

SECTION 6.0 OTHER MANDATORY CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

CEQA Guidelines Section 15128 states that an EIR “shall contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail in the EIR.”

Effects related to agriculture resources, mineral resources, and population and housing were not analyzed in detail in this EIR as it was obvious during the initial environmental review process that impacts to these resource areas as a result of the proposed project would be less than significant. A discussion of these issues and the rationale for this determination is presented in Section 6.1.1.

Other issues were determined to be potentially significant at the initial environmental review process, but through subsequent analysis were determined to be less than significant through project design. Land use, aesthetics/visual quality, traffic/circulation, recreation, water resources, geology/soils, and utilities and public services, which are discussed in detail in Section 3.0 of this EIR, were found not to be significant for the reasons discussed in Section 6.1.2.

6.1.1 Environmental Effects Eliminated from Further Review

Agricultural Resources

Would the proposed 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?*
- *Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*
- *Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?*

According to the San Diego County Important Farmland Map, much of MTRP, and all of the proposed project area, is designated as Grazing Land. There are no agricultural soils or agricultural operations within the project vicinity. Grazing Land is not considered to be a significant agricultural resource by the California Department of Conservation or the Water Authority. Furthermore, the subject land is within MTRP, which precludes grazing or the possibility of any other type of farming. The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use and would not interfere with farming of adjacent parcels. MTRP is surrounded by urban development and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. The Water Authority has determined that impacts to agricultural resources would not be significant, and that no further study of this issue is warranted.

Mineral Resources

Would the proposed 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?*
- *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?*

The State Mining and Geology Board has defined the following Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ):

- MRZ-1: Areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that there is little likelihood for their presence.
- MRZ-2: Areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that there is a high likelihood for their presence.
- MRZ-3: Areas containing mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data.
- MRZ-4: Areas where available information is inadequate for assignment to any other MRZ zone.

Western San Diego County was classified by Mineral Resource Zones by the California Division of Mines and Geology in 1982. Plate 21 of the report entitled *Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Western San Diego County Production-Consumption Region* (CDMG 1982) indicates that the portion of MTRP studied in this EIR has been classified as MRZ-2 and 3. The San Diego River east of Mission Dam, and west of the Second Aqueduct is in MRZ-2 zone, indicating the presence or high likelihood of significant mineral deposits. The area around Fortuna Mountain, which is located between the Mission Dam and the Second Aqueduct, is classified as MRZ-3. Although these deposits may contain significant mineral resources, the proposed project would not preclude access since they are located within a utility easement and an open space preserve/regional park setting and mining would not be compatible with dedicated parkland. Further, the crushed rock, sand, and mud deposits that are excavated during project construction would be offered to local mining operators and may be put into the local development economy. For these reasons, the Water Authority has determined that impacts to mineral resources would not be significant, and that no further study of this issue is warranted.

Population and Housing

Would the proposed 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)?*
- *Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

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

The proposed project would provide for increased flow regulatory capabilities within the Water Authority's Second San Diego Aqueduct, which would prevent future spills through existing vent structures in MTRP, and would allow for increased hydraulic service and increased capacity to the Alvarado, Perdue, and Otay Water Treatment Plants and to Lake Murray, Sweetwater Reservoir, and Lower Otay Lake. The proposed project would be constructed entirely within MTRP and no houses or persons would be displaced. For these reasons, the Water Authority has determined that impacts to population and housing would not be significant, and that no further study of this issue is warranted.

6.1.2 Effects Found Not to Be Significant During Environmental Analysis

Land Use

Potential impacts to land use are evaluated in Section 3.1. The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plans, policies or regulations. The proposed project would conform to the guidelines of the MSCP, so also would not conflict with the applicable habitat conservation plan for the project area. Land use impacts would not be significant.

Aesthetics/Visual Quality

Potential impacts to aesthetics/visual quality are evaluated in Section 3.2. No significant visual impacts were identified for any of the 16 key observation points of the project. The aesthetic/visual quality impacts of the proposed project within MTRP during construction are identified as adverse but not significant because the impacts would be short term. Long-term visual/aesthetic impacts in MTRP would not be significant because planned revegetation with native seed mix would restore the natural landscape, and the FRS II control building would be constructed with an architectural design and building materials that would complement the surrounding parkland. In addition, the removal or replacement of many of the existing Elliott Vents with smaller structures would be a visual benefit. The proposed project would not introduce a new source of substantial light that would affect nighttime views in the area or glare that would affect daytime views in the project area. Aesthetics/visual quality impacts would not be significant.

