

## 3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

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### 3.0.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents an analysis of each resource topic identified through preliminary environmental analysis and the public scoping process as likely to be affected by the Proposed Action or any of the alternatives to the Proposed Action. Each section describes the affected environment as it relates to that specific resource topic; the direct and indirect effects that could result from implementation of the Proposed Action or an alternative; and mitigation measures that would avoid, reduce, or compensate for significant effects of the Proposed Action or an alternative. The subsections below summarize the approach to the impact analysis, including the key assumptions and data used in the analysis to help the reader better understand the analyses contained in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS).

### 3.0.2 SCOPE OF THE EIS

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), this Draft EIS provides an evaluation of potential effects on the human environment, which includes an analysis of the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment (40 CFR § 1508.14). Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR § 1508.27) provide guidance as to the requirement to evaluate impacts in an EIS and identify the need to evaluate a Proposed Action's effects on the following: public health and safety; historical and cultural resources; parklands; prime farmlands; wetlands; wild and scenic rivers; ecologically critical areas; and Endangered or Threatened species or their habitat.

Based on the input received during the EIS scoping process, as described in **Chapter 1.0, Introduction and Statement of Purpose and Need**, this Draft EIS addresses the following resource topics or categories of effects in detail:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Climate Change
- Cultural Resources
- Environmental Justice, Population and Housing
- Geology, Soils, and Minerals
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Public Services
- Traffic and Transportation
- Utilities and Service Systems

These topics address all of the resource topics identified in the CEQ regulations, with the exception of parklands and wild and scenic rivers. No parkland or wild and scenic rivers are present within the area of effect of the Proposed Action or the alternatives.

### **3.0.3 SECTION CONTENTS AND DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Each resource topic considered in this section of the Draft EIS is addressed under six primary subsections: Introduction; Affected Environment; Regulatory Framework – Applicable Laws, Regulations, Plans and Policies; Significance Thresholds and Analysis Methodology; Environmental Consequences and Mitigation Measures; Residual Significant Impacts; and Cumulative Impacts. An overview of the information included in these subsections is provided below.

#### **3.0.3.1 Introduction**

The introduction section describes the analyzed topic and the contents of the analysis. It also provides the sources used to characterize the affected environment and evaluate the potential effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives.

#### **3.0.3.2 Affected Environment**

This section describes the existing conditions in the area of the Proposed Action and the alternatives for each resource topic. The section provides a description of the applicable physical setting of the project site and its surroundings (e.g., existing land uses, existing soil conditions, existing traffic conditions). The Amoruso Ranch project is expected to be built out over a period of 16 years depending on market conditions, with full project build out in 2035 (or later). As such, for certain topics such as traffic, this Draft EIS also presents future environmental conditions that would exist in the project area under 2035 conditions, and the impacts of the Proposed Action (and alternatives) are analyzed by adding Proposed Action traffic (or traffic due to an alternative) to the background traffic that would exist in 2035.

#### **3.0.3.3 Regulatory Framework – Applicable Laws, Regulations, Plans, and Policies**

This section presents relevant federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, and policies. Only those laws, regulations, and policies that are pertinent to the impact analysis are included.

#### **3.0.3.4 Significance Thresholds and Analysis Methodology**

##### *Significance Thresholds*

For each resource topic included in this section, the Draft EIS identifies criteria used by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to evaluate the significance of the effects. Although CEQ regulations (40 CFR § 1508.27) provide guidance as to the requirement to evaluate impacts in an EIS, CEQ guidance generally does not specify the criteria to be used to evaluate the significance of the specific effects of the proposed action.

In evaluating the significance of a project's effects, NEPA requires a consideration of both context and intensity (40 CFR § 1508.27). "Context" means that the significance must be analyzed in several contexts, such as the human environment, affected region, affected interests, and the local setting. "Intensity" refers to the severity of the impact. Impacts must be evaluated that may be both beneficial and adverse. Both context and intensity were considered in the evaluation of the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives.

### *Analysis Methodology*

This section summarizes the methodology used to evaluate direct, indirect, and cumulative effects. Impacts are evaluated quantitatively where possible and qualitatively where quantification is not feasible. All effects are evaluated relative to the No Action alternative, which represents conditions that would exist on the project site if the Corps denied the issuance of a DA permit.

#### **3.0.3.5 Environmental Consequences and Mitigation Measures**

This section presents the environmental effects from the construction and operation of the Proposed Action or its alternatives. All impacts are numbered (for instance, Impact AES-1 refers to the first impact under **Aesthetics**) and is shown in bold type. Mitigation measures are numbered to correspond to the impact. Impacts and mitigation measures are numbered consecutively within each topic.

The following terms, as defined below, are used in this Draft EIS to describe the types of effects that could result from the implementation of the Proposed Action or its alternatives:

- **Direct Effect.** An effect caused by the action that occurs at the same time and place.
- **Indirect Effect.** An effect that is caused by the action and occurs later in time or in a different location than the action, but is still reasonably foreseeable.
- **No Effect.** There would be no effect from implementation of the action.
- **Adverse Effect.** An effect that would negatively affect the environmental resource value or quality as it exists prior to the project. Adverse effects are further qualified as significant or negligible based on significance thresholds presented under each resource topic.
- **Residual Effect.** The effect remaining after mitigation measures have been implemented to reduce a significant effect.
- **Cumulative Effect.** An effect resulting from the incremental impact of the action when added to the effects from other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.
- **Beneficial Effect.** An effect resulting from the action that would result in an improvement of the environmental resource value or quality as it exists prior to the project.

#### **3.0.3.6 Residual Significant Impacts**

This section discusses any potentially significant impacts that cannot be reduced to a less than significant level and would remain significant after mitigation.

#### **3.0.3.7 Cumulative Impacts**

NEPA regulations require that cumulative impacts of a proposed action be assessed and disclosed in an EIS. CEQ regulations define a cumulative impact as “the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.” (40 CFR § 1508.7) The approach used to complete a cumulative impact analysis for the Proposed Action and the results are presented in **Chapter 4.0, Cumulative Impacts**.

### 3.0.4 TOPICS WITH LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT OR NO IMPACTS FROM THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Implementation of the Proposed Action or its alternatives would not result in any direct impacts to parks and recreational facilities, as none are present within the project area. Furthermore, the Proposed Action and each of the alternatives would include public land use areas that would be developed with neighborhood parks and open space to serve the associated population. In addition, developer(s) of residential units are required to pay neighborhood and Citywide park fees at issuance of a building permit to ensure adequate number of parks and recreational facilities are maintained per the thresholds specified by local and regional planning requirements. Because adequate parkland would be provided and park fees would be paid, there would be an **indirect beneficial effect** related to parks and recreation under the Proposed Action, as well as the alternatives.

As noted earlier, there are no wild and scenic rivers in the area of effect of the Proposed Action or alternatives. Therefore, there would be no direct effects on wild and scenic rivers.