APPENDIX B – VENTURA COUNTY INITIAL STUDY ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES CHECKLIST

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY

This Initial Study has been prepared to address the issues listed in Ventura County's Initial Study Checklist for the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project (proposed project), which has been proposed by the Ventura County Public Works Agency, Watershed Protection District (VCWPD), and which is also the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency. As it was anticipated that the proposed project would result in significant impacts to the environment, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), the federal lead agency for the project, and the VCWPD chose to prepare the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) to analyze the impacts resulting from the project and comply with CEQA and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Section 15063(a) of the CEQA Guidelines states that when a lead agency determines that an EIR will clearly be required, an Initial Study (IS) "is not required but may still be desirable." This document has been prepared for the EIS/EIR to ensure the project complies fully with the Ventura County CEQA Initial Study Assessment Guidelines by addressing all issues listed in the Ventura County Initial Study Checklist.

To reduce repetition between the EIS/EIR and the Initial Study, the impact analyses presented makes reference to sections and figures within the Draft and Final EIS/EIR documents where possible.

1.2 PROJECT PROPONENT

Ventura County Watershed Protection District
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California 93009

Contact: Jeff Pratt (805/654-2040)

1.3 PROJECT LOCATION

Refer to Section 1.3 Study Area Location, page 1-8 of the Draft EIS/EIR, and corresponding changes described in the Final EIS/EIR.

1.4 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

Refer to Section 2.1 Purpose and Need, page 2-1 of the Draft EIS/EIR, and corresponding changes described in the Final EIS/EIR.

1.5 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Refer to Section 2.2 Project Objectives, page 2-6 of the Draft EIS/EIR, and corresponding changes described in the Final EIS/EIR.

1.6 PREPARERS OF THE INITIAL STUDY

This document was prepared for the VCWPD by the following staff of Aspen Environmental Group:

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2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Refer to Section 3.0 Alternatives, pages 3-1 through 3-47 of the Draft EIS/EIR, and corresponding changes described in the Final EIS/EIR.

2.2 PROJECT COMPONENTS

Refer to Section 3.0 Alternatives, pages 3-1 through 3-47 of the Draft EIS/EIR, and corresponding changes described in the Final EIS/EIR.

3.0 INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

The Initial Study Checklist was prepared following the format adopted by the County of Ventura (2000).

Issue		Project Impact Degree of Effect *				Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect *			
		N	LS	PS-M	PS	N	LS	PS-M	PS
GENERAL:	1. General Plan Environmental Goals and Policies:	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
LAND USE:	2. Land Use:								
	a. Community Character	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Housing	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	c. Growth Inducement	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	
RESOURCES:	3. Air Quality:								
	a. Regional	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
	b. Local	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒
	4. Water Resources:								
	a. Groundwater Quantity	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Groundwater Quality	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	c. Surface Water Quantity	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	d. Surface Water Quality	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	5. Mineral Resources:								
	a. Aggregate	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Petroleum	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	6. Biological Resources:								
	a. Endangered, Threatened, or Rare species	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒
	b. Wetland Habitat	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒
	c. Coastal Habitat	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	d. Migration corridors	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐
	e. Locally Important Species/ Communities	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	7. Agricultural Resources:								

Issue		Project Impact Degree of Effect *				Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect *			
		N	LS	PS-M	PS	N	LS	PS-M	PS
	a. Soils	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Water	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	c. Air Quality/Micro-Climate	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	d. Pests/Diseases	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	e. Land Use Incompatibility	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	8. Visual Resources:								
	a. Scenic Highway	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
	b. Scenic Area/Feature	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	9. Paleontological Resources:	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	10. Cultural Resources:								
	a. Archaeological	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Historical	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	c. Ethnic, Social, or Religious	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	11. Energy Resources:	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	12. Coastal Beaches & Sand Dunes:	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
HAZARDS:	13. Seismic Hazards:								
	a. Fault Rupture	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Ground-shaking	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	c. Tsunami	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	d. Seiche	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	e. Liquefaction	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	14. Geologic Hazards:								
	a. Subsidence	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Expansive Soils	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	c. Landslides/Mudslides	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	15. Hydraulic Hazards:								
	a. Erosion/Siltation	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Flooding	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	16. Aviation Hazards:	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	17. Fire Hazards:	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	18. Hazardous Materials/Waste:								
	a. Above-Ground Hazardous Materials	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Below-Ground Hazardous Materials	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
	c. Hazardous Waste	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	19. Noise and Vibration:	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐
	20. Glare:	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	21. Public Health:	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
PUBLIC FACILITIES/ SERVICES	22. Transportation/Circulation								
	a. Public Roads and Highways:								
	(1) Level of Service	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒
	(2) Safety/Design	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
	(3) Tactical Access	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
	b. Private Roads and Driveways								
	(1) Safety/Design	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	(2) Tactical Access	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	c. Pedestrian/Bicycle								
	(1) Public Facilities	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐

Issue		Project Impact Degree of Effect *				Cumulative Impact Degree of Effect *			
		N	LS	PS-M	PS	N	LS	PS-M	PS
	(2) Private Facilities	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	d. Parking	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	e. Bus Transit	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	f. Railroads	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	g. Airports	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	h. Harbors	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	i. Pipelines	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	23. Water Supply								
	a. Quality	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Quantity	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	c. Fire Flow	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	24. Waste Treatment/Disposal								
	a. Individual Sewage Disposal System	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	b. Sewage Collection/Treatment Facilities	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	c. Solid Waste Management	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	d. Solid Waste Facilities	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	25. Utilities								
	a. Electric	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	b. Gas	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	c. Communications	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	26. Flood Control/Drainage								
	a. FCD Facility	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Other Facilities	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	27.Law Enforcement/Emergency Svs.								
	a. Personnel/Equipment	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	b. Facilities	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
	28 Fire Protection								
	a. Distance/Response Time	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Personnel/Equipment/Facilities	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	29. Education								
	a. Schools	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Libraries	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	30. Recreation								
	a. Local Parks/Facilities	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	b. Regional Parks/Facilities	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
	c. Regional Trails/Corridors	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐

*Explanation: Degree of Effect
N = No Effect
LS = Less Than Significant Effect
PS-M = Potentially Significant Impact Unless Mitigation is Incorporated
PS = Potentially Significant Impact

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

		Yes/Maybe	No
1.	Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☒	☐
2.	Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals? (A short-term impact on the environment is one that occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time while long-term impacts will endure well into the future).	☐	☒
3.	Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effect of other current projects, and the effect of probable future projects. (Several projects may have relatively small individual impacts on two or more resources, but the total of those impacts on the environment is significant).	☒	☐
4.	Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☒	☐

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section of the Initial Study examines and describes the anticipated environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project (the proposed project). The impact analysis has been divided into subsections addressing individual environmental topics per the Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines Checklist. The potential environmental impacts are evaluated based on significance criteria presented at the beginning of the impact analysis for each environmental topic. In determining the significance of impacts, the ability of existing regulations and other public agency requirements to reduce potential impacts is taken into consideration. If an adverse impact is potentially significant despite existing regulations and requirements, mitigation measures are proposed to reduce or avoid the impact, where feasible.

In the environmental impact analysis, impacts are classified as either "beneficial," "less than significant," "significant but mitigable," or "significant and unavoidable." These classifications are based on the significance criteria presented for each environmental topic and take into consideration mitigation measures proposed to reduce the significance of impacts. The following classification system is used to describe the potential effects of the proposed project:

- Class I: Significant Unavoidable Impact. Class I impacts are significant adverse effects that cannot be mitigated below a level of significance through the application of feasible mitigation measures. Class I impacts are significant and unavoidable.
- Class II: Significant but Mitigable Impact. A Class II impact is a significant adverse effect that can be reduced to a less-than-significant level through the implementation of mitigation measures presented in the EIS/EIR.
- Class III: Less-than-Significant Impact. A Class III impact is a minor change or effect on the environment that does not meet or exceed the criteria established to gauge significance. Less-than-significant impacts do not require mitigation.
- Class IV: Beneficial Impact. Class IV impacts represent beneficial effects that would result from project implementation.

Where no impact would occur as a result of the project, no classification is given to the impact.

4.2 GENERAL PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS AND POLICIES

Significance Thresholds. According to the County's Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, a project would have a significant impact if it would be inconsistent with a specific environmental policy established in the Ventura County General Plan. Since the proposed project extends through the Cities of Ojai and San Buenaventura (Ventura) and is located in its entirety within Ventura County, California, consistency with the policies of the City of Ojai General Plan (City of Ojai, 1997), City of San Buenaventura General Plan (City of San Buenaventura, 1995) and Ventura County General Plan (County of Ventura, 1988) were used as significance thresholds.

Impacts. As discussed in Section 5.10.3 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plans, regulations, or policies nor would it be inconsistent with an environmental goal of the Ventura County General Plan. The proposed project would not only be consistent with local plans, but could also contribute to the long-term achievement of beach

replenishment goals set in the Ventura County General Plan, Ventura County Coastal Area Plan, and the City of San Buenaventura Comprehensive Plan Update to the Year 2010. In addition to sand and sediment from the headwaters of Matilija Creek, which could enter the Ventura River and contribute to beach nourishment under the proposed project, the stabilization of sediment in a manner allowing controlled natural erosion during storm events would also add to beach nourishment. This is considered a beneficial impact (Class IV) resulting from the project. No negative impacts would occur.

4.3 LAND USE (PLANNING)

4.3.1 Community Character

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact to community character if it would disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community.

Impacts. As presented in Section 5.10.3 of the EIS/EIR, proposed project activities associated with the dam removal and restoration in the reservoir area are not expected to disrupt or divide communities. Excavation and stabilization of earth material from behind the dam and slurrying of materials to the proposed disposal site downstream, an open space area alongside the Ventura River off of Rice Road, would not disrupt or divide communities.

Implementation of the high-level flood protection measures proposed by the project, however, may have the potential to adversely affect downstream communities. Flood control protection measures call for the purchase and removal of the Matilija Hot Springs retreat center and up to 11 residences along Camino Cielo and the relocation of the occupants. As these structures are dispersed through the Camino Cielo area and relatively isolated from other development, the removal of these structures would not constitute the division of a community. As all relocations would comply with both the State (California Government Code 33410–33418) and Federal (49 CFR Part 24) Uniform Relocation Act Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Guidelines, this would be considered a disruption, but would be a less-than-significant impact (Class III).

As described in Section 5.10.3 of the EIS/EIR, any divisions or disruptions to communities caused by the construction or improvements of the levees and floodwalls could be adverse, but would be less than significant (Class III). Modifications to water supply facilities at Foster Park and Robles Diversion and the construction of the locally preferred desilting basin would occur in conjunction with or in the vicinity of existing water facilities in these locations. As these facilities are outside of established communities on the Ventura River, construction of these facilities would not disrupt or divide any nearby communities.

