EXHIBIT A

CEQA FINDINGS OF FACT

and

STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

for the

PLACER VINEYARDS SPECIFIC PLAN

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
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I. INTRODUCTION

The Final Environmental Impact Report (“FEIR”) prepared for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan (the “Project”) addresses the potential environmental effects associated with implementation of the goals, policies, and objectives of the Project. These findings have been prepared to comply with requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.). These findings refer to the FEIR where material appears in that document. Otherwise, references are to the Revised Draft EIR (“RDEIR”) and Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR (“PRRDEIR”).

II. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Like the EIR itself, these findings use a number of acronyms. To make the findings easier to follow, key acronyms are defined below.

“AHP” mean Affordable Housing Plan.

“BMP” means Best Management Practices.

“Board of Supervisors” or “Board” refers to the Placer County Board of Supervisors.

“CA DFG” means California Department of Fish and Game.

“CAC” means Citizens Advisory Committee.

“Cal/EPA” means California Environmental Protection Agency.

“Caltrans” means California Department of Transportation.

“CEQA” means California Environmental Quality Act.

“cfs” means cubic feet per second.

“CLUP” means Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

“CNEL” means Community Noise Equivalent Level.

“CO” means carbon monoxide.

“CVP” means Central Valley Project.

“dB” means decibel(s).

“dBA” means A-weighted sound levels.

“dbh” means diameter at breast height.


“DCWWTP” means Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant.

“EIR” means Environmental Impact Report.

“EPA” means United States Environmental Protection Agency.

“ESA” means the federal Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.).

“FEIR” or “Final EIR” means Final Environmental Impact Report for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan (October, 2006).

“kV” means kilovolt.

“L_{dn}” means day-night noise level.

“L_{eq}” means equivalent sound level.

“LOS” means level of service.

“MGD” means million gallons per day.

“MMRP” means Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

“mph” means miles per hour.

“NA” means not applicable.


“NO_x” means nitrogen oxides.
“NOP” means Notice of Preparation.

“NPDES” means National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System.

“OL” means operating location.

“PCB” means polychlorinated biphenyls.

“PFFP” means Public Facilities Financing Plan.


“PM$_{10}$” means particulate matter equal to or less than 10 microns in diameter.

“ppb” means parts per billion.

“ppm” means parts per million.

“ppmv” means parts per million by volume.

“PRRDEIR” means Partially Recirculated Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan (July, 2006.)

“ROG” means reactive organic gases.


“RT” means Regional Transit.

“SACOG” means Sacramento Area Council of Governments.

“SEL” means sound exposure level.

“SMUD” means Sacramento Municipal Utilities District.


“SPWA” means South Placer Wastewater Authority.
“SRCSD” means Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District.

“SRWTP” means Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant.

“Supplement to the FEIR” means Supplement to the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan (June, 2007).

“TMA” means Transportation Management Association.

“TOD” means Transit Oriented Development.

“USFWS” means U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.


“V/C” means volume-to-capacity.

“VMT” means vehicle miles traveled.

“VOC” means volatile organic compound.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Location

The Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area is located in the southwest corner of Placer County, approximately 15 miles north of Sacramento. The Specific Plan area includes 5,230± acres, however, only 4,251 acres are planned for urban development under the proposed Specific Plan. The project site is bounded on the north by Baseline Road, on the south by the Sacramento/Placer County line, on the west by the Sutter/Placer County line and Pleasant Grove Road, and on the east by Dry Creek and Walerga Road. The project area encompasses approximately eight square miles of land area. (RDEIR, pp. 3-1, 3-8.)

Project Background

Placer County proposes approval and development of a specific plan known as the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan in the unincorporated area of western Placer County. While the Specific Plan area includes 5,230± acres, only 4,251 acres are planned for urban development under the proposed Specific Plan. The remaining 979 acres are reserved as a Special Planning Area (SPA) and will continue to be used for large lot rural residential development, consistent with current zoning under the proposed Specific Plan, unless individual landowners apply for zone changes in the future (in which case additional project-level CEQA analysis will be required, as explained in Section 2.5). It is estimated that full buildout of the Specific Plan will occur over a 20- to 30-
year time period. The proposed development includes residential, employment, commercial, open space, recreational and public/quasi-public land uses. (RDEIR, p. 3-1.)

The August, 1994 Placer County General Plan identified this area as appropriate for urbanization following adoption and implementation of a comprehensive Specific Plan. This project, requesting approval of a Specific Plan and the associated Land use and Development Standards, found in Appendix A to the Specific Plan, is the first in a series of steps in the approval process required prior to any new urban construction in the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 3-1.) Other County entitlements, approvals and permits that will be necessary in the future include approval of tentative and final large and small lot subdivision maps, approval of improvement plans for infrastructure, design review and other processes as required by the Placer county Zoning Ordinance. (RDEIR, p 3-2.)

The Specific Plan area is currently designated “Urban” on the Generalized Land Use Diagram within the Placer County General Plan, and “West Placer Specific Plan” in the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan. As part of the countywide General Plan Update, the Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution 94-238 on August 16, 1994 designating the Specific Plan area as “West Placer Specific Plan” and adding to the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan a list of development standards to be incorporated into the future West Placer Specific Plan. This section of the General Plan is referred to as “Exhibit 1.” Exhibit 1 is included as Appendix D of the Revised Draft EIR, as well as in Section 4.1 of the Revised Draft EIR. The County has determined that Exhibit 1 supersedes the other goals and policies of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan for the area identified as “West Placer Specific Plan” (the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area). (RDEIR, p. 3-1.)

Exhibit 1 provides that the 5,230-acre “West Placer Specific Plan Area” shall be limited to a total of 14,132 dwelling units. Under the proposed Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, it is proposed to allocate 13,721 of the 14,132 allowable dwelling units to the 4,251 acres proposed for urban development. The remaining area, the 979-acre SPA, will be allocated 411 dwelling units, including 150 existing dwelling units. For purposes of the analysis contained in the Revised Draft EIR, a total of 14,132 dwelling units is assumed for the project, although only 13,721 will be built by project proponents. As explained in Section 2.5, additional project-level CEQA analysis will be necessary before the County can approve any zoning change that will allow a SPA landowner to develop property at densities greater than those allowed under current zoning. Because the current zoning will allow, at most, construction of a total of 63 new dwelling units in the entire SPA, legislative action by the Board of Supervisors will be necessary before all 411 dwelling units reserved for the SPA can actually be developed. (RDEIR, pp. 3-1 to 3-2.)

This project is an application for a Specific Plan to (a) define a comprehensive set of rules and policies to govern all future urban development in the 5,230±-acre Specific Plan area; (b) adopt a Land Use Diagram showing the location and density/intensity of future residential, commercial, office and business park development, parks, schools, open space and other needed public facilities; (c) identify all major infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, drainage, etc.) and public services needed for proposed new development; and (d) impose standards for phasing and the implementation and financing of all requirements set forth in the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan proposes a mandatory series of stepped or sequential actions which must be approved by
Placer County after approval of the Specific Plan, but before any urban construction occurs. (RDEIR, p. 3-2.)

The applicant is requesting approval of a Specific Plan for the development of a mixed-use planned community, including 14,132 residential units, 274 acres of commercial uses (with an estimated 3,553,080 square feet of floor area), 919 acres of park and open space land, and 641 acres of quasi-public (i.e., public facilities/services, religious facilities, schools and major roadways) land uses. To implement this expansive development project, the Specific Plan defines a comprehensive set of rules and policies to govern future urban development in the 5,230-acre Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area.