Traffic/Circulation

Potential impacts to traffic/circulation are evaluated in Section 3.3. For the peak time of construction traffic, estimated to occur during the first 6 months of the project construction period, all road segments and intersections in the study area are calculated to operate at acceptable levels with the addition of construction traffic. Long-term traffic generation from project operation would be minimal. Traffic impacts would not be significant.

Recreation

Potential impacts to recreation are evaluated in Section 3.6. The project would reduce the use of the extreme western side of MTRP during construction where certain access points and trails would be closed to protect public safety. However, because this large regional park offers multiple access points and trails, the recreation impacts from temporary closure of the access points and trails on the extreme western side of MTRP are identified as adverse but not significant.

Water Resources

Potential impacts to water resources are evaluated in Section 3.7. Compliance with the General Construction Stormwater Permit and provisions of the SWPPP would assure the project would not result in significant downstream surface water or groundwater quality impacts. Adherence to the Waste Discharge Permit would assure the project would not result in significant waste discharge impacts due to possible dewatering activities.

The temporary disruption of natural drainage patterns in the construction areas would not be long-term and would be limited; therefore, this impact would not be significant. The only project component anticipated to interrupt flowing water is the stabilized crossing of the San Diego River, which would be constructed prior to the higher winter flows and would take no more than 2 months to complete. After FRS II and pipeline tunnel construction is completed, the impermeable surface expression of the constructed facilities would be limited to the access/control building and small concrete pads covering valve vaults. These small areas would not generate additional runoff at levels that would affect the capacity of downstream drainages, or increase downstream flooding. Therefore, long-term alteration of drainage patterns within MTRP would not be significant.

The overflow pipeline from the FRS II is not considered to be a significant impact due to the remote chance that large quantities of water would be discharged and the lack of development, including roads or trails that could be affected downstream. Compliance with provisions of the SWPPP and the General Construction Stormwater Permit would assure that potential construction impacts to aquatic biological resources would not be significant. The stabilized river crossing would be constructed at grade and would be engineered to withstand the flows and velocities anticipated during a 100-year flood. Therefore, potential impacts from placing this structure within the 100-year floodplain would not be significant.

Water resources impacts would not be significant.

Geology/Soils

While southern California is a seismically-active area, the proposed project would be located in an area where the risks of damage due to fault rupture, strong seismic ground shaking, liquefaction, and landslide are low. The project structures would be designed to resist damage from ground-shaking induced by the design earthquake. Also, the FRS II and pipeline tunnel would be unmanned.

Although the project would involve extensive grading of soils with severe erodibility and high runoff potential, substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil would be avoided by implementation of the standard specifications and project features described in Section 2.6, including erosion control BMPs developed for the SWPPP. The Pomerado Conglomerate, which is the primary geologic unit in which the FRS II would be constructed, is stable. Pomerado Conglomerate also is not considered to be an expansive soil. In addition, the FRS II site and the pipeline tunnel would be over excavated and backfilled with appropriate materials.

Geology/soils impacts would not be significant.

Utilities and Public Services

Potential impacts to utilities and public services are evaluated in Section 3.13. Public utilities, including aboveground electrical and communication lines, Water Authority pipelines, the storm drain under the access road at the North Portal, and the Mission Gorge Trunk Sewer would not be adversely affected by project construction due to design features and utility protection measures that would be incorporated into the project plans and specifications. Also, the outage necessary to allow connection of the new pipeline to the existing Pipeline 3 and Pipeline 4 at the north and south ends of the project would be short-term, and would be scheduled by the Water Authority during the winter when water demands are low. Construction impacts on utilities would not be significant.

In regards to long-term operation, both SBC/Pac Bell and SDG&E have confirmed that there is sufficient capacity in their system to serve the proposed FRS II site. Therefore, there is no need for additional capacity of communications or electrical lines, and overall level of service would not decrease due to the project. The project would have operational benefits to the capacity and reliability of the water delivery system. The proposed river crossing would not affect river hydraulics, so the Mission Gorge Trunk Sewer would not be affected by the permanent presence of the stabilized at-grade crossing to the east. Operational impacts on utilities would not be significant.

In regards to construction impacts on public services, although the project would bring more people and heavy equipment into the park to accomplish the project construction, the increased activity is not anticipated to substantially increase the need for police services such that capacity or response times in the surrounding community would be reduced. Measures to reduce the risk of fire due to project construction are discussed in Section 3.12 (Public Safety and Hazardous Materials). These measures are anticipated to reduce the risk of fire to below a level of significance. Therefore, the project is not expected to increase the need for fire protection services during construction. Emergency access routes would be maintained to all project components during construction, and no public roads would be closed due to project construction; therefore, project construction would not reduce emergency medical response. The construction zones for the project are well within the park. Construction would not interfere with school activities. Construction impacts on public services, including police, fire, emergency response, and schools would not be significant.