4.3.2 Housing

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact on housing if it would remove existing low-income rental housing units (or moderate-income rental housing units in a coastal area) or create substantial demand for new housing.

Impacts. The majority of activities associated with the proposed project would be located behind Matilija Dam. However, construction of downstream flood protection measures could potentially require the purchase and removal of Matilija Hot Springs and up to 11 structures near the Ventura River along Camino Cielo. The Matilija Hot Springs retreat center includes private residences on its property and the majority of the structures to be removed along Camino Cielo

are also residences. All relocations would comply with both the State (California Government Code 33410–33418) and Federal (49 CFR Part 24) Uniform Relocation Act Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Guidelines. According to Ventura County Public Works Agency Real Estate Services, while some of the structures that may be purchased and removed are rental housing units, none are low-income housing (County of Ventura Real Estate Services, 2004). No housing units would be removed within a coastal zone. Compliance with these guidelines would ensure the displacement of Matilija Hot Springs and any commercial and residential properties along Camino Cielo would not result in significant impacts (Class III).

In addition, given the nature of the project, demand for permanent housing due to project operation would be minimal. Because few, if any, workers are expected to relocate to the area, no new housing would be needed for the project, no housing would be displaced due to demand by the work force, and no new competition for existing housing would be likely to occur. Temporary accommodations may be needed during construction. However, the numerous hotels and motels in the area would accommodate this need and impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.3.3 Growth Inducement

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would induce substantial growth. The project would have the potential to induce substantial growth if it would eliminate or remove an impediment to growth in the area. This includes both physical impediments (lack of roads, flood control facilities, sewers, water lines, etc.) and policy impediments (e.g., existing land use and zoning designations, General Plan policies, etc.).

Impacts. As discussed in Section 11 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would not include residential units; therefore, it would not directly increase population levels. However, the proposed project could facilitate growth in the project area by indirectly inducing growth through increased development of recreational resources and improving flood protection, which could result in future development of mixed uses downstream.

While the project would not directly induce growth, the removal of Matilija Dam and restoration of the Ventura River ecosystem could indirectly induce growth through the creation of new recreation trails, connection to existing trails, and accommodation of future development of recreational resources through the replenishment of sediment to downstream beaches. Restoration of the Ventura River watershed to a more natural condition could increase the aesthetic value of the area, which may lead to increased development of recreational resources. Additional recreational resources may then lead to increased tourism or demand for housing in a highly valued area.

Improving flood protection downstream would accommodate future development of mixed uses (e.g., agriculture, residential, commercial, recreation). Most of the development surrounding the project site has occurred in the cities of Ojai and San Buenaventura. While the proposed project could facilitate growth in the area by reducing a potential development constraint (flood hazard), the resultant growth would have to be consistent with the land use policies of the applicable general plans for this area. Therefore, growth-inducing impacts would be adverse but less than significant (Class III).

4.4 AIR QUALITY

Significance Thresholds. In accordance with the Ventura County General Plan and the Ventura County Administrative Supplement to the CEQA Guidelines, all County agencies, departments and special districts shall utilize the air quality assessment guidelines as adopted and periodically updated by the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (APCD).

Impacts. In order to evaluate air quality impacts in the study area, the EIS/EIR used the thresholds of significance from CEQA guidelines, in addition to regional and local thresholds from Ventura County, which included specific thresholds for the Ojai Planning Area. The more stringent of the two sets of thresholds were used for the analysis. The significance criteria that are listed in the Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines are presented below, in addition to a discussion of how these thresholds were analyzed in Section 5.6.3 of the EIR/EIS and the resulting impact classification:

- **Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.** This significance criterion was analyzed in Section 5.6.3 of the EIS/EIR and discussed in the Response to Comments. The project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the VCAPCD Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP). Although temporary construction from the project would cause emissions of ozone precursors, project emissions would not contribute substantially to an existing or projected 1-hour or 8-hour ozone air quality violation. Additionally, because the project would result in any increases in population, it would not be inconsistent with the growth forecasts in the AQMP. The proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact to the Ventura County region and the Ojai Planning Area (Class III).
- **Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.** This significance criterion was analyzed in Section 5.6.3 of the EIS/EIR, and was found to have a local PM10 ambient air quality impact to the Ojai Planning Area that was significant and unavoidable (Class I). In order to reduce fugitive dust emissions to the best extent feasible, the proposed project would implement Mitigation Measures A-1 through A-4 and A-6 through A-11. The numerous project benefits that outweigh the above impact would be listed in the Statement of Overriding Considerations. Significant regional impacts resulting from PM10 emissions were not identified. The annual NOx emissions would exceed the General Conformity *de minimis* thresholds, but with Mitigation Measure A-5 which would require the purchase of NOx offsets, impacts would be less than significant (Class II)
- **Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the above region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.** This significance criterion was analyzed in Section 5.6.3 of the EIS/EIR. The analysis found that impacts from ROC and NOx emissions within the Ventura County region would be less-than-significant after implementation of Mitigation Measures A-1 through A-5 (Class II). No specific impacts to the Ojai Planning Area would occur.
- **Expose the public (especially schools, day care centers, hospitals, retirement homes, convalescence facilities, and residences) to substantial pollutant concentrations.** This significance criterion was analyzed in Section 5.6.3 of the EIS/EIR. The analysis found that local impacts to project workers and sensitive receptors near the project site would be less-than-significant after implementation of mitigation measure A-12 (Class II). Impacts to the Ventura County region would not occur.
- **Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.** This significance criterion was analyzed in Section 5.6.3 of the EIS/EIR, and was found to have a local impact to project workers or sensitive receptors near the project site that was less-than-significant (Class III). Impacts to the Ventura County region would not occur.

4.5 WATER RESOURCES

4.5.1 Groundwater Quantity

Significance Thresholds. A land use or activity, which could cause a significant adverse impact upon groundwater resources in itself or on a cumulative basis. Threshold criteria include, but are not limited to:

- Any land use that will directly or indirectly decrease, either individually or cumulatively, the net quantity of groundwater in a basin that is overdrafted, shall be considered to have a potentially significant impact.
- In groundwater basins that are not overdrafted, or are not in hydrologic continuity with an overdrafted basin, net groundwater extraction that will individually or cumulatively cause the basin(s) to become overdrafted, shall be considered to have a potentially significant impact.
- In areas where the basin condition is not known and there is evidence of overdraft due to declining water levels in a well or wells, it shall be assumed that any net increase in groundwater extraction may potentially cause a significant impact until such time as reliable studies determine otherwise.
- Notwithstanding the above, any project which would result in 0.15 acre-feet, or less, of net annual increase in groundwater extraction is not considered to have a significant project or cumulative impact.
- The Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA) is in itself mitigation for water used within the FCGMA boundary, provided there is compliance with FCGMA Ordinances. (These ordinances may require a significant penalty for exceeding an established allocation.)

Impacts. The proposed project would not include land use or activities that would directly or indirectly decrease the net quantity of groundwater in a basin that is overdrafted or would result in net groundwater extraction that will cause a basin to become overdrafted. However, the removal of Matilija Dam could interfere with groundwater flow or recharge due to increases in turbidity and sedimentation. As described in Section 5.2.3 of the EIS/EIR, it is estimated that project-related turbidity increases would cause surface diversions from existing facilities at Foster Park to be reduced by approximately 470 acre feet the first year after construction of the dam, diminishing to no reduction in diversions after six years. The first year reduction amounts to approximately seven percent of total yearly diversion. Total reduction in diversions over the six-year period is estimated at 1,600 acre-feet, which represents approximately four percent of the six-year diversion total. The proposed project would include the construction of two groundwater wells at Foster Park to offset the possible reduction. With the inclusion of these wells, the impacts to groundwater quantity would be considered adverse, but less than significant (Class III).

The groundwater extracted from the Foster Park wells would be limited to no more than the amount of surface water the City would divert from the Ventura River to offset this loss diversion resulting from Matilija sediment-generated turbidity. As such, no net increase of water is expected to be lost from the Foster Park area. No overall impact to aquatic or riparian resources are expected as the total groundwater and surface water amount is expected to be unaffected. (Class III).

Approximately 4,800 acre-feet would be directed from Lake Casitas to the proposed project. The City of Ventura maintains an annual 8,000 acre-feet allocation from Lake Casitas, but presently only uses 6,000 acre-feet. In Fox Canyon, the City has 30,000 acre-feet in reserves, which represents water they have been allocated but have not utilized in the past years.

Allocations in the Santa Paula Basin include 3,000 acre-feet each year, with only 1,500 acre-feet withdrawn annual. The proposed project's use of 4,800 acre-feet from Lake Casitas would leave approximately 3,000 acre-feet for the City of Ventura to use. The remaining 3,000 acre-feet needed by the City of Ventura would be made up by utilizing the remaining 1,500 acre-feet from the Santa Paula Basin and withdrawing reserves from the Fox Canyon Basin. Because the City of Ventura is allocated more water than it needs each year and maintains reserves, providing the water to the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to these water sources and would not result in overdrafts of groundwater resources. Impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.5.2 Groundwater Quality

Significance Thresholds. A land use, or activity, which could cause a significant impact upon groundwater quality in itself or on a cumulative basis. Threshold criteria include, but are not limited to:

- Any land use proposal that will individually or cumulatively degrade the quality of groundwater and cause groundwater to fail to meet groundwater quality objectives set by the LARWQCB shall be considered to have a potentially significant impact.
- In cases where the proposed land use impact upon the quality of groundwater is unknown, and there is evidence that the proposed land use could cause the quality of groundwater to fail to meet the groundwater quality objectives set by the LARWQCB, the project shall be considered to have a potentially significant impact until such time as reliable studies determine otherwise.

Impacts. As discussed in Section 5.2.3 in the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would not involve the discharge of wastes into groundwater such that the project could violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality. Results of field investigations conducted in 2001 indicate detection of regulated substances including copper, nickel, arsenic and DDT. Preliminary consultation with another water agency indicated that the concentration levels detected were considered within normal background levels and would not usually be associated with adversely impacting water quality. Initial consultation by the Corps has occurred with the Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Health Services. Future consultation with the California Department of Health Services and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board will continue during the next more detailed phase of work (Preconstruction, Engineering and Design phase). Therefore, impacts to groundwater quality would be less than significant (Class III).

4.5.3 Surface Water Quantity

Significance Thresholds. A land use or activity that could cause a significant adverse impact upon surface water resources in itself or on a cumulative basis. Threshold criteria include, but are not limited to:

- Any use that will increase the net utilization of surface water in a hydrologic unit that is overdrafted or adversely impacts an overdrafted hydrologic unit is a significant adverse impact.
- In hydrologic units that are not overdrafted or that do not impact an overdrafted hydrologic unit, water use that will individually or cumulatively cause the hydrologic unit to become overdrafted is a significant adverse impact.
- In areas where the hydrologic unit condition is not known, it must be assumed that any net increase in surface water use may potentially cause a significant impact unless a reliable study determines otherwise.