The Specific Plan provides a Land Use Diagram and Land Use Ownership Summary for the 4,251-acre portion of the Plan area, which shows specific land uses, the location and density/intensity of future residential, commercial, office and business park, schools, parks, open space and other necessary public facilities. Included in the Specific Plan are Land Use and Development Standards that will govern all future development within the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan. In addition, the Specific Plan identifies the major infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, drainage systems) and public services needed to accommodate the new development. The overall residential density will be 5.7 units per acre, exclusive of the SPA (13,721 units divided by 2,418 residential acres). Implementation of the proposed project will result in a build-out population of approximately 32,800 persons over a 20- to 30-year period (based on the anticipated occupancy of approximately two persons per residence).

The Placer Vineyards Specific Plan proposes a mixture of land uses on 5,230 acres which are depicted on the Land Use Diagram and include:

- 14,132 Residential Dwelling Units (including the SPA), including:
  - 3,734 units Low Density Residential (26 percent of all residential units)
  - 6,277 units Medium Density Residential (44 percent of all residential units)
  - 3,074 units High Density Residential (22 percent of all residential units)
  - 636 units Commercial Mixed-Use (5 percent of all residential units)
  - 411 units Rural Residential (3 percent of all residential units)

- 274 acres of Commercial Land Uses:
  - 166 acres Retail / Commercial (61 percent of commercial acreage)
  - 107 acres Office / Business Park (39 percent of commercial acreage)

- 1,559 acres of Public/Quasi-Public Land Uses:
  - 51 acres of Public Facilities/Services (government offices/facilities, sheriff and fire stations, library, transit station, utility substation, and cemetery)
  - 91 acres of Religious Facilities
  - 167 acres of Schools (6 elementary, 2 middle and 1 high school)
  - 210 acres of Parks (community, neighborhood, mini, recreation center)
  - 709 acres of Open Space
  - 332 acres of Major Roadways (thoroughfares, arterials, collectors)
The project proponents have also sought a number of general plan amendments, two amendments to the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan*, and additional legislative and other approvals in order to facilitate the Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 3-2 to 3-6.)

**Project Objectives**

The project applicants’ objectives of the Specific Plan are:

- To protect the highest quality natural features and resources of the site and provide transitional buffers sensitive to the character of adjacent land uses.

- To promote compact mixed-use development that strives to provide a balance of uses, diverse housing and transportation choices and contributes to a jobs to housing balance within the region.

- To establish a pedestrian friendly community and access to a regional system of trails that link neighborhoods together.

- To develop a series of neighborhood areas with their own unique site identify with urban centers and community serving facilities (schools, parks and public amenities).

(RDEIR, pp. 3-13, 6-1.)

To achieve Specific Plan objectives, the project applicants propose to undertake the following more specific actions:

**Land Use:**

- Conform to General Plan and Exhibit 1 policies which designate this region for urban development.

- Provide a well designed, balanced community with identifiable neighborhoods in close proximity to jobs and services.

- Provide a balanced mix of land uses that will allow a self-sufficient community, thereby reducing demands on regional roadways and services.

- Provide for a full range of housing densities affordable to all income levels.

- Provide higher density housing within clusters at the town center, village centers, commercial nodes and concentrated along major transportation corridors.

- To the extent that sound walls are used to screen residential areas from the noise generated along major streets in the projects, such walls are to be screened by landscape and/or setback techniques intended to soften the visual effect of the wall.
- Provide a comprehensively planned project that is sensitive to environmental issues including wetlands, flood protection and tree preservation.

- Provide required schools and parks sized to meet the needs of residents in the Specific Plan area and located as neighborhood focal elements.

(RDEIR, pp. 3-15, 6-2.)

Environmental Resources:

- Use greenways to help manage stormwater runoff.

- Incorporate significant on-site wetlands and existing oak groves into greenway and open space systems.

- Provide off-site mitigation to permanently protect preserves of natural resources, open space and agricultural land, distanced from the effects of urban development.

(RDEIR, pp. 3-15, 6-2.)

Circulation:

- Provide a network of streets with a clear system of hierarchy that interconnects the communities and contributes to their character.

- Establish a circulation system that meets local and regional transportation needs and accommodates a variety of transportation modes including off-street trail systems.

- Provide a continuous system of trails to link neighborhoods together and provide safe routes to schools, parks and community serving areas.

- Expand capacity on the Baseline Road east-west arterial to serve local and regional traffic needs, initially to four lanes and ultimately to six lanes.

- Improve the following intersections in Sutter County:
  - Riego Road and East Natomas Road,
  - Riego Road and Pleasant Grove Road,
  - Baseline Road and Pleasant Grove Road, and
  - Baseline Road and Locust Road.

- Expand capacity of Watt Avenue initially to four lanes and ultimately to six lanes from Baseline Road to approximately 1000 feet south of the Placer County line.

- Construct Dyer Lane as a four-lane roadway.
- Construct 16th Street as a four-lane roadway.

- Modify signals at Watt Avenue/Baseline Road and Fiddyment Road/Baseline Road.

- Construct new signals on Baseline Road at Brewer Road/Dyer Lane (west), Palladay Road, 16th Street, 14th Street, 12th Street, Dyer Lane (east) and Park Street.

- Construct new traffic signals on Watt Avenue at A Street, East Town Center Drive, Oak Street and Dyer Lane.

- Construct new traffic signals on Dyer Lane at A Street (east and west), Town Center Drive (east and west), 18th Street, Palladay Road, 16th Street, Tanwood Avenue and 11th Street.

- Construct new traffic signals on A Street at Palladay Road, 16th Street, 14th Street and 12th Street.

(RDEIR, pp. 3-15 to 3-16, 6-2 to 6-3.)

Infrastructure:

- Provide a comprehensively planned infrastructure system (e.g., water treatment and distribution systems, sewer treatment and collection systems, electrical distribution systems, fire suppressions facilities, general government facilities) to serve the needs of future residents and allow existing residents to tie into upgraded facilities.

- Provide adequate infrastructure improvements without adversely affecting existing levels of service.

- Conserve energy and water.

(RDEIR, pp. 3-16, 6-3 to 6-4.)

Flood Control:

- Construct incremental flood detention facilities along open space corridors as development occurs to fully mitigate on-site impacts and not worsen existing off-site conditions.

- Provide joint-use of parks with detention basins where appropriate and feasible.

(RDEIR, pp. 3-17, 6-4.)

Open Space and Recreation:

- Provide landscaped open space buffers and/or landscape corridors along major arterials.
• Provide a variety of active and passive parkland for local and regional public enjoyment and preserve significant natural resources.

• Provide entry statements to define and distinguish this new community.

• Provide open space linkages to the bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian facilities provided within the Dry Creek regional corridor.

• Provide natural open space along existing drainage corridors and easements, with off-street biking/hiking linkages to schools, parks, shopping and public places.

(RDEIR, pp. 3-17, 6-4.)

Community Design:

• Maintain vegetated corridors along circulation routes to preserve the scenic quality of the landscape.

• Design residential development to front upon streets where outdoor noise levels do not exceed 60Ldn/CNEL, as well as upon pedestrian streets, parks and/or open space, as much as possible.

• Provide landscaping as a transition between developed areas and open space and to screen mechanical equipment, accessory roads and parking.

• Anchor neighborhoods with community serving facilities, including schools, parks and quasi-public uses.

(RDEIR, pp. 3-17, 6-4.)

Implementation:

• Establish financial mechanisms to ensure that the full range of services needed to serve the Specific Plan area are funded by the community without cost to the balance of the County.

