
3.7 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, POPULATION, AND HOUSING

3.7.1 INTRODUCTION

This section describes the demographic conditions within the census tracts containing the Proposed Action and its alternatives, and evaluates the potential for the Proposed Action and its alternatives to result in disproportionately high and adverse environmental and human health effects on low-income or minority populations. It also evaluates the effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives on population and housing in Placer County.

The primary source of information used in this analysis is the U.S. Census Bureau data from the 2010 Census.

3.7.2 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The Proposed Action is located in the southwest corner of Placer County, along the borders with Sacramento County and Sutter County.

3.7.2.1 Placer County Population and Housing

Placer County consists of six cities (Auburn, Colfax, Lincoln, Loomis, Rocklin, and Roseville) and unincorporated land. According to the 2012 population figures reported by the California Department of Finance, the population of Placer County is 355,328 residents, of which 109,456 individuals reside in unincorporated areas. Since 2000, the County's population has increased by 43 percent and the population of the unincorporated areas has increased by 9 percent. There are 154,525 housing units within Placer County, of which 56,194 units are within unincorporated areas (DOF 2012). According to Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) projections, the year 2035 population in Placer County (excluding the Tahoe Basin) is projected to be 500,958 individuals, of which 125,047 individuals would reside in unincorporated areas. SACOG projects that in year 2035 there will be 179,514 housing units in Placer County (excluding the Tahoe Basin), including 42,752 units in unincorporated areas (SACOG 2012).

3.7.2.2 Study Area Population, Race, and Ethnicity

For the purpose of the analysis of the Proposed Action's effects related to environmental justice, the study area was defined to include the three census tracts containing and surrounding the project site. The study area is shown in **Figure 3.7-1, Census Tract Locations**.

Table 3.7-1, Study Area Demographics, lists the populations of the three census tracts by race and ethnicity. Based on the 2010 Census data, minority populations make up approximately 31 percent, 32 percent, and 24 percent of the total population in Census Tracts 213.22, 225, and 72.06, respectively. By comparison, in the state of California, the minority population is approximately 57 percent of the total population.

**Table 3.7-1
Study Area Demographics**

Demographic	Tract 213.22		Tract 225		Tract 72.06	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Population	8,762	--	3,879	--	4,131	--
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	971	11.1	398	10.3	648	15.7
White	6,291	71.8	2,727	70.3	3,345	81.0
Black or African American	214	2.4	187	4.8	93	2.3
American Indian or Alaska Native	43	0.5	34	0.9	52	1.3
Asian	1,445	16.5	581	15.0	169	4.1
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	33	0.4	21	0.5	40	1.0
Some other Race	283	3.2	129	3.3	223	5.4
Two or more Races	453	5.2	200	5.2	209	5.1
Total Minority Population	2,706	30.9	1,221	31.5	1,002	24.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Census Summary File 1

3.7.2.3 Study Area Income and Poverty Status

The U.S. Census determines poverty status based on the thresholds prescribed for federal agencies by Statistical Policy Directive 14, issued by the Office of Management and Budget. These thresholds take into account family size, the age of the individual(s), and income (U.S. Census 2011). **Table 3.7-2, Income and Poverty Status**, shows the percentage of study area populations below the poverty level. Based on 2006-2010 American Community Survey data, the percentage of individuals considered to be below the poverty level within the study area census tracts is substantially less than the statewide level of 13.7 percent.