Impacts. The proposed project would not involve any use that will increase the net utilization of surface water in a hydrological unit that has is overdrafted. As described in Section 5.2.3 of the EIS/EIS, the proposed project would remove Matilija dam, which would result in a decrease of water supply. Casitas Metropolitan Water District (MWD) has a lease with Ventura County to use stored water at Matilija Dam until 2009, when the current lease expires. Matilija Dam provides an average of 590 acre-feet/year of water for Robles diversions under current operating criteria. The construction timeframe for the project is not anticipated to begin until 2008 at the earliest. The first year of construction will include downstream features such as bridge modifications, levee construction and slurry pipeline and disposal site construction. The slurry of fines and dam deconstruction will not begin until the second year of construction, in 2009. Therefore, the CMWD lease with the VCWPD will expire prior to any construction activities that may impact the Matilija Dam water supply. Additionally, as sediment accumulates behind the dam, the capacity of the Lake Matilija as a water supply would have been lost with or without the project. Any impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.5.4 Surface Water Quality

Significance Thresholds. A land use or activity that could cause a significant adverse impact upon surface water resources in itself or on a cumulative basis. Threshold criteria include, but are not limited to:

- Any land use proposal that will degrade the quality of surface water and cause it to fail to meet surface water quality objectives for a hydrologic unit defined in the 4A, 3 or 5D Plans is a significant adverse impact.
- In cases where the proposed land use impact upon the quality of surface water is unknown or the quality of surface water in a hydrologic unit is unknown, the impact is unknown and must be determined by additional investigation.

Impacts. As described in Section 5.2.3 of the EIS/EIR, Matilija Dam currently acts as a sediment trap, blocking watershed-generated sediments, including fines, from being transported downstream of the dam. The proposed project would remove Matilija dam, which would result in short-term increases in downstream turbidity in the form of water-borne silts and clays. Temporary increases would result from construction activities disturbing sediment within the flow of Matilija Creek. Removal of the dam, however, which currently inhibits watershed-generated sediment from being transported downstream, would allow erosion and transport of sediments that have been deposited behind the dam over the years. Potential areas of impact include all of Matilija Creek downstream of the dam, all of the Ventura River downstream of the confluence with Matilija Creek, Robles Diversion, the Foster Park Diversion, and Lake Casitas. The Robles Diversion is located approximately two miles downstream of the dam and feeds Lake Casitas by a diversion and canal for the Casitas Municipal Water District (MWD). The Foster Park Diversion is a combination of surface diversion and subsurface wells approximately ten miles downstream of the dam. These wells divert surface water and ground water for use by the City of Ventura. The proposed project includes measures to minimize the effect of increased turbidity through: (1) removal of accumulated sediments behind the dam through slurry to a disposal area downstream of the dam; (2) construction of a low-flow channel (ten-year flood capacity) protected with soil cement from erosion through the excavated area behind the dam; and (3) a desilting basin along the Robles-Casitas canal for the purpose of trapping fine sediments prior to their reaching Lake Casitas.

In the short term, during and shortly after construction, demolition of the dam and the mechanical removal of sediment would introduce fine sediment into the river system. The fine sediment concentrations are estimated to be between two and ten times higher from the beginning of dam demolition until the first storm passes through the reservoir area. It would be conservatively assumed that concentrations and turbidity would increase by a factor of ten until the first storm passes.

Under the proposed project, the long-term increase in turbidity after construction is completed should only occur during high flow events. The modeling studies for the project show an increase in turbidity levels by up to a factor of two to three times baseline conditions for the first few higher flow events (greater than ten-year recurrence), decreasing to levels not exceeding 50 percent after a few years. The sediment concentration during these events is already high and it is expected that the increase in turbidity may be within natural variability. After a period of five to ten years, turbidity levels for high flows would return to baseline levels. For storms less than ten-year events, the flows would not contain any fine sediment eroded from the trapped materials due to the protection offered by the soil cement revetment in the channel.

Because turbidity impacts, and thus surface water quality impacts, are temporary or confined to high flow events of ten-year recurrence interval or greater, and because the proposed project includes structures to minimize turbidity impacts, impacts to water quality standards, waste discharge requirements, or water quality are considered adverse, but less than significant (Class III). No mitigation is required.

4.6 MINERAL RESOURCES

4.6.1 Aggregate Resources

Significance Thresholds. Any project that would directly or indirectly use aggregate products or by-products would have an impact on the demand for aggregate resources; however, no project would have a significant impact because "there is a sufficient amount of aggregate resources to meet local demand for the next 50 years (Resources Appendix of the General Plan)."

Additionally, the project would have a significant impact if it would hamper extraction or access to aggregate resources, by being located in or immediately adjacent to any known aggregate resource area, or adjacent to a principal access road to an existing aggregate production facility.

Impacts. According to the California Geological Survey, aggregate resources are not known to exist at the project site, nor is the project site located adjacent to known deposits of aggregate resources or aggregate resource extraction facilities. The nearest aggregate resource area, zoned as Mineral Resource Zone 2 (MRZ-2), is located along the Santa Clara River (California Geologic Survey, 2004). The proposed project would not hamper the extraction or access of aggregate resources, nor would it directly or indirectly use aggregate products or by-products. Further, the proposed project would utilize aggregate from behind the Matilija Dam for levees, soil cement, and other components to the greatest extent feasible. Use of aggregate from behind the dam will reduce or preclude the use of aggregate from other sources. Any impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.6.2 Petroleum Resources

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would hamper extraction or access to petroleum resources, by being located in or immediately adjacent to any known petroleum resource area, or adjacent to a principal access road to an existing petroleum production facility.

Impacts. According to Steve Mulqueen, Field Engineer for the Department of Conservation, although the project area along the Ventura River includes petroleum resource areas and production facilities, project activities would not occur adjacent to active petroleum resource areas or petroleum production facilities (California Department of Conservation, 2004). Identified petroleum resource areas, extraction, and production facilities are over 12 miles downstream from the dam and are not adjacent to any project activities. Modeling by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation indicates that increased risk of flooding resulting from the project at this point downstream would not be substantially different than existing flood risk (BOR, 2004). It is not anticipated that project activities or effects resulting from the project would hamper extraction or access to petroleum resources under the proposed project. Construction activities associated with project improvements would only use a minor amount of petroleum products for fueling and lubrication, and would not affect the supply of petroleum in the County. In addition, the proposed project improvements would not create a barrier to the extraction of petroleum resources, if discovered at or adjacent to the project site. Therefore, there would be no impact to petroleum resources.

4.7 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4.7.1 Endangered, Threatened, or Rare Species

Significance Thresholds. A significant impact to such species would occur if a project would directly or indirectly:

- Reduce species population.
- Reduce species habitat.
- Restrict reproductive capacity.

Impacts. The significance thresholds listed above were analyzed in Section 5.3.3 of the EIS/EIR, in which the project was found to have the following impacts:

- **Reduce species populations.** The proposed project was found to have an overall beneficial impact to native and terrestrial species populations in Matilija Creek and the Ventura River (Class IV). Specific effects to populations resulting from construction activities and human disturbance would create temporary, less-than-significant impacts after implementation of Mitigation Measures B-1 through B-15 (Class II). The project was also found to have a short-term impact to steelhead that was potentially significant and unavoidable (Class I). In order to reduce this temporary Class I impact to the best extent feasible, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure B-16. The numerous project benefits that outweigh the Class I impact would be listed in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.
- **Reduce species habitat.** The proposed project was found to have an overall beneficial impact to increasing the habitat value and function of existing and restored habitats within the Ventura River (Class IV). Specific effects resulting from the temporary loss of riparian woodland and the permanent loss of lacustrine habitat would result in less-than-significant impacts after implementation of Mitigation Measures B-1, B-5, B-11, and B-12 (Class II). The project was also found to have a potentially significant and unavoidable effect to habitats adjacent to the area (Class I). In order to

reduce this temporary Class I impact to the best extent feasible, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure B-16. The numerous project benefits that outweigh the Class I impact would be listed in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.

- **Restrict reproductive capacity.** The proposed project was found to have an overall beneficial impact to restoring permanent and temporary ponds that provide suitable breeding pools for species such as the California red-legged frog (Class IV). Specific effects resulting from the potential loss of breeding habitat for migratory birds would result in a less-than-significant impact after implementation of Mitigation Measures B-1 and B-5 (Class II).

4.7.2 Wetland Habitat

Significance Thresholds. A significant impact would result from the direct reduction of, or a substantial indirect impact to, a significant Wetland Habitat. All wetlands are potentially significant; therefore, a qualified biologist must make a determination of significance in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Game during Initial Consultation.

Impacts. Section 5.3.3 of the EIS/EIR found that the project would permanently remove approximately 46 acres of open water and emergent wetland habitat artificially created by development of the Matilija Reservoir, which would result in a significant and unavoidable impact to wetlands (Class I). In order to reduce this Class I impact to the best extent feasible, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure B-16. The numerous project benefits that outweigh the Class I impact would be listed in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.

4.7.3 Coastal Habitat

Significance Thresholds. According to the State Coastal Act and the County's Local Coastal Program, virtually any direct reduction of, or indirect impact to, a Coastal Habitat could be considered significant.

Impacts. Although project activities would not be located in or adjacent to a coastal habitat, Section 5.1.3 of the EIS/EIR found that the project would potentially provide an overall beneficial impact to local beaches by permitting sediments to migrate downstream and contribute to future beach replenishment (Class IV). In Section 5.3.3, potential impacts to species that inhabit the Ventura estuary, such as the western snowy plover and the California least tern; were found to be less-than-significant (Class III).

4.7.4 Migration Corridors

Significance Thresholds. A significant impact to a migration corridor would result if a project would substantially interfere with the use of said area by fish or wildlife. This could occur through elimination of native vegetation, erection of physical barriers, or intimidation of fish or wildlife via introduction of noise, light, development or increased human presence.

Impacts. Section 5.3.3 of the EIS/EIR found that the proposed project would have an overall beneficial impact to restoring wildlife movement through the Matilija Reservoir (Class IV). However, the temporary disruption of wildlife movement in Matilija Canyon and along the Matilija Reservoir resulting from dam and sediment removal activities would create a significant and unavoidable impact (Class I). In order to reduce this temporary Class I impact to the best extent feasible, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure B-16. The numerous project benefits that outweigh the Class I impact would be listed in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.

4.7.5 Locally Important Species/Communities

Significance Thresholds. Since this group of species/communities is so diverse, determination of significance must be made by a qualified biologist on a case-by-case basis.