• Phase development and infrastructure to respond to market demand while requiring new development to provide the infrastructure and public facilities necessary to serve the developing area.

• Provide revenue for the maintenance of public open space areas and park facilities, infrastructure and public services.

(RDEIR, pp. 3-17 to 3-18, 6-4 to 6-5.)
IV. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

In accordance with section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan EIR was prepared by the County in June, 1999. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15023, subdivision (c), and 15087, subdivision (f), the State Clearinghouse in the Office of Planning and Research is responsible for distributing environmental documents to State agencies, departments, boards, and commissions for review and comment. The County followed required procedures with regard to distribution of the appropriate notices and environmental documents to the State Clearinghouse. The State Clearinghouse was obligated to make that information available to interested agencies for review and comment. The NOP was received by the State Clearinghouse (SCH #1999062020) on June 7, 1999, and was made available for a 30 day public review period ending on July 6, 1999. (See RDEIR, p. 2-1, Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, CEQA website http://www.ceqanet.ca.gov/ProjDocList.asp?ProjectPK=502668.)

A subsequent NOP was circulated in May, 2001 that specifically addressed a change in the proposed water supply and outlined alternatives for both interim and long-term water supplies. The NOP was received by the State Clearinghouse on May 18, 2001, and was made available for a 30 day public review period ending on June 18, 2001. The June, 1999 NOP and response letters are included as Appendix A of the Revised Draft EIR. The May, 2001 NOP and response letters are included as Appendix B of the Revised Draft EIR. Appendix P contains letters sent to Sacramento and Sutter counties advising them of their role as a potential responsible agency for the proposed project along with a response letter from Sutter County. (RDEIR, p. 2-1.)

Preparation of an EIR is a CEQA requirement for all discretionary projects in California that have a potential to result in significant environmental impacts. EIRs must disclose, analyze, and provide mitigation measures for all potentially significant environmental effects associated with adoption and implementation of proposed projects. Consistent with these requirements, the County in October, 2004 published the first Draft EIR for the proposed Placer Vineyards Specific Plan and circulated the document for review and comment by responsible and trustee agencies as well as interested members of the public. The NOA of the Draft EIR was received by the State Clearinghouse on October 15, 2004, and was made available for a public review period ending on January 5, 2005. (RDEIR, pp. 2-1 to 2-2.)

Following the receipt of written comments on that Draft EIR, the project proponent (Placer Vineyards Property Owners Group) modified the project to address concerns raised in these comments. The revised project is described in detail in Chapter Three of the Revised Draft EIR. A summary of the more significant project changes is provided in Section 2.4 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 2-2.)

Because the County opted for a complete, rather than partial, recirculation, the County elected to follow option (f)(1), and not respond in the Final EIR to comments received during the initial circulation period (October 18, 2004 – January 5, 2005), as those comments have largely been rendered moot by preparation of the Revised Draft EIR. Written comments received on significant environmental issues during the initial circulation period were considered and in some
instances expressly addressed in the Revised Draft EIR. The Revised Draft EIR was circulated in March, 2006. The NOA was received by the State Clearinghouse on April 4, 2006, and was made available for a 45 day public review period ending on May 18, 2006. All comments received on the Revised Draft EIR during the review period are responded to in the Final EIR. (RDEIR, p. 2-3, Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, CEQA website http://www.ceqanet.ca.gov/ProjDocList.asp?ProjectPK=502668.)

The Revised Draft EIR evaluates the existing environmental resources in the vicinity of the Specific Plan area and off-site infrastructure, analyzes potential impacts on those resources due to the proposed project and identifies mitigation measures that could avoid or reduce the magnitude of those significant impacts. The environmental analysis chapter of the Revised Draft EIR discusses the environmental and regulatory settings, impacts and mitigation measures for each of the following twelve topics:

- Land Use and Planning Policies
- Visual Quality and Aesthetics
- Hydrology, Water Resources and Water Quality
- Biological Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Archaeological and Paleontological Resources
- Transportation and Circulation
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Population, Employment and Housing
- Public Services and Infrastructure
- Hazards

(RDEIR, p. 2-11.)

In July 2006, in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21092.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5, 1 Placer County decided to partially recirculate the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report (“Revised Draft EIR”). As part of this partial recirculation effort, Placer County also elected to make available for public review the proposed Placer Vineyards Public Facilities Draft Financing Plans for both the Project as proposed (14,132 dwelling units) (“the Base Plan”) and for the Blueprint Alternative (21,631 dwelling units). The First Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR (PRRDEIR) was published in July, 2006. The NOA was received by the State Clearinghouse on July 31, 2006, and was made available for a 45 day public review period ending on September 13, 2006. (PRRDEIR, p. 1-1, Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, CEQA website http://www.ceqanet.ca.gov/ProjDocList.asp?ProjectPK=502668.)

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1 The CEQA Guidelines are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with Section 15000.
In March 2007, again in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21092.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5, Placer County elected to undertake a second partial recirculation of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan Revised Draft EIR.

In October 2006, before deciding to prepare the Second Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR, the County had distributed the Final EIR, including responses to the comments received on the Revised Draft EIR and the first Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR. In late June 2007, the County distributed the Supplement to the Final EIR, including responses to comments received during the project deliberation process that were received too late for incorporation into the October 2007 Final EIR and responses to comments on the Second Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR. The Revised Draft EIR, the first Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR, the Second Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR, the October 2006 Final EIR, and the June 2007 Supplement to the Final EIR together constitute the Final EIR for the Project.

The County received comments on the Final EIR from 74 persons/agencies before the close of the comment period.

On January 25, 2007, the County presented the project at the Planning Commission hearing to make a final recommendation on the project. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan (“Base Plan”).

On July 16, 2007, the Board of Supervisors (“Board”) held a public hearing on the project, at the end of which the Board certified the Final EIR and adopted the “Base Plan” version of the Specific Plan and an accompanying Development Agreement and various related planning documents. As part of the project approval, the Board approved these Findings of Fact, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and the Statement of Overriding Considerations included in Section XIII of this document.

V. SIGNIFICANT NEW INFORMATION

CEQA requires a lead agency to issue new notice and “recirculate” a revised EIR, or portions thereof, for additional commentary and consultation if, subsequent to the commencement of public review and interagency consultation but prior to final EIR certification, the lead agency adds “significant new information” to an EIR (see Pub. Resources Code, Section 21092.1; CEQA Guidelines, Section 15088.5; Laurel Heights Improvement Association of San Francisco, Inc. v. Regents of the University of California (1993) 6 Cal.4th 1112 (Laurel Heights II)). CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5 provides four examples of disclosure which constitute “significant new information” for purposes of requiring recirculation of a revised EIR:

1. A new significant environmental impact would result from the project or from a new mitigation measure proposed to be implemented;

2. A substantial increase in the severity of an environmental impact would result unless mitigation measures are adopted that reduce the impact to a level of insignificance;
(3) A feasible project alternative or mitigation measure considerably different from others previously analyzed would clearly lessen the environmental impacts of the project, but the project’s proponents decline to adopt it; or

(4) The draft EIR was so fundamentally and basically inadequate and conclusory in nature that meaningful public review and comment were precluded.

(PRDEIR, p. 1-1; SPRDEIR, p. 1-1.)

The revised environmental document must be subjected to the same “critical evaluation that occurs in the draft stage,” so that the public is not denied “an opportunity to test, assess, and evaluate the data and make an informed judgment as to the validity of the conclusions to be drawn therefrom” (Sutter Sensible Planning, Inc. v. Board of Supervisors (1981) 122 Cal.App.3d 813, 822; see also Save Our Peninsula Committee v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors (2001) 87 Cal.App.4th 99, 131). (PRDEIR, pp. 1-1 to 1-2; SPRDEIR, p. 1-1 to 1-2.)