In regards to long-term operation, the project would not interrupt service, create the need for additional capacity, or decrease the level of service of public services in the project area, including fire stations, police services, or schools. Operational impacts on public services would not be significant.

6.1.3 Non-applicable Significance Thresholds

Several thresholds from CEQA Guidelines Appendix G were found to not be applicable to the proposed project. As a matter of clarification, these thresholds are addressed briefly below.

Land Use

Would the proposed project physically divide an established community?

The proposed project is linear in nature, with construction activity proposed within or adjacent to approximately 2 miles of the Water Authority's right-of-way through MTRP. Nearly all of the project components would be placed belowground. The roads and trails leading to and within the right-of-way would be temporarily closed during construction, but would remain part of the recreational trails network following construction. Tierrasanta is the closest established community to the proposed project site. No physical impacts would occur within the Tierrasanta community. Therefore, the proposed project does not have the potential to physically divide an established community.

Traffic/Circulation

Would the proposed project result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

The project would not involve or affect airport facilities.

Would the proposed project conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?

The proposed project impact area is confined to the MTRP, a recreational area not connected to alternative transportation routes. Project related construction traffic would not require traffic control on public streets that would interfere with bus, bicycle, or other alternative transportation modes.

Noise

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 proposed project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the proposed project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

The proposed project area is not within an airport land use plan, within 2 miles of a public airport, or in the vicinity of a private airstrip.

Recreation

Would the proposed project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The proposed project would involve construction of infrastructure within a regional recreational area, but would not involve construction of recreational facilities.

Water Resources

Would the proposed project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level, which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted).

The proposed project would not involve the use of groundwater. Limited dewatering may be required during excavation of the FRS II and during tunneling, but the duration of groundwater pumping would be short-term, and no groundwater supply wells are in the vicinity of the proposed project.

Would the proposed project place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

The proposed project would not involve construction of housing.

Geology and Soils

Would the proposed 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?

The proposed project would not involve or impact septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems.

Public Safety and Hazardous Materials

Would the proposed project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working within an area covered by an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport?

MCAS Miramar is located north of SR-52, within 2 miles of the project site, although the runways are over 2 miles to the northwest. Montgomery Field is located approximately 3 miles to the west of the project site. The proposed project is outside the Accident Potential Zones (APZ) adopted by MCAS Miramar. The FRS II and pipeline tunnel would be unmanned facilities requiring only periodic inspection and maintenance. The project would not introduce persons into an area to work or reside where there would be a significant potential hazard from aircraft.

Would the proposed project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working within an area within the vicinity of a private airstrip?

The proposed project area is not in the vicinity of a private airstrip.

6.2 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) requires an EIR to describe “any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance.” In Section 3, the proposed project was analyzed to determine if it would cause significant impacts in each technical issue. Significant impacts were identified by measuring the project’s performance against specific significance thresholds. If significant impacts were identified, mitigation measures were developed. In most cases, these measures would reduce significant impacts to below a level of significance with no residual impacts. However, for certain issues discussed below, significant and unmitigable impacts would still occur. In all cases, these unmitigable impacts would occur during the construction period, and would cease to occur when construction is completed. Issues that would have a residual impact after mitigation are air quality and recreation.

6.2.1 Air Quality

Potential project impacts to air quality are evaluated in Section 3.4 and cumulative impacts to air quality are evaluated in Section 4.3.4. Potential worst-case maximum daily emissions associated with the construction phase of the project would be above the significance criteria for NO_x and PM₁₀. Based on the project’s anticipated exceedence of air quality standards and a cumulative net increase in criteria pollutants for which the San Diego Air Basin is designated non-attainment, construction emissions would be significant for NO_x and PM₁₀. Emissions would be less than significant for CO, ROC/ROG, and SO_x. Although the severity of impacts to air quality from the maximum daily NO_x and PM₁₀ emissions for construction of the proposed project would be reduced by implementation of the required mitigation measures, the impact of peak emissions would remain significant during the 2-year construction period and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required. The cumulative impact to air quality is also

significant and would require a Statement of Overriding Considerations. The project-level and cumulative impact to air quality would cease upon the completion of construction.

6.2.2 Noise

Potential noise impacts are evaluated in Section 3.5. Construction may generate substantial short-term increases in noise levels above ambient that may exceed 75 dBA. Also, significant noise impacts would be generated by night construction at the North Portal and Pipeline Interconnect Reconfiguration. Residual impacts would remain significant after implementation of the proposed mitigation measures. A Statement of Overriding Considerations would be necessary for project approval. The significant impacts to noise would cease upon the completion of construction.

This page intentionally left blank.