Impacts. Section 5.3.3 of the EIS/EIR found that the proposed project would have an overall beneficial impact to locally important species such as steelhead (Class IV). The specific effects of construction activities to the habitat of native flora and fauna would result in a less-than-significant impact after implementation of Mitigation Measures B-1, B-3, B-5, B-7 through B-9, and B-11 through B-15 (Class II).

4.8 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

4.8.1 Agricultural Soils

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would either directly or indirectly result in the loss of important agricultural soils.

Impacts. As described in Section 5.10.3 of the EIS/EIR, the majority of the components of the proposed project would be sited on open space, floodplain, or Los Padres National Forest land; therefore, the potential for the proposed project to directly or indirectly result in the loss of important agricultural soils is low.

There are no agricultural lands in the vicinity of the project upstream of Matilija Dam, so reservoir material excavation and stockpiling and dam removal activities would not result in the loss of any agricultural soil. Improvements to levees and floodwalls downstream would occur either to existing levees and floodwalls, or in the case of the Cañada Larga levee, the Meiners Oaks levees and floodwall, and the Live Oaks extension, would be constructed alongside the floodplain outside of agricultural areas. Two of the three slurry disposal sites downstream are open space areas consisting of degraded scrub, so activities at these disposal sites would not result in any farmland conversion. The North of Baldwin Road disposal site, which is also one of the potential desilting basin sites, would be located on a portion of agricultural land. The area is dry farmed, but is not under Williamson Act contract, a Greenbelt Policy or considered to be Prime or Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Because of the conditions of the land and because the proposed project would not be located on Prime or Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide importance, agricultural impacts could be considered adverse, but less than significant (Class III).

4.8.2 Agricultural Water Supply

Significance Thresholds. The project would have an impact if it would affect the quantity or quality of water used for agricultural production. Impacts to agricultural water supply would be considered significant if the project would cause:

- The quality of agricultural water supply sources would be worsened to a level of greater than 1,200 milligrams per liter (mg/l) of total dissolved solids (TDS), or,
- A net decrease in the amount of water supply available to agricultural resources.

Impacts. Dam removal and restoration are anticipated to use a substantial amount of water for a variety of activities, including slurrying sediments downstream and watering construction areas to reduce dust. Additionally, as described in Section 5.2.3 of the EIS/EIR, removal of the dam would reduce water deliveries from stored water behind the dam. However, the proposed

project would include the purchase of water from the California State Water Project or other sources and installation of two groundwater wells at Foster Park to offset reductions in water quality and supply. Consequently, impacts to water resources used for agriculture would be less than significant (Class III).

4.8.3 Air Quality/Micro-Climate

Significance Thresholds. The project could impair the productivity of adjacent agricultural areas if it altered local air quality/micro-climate. The impact of the project to agricultural productivity would be considered significant if the project caused:

- A 10 percent or greater increase in dust deposition on adjacent agricultural areas;
- A 10 percent or greater decrease in incident solar energy on adjacent agricultural areas;
- The removal of any row(s) of trees, or;
- A substantial adverse change to the air quality/micro-climate of adjacent agricultural areas not related to dust, solar energy, and tree rows.

Impacts. Although proposed project activities would result in fugitive dust emissions, it is not anticipated that this would result in a 10 percent or greater increase in dust deposition on adjacent agricultural areas. As presented in Section 5.6.3 of the EIS/EIR, Mitigation Measures A-6 through A-11 would be implemented to minimize impacts resulting from fugitive dust emissions. With the implementation of these measures, impacts would be less than significant (Class II)

No structures related to the project would be installed adjacent to agricultural areas that would reduce the incident solar energy and it is not anticipated that any project activities associated with dam removal or restoration would affect the amount of solar energy reaching nearby agricultural areas. No impacts are expected to occur.

Although, as described in Section 5.3.3 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would result in the clearing and grading of some California black walnut and oak woodland stands, the project would not remove any row trees planted to provide protection from wind or frost. No impacts would occur.

The elimination of Lake Matilija, removal of the dam, and restoration of the reservoir area could potentially affect the air quality/micro-climate of its immediate surroundings. As agricultural areas adjacent to the project are minimal, however, any impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.8.4 Pests/Diseases

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would cause the introduction of or a substantial increase in pest density and/or disease severity or frequency in nearby agricultural areas.

Impacts. The proposed project would include the removal of invasive species, and revegetation of native species. Invasive species removal, specifically giant reed removal, would include the use of mechanical and glyphosate-based herbicide. It is currently anticipated that either Rodeo® or Aquamaster® would be used, both of which are labeled for use within water and have the same formulations: glyphosate (53.8 percent) and water (46.2 percent). Rodeo®

and Aquamaster® are currently approved, and in use by the CDFG and USFS for the removal of giant reed in riparian habitats throughout southern California.

Because the proposed project would replace invasive species with native vegetation, the potential of introducing or substantially increasing pest density and/or disease severity would be negligible. Therefore, no impacts would occur.

4.8.5 Land Use Incompatibility

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would pose substantial land use incompatibilities with adjacent property currently in or suitable for agricultural production.

Impacts. As described above in Section 4.6.1 of the Initial Study and Section 5.10.3 of the EIS/EIR, the majority of the components of the proposed project would be sited on open space, floodplain, or Los Padres National Forest land; therefore, the proposed project would not pose land use incompatibilities with adjacent property currently in or suitable for agricultural production. There are no agricultural lands in the vicinity of the project upstream of Matilija Dam. Improvements to levees and floodwalls downstream would occur either to existing levees and floodwalls, or would be constructed alongside the floodplain outside of agricultural areas.

As discussed in Section 5.10.3 in the EIS/EIR, one of the potential sites being considered for the slurry disposal site or the desilting basin would be located on a portion of agricultural land north of Baldwin Road, which would pose substantial land use incompatibilities. As described above, the area is dry farmed, but is not under Williamson Act contract or a Greenbelt Policy, nor is it considered to be Prime or Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Consequently, impacts due to land use incompatibility would be considered less than significant (Class III).

4.9 VISUAL RESOURCES

4.9.1 Scenic Highways

Significance Thresholds. In accordance with Policy 1.7.2.4 of the Ventura County General Plan, the project would have a significant impact if it would "degrade visual resources or significantly alter or obscure public views."

Impacts. Within the project area, Scenic Highway Areas depicted on Ventura County's Resource Protection Map include State Route (SR) 33, from milepost 17.5 to the Santa Barbara County line. As discussed in Section 5.5.3 of the EIS/EIR, no views of scenic resources from eligible or designated scenic highways, such as portions of SR 33, would be affected by the proposed project. The majority of activities associated with this project would not obstruct or degrade views of ridgelines from scenic highways. Similarly, project activities above Matilija Dam would not interfere with views of shorelines along beaches or rivers. Downstream flood protection measures, such as the 968-foot floodwall on the west side of SR 33, which would range in height from 4.1 feet to 10.6 feet, would result in impacts to visual resources along the Ventura River and its banks. Construction of the floodwall just west of SR 33 would introduce a large, man-made feature into a dominantly natural area. This would be considered a significant impact, but could be reduced to a less-than-significant (Class II) level through implementation of Mitigation Measures AE-1 and AE-2 in the EIS/EIR.

4.9.2 Scenic Areas/Features

Significance Thresholds. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines states that a project would have a significant impact on the environment if it would "have a substantial, demonstrable negative aesthetic affect." The Ventura County General Plan states that a project would have a significant impact if it would "degrade visual resources or significantly alter or obscure public views."

Impacts. As discussed in Section 5.5.3 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would result in the elimination of Lake Matilija, which is an area designated as a scenic resource on the Resource Protection Map of the County of Ventura's General Plan. Although the lake is designated as a scenic resource, which would be eliminated by the proposed project, the proposed project behind the dam in the reservoir area would serve to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the Matilija Canyon. The excavation of material from behind the reservoir, removal of Matilija Dam, re-vegetation of the reservoir area, and creation of a naturally flowing stream channel would return the lake to a more natural, canyon-like landscape than the wide floodplain currently emptying into the reservoir. Additionally, the removal of giant reed, which has established on the growing banks of Lake Matilija, as part of the proposed project and the re-vegetation of the area with native species, would improve views of the Matilija Canyon by creating a more natural landscape for viewers. Although Lake Matilija would be eliminated, the improvement to the scenic value of Matilija Canyon would be a considerable aesthetic benefit to the area, especially considering that the lake will continue to decrease in size under current conditions. Any impacts would be less than significant (Class III)

4.10 PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would result in the loss of or damage to important paleontological resources. Paleontological resources are important if they are well preserved, identifiable, type/topotypic specimens, age diagnostic, useful in environmental reconstruction, represent rare and or endemic taxa, represent a diverse assemblage, or represent associated marine or non-marine taxa.

Impacts. According to the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) *Hydraulics, Hydrology and Sediment Studies of Alternatives for the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project, Ventura CA* (July 31, 2003), the drainage watershed of Matilija Dam is primarily composed of Tertiary marine sandstone and shale of the Juncal Formation, Matilija Sandstone, and Cozy Dell Shale with small areas of unnamed Cretaceous marine strata. Matilija Dam is founded in the Matilija Sandstone and the reservoir area is predominantly underlain by Juncal Formation with a smaller area of Matilija Sandstone. Downstream of the dam the river canyon is cut in Matilija Sandstone. The river valley widens downstream where it flows through Cozy Dell Shale.

Based on the Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, Juncal, Matilija, and Cozy Dell geologic formations are all listed as having a low paleontological importance. Therefore, significance does not have to be determined by a qualified paleontological consultant and no additional assessment is necessary. Consequently, no impact to paleontological resources would occur.

4.11 CULTURAL RESOURCES

4.11.1 Archeological Resources

Significance Thresholds. The project would result in a significant impact if it would result in the loss or destruction of unique archeological resources. An archeological resource is considered unique when it:

- Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and there is demonstrable public interest in that information;
- Has a special and particular quality such as the oldest of its type of best available example of its type, or;
- Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

Impacts. As Discussed in Section 4.4.1 of the EIS/EIR, twenty-five prehistoric archeological sites are known to be present within the study area boundary. Four isolated artifacts have also been recorded. These sites include village and small campsites, shell midden, and other resource processing sites. In addition, the record search also revealed the presence of twenty-one historic archeological sites. These include features such as the ruins of the Mission Period San Miguel Chapel, remains of historic adobes, and other miscellaneous evidence of historic period settlement and activities.

Section 5.4.3 of the EIS/EIR discusses potential impacts to archaeological resources with the proposed project. The downstream disposal site and slurry line have yet to be surveyed for the presence of historic or prehistoric cultural resources. If any resources are found, and determined to be eligible for the NRHP, the first step would be to try to redesign the project to avoid these sites. For both the slurry line and disposal sites, this would be relatively easy. If redesign were not feasible, these sites would likely be adversely affected by these activities. However, subsurface archeological sites might possibly be protected and preserved by burial under sediment placed at the disposal site. This would require a detailed and comprehensive plan to ensure that it is implemented in a manner that minimizes damage. Mitigation Measure CR-1 requires pre-construction surveys of these locations and NHRP evaluations, if necessary. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-1, impacts to potential NRHP sites would be less than significant (Class II).