Recirculation of an EIR requires notice pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15087, and consultation pursuant to Section 15086 (see CEQA Guidelines, Section 15088.5, subd. (d)). Where an agency determines that recirculation is required, the agency can satisfy its obligation by reissuing only the revised part or parts of the EIR, rather than a whole new document. “If the revision is limited to a few chapters or portions of the EIR, the lead agency need only recirculate the chapters or portions that have been modified” (see CEQA Guidelines, Section 15088.5, subd. (c)). (PRDEIR, p. 1-2; SPRDEIR, p. 1-2.)

The CEQA Guidelines state that "[w]hen recirculating a revised EIR, either in whole or in part, the lead agency shall, in the revised EIR or by an attachment to the revised EIR, summarize the revisions made to the previously circulated draft EIR" (see CEQA Guidelines, Section 15088.5, subd. (g)). The revisions made to the Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR (PRRDEIR) are described below. (PRREIR, p. 1-2; SPRDEIR, p. 1-2.)

PARTIALLY RECIRCULATED REVISED DRAFT EIR (PRRDEIR)

FINANCING PLAN

First, the County is releasing for public review the Draft Financing Plans for the Base Project and the Blueprint Alternative, as discussed previously. The County’s decision to release the Draft Financing Plans for public review and comment fulfills the County’s previously-stated commitment, as set forth in the text of the Revised Draft EIR, to make these documents available for public inspection during the period of review of the Revised Draft EIR (see Revised Draft EIR, p. 3-34). As stated in the Revised Draft EIR, the County intended to release the Financing Plans for public review simultaneous with release of the Revised Draft EIR; however, the drafts of the Financing Plans were not complete at the time the Revised Draft EIR was released for public review. The County’s decision to allow public review of the Draft Financing Plans in conjunction with the Revised Draft EIR as part of this recirculation should not be perceived as
the County’s concurrence with commentors on the Revised Draft EIR who suggested that a Financing Plan is required by CEQA, should the project be approved, or that CEQA requires public review of whatever documents comprise the “financing measures” required for specific plans (see Gov. Code, Section 65451, subd. (a)(4)). The Board of Supervisors will consider a Final Financing Plan in association with the project separate and apart from any action on the EIR. A summary of the two Draft Financing Plans appears in Appendix W which is attached to the Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR. (PRRDEIR, p. 1-2.)

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

Second, the County has decided to revise Table 4.4-3 (Listed and Special-Status Species Potentially Occurring in the Specific Plan Area, Specific Plan Area Vicinity, or Off-site Infrastructure Areas), which appears in Section 4.4 (Biological Resources) of the Revised Draft EIR. Accompanying explanatory text, Impact statements 4.4-7 and 4.4-21, and Mitigation Measures 4.4-7 and 4.4-21 are modified to reflect the information appearing in the revised table. These changes have been made in response to recent findings concerning certain Special Status Species not previously thought to occur in the project area. The revisions are based on the most recent field surveys and data collection efforts of ECORP Consulting and Quad Knopf, Inc. Pages of the Revised Draft EIR containing modifications are reprinted in Chapter Two of the Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR. A “track changes” version of the text is also included in Appendix X for those wishing to compare one version with the other. (PRRDEIR, pp. 1-2 to 1-3.)

REVISED TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

Third, the County has decided to recirculate portions of Section 4.7 (Transportation and Circulation) and portions of Section 6.3.4 (Blueprint Alternative) related to transportation and circulation. This decision was made because several changes have been made to the 2025 methodology described in the Revised Draft EIR (see Section 4.7 for a discussion of the changes to the methodology). The Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR contains the results of the analysis where intersections and roadway segments would be adversely affected in one of the following ways:

• An intersection or roadway segment that was shown to operate at an acceptable Level of Service (LOS) under “plus project” conditions in the Revised Draft EIR is now projected to operate at an unacceptable LOS under “plus project” conditions;

• An intersection or roadway segment that was not analyzed under “plus project” conditions in the Revised Draft EIR has now been analyzed and projected to operate at unacceptable LOS under “plus project” conditions; or

• An intersection or roadway segment that would operate at an unacceptable LOS under “without project” conditions, but would not be made substantially more severe under “with project” conditions as analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR, is now predicted to degrade substantially under “plus project conditions”.
The standards of significance identified in the Revised Draft EIR are used to determine whether an intersection or roadway segment operates at an acceptable LOS and/or whether the degradation due to the project is “substantial” and therefore significant. (PRRDEIR, p. 1-3.)

As discussed below, the Existing plus Project and Roseville impacts were not remodeled, because the changes to the project were not substantial enough to alter the conclusions of the analyses, and the changes to the model assumptions affects only the 2025 analysis. (PRRDEIR, p. 1-3.)

**Changes To The Analysis**

As described in the following paragraphs, the proposed project and the Blueprint Alternative have changed slightly. These changes, for the reasons discussed below, are not great enough in and of themselves to alter the conclusions of the traffic or other EIR analyses. (PRRDEIR, p. 1-3.)

**Project Description**

The project description changed slightly, primarily due to the shifting of the high school site so that it would be within the boundaries of a single school district, changes in the mix of commercial and residential development in the Town Center, and the conversion of 30 acres designated Business Professional to Power Center/Business Professional. As shown in revised Table 4.7-14 (below), the changes to the proposed project would result in an estimated 195,246 trips, compared to 192,788 trips under the project analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR (an increase of approximately 1.5 percent in daily trips). Based on a review of the Existing Plus Project volumes and analysis, the increase in project trips would not be great enough to trigger new or substantially more severe impacts. No other changes to existing conditions were identified, except that some segments and intersections were added to the analysis (see explanation above). Therefore, the Existing Plus Project scenario was not reanalyzed except for the new segments and intersections. Similarly, the 2020 Roseville Capital Improvements Program (CIP) assumptions have not changed, and the changes to the project are not great enough to alter the conclusions of the analysis in the Revised Draft EIR, so those impacts have not been reanalyzed. (PRRDEIR, p. 1-4)

Revised Table 4.7-14 summarizes the trip generation of the Specific Plan under the updated project description (Base Project). (PRRDEIR, p. 1-4.)

**Cumulative (2025) Development And Network Assumptions**

The cumulative network and land use assumptions changed based on updated information from the City of Roseville and Placer County. The changes to cumulative land use assumptions are shown in revised Table 4.7-15 appearing in Chapter Two of the Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR. The changes to the network are also described in Chapter Two. The network used in this updated 2025 analysis is shown in revised Figures 4.7-13, 4.7-17, 4.7-19, 6-8 and 6-10.
These changes are substantial enough to alter the projected traffic volumes and patterns, so the 2025 scenario was reanalyzed under “with” and “without” project conditions. (PRRDEIR, p. 1-5.)

**Blueprint Alternative**

As discussed above, the traffic model has been updated to reflect changes to the cumulative roadway network and development assumptions. In addition, the Blueprint Alternative has changed since the Revised Draft EIR was circulated for public review. As shown below the Blueprint Alternative is now estimated to generate 243,567 trips per day, compared to 242,912 under the alternative described in the Revised Draft EIR (an increase of approximately 0.25 percent). This increase in and of itself would not be great enough to substantially alter the impact analysis in the Revised Draft EIR. Therefore, the analysis of Existing plus Project and Roseville CIP traffic scenarios were not remodeled. (PRRDEIR, p. 1-5.)

