majority, if not all, of the new jobs would be filled with individuals that already reside in the region.

Secondary employment growth associated with expanded mining operations is likely to occur with expansion of Robertson's production, such as Pro Cast Products and ProParts as they depend on Robertson's production. This increase in employment, although beneficial, would not be of great enough magnitude to substantially alter existing population patterns, housing demand, or subsequently, socioeconomic conditions within or surrounding the Plan Area, and a less than significant socioeconomic impact is anticipated.

The presence and percentages of low-income and minority populations are presented in Section 3.6, *Affected Environment*. As discussed in Section 3.6, there are no populations in the Plan Area and therefore are no low-income or minority populations within the Plan Area. However, two out of the four census tracts included in the study area, which includes areas outside of the Plan Area boundary, do contain minority populations. Therefore, the Proposed Action is subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, and must identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects on the health or environment of these populations.

An assessment of the potential impacts identified in the other resource sections of this EIS/SEIR was conducted to determine the potential for adverse effects, such as noise, air pollutant emissions, soils and water quality effects, and traffic delays resulting from both short-term construction activities, and long-term operations associated with implementation of Alternative B. Both construction and operational adverse impacts are anticipated to occur, particularly with regard to the additional mining and processing activities associated with Alternative B.

These impacts would not be confined to minority populations, but would result to the general population residing with proximity to construction areas. The construction-related impacts would be long-term in nature and would cease upon completion of the additional mining and processing activities. In addition, Alternative B proposes several mitigation measures that would reduce potential construction-related impacts and also would be required to comply with multiple regulations and provisions within the respective City and County Municipal Codes. For example, the Proposed Projects would be required to: develop a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to mitigate traffic impacts; develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to mitigate water quality impacts; adhere to construction hour and time limitations to mitigate noise impacts; and would be required to adhere to Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction to mitigate air quality/greenhouse gas impacts.

Significant and unavoidable operational impacts related to air quality and traffic would occur with implementation of Alternative B; these impacts are discussed at length in Sections 4.1, *Air Quality*, and Section 4.7, *Transportation Systems and Traffic*, of this Draft EIS/SEIR. However, as with construction-related impacts, these long-term adverse impacts would not occur disproportionately to the existing minority populations residing near the Plan Area, because the impacts would occur to all populations or the general population surrounding the Plan Area (including populations within Highland, Redlands, and unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County).

As such, both construction and operational impacts of Alternative B would not cause disproportionately high and adverse effects on any minority or low-income populations as per Executive Order 12898.

Determination: This alternative would not have an adverse impact, rather it would have a beneficial impact related to socioeconomic conditions in the region and would not result in significant adverse impacts related to environmental justice.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Because it was determined that less than significant or no impacts would result from implementation of the Proposed Action/Projects with respect to socioeconomics, population and housing, no mitigation is required.

RESIDUAL IMPACTS AFTER MITIGATION

All impacts are less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required. There are no residual impacts after mitigation.

4.6.1.3 Alternative C: 2008 Land Management Plan

Implementation of the 2008 Land Management Plan would allow for expansion of aggregate mining on approximately 32 more acres than the 2019 HCP (Alternative B: Proposed Action/Projects). Thus, implementation of the 2008 Land Management Plan would result in an increase in aggregate materials produced from the Plan Area as compared to the 2019 HCP.

The 2008 Land Management Plan would result in an expansion of the existing mining production, which would translate to a beneficial economic impact. The economic gains would not represent a significant economic increase, however, would still result in an economic benefit the local area, in the form of additional jobs, as well as additional revenue for the Cities of Highland and Redlands from sales taxes on the increased aggregate production.

As with Alternative B, Cemex anticipates adding approximately 18-20 additional job positions (combination of permanent and contract employees) with the proposed expansion. Robertson's does not anticipate adding job positions with the proposed expansion, rather it would retain its existing

approximately 175 employees longer, beyond the anticipated 1-2 years in which currently available resources would be depleted and those job positions lost.

Secondary employment growth associated with expanded mining operations is likely to occur with expansion of Robertson's production, such as Pro Cast Products and ProParts as they depend on Robertson's production. This increase in employment, although beneficial, would not be of great enough magnitude to substantially alter existing population patterns, housing demand, or subsequently, socioeconomic conditions within or surrounding the Plan Area, and a less than significant socioeconomic impact is anticipated.

Significant and unavoidable operational impacts related to air quality and traffic would occur with implementation of the 2008 Land Management Plan; these impacts are discussed at length in Sections 4.1, *Air Quality*, and Section 4.7, *Transportation Systems and Traffic*, of this Draft EIS/SEIR. However, as with construction-related impacts, these long-term adverse impacts would not occur disproportionately to the existing minority populations residing near the Plan Area, because the impacts would occur to all populations or the general population surrounding the Plan Area (including populations within Highland, Redlands, and unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County). As such, both construction and operational impacts of Alternative B would not cause disproportionately high and adverse effects on any minority or low-income populations as per Executive Order 12898.

Determination: This alternative would not have an adverse impact, rather it would have a beneficial impact related to socioeconomic conditions in the region and would not result in significant adverse impacts related to environmental justice.