Historic/prehistoric sites COE#1 and COE#2 are located at the margin of sediment removal activities. These sites have not formally been evaluated and determined to be NRHP eligible. However, based on survey information, they could contain information important in history and prehistory, and hence are NRHP eligible. Erosion after removal of sediment at the margin may undermine the stability of the sites, and damage any cultural deposits present. Also, portions of them may be buried under sediment behind the dam. Additional studies would be necessary to evaluate these sites for the NRHP and determine their horizontal and vertical extent. If they are determined to be NRHP eligible, and would be affected by sediment removal, mitigation measures would be necessary. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-2 from the EIS/EIR would ensure that sites COE#1 and COE#2 are evaluated and that proper procedures are followed if the these sites are determined to be potentially NRHP eligible, thereby reducing this impact to a less-than-significant level (Class II).

Undiscovered buried historic and prehistoric resources may be present beneath sediment behind Matilija Dam. Removal of sediment by natural and mechanical means would have an

adverse effect on any buried resource eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It would be very difficult to stabilize buried cultural deposits as sediment is removed without disturbing their integrity. Mitigation Measure CR-3 requires development of a discovery plan to treat previously unknown resources found during implementation of the project. It would include procedures to monitor and treat cultural resources discovered during mechanical and natural removal of sediment behind Matilija Dam. It would also include procedures for discoveries made during grading and earth-moving activities. Mitigation Measure CR-4 requires consultation with potentially affected Native American Tribes or other groups or individuals with a cultural interest in areas construction could affect. Implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-3 and CR-4 would reduce any potentially significant impacts associated with the discovery of buried resources to a less-than-significant level (Class II).

4.11.2 Historical Resources

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would alter, move, relocate, or disturb historical resources such that the resources would lose any historically significant characteristics.

Impacts. As discussed in Section 4.4.1 of the EIS/EIR, the record search revealed the presence of several historic buildings dating from 1782 through the 1950s within the study area. The present status of the buildings is based on records search information only. Some of these structures may no longer exist. A field examination would be conducted to verify their current status during the Pre-Construction Engineering and Design phase.

Section 5.4.3 of the EIS/EIR discusses potential impacts to historic resources with the recommended plan. As Matilija Dam itself is not considered to be eligible for the NRHP, there would not be an adverse effect from its removal and demolition. Potentially NRHP-eligible Matilija Hot Springs, which is located just downstream of Matilija Dam, would be acquired and removed. Additional investigation of the significance of Matilija Hot Springs would need to be performed. If this site is determined to be NRHP eligible there would be an adverse effect from its removal and demolition, or damage from flooding and neglect. The NRHP eligibility of the site is subject to concurrence by the California State Historic Preservation Officer. As discussed above under Section 4.9.1, Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-4 would reduce any potentially significant impacts to historic resources to less than significant levels (Class II).

4.11.3 Ethnic, Social, and Religious Resources

Significance Thresholds. The significance of impacts to these types of resources are determined on a case-by case basis.

Impacts. Section 4.4.1 of the EIS/EIR discusses Native American coordination and concerns. Section 5.4.3 of the EIS/EIR describes potential impacts of the recommended plan to archaeological and historic resources, which includes those with ethnic, social, and religious importance. Mitigation Measure CR-4 specifically requires consultation with potentially affected Native American Tribes or other groups or individuals with a cultural interest in areas that construction could affect. Mitigation Measure CR-4, in addition to Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-3, as discussed under Section 4.9.1 of the Initial Study and in Section 5.4.3 of the EIS/EIR, would reduce any potentially significant impacts to ethnic, social, and religious resources to less than significant levels (Class II).

4.12 ENERGY RESOURCES

Significance Thresholds. The Ventura County Initial Assessment Guidelines states that no individual project would have a significant impact because solar, wind and hydraulic energy sources are renewable, and petroleum resources are addressed separately (see Section 4.5).

Impacts. The project would involve the use of fuel during the dam demolition and restoration activities, but would not impact any energy generated by solar, wind, or hydraulic sources. The Matilija Dam is not an electricity generating dam, so its removal would not affect any power supply from hydraulic generation. No impacts to energy resources would occur.

4.13 COASTAL BEACHES AND SAND DUNES

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would be inconsistent with goals and policies of the Ventura County General Plan or the Sand Dune Protection Policy of the City's Local Coastal Program. Potential impacts may include any direct impacts (i.e., physical removal or modification) or indirect impacts (i.e., creation of barriers to sand replenishment or disturbance of dune vegetation) of a project on these resources should be fully mitigated. Otherwise, a significant impact would occur.

Impacts. As discussed in Sections 5.1.3, 5.2.3, and 5.10.3 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would return sediment to the Ventura River and to beaches downstream. The project would contribute to the long-term achievement of beach replenishment goals set in the Ventura County General Plan, Ventura County Coastal Area Plan, and the City of San Buenaventura Comprehensive Plan Update to the Year 2010. The project would result in no negative impacts to coastal beaches and sand dunes and would be a beneficial impact (Class IV) to these resources.

4.14 SEISMIC HAZARDS

4.14.1 Fault Rupture

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would place persons or property at risk of loss of life or damage due to fault rupture.

Impacts. The seismic and geologic setting is described in Section 4.1.1 of the EIS/EIR. The Ventura Basin is seismically active with the Oak Ridge fault and several other major faults, such as the San Cayetano fault, in the local area. However, the proposed action would remove the dam infrastructure thereby eliminating its potential for damage or failure in the event of an earthquake. Therefore, the project would result in seismic improvements overall. In addition, the construction of all structures, including the flood control improvements would adhere to the federal, State, and local regulations discussed in Section 4.1.3 of the EIS/EIR. Less-than-significant impacts are anticipated to result from fault rupture (Class III).

4.14.2 Ground-shaking

Significance Thresholds. Impacts from ground-shaking hazards are considered less than significant for projects of ordinary type and construction subject to the provisions of the Ventura County Building Code. Significant impacts from ground-shaking hazards would result for projects involving high-rise structures, critical facilities, and projects of unique design not covered by ordinary provisions of the Uniform Building Code (UBC). Such projects may subject

persons and property to greater risk of loss of life or substantial damage during strong ground-shaking events.

Impacts. As described above, the seismic and geologic setting is described in Section 4.1.1 of the EIS/EIR. The Ventura Basin is seismically active with the Oak Ridge fault and several other major faults, such as the San Cayetano fault, in the local area and has the potential for strong ground shaking. However, the proposed action would remove the dam infrastructure thereby eliminating its potential for damage or failure in the event of an earthquake. Therefore, the project would result in seismic improvements overall. In addition, the construction of all structures, including the flood control improvements would adhere to the federal, State, and local regulations presented in Section 4.1.3 of the EIS/EIR. Less-than-significant impacts are anticipated to result from ground shaking (Class III).

4.14.3 Tsunami and Seiche

Significance Thresholds. Projects that would be located within an unmitigable tsunami or seiche hazard zone would have a significant impact.

Impacts. The seismic and geologic setting is described in Section 4.1.1 of the EIS/EIR. The project is not located in an unmitigable tsunami hazard zone on the County General Plan maps and FIRM maps. For most areas, tsunami hazards do not exist inland further than 50 feet from the beach. In addition, the removal of the Matilija dam with the recommended plan would eliminate Lake Matilija and thereby eliminate any potential seiche hazard. Potential impacts from tsunamis and seiches would be less than significant (Class III).

4.14.4 Liquefaction

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if liquefaction hazards would subject persons or property to loss of life or substantial injury or damage.

Impacts. As discussed in Section 4.1.1 of the EIS/EIR, a liquefaction threat may exist in the vicinity of the Ventura River and Matilija Creek. However, the proposed action would remove the dam infrastructure thereby eliminating its potential for hazards or failure to occur from liquefaction. Soil borings have been performed for sediment trappings and the results are included in the *Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study Geotechnical Field Investigations* prepared by BOR based on fieldwork completed between July 30 and September 15, 2001. Potential hazards from liquefaction hazards are less than significant (Class III).

4.15 GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

4.15.1 Subsidence

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would cause or be subjected to a subsidence hazard that cannot be mitigated.

Impacts. Although the proposed project would require the use of approximately 4,800 acre-feet of water for project activities, this water would be drawn from Lake Casitas. As discussed above in Initial Study Section 4.5.1, this would require the City of Ventura to draw on water allocations from the Santa Paula and Fox Canyon Basins to make up for Lake Casitas water used by the project. The withdrawal of 1,500 acre-feet of water from the Santa Paula Basin is within the City of Ventura's water allocation and would not substantially affect the basin. Similarly, the withdrawal of approximately 1,500 acre-feet from Fox Canyon Basin is out of the City of

Ventura's 30,000 acre-feet reserves there and would not affect Fox Canyon Basin. Consequently, the withdrawal of this water would not substantially affect the basins in a manner that would result in subsidence. Impacts related to subsidence would be less than significant (Class III).

4.15.2 Expansive Soils

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would construct unique structures that are especially susceptible to soil expansion in an area with highly expansive soils (i.e., with an expansion index greater than 20 are present).

Impacts. As discussed in Section 4.1.1 of the EIS/EIR, expansive soils have caused substantial damage in Ventura County and areas around the Ojai Valley have some high risk for soil expansion. However, the proposed project would remove the dam infrastructure thereby eliminating its potential for hazards to occur from the shrinking and swelling of expansive soils. Soil borings have been performed for sediment trappings and the results are included in the *Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study Geotechnical Field Investigations* prepared by BOR based on fieldwork completed between July 30 and September 15, 2001. In addition, the construction of all structures, including the flood control improvements would be built according to the federal, State, and local regulations discussed in Section 4.1.3 of the EIS/EIR. Potential hazards from expansive soils would be less than significant (Class III).

4.15.3 Landslides/Mudslides

Significance Thresholds. A project would have a significant impact if the project site would be affected by a landslide/mudflow hazard that could not be mitigated.

Impacts. As discussed in Section 4.1.1 of the EIS/EIR, landsliding has not occurred in such a widespread manner in northern Ventura County as to be classified as a significant hazard. However, the region is extremely mountainous with steep lopes and high local relief. Faulting and tilting of the bedrock is common. The area around the Ventura River and Matilija Creek has a moderate to high landslide potential risk. The proposed project would not contribute to factors that produce landslides, such as earthquake groundshaking, brush fires, and changes to groundwater levels. Although the project would result in erosion in of temporarily stockpiled sediment upstream of the Matilija Dam site, revetment and channel protection have been designed to minimize the risk of landslide of this material.