**New Conclusions And Mitigation Measures**

Revisions to Revised Draft EIR Sections 4.7 and 6.3.4 are presented in their entirety in Chapter Two of the Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR. A “track changes” version of the text is also included in Appendix Y for those wishing to compare one version with the other. Chapter One of the Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR summarizes the major new conclusions in the revised text and additional proposed mitigation measures. (PRRDEIR, p. 1-6.)

**SECOND PARTIALLY RECIRCULATED REVISED DRAFT EIR (SPRRDEIR)**

**SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES**

The County has decided to revise Table 4.4-3 (Listed and Special-Status Species Potentially Occurring in the Specific Plan Area, Specific Plan Area Vicinity, or Off-site Infrastructure Areas), which appears in Section 4.4 (Biological Resources) of the Revised Draft EIR to include Conservancy fairy shrimp as a species that could occur in the project area. The species was recently found on a similar site west of the City of Lincoln in Placer County. Accompanying explanatory text appearing on page 4.4-14 of the Revised Draft EIR has also been modified to reflect the additional invertebrate species. Revised Draft EIR Impact statements 4.4-2 and 4.4-16 already address listed vernal pool invertebrates, such as Conservancy fairy shrimp, and no modifications to these impacts are necessary. Mitigation Measures 4.4-2 and 4.4-16 provide mitigation for impacts to the affected vernal pool species and habitat that would include Conservancy fairy shrimp, if present. The impacts remain significant and unavoidable with mitigation because the mitigation measures do not guarantee preservation of affected vernal pools. The changes concerning special-status species are presented in Chapter Two of the SPRRDEIR. (SPRRDEIR, p. 1-2.)

**SUPPLEMENTAL WATER SUPPLY ANALYSIS**

On February 1, 2007, the California Supreme Court filed its decision in the matter of *Vineyard Area Citizens For Responsible Growth v. City of Rancho Cordova*, reversing the lower court’s
ruling in favor of the respondents. The decision enunciates four overarching principles with regard to the manner in which water supply analyses should be performed when preparing environmental impact reports (EIRs) for large land use plans pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). These principles are described and discussed in Chapter Two of the SPRRDEIR. (SPRRDEIR, p. 1-2.)

In response to the Court’s decision, Placer County has undertaken a detailed review of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan Final EIR in order to ensure full compliance with the Court’s ruling and has decided to circulate a Supplemental Water Supply Analysis. The Supplemental Analysis includes a new Revised Draft EIR Section 4.3.5, which supplements and updates previous work, and a rewritten Revised Draft EIR Section 6.3.5. (SPRRDEIR, p. 1-3.)

One new Impact statement is added to the Revised Draft EIR as follows:

4.3.3-14A The long-term surface water supplies could yield less water than is projected, resulting in a permanent curtailment in development in western Placer County.

This effect is analyzed in Chapter Two of the SPRRDEIR and found to be significant and unavoidable. (SPRRDEIR, p. 1-3.)

In addition, an analysis is provided of the effects of implementing Mitigation Measures 4.11.7-1a and 4.11.7-1c, which relate to a temporary curtailment in water supply. Mitigation Measure 4.9-3 is also modified to address the potential effects of blasting in the alternative long-term water supply pipeline corridor. (SPRRDEIR, p. 1-3.)

Other topics covered in Chapter Two of the SPRRDEIR include a detailed description of each short-term and long-term water supply option, including information from the Sacramento River Water Reliability Study Initial Alternatives Report. New information is also provided regarding PCWA’s ability to deliver Middle Fork Project Water to western Placer County. In addition, water demand projections through year 2025 are provided for western Placer County and compared with available supply. Two new tables have been added, Tables 4.3.5-1 and 4.3.5-2, which demonstrate the assumed development buildout within the PCWA wheeling agreement service area and within western Placer County, respectively. The discussion concludes that there is a reasonable likelihood, though no guarantees, that one or more of the analyzed short-term supplies and long-term supplies will be available to the full project at buildout. (SPRRDEIR, p. 1-3.)

SUPPLEMENTAL TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

The County has decided to recirculate portions of Section 4.7 (Transportation and Circulation) and portions of Section 6.3.4 (Blueprint Alternative) related to transportation and circulation. The March 2006 Revised Draft EIR provided intersection analyses in four jurisdictions: Placer County, City of Roseville, Sutter County and Sacramento County. With the exception of Sacramento County, only the p.m. peak hour was analyzed, because a.m. peak hour was not typically analyzed in these jurisdictions. In response to requests received in comments on the
Revised Draft and Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIRs, a.m. peak hour traffic impacts have been quantified for Placer County and Sutter County (the latter was also provided in the October 2006 Final EIR). No a.m. peak hour analysis has been prepared for impacts occurring within the City of Roseville, however, because the City General Plan specifically refers to the p.m. peak hour. Additionally, an analysis of impacts to the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) crossing at Riego Road has been added. (SPRRDEIR, p. 1-3.)

**UPRR CROSSING IMPACTS**

Text is added to Section 4.7, Transportation and Circulation, to address the issue of UPRR Crossing impacts. Existing conditions are described as well as the regulatory setting and method of analysis, cumulative analysis, and impacts under the Blueprint alternative. These impacts were found to be less than significant and no new mitigation is proposed. (SPRRDEIR, p. 1-9.)

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

A new Section 4.13 has been added to the Revised Draft EIR. This section considers the impacts of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, including comparisons of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan and the Blueprint Specific Plan Alternative (“Blueprint Alternative”), on greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change (Section 4.13.3). This section also considers the impacts of global climate change on the reliability of the Project’s anticipated water supply (Section 4.13.4). (SPRRDEIR, p. 1-9.)

This information has been added to the EIR in response to recent heightened interest in the subject of global warming and climate change, and specifically, the State legislature’s passage and the Governor’s signing of Assembly Bill (AB) 32 in September 2006. The legislation is intended to control and reduce the emission of global warming gases in California. Although it did not amend CEQA or create any explicit mandate that CEQA documents address climate change issues, AB 32 requires both the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions and their reduction according to a schedule, including a reduction of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. Because the State of California views global warming as a serious environmental threat in California, the SPRRDEIR addresses the issue and provides full environmental disclosure of the possible effects of the project on greenhouse gas emissions, and proposes mitigation measures that would assist in reducing the project’s effects. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 1-9 to 1-10.)

Two new impacts statements and several mitigation measures are added to the EIR. The two new impact statements are:

**4.13-1** Development of the Project could potentially result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the significant cumulative impact of global climate change.

**4.13-2** The impacts of global climate change on water supply and availability could affect future water supply and availability in the Specific Plan area.
The SPRRDEIR concludes that the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan will not suffer a reduction in water supply due to climate change, for the reasons set forth under discussion of Impact statement 4.13-2, and no mitigation measures are required. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 1-10 to 1-11.)