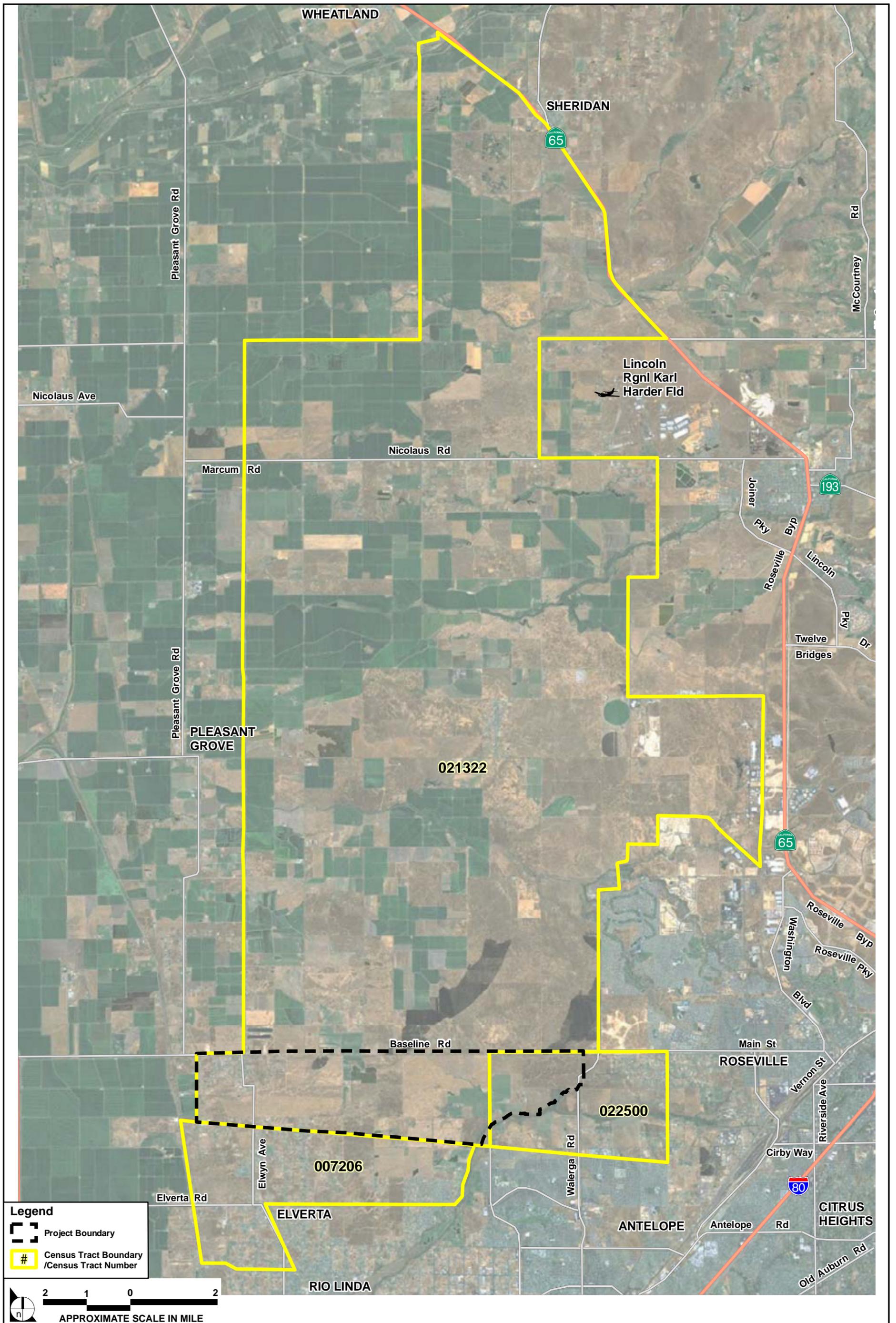


FIGURE 3.7-1

Census Tract Locations

**Table 3.7-2
Income and Poverty Status**

Income and Poverty Status	Tract 213.22		Tract 225		Tract 72.06	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Households	1,970	--	1,256	--	1,254	--
Less than \$10,000	91	4.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
\$10,000 to \$14,999	54	2.7	52	4.1	39	3.1
\$15,000 to \$24,999	23	1.2	64	5.1	86	6.9
\$25,000 to \$34,999	65	3.3	87	6.9	58	4.6
\$35,000 to \$49,999	142	7.2	176	14.0	211	16.8
\$50,000 to \$74,999	300	15.2	147	11.7	286	22.8
\$75,000 to \$99,999	373	18.9	157	12.5	175	14.0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	626	31.8	133	10.6	250	19.9
\$150,000 to \$199,999	160	8.1	196	15.6	87	6.9
Greater than \$200,000	136	6.9	244	19.4	62	4.9
Median Household Income	96,181	--	95,114	--	71,765	--
Median Family Income	101,157	--	111,923	--	71,458	--
Per Capita Income	33,610	--	39,236	--	27,518	--
Poverty Status – Families	--	2.7	--	1.6	--	0.8
Poverty Status - Individuals	--	5.5	--	5.0	--	3.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2006-2010 American Community Survey

3.7.3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK – APPLICABLE LAWS, REGULATIONS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

3.7.3.1 Federal Laws and Regulations

Executive Order 12898

On February 11, 1994, the President issued Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations. The order focuses federal attention on the relationship between the environment and human health conditions of minority communities and calls on agencies to make achieving environmental justice part of their mission. The Order requires the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and all federal and state agencies receiving federal funds to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. It also requires the agencies to develop strategies to address this problem.

3.7.3.2 State Laws and Regulations

There are no state laws and regulations related to environmental justice that are applicable to the Proposed Action or the alternatives under consideration.

3.7.3.3 Local Plans, Policies, and Ordinances

There are no local plans, policies or ordinances of Placer County related to environmental justice.