In addition, removal of the dam would occur in accordance with the Department of Water Resources' Division of Safety of Dams (CDSD) best management practices and the reduction of off-site erosion would be implemented with Mitigation Measures ER-1 and ER-2 in Section 5.1.3 of the EIS/EIR. The construction of all structures, including the flood control improvements would be built according to the federal, State, and local regulations discussed in Section 4.1.3 of the EIS/EIR. Therefore, impacts resulting from landslide/mudflow hazards would be considered less than significant with the implementation of mitigation (Class II).

4.16 HYDRAULIC HAZARDS

4.16.1 Erosion/Siltation

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would cause substantial erosion or siltation.

Impacts. Erosion and siltation are discussed under both the Section 4.1.3 and Section 4.2.3 of the EIS/EIR. Implementation of the proposed project would result in erosion occurring along the waterways downstream of the dam. However, lateral migration is a natural process and the river is naturally braided in many sections. Additional bank protection and/or grade control would degrade the current habitat over time and over-constriction of the river by bank protection could cause bed coarsening and decrease the connectivity of the river with the flood plain. Grade control may also induce scour downstream of the structures and impede fish passage. Thus, these measures are not recommended, except where it has been determined that bank protection is necessary to protect property and structures.

Section 5.1.3 of the EIS/EIR states that with the construction of the soil-cement slope protection, monitoring of sediment degradation, and implementation of Mitigation Measures ER-1 and ER-2, erosion impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant (Class II). In addition, the restoration of the pre-dam topography and replenishment of sediment to the Ventura River would be considered beneficial impacts. With the temporary stabilization of sediments, sediment could be transported downstream under this project, providing beneficial impacts to local beaches.

4.16.2 Flooding

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would be substantially affected by flooding or if it would increase flooding hazard at upstream or downstream locations. FEMA considers a flood elevation increase of 1 foot during a 100-year storm to be significant.

Impacts. As described in Section 5.2.3 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would result in a potential change of flow rate, and thus increase in flood hazards, primarily through sediment deposition that would reduce channel and levee capacity, reduce bridge capacity, and raise flood water surface elevations. Effects would be most notable where aggradation is greatest. The potential purchase and vacation of the Matilja Hot Springs Facility and up to 11 Camino Cielo structures, replacement of the Camino Cielo Bridge, improvement of existing and construction of new levees and floodwalls, and replacement of the Santa Ana Bridge as a part of the project would ensure that impacts due to flood hazards would be reduced to less than significant levels (Class III).

4.17 AVIATION HAZARDS

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would be incompatible with the safe operation of aviation facilities. Projects located within two miles of an airport are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Impacts. The closest airports to the proposed project area are Santa Paula Airport and the Oxnard Airport, located more than 17 miles east-southeast and more than 20 miles south-southeast of Matilija Dam, respectively (AirNav.Com, 2004). The Camarillo Airport is approximately 22.5 miles southeast of the project area. Therefore, the proposed project is more than two miles away from the Oxnard and Camarillo Airports, and would thus present no aviation safety hazards. No impacts would occur.

4.18 FIRE HAZARDS

Significance Thresholds. The Ventura Building Code, Article IV Section of Uniform Building Code 1601 identifies high fire hazard areas as any area within 500 feet of uncultivated brush, grass, or forest covered land wherein an authorized representative of the Fire District determines that a potential fire hazard exists due to the presence of such flammable growth. Projects located in a high fire hazard area may have a significant impact if fire prevention measures such as brush clearance are not implemented.

Impacts. According to Section 4.10.3 of the EIS/EIR, while the Ventura River, Matilija Dam, and Matilija Creek are all designated Open Space or Floodplain under different applicable General Plans, the land use designations for adjacent lands vary widely, ranging from rural to residential to industrial. The vegetation in the area is discussed in Section 4.3.1 of the EIS/EIR. Although there is undeveloped open space and forestland in the vicinity of the proposed project and in Los Padres National Forest, the proposed project involves dam removal and flood protection that require no permanent onsite operational personnel. Therefore, no significant impacts are expected due to exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death attributable to wildland fires. Any impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.19 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/WASTE

4.19.1 Above-Ground or Below-Ground Hazardous Materials

Significance Thresholds. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines indicates that a project would have a significant impact if it would create a public health hazard, expose people to a potential health hazard, or pose a threat to the environment. The County's Initial Study Assessment Guidelines indicate the significance of hazardous materials impacts of a project shall be determined on a case-by-case basis considering the following parameters:

- Individual or cumulative physical hazard of material or materials.
- Amounts of materials on-site, either in use or storage.
- Proximity of hazardous materials to populated areas and compatibility of materials with neighboring facilities.
- Federal, State, and local laws and ordinances governing storage and use of hazardous materials.
- Potential for spill or release.
- Proximity of hazardous materials to receiving waters or other significant environmental resources.

Impacts. As discussed in Section 5.1.3 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would not result in any substantial soil contamination or involve activities that would mobilize contaminants. Initial soil samples performed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in March 2002 and included in the *Geotechnical Field Investigations of the Feasibility Study* indicated that sediments stored behind the dam are not toxic (BOR, 2002). However, it is possible that unexpected soil and/or groundwater contamination could be encountered during grading or excavation. Additional tests would be conducted in later stages of the planning process to ensure that no undiscovered contaminates are exposed during construction. Mitigation Measures ER-3 and ER-4 in Section 5.1.3 would ensure that potentially significant impacts are reduced to less-than-significant levels. Significant impacts from previously unknown contamination that could be encountered

during construction would be avoided with the implementation of Mitigation Measure ER-3. Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation (Class II).

During construction operations, hazardous materials such as vehicle fuels, oils, and other vehicle maintenance fluids would be used and stored in construction staging yards. Spills of hazardous materials and during construction activities could potentially cause soil or groundwater contamination. Improperly maintained equipment could leak fluids during construction operation and while parked, resulting in soil contamination. Mitigation Measure ER-4 would ensure that any accidental spills associated with construction equipment would be properly contained and that potentially significant impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels. The proposed project would not generate any hazardous materials or expose workers to conditions that exceed permissible levels. Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation (Class II).

Potential indirect impacts to biological resources may also occur from construction related activity including fuel, lubricant, or spills of construction waste. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measures B-3, B-6, and B-7 in Section 5.3.3 of the EIS/EIR, as well as proper implementation of required water quality and construction best management practices, direct impacts to biological resources could be minimized or completely avoided. With the implementation of mitigation, impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level (Class II).

4.19.2 Hazardous Waste

Significance Thresholds. The storage, handling and disposal of all potentially hazardous materials shall be in conformance with the requirements set forth in the following regulations:

- California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, Division 4.5.
- California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.5.
- Ventura County Ordinance Chapter 5 (Hazardous Substances), Article 1, (Certified Unified Program Agency).

Impacts. As discussed in Section 5.1.3 of the EIS/EIR and above in Section 4.17.1 of the Initial Study, the proposed project would not generate any hazardous materials or expose workers to conditions that exceed permissible levels. Therefore, the storage, handling and disposal of all potentially hazardous materials would be in conformance with the requirements set forth in County and State regulations, and potential hazardous waste impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.20 NOISE AND VIBRATION

Significance Thresholds. The General Plan (Section 2.16.2-1 of the Goals, Policies and Programs) establishes the following threshold criteria; above which significant noise impacts would be anticipated:

- Noise sensitive uses proposed to be located near highways, truck routes, heavy industrial activities and other relatively continuous noise sources shall incorporate noise control measures so that:
  - Indoor noise levels in habitable rooms do not exceed CNEL 45.
  - Outdoor noise levels do not exceed CNEL 60 or Leq1H of 65 dB(A) during any hour.
- Noise sensitive uses proposed to be located near railroads shall incorporate noise control measures so that:

- Guidelines a and b above are adhered to.
- Outdoor noise levels do not exceed L10 of 60 dB(A).

- Noise sensitive uses proposed to be located near airports:
  - Shall be prohibited if they are in a CNEL 65 or greater, noise contour.
  - Shall be permitted in the CNEL 60 to CNEL 65 noise contour area only if means will be taken to ensure interior noise levels of CNEL 45 or less.
- Noise generators proposed to be located near any noise sensitive use shall incorporate noise control measures so that outdoor noise levels at the noise receptor do not exceed:
  - Leq1H of 55 dB(A) or ambient noise level plus 3 dB(A), whichever is greater, during any hour from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
  - Leq1H of 50 dB(A) or ambient noise level plus 3 dB(A), whichever is greater, during any hour from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
  - Leq1H of 45 dB(A) or ambient noise level plus 3 dB(A), whichever is greater, during any hour from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

  This standard is not applicable to increased traffic noise along any of the roads identified within the 2010 Regional Roadway Network (Figure 4.2.3) of the Public Facilities Appendix of the Ventura County General Plan. In addition, State and federal highways, all railroad line operations, aircraft in flight, and public utility facilities are noise generators having Federal and State regulations that preempt local regulations.
- Discretionary development which would be impacted by noise or generate project related noise which cannot be reduced to meet the above standards, shall be prohibited. This policy does not apply to noise generated during the construction phase of a project if a statement of overriding considerations is adopted by the decision-making body in conjunction with the certification of a final Environmental Impact Report.

Impacts. Because the proposed project would not create a noise sensitive use, significance thresholds for these uses were not discussed in the EIS/EIR. In order to evaluate impacts to sensitive uses from noise generators, the EIS/EIR used the Ventura County and the City of Ojai significance thresholds for noise. Section 5.7.3 of the EIS/EIR found that construction, trucking, and giant reed removal activities, as well as operation and maintenance activities, would be expected to cause a significant and unavoidable impact (Class I). In order to reduce this temporary Class I impact to the best extent feasible, the proposed project would implement Mitigation Measures N-1 through N-9. The numerous project benefits that outweigh the Class I impact would be listed in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.

4.21 GLARE

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would involve:

- Any light source in excess of 150 watts which directly illuminated adjacent properties;
- Indirect illumination of adjacent properties on excess of 0.5 foot candles;
- Pedestrian lighting with a point of overlap of greater than 7 feet, and;
- Lighting intensity exceeding 7-foot candles.

Impacts. Most construction activity would only occur between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. to limit noise impacts (per Mitigation Measure N-1 in Section 5.7.3 of the EIS/EIR), except for dredging, slurrying, and associated water conveyance activities, which are planned to occur 24 hours a

day, 7 days a week. Although there would be some limited construction activity during nighttime hours that would require lighting, this impact would be temporary in nature occurring only during the construction period (approximately 24 months). As project activities would largely occur away from residences or businesses, illumination of adjacent properties is unlikely to result in any substantial impacts. Additionally, no permanent operational lighting would be installed as a part of the project. Therefore, impacts from glare would be less than significant (Class III).