VI.
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

For purposes of CEQA and these Findings, the Record of Proceedings for the Project consists of the following documents, at a minimum:

- The Notice of Preparation and all other public notices issued by the County in conjunction with the Project;
- The Final EIR for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan;
- All comments submitted by agencies or members of the public during the 45 day public comment periods on the Revised Draft EIR, the Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR, and the Second Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR;
- All comments and correspondence submitted to the County with respect to the Project, in addition to timely comments on the Revised Draft EIR, the Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR, and the Second Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR;
- The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan for the Project;
- Copies of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan and related documents prepared by staff after Board approval to conform to the Board's final decisions (e.g., in terms of including final the language of adopted policies, the final numbering of policies, changes to reflect errata identified in various documents);
- All findings and resolutions adopted by County decisionmakers in connection with the Project, and all documents cited or referred to therein;
- All reports, studies, memoranda, maps, staff reports, or other planning documents relating to the Project prepared by the County, consultants to the County, and responsible or trustee agencies with respect to the County’s compliance with the requirements of CEQA and with respect to the County’s actions on the Project;
- All documents submitted to the County by other public agencies or members of the public in connection with the Project, up through the close of the public hearing;
- Minutes and/or verbatim transcripts of all public meetings and public hearings held by the County in connection with the Project;
• Any documentary or other evidence submitted to the County at such public meetings and public hearings;

• Matters of common knowledge to the County, including, but not limited to federal, State, and local laws and regulations;

• Any documents expressly cited in these findings, in addition to those cited above; and

• Any other materials required to be in the record of proceedings by Public Resources Code section 21167.6, subdivision (e).

The custodian of the documents comprising the record of proceedings is Placer County Planning Director, whose office is located at 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 140, Auburn, California, 95603.

The Board of Supervisors has relied on all of the documents listed above in reaching its decision on the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, even if not every document was formally presented to the Board or County Staff as part of the County files generated in connection with the Project. Without exception, any documents set forth above not found in the Project files fall into one of two categories. Many of them reflect prior planning or legislative decisions with which the Board was aware in approving the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan. (See City of Santa Cruz v. Local Agency Formation Commission (1978) 76 Cal.App.3d 381, 391-392; Dominey v. Department of Personnel Administration (1988) 205 Cal.App.3d 729, 738, fn. 6.) Other documents influenced the expert advice provided to County Staff or consultants, who then provided advice to the Board. For that reason, such documents form part of the underlying factual basis for the Board’s decisions relating to the adoption of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan. (See Pub. Resources Code, § 21167.6, subd. (e)(10); Browning-Ferris Industries v. City Council of City of San Jose (1986) 181 Cal.App.3d 852, 866; Stanislaus Audubon Society, Inc. v. County of Stanislaus (1995) 33 Cal.App.4th 144, 153, 155.)

VII. FINDINGS REQUIRED UNDER CEQA

Public Resources Code section 21002 provides that “public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen the significant environmental effects of such projects[.]” (Emphasis added.) The procedures required by CEQA “are intended to assist public agencies in systematically identifying both the significant effects of Projects and the feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures which will avoid or substantially lessen such significant effects.” (Emphasis added.) Section 21002 goes on to state that “in the event [that] specific economic, social, or other conditions make infeasible such project alternatives or such mitigation measures, individual projects may be approved in spite of one or more significant effects thereof.”

The mandate and principles announced in Public Resources Code section 21002 are implemented, in part, through the requirement that agencies must adopt findings before approving projects for which EIRs are required. (See Pub. Resources Code, § 21081, subd. (a);
CEQA Guidelines, § 15091, subd. (a).) For each significant environmental effect identified in an EIR for a proposed project, the approving agency must issue a written finding reaching one or more of three permissible conclusions. The first such finding is that “[c]hanges or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15091, subd. (a)(1).) The second permissible finding is that “[s]uch changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15091, subd. (a)(2).) The third potential conclusion is that “[s]pecific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the final EIR.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15091, subd. (a)(3).) Public Resources Code section 21061.1 defines “feasible” to mean “capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social and technological factors.” CEQA Guidelines section 15364 adds another factor: “legal” considerations. (See also Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors (“Goleta II”) (1990) 52 Cal.3d 553, 565.)

The concept of “feasibility” also encompasses the question of whether a particular alternative or mitigation measure promotes the underlying goals and objectives of a project. (City of Del Mar v. City of San Diego (1982) 133 Cal.App.3d 410, 417.) “‘[F]easibility’ under CEQA encompasses ‘desirability’ to the extent that desirability is based on a reasonable balancing of the relevant economic, environmental, social, and technological factors.” (Ibid.; see also Sequoyah Hills Homeowners Assn. v. City of Oakland (1993) 23 Cal.App.4th 704, 715.)

The CEQA Guidelines do not define the difference between “avoiding” a significant environmental effect and merely “substantially lessening” such an effect. The County must therefore glean the meaning of these terms from the other contexts in which the terms are used. Public Resources Code section 21081, on which CEQA Guidelines section 15091 is based, uses the term “mitigate” rather than “substantially lessen.” The CEQA Guidelines therefore equate “mitigating” with “substantially lessening.” Such an understanding of the statutory term is consistent with the policies underlying CEQA, which include the policy that “public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen the significant environmental effects of such projects.” (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002, emphasis added.)

For purposes of these findings, the term “avoid” refers to the effectiveness of one or more mitigation measures to reduce an otherwise significant effect to a less than significant level. In contrast, the term “substantially lessen” refers to the effectiveness of such measure or measures to substantially reduce the severity of a significant effect, but not to reduce that effect to a less than significant level. These interpretations appear to be mandated by the holding in Laurel Hills Homeowners Association v. City Council (1978) 83 Cal.App.3d 515, 519-527, in which the Court of Appeal held that an agency had satisfied its obligation to substantially lessen or avoid significant effects by adopting numerous mitigation measures, not all of which rendered the significant impacts in question less than significant.
Although CEQA Guidelines section 15091 requires only that approving agencies specify that a particular significant effect is “avoid[ed] or substantially lessen[ed],” these findings, for purposes of clarity, in each case will specify whether the effect in question has been reduced to a less than significant level, or has simply been substantially lessened but remains significant.

Moreover, although section 15091, read literally, does not require findings to address environmental effects that an EIR identifies as merely “potentially significant,” these findings will nevertheless fully account for all such effects identified in the Final EIR.

CEQA requires that the lead agency adopt mitigation measures or alternatives, where feasible, to substantially lessen or avoid significant environmental impacts that would otherwise occur. Project modification or alternatives are not required, however, where such changes are infeasible or where the responsibility for modifying the project lies with some other agency. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15091, subd. (a), (b).)

With respect to a project for which significant impacts are not avoided or substantially lessened either through the adoption of feasible mitigation measures or feasible environmentally superior alternative, a public agency, after adopting proper findings, may nevertheless approve the project if the agency first adopts a statement of overriding considerations setting forth the specific reasons why the agency found that the project’s “benefits” rendered “acceptable” its “unavoidable adverse environmental effects.” (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15093, 15043, subd. (b); see also Pub. Resources Code, § 21081, subd. (b).) The California Supreme Court has stated that, “[t]he wisdom of approving . . . any development project, a delicate task which requires a balancing of interests, is necessarily left to the sound discretion of the local officials and their constituents who are responsible for such decisions. The law as we interpret and apply it simply requires that those decisions be informed, and therefore balanced.” (Goleta II, supra, 52 Cal.3d at p. 576.)

These findings reflect the independent judgment of the Board of Supervisors and constitute its best efforts to set forth the rationales and support for its decision under the requirements of CEQA.

VIII.
LEGAL EFFECTS OF FINDINGS

To the extent that these findings conclude that various proposed mitigation measures outlined in the Final EIR are feasible and have not been modified, superseded or withdrawn, the County hereby binds itself to implement these measures. These findings, in other words, are not merely informational, but rather constitute a binding set of obligations that will come into effect when the Board of Supervisors approve the Project.