3.7.4 SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS AND ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

3.7.4.1 Significance Thresholds

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) does not specify significance thresholds that may be used to evaluate the effects of a proposed action related to environmental justice. However, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidance requires an evaluation of a proposed action's effect on the human environment, and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) must comply with Executive Order 12898. The USACE has determined that the Proposed Action or its alternatives would result in substantial adverse effects related to environmental justice if the Proposed Action or an alternative would disproportionately adversely affect a minority and low-income community through its effects on

- environmental conditions such as quality of air, water and other environmental media; degradation of aesthetics, loss of open space, and nuisance concerns such as odor, noise, and dust;
- human health such as exposure of minority and low-income populations to pathogens;
- public welfare in terms of social conditions such as reduced access to certain amenities like hospitals, safe drinking water, public transportation, etc.; and
- public welfare in terms of economic conditions such as changes in employment, income, and the cost of housing, etc.

The USACE has determined that the Proposed Action or its alternatives would result in significant effects related to population and housing if the Proposed Action or an alternative would

- 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; or
- displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

3.7.4.2 Analysis Methodology

Several guidance documents have been prepared by various federal agencies to guide the evaluation of impacts of a proposed action on minority and low-income populations. CEQ guidance "Environmental Justice Under the National Environmental Policy Act" dated December 1997 and the U.S. EPA "Toolkit for Assessing Potential Allegations of Environmental Injustice" dated November 2004 were consulted in evaluating the effects of the Proposed Action and its alternatives relative to Executive Order 12898.

The USACE conducted an evaluation of environmental justice impacts using a two-step process: as a first step, the study area was evaluated to determine whether it contains a concentration of minority and/or low-income populations. Following that evaluation, in a second step, the USACE determined whether the Proposed Action and its alternatives would result in the types of effects listed above, and whether these effects would disproportionately affect minority and/or low-income populations.

The following criteria were used to determine if any of the three study area census tracts contain a high concentration of a minority or low-income population.

Minority Population

As defined in Executive Order 12898 and the CEQ guidance, a minority population occurs where one or both of the following conditions are met within a given geographic area:

- The American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian, Pacific Islander, Black, or Hispanic population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent, or
- The minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis.

A minority population also exists if more than one minority group is present and the aggregate minority percentage meets one of the above conditions. The selection of the appropriate unit of geographic analysis could be a governing body's jurisdiction, a neighborhood, census tract, or other similar unit.

Although the Hispanic population cannot be directly aggregated without resulting in double counting because it represents a multiracial group which includes several races, for purposes of this analysis, it was aggregated because the Hispanic population is a designated minority group.

Based on this, as shown in **Table 3.7-1**, above, the aggregate minority population is about 31 percent, 32 percent, and 24 percent of the total population in study area Census Tracts 213.22, 225, and 72.06, respectively. The aggregate minority population percentages for the census tracts therefore do not exceed 50 percent. In addition, the study area minority population percentage is not greater than the minority population percentage in the state of California as a whole which is approximately 57 percent. Therefore, the study area does not contain a high concentration of minority population.

Low-income Population

Executive Order 12898 does not provide criteria to determine if an affected area consists of a low-income population. For the purpose of this assessment, the CEQ criterion for defining a minority population has been adapted to identify whether or not the population in an affected area constitutes a low-income population. An affected geographic area is considered to consist of a low-income population (i.e., below the poverty level, for purposes of this analysis) where the percentage of low-income persons

- is at least 50 percent of the total population, or
- is meaningfully greater than the low-income population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis.

As shown in **Table 3.7-2, Income and Poverty Status**, based on the 2006-2010 American Community Surveys, 5.5 percent of the individuals in Census Tract 213.22, 5.0 percent of the individuals in Census Tract 225, and 3.6 percent of the individuals in Census Tract 72.06 are considered below the poverty level. The three study area census tracts do not meet either criterion as the percentages of low-income persons are substantially less than 50 percent and are not higher than in the state of California as a whole, which has a poverty level of 13.7 percent of individuals. Therefore the study area does not contain a high concentration of low-income population.

In summary, the study area which comprises the three study area census tracts containing and surrounding the project site does not constitute an “environmental justice (EJ)” community.

3.7.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact EJ-1 **Disproportionate Adverse Environmental Effects on Minority or Low-income Populations**

No Action Alt. The No Action Alternative would not result in disproportionate adverse environmental effects on minority or low-income populations. The No Action Alternative involves the development of a mixed use, mixed density community that would be similar to existing urban development to the northeast of the project site. The No Action Alternative does not involve any land uses that would produce hazardous emissions or create other conditions that could adversely affect nearby residential areas. Furthermore, as shown by the data presented above, the project site and surrounding area does not meet the criteria for an EJ community. There would be a **less than significant** effect. Mitigation is not required.