Section 5.3.3, Biological Resources also addresses construction lighting and its impact on wildlife. Since most construction activities would occur during daylight hours, wildlife would have access past these areas during the night when many species are commonly active. However, breeding behavior could also be disrupted due to construction lighting. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measures B-3 and B-7, direct impacts to wildlife in the area could be minimized or completely avoided. Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation (Class II)

4.22 PUBLIC HEALTH

Significance Thresholds. Significance for public health related impacts must be determined on a case-by-case basis, and is related to project type, location, and other environmental factors.

Impacts. The EIS/EIR found that the project would have the following potential impacts to public health:

- Section 5.2 of the EIS/EIR found that the construction of floodwalls and levees would reduce any potential flood hazards resulting from increased sediment deposition in Matilija Creek to a less-than-significant level (Class III).
- Section 5.1 of the EIS/EIR found that potential impacts from accidental spills of hazardous materials would be less-than-significant after implementation of mitigation measure ER-4 (Class II).
- Section 5.6 of the EIS/EIR found that potential Valley Fever impacts from earthmoving projects would be less-than-significant after implementation of mitigation measure A-13 (Class II).
- Section 5.6 of the EIS/EIR found that the potential for exposing sensitive receptors or project workers to substantial pollutant concentrations would be less-than-significant after implementation of mitigation measure A-12 (Class II).

4.23 TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION

4.23.1 Public Roads and Highways

Significance Thresholds. The minimum acceptable level of service for all County maintained local roads is LOS C. The project would have a significant impact on public roads and highways if 10 percent or more of project-generated traffic would occur during peak hours on roadways and generate an unacceptable level of service.

Level of Service

Impacts. In order to evaluate transportation impacts, the EIS/EIR used the Ventura County LOS standards. Section 5.9.3 of the EIS/EIR found that impacts to road or highway LOS associated with worker commutes would be less-than-significant (Class III). However, the daily and a.m. peak hour trips estimated for heavy-duty vehicles would violate the County LOS

standards, which would create a significant and unavoidable traffic impact (Class I). In order to reduce this temporary Class I impact to the best extent feasible, the proposed project would implement mitigation measure T-1. The numerous project benefits that outweigh the Class I impact would be listed in the Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Safety/Design

Impacts. In order to evaluate impacts to transportation safety and design, the EIS/EIR used the County Road Standards. Section 5.9.3 of the EIS/EIR found that the potential for heavy vehicles and equipment to unexpectedly damage public roads, sidewalks, or mediums would be less-than-significant after implementation of mitigation measure T-2 (Class II).

Tactical Access

Impacts. Tactical access would be maintained at all times on public roads and highways used by construction equipment and adjacent to project activities. Although the Santa Ana Bridge would be closed for its replacement, a temporary road over the Ventura River is proposed to maintain traffic capacity. The removal of the Camino Cielo Bridge would not occur until a new bridge is constructed to replace it. Implementation of mitigation measure T-1 would ensure that impacts to tactical access would be reduced to less than significant levels (Class III).

4.23.2 Private Roads and Driveways

Significance Thresholds. A project would have a significant impact to private roads or driveways if it would create a temporary or permanent impediment to access, or create a public road or driveway that is not consistent with the traffic and circulation policies adopted by the County of Ventura or the Cities of Ojai and San Buenaventura.

Safety/Design

Impacts. Because the project would not create private roads or driveways, road design was not addressed in the EIS/EIR. There would be no impact to safety or design of private roads.

Tactical Access

Impacts. Because the project would not create private roads or driveways, tactical access was not addressed in the EIS/EIR. Although the Camino Cielo bridge would be removed under the proposed project, potentially affecting access to private roads and driveways in the Camino Cielo area, the bridge would not be removed until a replacement bridge had been constructed downstream. Consequently, there would be no impact to tactical access.

4.23.3 Pedestrian/Bicycle

Significance Thresholds. A project that would cause actual or potential barriers to existing or planned pedestrian/bicycle facilities may have a significant impact. Projects that generate or attract pedestrian/bicycle traffic volumes meeting requirements for protected highway crossings or pedestrian and bicycle facilities may have a significant impact. Pedestrian overcrossings, traffic signals, and bikeways are examples of these types of facilities.

Public Facilities

Impacts. Section 5.11.3 of the EIS/EIR found that the project would disrupt access to the Rice Canyon Trail, eliminate portions of the East/West River Bottom Loop/Trails, and block access to other trails. These pedestrian impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level after implementation of Mitigation Measures R-1 and AE-3 (Class II). The project would also create new trails and ultimately link trails in Matilija Canyon, resulting in beneficial impacts.

Private Facilities

Impacts. Because the project would not create actual or potential barriers to private pedestrian/bicycle facilities, impacts to these facilities were not addressed in the EIS/EIR. No impacts would occur.

4.23.4 Railroads

Significance Thresholds. A project would normally have a significant impact on a railroad if it would substantially interfere with an existing railroad's facilities or operations.

Impacts. Although portions of the project area run adjacent or are crossed by railroads, project activities would not interfere with railroad facilities or operations. The proposed project would not impact railroads. Consequently, impacts to railroads were not addressed in the EIS/EIR.

4.23.5 Other Facilities

Significance Thresholds. A project would normally have a significant impact on parking, bus transit, airports, harbors, or pipelines if it would substantially interfere with these existing facilities or operations.

Impacts. Because the proposed project activities would not be located adjacent to, nor would it result in any impacts to other transportation facilities including parking, bus transit, airports, harbors, or pipelines, these impacts were not addressed in the EIS/EIR.

4.24 WATER SUPPLY

4.24.1 Domestic Water Quality

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would result in the use of domestic water that does not meet applicable State Drinking water standards as described in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations.

Impacts. Domestic water, as defined by the Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, is a supply of potable water used for human consumption or connected to domestic plumbing fixtures in which the supply is obtained from an approved individual water supply system or a public water system operating with an unrevoked permit from the Ventura County Environmental Health Division or the California State Department of Health and Services.

The proposed project would not directly require a domestic water supply nor would it directly provide domestic water to development. However, concerns have been raised by water users and purveyors regarding potential water quality impacts resulting from release of trapped sediment into the riverine system or placement of these materials into disposal sites. Results of field investigations conducted in 2001 indicate detection of regulated substances including copper, nickel, arsenic and DDT, but at concentrations considered within normal background levels. Initial consultation has occurred between the Corps and the Environmental Protection Agency and the California Department of Health Services. Future consultation with the

California Department of Health Services and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board will continue during the Preconstruction Engineering and Design phase. Therefore, impacts to domestic water quality would be adverse, but less than significant (Class III).

There are numerous groundwater wells that access the water in the Upper Ventura Aquifer and includes floodplains along the mainstem of the Ventura River from Casitas Springs upstream though Meiners Oaks to Camino Cielo Road. All sediment transport modeling to date shows that the gradual release of this material will not substantially change the composition of the Ventura River Bed and will not change the infiltration of water from the Ventura River into the Upper Ventura River Aquifer. To minimize potential impacts to wells located near or within the sediment disposal site areas, the wells will be inspected prior to project implementation. Inspection will result in the repair of leaking casings to minimize the potential for fines to infiltrate and damage the wells. Impacts to groundwater quality from wells would be less than significant (Class III).

4.24.2 Domestic Water Quantity

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if its demand for domestic water could not be met or if it would result in the withdrawal of groundwater in an overdrafted groundwater basin.

Impacts. The proposed project does not include any components that would increase demand for domestic water, nor would it result in population growth beyond that projected in local general plans.

As described above in Sections 4.5.1 and 4.15.1, the proposed project would require approximately 4,800 acre-feet of water for project activities drawn from Lake Casitas. This would require the City of Ventura to draw on water allocations from the Santa Paula and Fox Canyon Basins to make up for Lake Casitas water used by the project. The withdrawal of replacement water from the Santa Paula and Fox Canyon Basins would come from the City of Ventura's water allocations and reserves and would not overdraft either basin. Consequently, any impacts to water quantity would be less than significant (Class III).

4.24.3 Fire Flow

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if sufficient water flow would not be available to meet the fire fighting needs of the project.

Impacts. The proposed project would remove Matilija Dam and the accumulated sediment, and would restore Matilija Creek to a more natural streambed configuration. It would not involve the construction of flammable structures or buildings. As such, it would not require fire protection services. Furthermore, the proposed project would not affect fire flow use pressures for any other uses. No fire plugs or pipelines used to convey water for fire fighting would be affected by the project. No impacts to fire flow would occur.

4.25 WASTE TREATMENT/DISPOSAL

4.25.1 Individual Sewage Disposal Systems

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would not comply with applicable building codes for the disposal of domestic waste generated by individual residences and businesses in areas without access to the public sewer service.

Impacts. The project would not create any sources of domestic waste generated by residences or businesses and would not create permanent demand for sewage collection or treatment facilities. No impacts with respect to sewage capacity would result from the project.

4.25.2 Sewage Collection/Treatment Facilities

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would individually or cumulatively generate sewage effluent which would be discharged to and exceed the capacity of an existing sewer main or sewage treatment plant. If the project description includes improvements to existing, or construction of new sewer mains and/or sewage treatment plants which would then be capable of serving the project and other cumulative development, there would be a less than significant impact.

Impacts. The project would not result in the long-term generation of sewage, and therefore, would not create permanent demand for sewage collection or treatment facilities. Sewage generated by construction workers would be handled by portable septic facilities. No impacts with respect to sewage capacity would result from the project.

4.25.3 Solid Waste Management

Significance Thresholds. Any project that generates solid waste would have an impact on the demand for solid waste disposal capacity in Ventura County. However, unless the county has reason to believe that there is less than 15 years of disposal capacity available for county disposal, no individual project would have a significant impact on the demand for solid waste capacity.

Impacts. Concrete rubble from the dam would be transported to Hanson Aggregates. The proposed project would require the hauling of 770,000 cubic yards of fine sediment and non-recyclable debris from the demolished dam to the Toland Road Landfill. The Toland Road Landfill has a closure date of 2027 and 20.1 million cubic yards of remaining capacity (CIWMB, 2004). It is not anticipated that the project would substantially affect the closure date of the Toland Road Landfill. Impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.25.4 Solid Waste Facilities

Significance Thresholds. Solid waste facilities shall be in compliance with the following statutes and regulations and are subject to enforcement by the EHD/LEA:

- California Health and Safety Code
- California Code of Regulations, Title 14
- California Code of Regulations, Title 27
- California Public Resources Code

Impacts. The proposed project does not involve a solid waste operation or facility. No impact would result from the proposed project.

4.26 UTILITIES

Significance Thresholds. Utility providers should be contacted in order to ascertain the project's impacts on or demand for utilities and whether or not these utilities would be significant.

4.26.1 Electricity

Impacts. Power requirements for demolition or restoration activities would largely be provided by an on-site generator, although some activities, such as operation of a construction trailer during demolition and restoration activities would be powered by connection to the local electrical grid. This use would constitute a minor incremental increase in use of local power. Any impacts to electricity service would be less than significant (Class III).