The mitigation measures are referred to in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) adopted concurrently with these findings, and will be effectuated through the process of constructing and implementing the Project. For the purposes of this Project, the objectives, goals and policies in the Specific Plan serve as mitigation measures. Therefore, the MMRP lists
requirements in the Specific Plan as mitigation for the various environmental impacts associated with adoption and implementation of the Specific Plan.

IX. MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been prepared for the Project and has been adopted concurrently with these Findings. (See Pub. Resources Code, § 21081.6, subd. (a)(1).) The County will use the MMRP to track compliance with Project mitigation measures.

X. SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The Final EIR identified several significant environmental effects (or “impacts”) that adoption and implementation of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan will cause. Most significant effects were avoided altogether because the proposed Project, as revised over the course of the adoption process, contains requirements that prevent the occurrence of significant effects in the first place. The requirements of the Specific Plan itself mitigate effects identified in the Revised Draft EIR, the Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR, Second Partially Revised Draft EIR and the FEIR. Thus, the identification of additional mitigation beyond the requirements of the Specific Plan (the Project) was not, for the most part, necessary. Some significant impacts of implementation of the Specific Plan, however, cannot be avoided by the adoption of feasible mitigation measures or feasible alternatives; these effects are outweighed by overriding considerations set forth in Section XI below. This Section (IX) presents in greater detail the Board’s findings with respect to the environmental effects of the Project.

This section also does not attempt to describe the full analysis of each environmental impact contained in the Final EIR. Instead, this section provides a summary description of each impact, describes the applicable mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR and adopted by the Board, and states the Board’s findings on the significance of each impact after imposition of the adopted mitigation measures. A full explanation of these environmental findings and conclusions can be found in the Final EIR and these findings hereby incorporate by reference the discussion and analysis in the Final EIR supporting the Final EIR’s determinations regarding mitigation measures and the Projects’ impacts and mitigation measures designed to address those impacts. In making these findings, the Board ratifies, adopts and incorporates the analysis and explanation in the Final EIR in these findings, and ratifies, adopts and incorporates in these findings the determinations and conclusions of the Final EIR relating to environmental impacts and mitigation measures, except to the extent any such determinations and conclusions are specifically and expressly modified by these findings.
A. LAND USE AND PLANNING POLICIES

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the County has devised three criteria for judging potentially significant impacts that are related to land use and planning. Placer County has determined that two of the three are relevant to the proposed Specific Plan:

- The project would conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

- The project would conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

(RDEIR, p. 4.1-45.)

Because the policy language found in a County’s general plan is susceptible to varying interpretations, it is often difficult to determine, in an EIR, whether a proposed project is consistent or inconsistent with such policies. Case law interpreting the Planning and Zoning Law (Gov. Code, Section 65000 et seq.) makes it clear (i) that the meaning of such policies is to be determined by the Board of Supervisors, as opposed to County staff, EIR consultants, applicants, or members of the public, and (ii) that the Board of Supervisors’ interpretations of such policies will prevail if they are “reasonable,” even though other reasonable interpretations are also possible. (See No Oil, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles [1987] 196 Cal.App.3d 223, 245-246, 249.) Courts have also recognized that, because general plans often contain numerous policies emphasizing differing legislative goals, a development project may be “consistent” with a general plan, taken as a whole, even though the project appears to be inconsistent or arguably inconsistent with some such policies. (Sequoyah Hills Homeowners Association v. City of Oakland (1993) 23 Cal.App.4th 704, 719.) Furthermore, courts strive to “reconcile” or “harmonize” seemingly disparate general plan policies. (No Oil, supra, 196 Cal.App.3d at p. 244.) (RDEIR, p. 4.1-45.)

In light of these considerations, the discussions of General Plan (and Exhibit 1 of the Community Plan) consistency in this chapter – and indeed throughout the Revised Draft EIR – represent the best attempt of its authors to advise the Board of Supervisors of their opinions as to whether the proposed project is consistent with identified goals and policies of the General Plan and Exhibit 1 of the Community Plan. The public should recognize that the opinions expressed below are in no way binding on the Board of Supervisors, and may be contrary to the position ultimately adopted by the Board of Supervisors in the exercise of its discretion. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-46.)

With regard to agricultural resources, the County has drawn from Appendix G the following three criteria which Placer County uses to judge potentially significant impacts:
• The project would convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use.

• The project would conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.

• The project would involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

(RDEIR, p. 4.1-46.)

In addition to the above, the following criteria will be used to judge the significance of impacts:

• The project would result in the development of incompatible uses and/or the creation of land use conflicts.

• The Placer County Agricultural Commissioner, Planning Department, and the UC Cooperative Extension have concluded that loss of Farmland of Local Importance (which has impacts on the local economy, wildlife habitat, and visual open space) represents a potentially significant impact.

(RDEIR, p. 4.1-46.)

Impact 4.1-1: There could be conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies and regulations and the proposed Specific Plan. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-46.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan provides standards for development of the Specific Plan area. Maximums are established for the number of dwelling units as well as for commercial and industrial acreage. The standards emphasize the need to establish buffers between the Specific Plan area and other uses, and between uses within the Specific Plan area. The policies regarding buffers in Exhibit 1 refer to the operative provisions of the Placer County General Plan, which provide quantitative standards for buffer dimensions and other features, as described in Section 4.1.3 of the RDEIR. These standards are set forth as ranges. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-46.)

When comparing the Specific Plan to the requirements of Exhibit 1, several observations have been made regarding consistency with applicable land use plans, policies and regulations:
• The maximum number of dwelling units permitted by Exhibit 1 within the Specific Plan area is 14,132, although it is acknowledged that this density may not be achieved due to development constraints. An acceptable mix of non-residential uses includes a maximum of 80 acres for commercial, 160 acres of office and professional development, and to up to 300 acres of professional/light industrial development for a total of up to 540 acres of employment-generating uses. The Specific Plan proposes a total of 14,132 dwelling units, which is consistent with Exhibit 1. The Specific Plan proposes development of 67.5 acres of commercial, 67 acres of commercial mixed-use, 160.5 acres of business park/power center, and 34.5 acres of office, for a total of 329.5 acres of employment-generating uses. It is assumed that there will be overlap with the commercial, business park/power center, office uses and the mixed-use commercial. The above described allocations do not appear to pose a land use-related physical impact on the environment. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-47.)

• Exhibit 1 provides that the phasing of the Specific Plan shall maintain a balanced mix of land uses throughout the development of the Specific Plan area. Although the proposed Specific Plan does not propose a phasing plan, Figure 3-15 in Chapter Three of the RDEIR conceptually shows 2015 land absorption assumptions (initial phase of development) that have been used during preparation of this RDEIR. The land absorption assumptions appear to generally attain the balanced mix of the land uses goal through inclusion of the Town Center. However, the absorption assumptions may not fully reflect the various policies and guidelines pertaining to the village concept. The initial development appears to be linear in nature, being spread out along major internal roadways. The above described concerns regarding development form do not, however, appear to constitute a land use-related physical impact on the environment. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-47.)

• A 200-foot open space corridor is shown along the southern border of the Specific Plan area buffering low-density development from the Elverta Specific Plan area per Exhibit 1 of the Community Plan, and open space corridors are also shown along the southeastern border of the Specific Plan area buffering the low- and medium-density residential development from Dry Creek. Additionally, various other open space corridors are described as buffers separating uses within the Specific Plan area. Although the Specific Plan describes various buffering concepts (see Section 4.2 of the RDEIR for a more in depth presentation of these concepts), it may not achieve the level of buffering envisioned by Exhibit 1, which emphasizes the need to establish buffers between the Specific Plan area and other uses, and between uses within the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-48.)