Proposed Action (Base Plan and Blueprint Scenarios) The Proposed Action would construct a larger mixed-use residential community on the same project site as the No Action Alternative. Based on the significance criteria listed above and for the same reasons presented for the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would result in **less than significant** environmental effects on an EJ community. Mitigation is not required.

Alts. 1 through 5 All of the on-site alternatives would construct a project broadly similar to the Proposed Action on the same project site. Based on the significance criteria listed above and for the same reasons presented for the No Action Alternative, implementation of any of the Alternatives A through E would result in **less than significant** environmental effects on an EJ community. Mitigation is not required.



Impact EJ-2 Impacts to Population and Housing

No Action Alt. Approximately 150 residences are located primarily in the northwest corner of the project site in the Special Planning Area. None of these residences would be affected by the No Action Alternative, and no dwelling units or persons would be displaced.

Implementation of the No Action Alternative would result in the construction of 8,047 residential units on the project site, which could accommodate approximately 24,000 additional persons. Based on projections provided by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), unincorporated Placer County (not including the Tahoe Basin) is projected to add approximately 16,475 residential units and 48,000 residents between 2008 and 2035 (SACOG 2012).

The increase in housing associated with the No Action Alternative represents approximately 48 percent of SACOG’s housing projection while the increase in population associated with the Base Plan scenario represents about 44 percent of SACOG’s population projection. As a result, the No Action Alternative would not exceed housing and population projections for the unincorporated portion of Placer County, and thus would not directly induce substantial population growth in Placer County that was not anticipated. This effect is **less than significant**.

**Proposed
Action (Base
Plan and
Blueprint
Scenarios)**

Implementation of the Proposed Action would result in the construction of 14,132 (Base Plan scenario) to 21,631 (Blueprint scenario) residential units on the project site, which could accommodate approximately 30,000 to 50,000 additional persons. As discussed above, SACOG projects that unincorporated Placer County (not including the Tahoe Basin) would add approximately 16,475 residential units and 48,000 residents between 2008 and 2035.

The increase in housing associated with the Base Plan scenario represents approximately 86 percent of SACOG’s housing projection while the increase in population associated with the Base Plan scenario represents about 72 percent of SACOG’s population projection. As a result, the Base Plan scenario would not exceed housing and population projections for the unincorporated portion of Placer County, and thus would not directly induce substantial population growth in Placer County that was not anticipated.

Concerning the Blueprint scenario, the increase in housing associated with this scenario represents 131 percent of SACOG’s housing projection while the increase in population associated with this scenario represents about 103 percent of SACOG’s population projection. Therefore, the Blueprint scenario would exceed housing and population projections for the unincorporated portion of Placer County, and thus would induce substantial population growth in Placer County. However, the additional population (about 1,400 persons more than the SACOG projections) represents a small exceedance of the SACOG projections. Furthermore, the housing and population increases that would result from development pursuant to the Blueprint scenario would promote the land use

scenario for the region as currently preferred by SACOG and several of its member organizations. By concentrating population closer to the core of the region, a number of environmental and lifestyle benefits would accrue, including shorter commutes, greater potential use of transit, cleaner air, and less open space lost to suburban sprawl. Therefore, this effect would be **less than significant**.

Alts. 1 through 5 Alternatives 1 through 5 would result in the same number of dwelling units as the Proposed Action. Therefore, the effects on population and housing would be similar to those described above for Proposed Action, and this effect is **less than significant**.

Impact EJ-3 Indirect Effects on Environmental Justice, Population, and Housing from Off-Site Infrastructure Not Constructed as Part of the Project

No Action Alt., Proposed Action (Base Plan and The construction and operation of off-site water pipeline infrastructure by the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) which may be used by the No Action Alternative, Proposed Action, and Alternatives 1 through 5, would result in **less than significant** effect on environmental justice, population, and housing.

Blueprint Scenarios), and Alts. 1 through 5 The construction of the infrastructure may induce population growth in the area. However, the water pipeline would be built to provide for anticipated population growth that would remain within SACOG growth projections. In addition, the proposed infrastructure would not displace any population or housing. The construction activities would also not disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations. Therefore, the effect on environmental justice, population, and housing from the water pipeline infrastructure would be **less than significant**. Mitigation is not necessary.

3.7.6 RESIDUAL SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

All effects associated with environmental justice and population and housing would be less than significant. Therefore, there would be no residual significant impacts for the Proposed Action and any of the alternatives.

3.7.7 REFERENCES

California Department of Finance (DOF). 2012. "E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates."

Placer County. 2006. "Placer Vineyards Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report" (State Clearinghouse No. 1999062020).

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