4.26.2 Natural Gas

Impacts. The project would not involve the use of natural gas either during construction or operation phases. As such, no impacts to natural gas service would result.

4.26.3 Communications

Impacts. The project would not involve the establishment of or require the permanent installation of communications lines. As such, no impacts to communications services would result.

4.27 FLOOD CONTROL/DRAINAGE FACILITIES

4.27.1 VCWPD Facility

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would substantially change the flow rate (i.e., increased runoff), velocity, erosion potential, or capacity of flood control channels.

Impacts. As described in Section 5.2.3 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would result in a potential change of flow rate, and thus increase in flood hazards, primarily through sediment deposition that would reduce channel and levee capacity, reduce bridge capacity, and raise flood water surface elevations. Effects would be most notable where aggradation is greatest. The purchase and vacation of the Matilja Hot Springs Facility and up to 11 Camino Cielo structures, removal of the Camino Cielo Bridge, improvement of existing and construction of new levees and floodwalls, and replacement of the Santa Ana Bridge as a part of the project would ensure that impacts due to flood hazards would be reduced to less than significant levels (Class III).

4.27.2 Other Facilities

Significance Thresholds. The project would have a significant impact if it would substantially change the flow rate (i.e., increased runoff), velocity, erosion potential, or capacity of flood control channels. In reviewing a project for impacts, the following are to be given consideration:

- Deposition of sediment and debris materials within existing channels and allied obstruction of flow.
- Capacity of the channel and the potential for overflow during design storm conditions.
- Increased runoff and the effects on areas of special flood hazard and regulatory channels both on and off site.

Impacts. As described above in Section 4.25.1 of the Initial Study and Section 5.2.3 of the EIS/EIR, the flood control measures included in the proposed project, including the purchase and vacation of the Matilja Hot Springs Facility and up to 11 Camino Cielo structures, removal of the Camino Cielo Bridge, improvement of existing and construction of new levees and

floodwalls, and replacement of the Santa Ana Bridge as a part of the project would ensure that impacts due to flood hazards would be reduced to less than significant levels (Class III).

4.28 LAW ENFORCEMENT/EMERGENCY SERVICES

4.28.1 Personnel/Equipment

Significance Thresholds. As the projected population ratio exceeds the average, additional sworn and support personnel, and equipment will be needed as it relates to the increase in population.

Impacts. As described in Section 5.8.3 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would not result in any increases to population. As such, the proposed project would not require that additional law enforcement or emergency services personnel or equipment be provided. No impacts to these services would result.

4.28.2 Facilities

Significance Thresholds. Patrol facilities in Ventura County are currently, on an average, 19.5 miles apart. Residential projects of ten units or more and all commercial projects greater than 19.5 miles from patrol facilities could result in the need for a new facility.

Impacts. The proposed project is neither a residential nor a commercial project, not would it result in the creation of residential or commercial projects. As such, the proposed project would not require that additional law enforcement or emergency services facilities be provided. No impacts to these services would result.

4.29 FIRE PROTECTION

4.29.1 Distance/Response Time

Significance Thresholds. Project distance from a full-time paid fire department is considered a significant impact if the project is in excess of five miles.

Impacts. Although not all portions of the proposed project are within five miles of a full-time paid fire department, Section 5.9.3 of the EIS/EIR includes Mitigation Measure T-1, the submission of a Transportation Management Plan which would contain traffic control measures to ensure access for emergency vehicles. Any impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation (Class II).

4.29.2 Personnel/Equipment/Facilities

Significance Thresholds. Additional fire personnel become necessary with increases in population due to projects, while equipment and facility concerns become significant when the magnitude of the project or the distance from existing facilities indicates that a new facility or additional equipment would be required within the proposed project.

Impacts. As described above in Section 4.26.1 of the Initial Study and in Section 5.8 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would not result in any increases to population. Consequently, the project would not require that additional fire personnel be provided. As described above in Section 4.27.1, not all portions of the proposed project are within five miles of a full-time paid fire department, but Section 5.9.3 of the EIS/EIR includes Mitigation Measure T-1, the submission of a Transportation Management Plan which would contain traffic control measures

to ensure access for emergency vehicles. As such, any impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation (Class II).

4.30 EDUCATION

4.30.1 Schools

Significance Thresholds. A project will normally have a significant impact on school facilities if it would substantially interfere with the operations of an existing school facility, or would put additional demands on a school district which is currently overcrowded.

Impacts. Activities associated with the proposed project are not anticipated to interfere with school facilities. Although project-related traffic may pass schools, Mitigation Measure T-1, Transportation Management Plan in Section 5.9.3 of the EIS/EIR, would ensure that traffic control measures would be implemented to reduce impacts to school facilities to less than significant levels. Additionally, as described in Section 5.8.3 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would not result in any increases to population and so would not place additional demands on overcrowded school districts. Consequently, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to schools with the implementation of mitigation (Class II).

4.30.2 Libraries

Significance Thresholds. A project will have a significant impact on public library facilities and services if it would substantially interfere with the operations of an existing public library facility, or would put additional demands on a public library facility which is currently overcrowded.

Impacts. Activities associated with the proposed project are not anticipated to interfere with public library facilities. Although project-related traffic may pass libraries, Mitigation Measure T-1, Transportation Management Plan, as described in Section 5.9.3 of the EIS/EIR, would ensure that traffic control measures would be implemented to reduce impacts to school facilities to less than significant levels. Additionally, as described in Section 5.8.3 of the EIS/EIR, the proposed project would not result in any increases to population and so would not place additional demands on overcrowded library facilities. Consequently, with the implementation of mitigation, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to libraries (Class II).

4.31 RECREATION

4.31.1 Local Parks/Facilities

Significance Thresholds. A project would have a significant impact on recreation if it would cause an increase in the demand for recreation when measured against the following standards:

- Local Parks/ Facilities: 5 acres of developable land (less than 15% slope) per 1000 population.
- Regional Parks/Facilities: 5 acres of developable land per 1000 population.
- Regional Trails/Corridors: 2.5 miles per 1000 population.

A project would have a significant impact on recreation if it would impede future development of Recreation Parks/Facilities and/or Regional Trails/Corridors.

Impacts. The Matilija Dam and reservoir area are closed to public use and so are unavailable for recreational uses. Other portions of the study area, however, experience high levels of

recreational use, from coastal to mountain activities. According to Section 4.11.1 of the EIS/EIR, six public agencies and a non-profit community group maintain recreational facilities in the study area, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture - National Forest Service (USFS), California Department of Parks and Recreation (California State Parks), California Department of Agriculture, County of Ventura, City of San Buenaventura, City of Ojai, and the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy. Section 5.5.3 of the EIS/EIR concludes that the majority of activities associated with this project would not obstruct or degrade views of ridgelines from scenic resource areas, recreation trails, or scenic highways.

Section 5.11.3 of the EIS/EIR concurs with this conclusion and states that the proposed project would result in no permanent losses, degradations, or displacements of existing local parks and facilities. Project activities at the dam and in the reservoir area would serve to permanently enhance and create recreation facilities. Additionally, the project would enhance beach nourishment and could potentially contribute to improving beach recreation.

The project would include development of a pair of trails that would be used to link SR 33 and the Matilija Wilderness Area and provide a shorter loop trail. Three interpretive areas with comfort stations, shelters, picnic areas, drinking fountains, and interpretive signs and markers would be created: one at the existing dam site, one at Hanging Rock, and one at the northern end of the project area where the proposed trails would converge. The improvement of the Matilija Canyon environment and development of recreation facilities in the canyon would be a beneficial impact.

None of the other components, including the locally preferred desilting basin or purchase of the Camino Cielo structures, would permanently affect existing recreation facilities. The purchase and removal of the Matilija Hot Springs facility would eliminate an established recreational facility. Due to the limited number of users, however, and because the facility is a privately owned business, EIS/EIR Sections 5.8.3 and 5.10.3 concluded that impacts to Matilija Hot Springs would be less than significant (Class III).

Activities associated with the project, including giant reed removal, reservoir material excavation, dam demolition, bridge replacement, installation and improvement of downstream flood protection measures, installation of the locally preferred desilting basin, and modifications to water supply facilities at Robles Diversion and Foster Park could result in the closure of public recreational facilities for the duration of the activity at a specific location. Though temporary, these closures could last up to year.

The project would not result in any increases in population growth, creating an increased demand for recreation. Construction impacts would be extended, but temporary, and would not impede the future development of local parks and facilities in the area. Impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.31.2 Regional Parks/Facilities

Impacts. As discussed above under Section 4.29.1 of the Initial Study, Section 5.11.3 of the EIS/EIR concludes that the proposed project would result in no permanent losses, degradations, or displacements of existing regional parks and facilities. Project activities at the dam and in the reservoir area would serve to permanently enhance and create recreation facilities. Project components downstream of the dam, however, could result in some

degradation to trails along the Ventura River. The improvement of the Matilija Canyon environment and development of recreation facilities in the canyon would be a beneficial impact.

As described for Section 4.29.1, above, the project would not result in any increases in population growth, creating an increased demand for recreation. While, construction impacts would be extended, they would be temporary, and would not impede the future development of local parks and facilities in the area. Impacts would be less than significant (Class III).

4.31.3 Regional Trails/Corridors

Impacts. As described in Section 5.11.3 of the EIS/EIR, the project would result in major, long-term restrictions of the OVLC Rice Canyon Trail and the potential permanent degradation of OVLC East/West River Bottom Loop Trails.

The levee and floodwall planned for Meiners Oaks, could result in long-term restrictions of access to and conflicts with the OVLC Rice Canyon Trail. In its proposed alignment, the Meiners Oaks flood protection would block street access to a pedestrian trailhead with a barrier up to 17 feet in height. The disruption of access to the Rice Canyon Trail would be considered a significant, but mitigable impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measure R-1, which would require the construction of an access ramp over the flood protection, would reduce impacts to less-than-significant levels.

Although the placement of the slurry disposal site at the north end of Baldwin Road or Highway 150 locations would not interfere with any recreation areas, use of the Rice Road slurry disposal site would bury OVLC trails on the east side of the Ventura River. Portions of the East/West River Bottom Loop Trails would be buried by up to 15 feet of sediment and access to these and other trails from the Riverview Trailhead would be blocked. The elimination of these trails and blockage of access to other trails would result in loss of trail use and would be considered a significant, but mitigable impact. Mitigation Measure AE-3 in Section 5.5.3 of the EIS/EIR would require that prior to completion of slurry activities and site re-vegetation the Corps, in consultation with the OVLC, shall design a system of trails integrated with a re-vegetation plan to be constructed and implemented after the site has been settled and dewatered. Consequently, impacts to regional trails and corridors would be less than significant with the implementation of mitigation (Class II).

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