Site-specific buffering is also not shown on the Specific Plan Land Use Diagram separating the SPA from more intensive land uses; however, a Specific Plan policy (Policy 7.16) provides for a minimum 50-foot separation between Specific Plan-proposed uses and the SPA. In addition, design techniques are recommended to allow for a compatible transition zone at the SPA edge. In addition, Business Park areas may not be adequately buffered from all residential areas, and the 200-foot to 300-foot buffer separations described in the Placer County General Plan may not be achieved. Policy decisions that will ultimately be made by the Board of Supervisors will determine the final interpretation of such matters. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-48.)
Curry Creek has transitioned from an intermittent to a perennial stream, probably due to an increase in urban runoff. The Placer County Zoning Ordinance requires a 100-foot centerline setback for all structures adjacent to a perennial stream. In addition, Figure 1-5 of the General Plan also describes a 100-foot setback from the centerline of perennial streams. The Specific Plan was reviewed to determine if this structural setback was achievable and was found to comply. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-48.)

- Exhibit 1 requires dedication of right-of-way for possible future light rail with a feeder bus network. The Specific Plan does not reflect a dedicated right-of-way for light rail purposes. However, the Specific Plan reserves a right-of-way along Watt Avenue for Bus Rapid Transit, which could be converted to or used for light rail. In addition, the Specific Plan shows a lane reserved for street cars along Town Center Drive between the west and east Village centers. Impacts regarding transit are addressed in Section 4.7 of the RDEIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-48.)

In the interest of fairness, County staff notes that, as to some of the issues discussed above, the project applicants maintain that their proposed Specific Plan, as submitted, does not raise any potential General Plan inconsistencies. In any event, although proposed buffers may not be fully consistent with the goals, policies, standards and guidelines of the Placer County General Plan, Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan and related documents for land use and development, these potential inconsistencies should be viewed as policy matters to be determined by the Board of Supervisors. Moreover, even if the Board of Supervisors determined that the proposed buffers did not fully comply with existing General Plan policies, the Board could nevertheless approve the applicant’s proposed buffers by adopting the proposed amendments to General Plan policies 1.H.5 and 1.H.6, as well as amendments to narrative languages on page 21 of the General Plan (see Section 3.1 in Chapter Three of the RDEIR). (RDEIR, pp. 4.1-48 to 4.1-49.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-49.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The impact is less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.1-2: There could be potential conflicts with a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-49.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

Placer County, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the National Marine Fisheries Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) entered into a NCCP Agreement on September 10, 2001. The agreement concerns the development of joint conservation plans under the California NCCPA and the FESA for the Placer Legacy Program. Refer to the Regulatory Setting discussion in this section for a description of the Agreement and Placer Legacy Program. The parties agreed that projects, actions, and activities proposed or implemented within areas covered by the Agreement during preparation of the corresponding NCCP/HCP should not compromise its successful development or implementation. The parties further agreed that interim projects should not be delayed solely due to preparation of the NCCP/HCP. The agreement established interim project review guidelines, and the proposed Specific Plan is subject to the guidelines included in the Agreement. The Specific Plan area has not been identified as an area for protection under the Placer Legacy Program. For a discussion of the Placer County Conservation Plan (now in preparation), and land proposed for protection by the Specific Plan applicants, see Section 4.4 of the RDEIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-49.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-49.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The impact is less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.1-3: Agricultural land, including “Important Farmland” would be converted to non-agricultural uses. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-50.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The Specific Plan area includes approximately 4,451 acres of agricultural land; however, approximately 225 acres of this land are within the area designated as SPA. Agricultural land within the SPA will not be directly affected by the proposed project, and will remain in its current zoning categories (Residential-Agricultural and Farm) minimum. Of the remaining 4,225 acres of agricultural land, 4,140 acres are classified as “Important Farmland” by the DOC
and local policy. Table 4.1-5 of the RDEIR provides acreages by farmland designation for the portion of the Specific Plan area to be developed. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-50.)

Once developed, these lands would no longer be available for agricultural uses. Even land within the Specific Plan area that is preserved as open space would be unlikely to be farmed, because it would be comprised primarily of natural areas and drainages surrounded by urban development. Therefore, development of the Specific Plan area at buildout would result in the loss of approximately 4,225 acres of agricultural land, and all active agricultural production within the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-50.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.1-3 Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-1a as it pertains to open space. In determining whether lands to be preserved under Mitigation Measure 4.4-1a adequately compensate for the loss of agricultural land due to development of the Specific Plan, the Planning Director shall consult with the Agricultural Commissioner prior to approval of any Open Space Mitigation and Management Plan prepared pursuant to Mitigation Measure 4.4-1a. For purposes of calculating the amount of agricultural land to be preserved off-site, no credit shall be given for on-site open space that is to be preserved under the Specific Plan. However, in reviewing Open Space Mitigation and Management Plans pursuant to Mitigation Measure 4.4-1a, and specifically in determining whether “substantial portion[s]” of the mitigation lands are in agricultural production or have the potential for agricultural production, the County may determine that Open Space and Mitigation Management Plans with very substantial percentages of agricultural acreage can also provide compensation for on-site open space acres that are not suitable for agriculture. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-51.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Significant and unavoidable.

Impact 4.1-4: Conflict with a Williamson Act contract could occur. This impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-52.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

There are no parcels within the Specific Plan area that are currently under Williamson Act contract. Approximately 90 acres were subject to a Williamson Act contract that expired in January 2005. One contracted Preserve, approximately 206 acres in size, exists on the north side of Baseline Road adjacent to several rural residences. Although currently designated for agricultural use by the General Plan, a portion of the Preserve is within the proposed Curry
Creek Community Plan area, and much of the southern perimeter of the Preserve is already bordered by existing residences. Development of the Specific Plan area will not alter this circumstance. Further, a major thoroughfare approximately 100 feet in width (Baseline Road) will separate future development from the Preserve area. Proposed development along the south side of Baseline Road within the Specific Plan area will be non-residential in nature, consisting predominantly of Business Park and Commercial forms of development. The nearest residentially designated land to the Preserve within the Specific Plan area would be approximately 700 feet away. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-52.)

The Placer County General Plan provides for agricultural buffers, as described in Section 4.1.4 above. Because the affected Preserve area may be used for rice production, the buffer should be 200 to 800 feet (and may be established anywhere within this range by a Specific Plan), and must include a 400-foot residential exclusion area. As described above, the nearest residential use to the Preserve would be approximately 700 feet away. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-52.)

In order to comply with the above buffer requirements, buildings adjacent to the Agricultural Preserve along Baseline Road (also see Impact 4.1-7 discussion) should be set back at least 200 feet from edge of the affected Agricultural Preserve. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-52.)

The Specific Plan proposes Policy 3.29, paragraph 3, that would require a 200-foot setback from the northern edge of the Baseline Road of right-of-way for all non-open space and non-infrastructure-related land uses located on the south side of Baseline Road along the portion of Baseline Road adjacent to any lands in Agricultural Preserve. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-52.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-52.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The impact is less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.1-5: Incompatible uses and/or creation of land use conflicts could occur within the Specific Plan area. This impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-53.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

As discussed in Section 2.5 in Chapter Two of the RDEIR, the Specific Plan provides for a streamlined approval process for projects pursuant to Government Code Section 65457, Public Resources Code Section 21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15182 and 15183. Under these
codes, projects may not be subject to further environmental review if County staff determines that the project is consistent with the Specific Plan and that the EIR addressed site-specific issues at a reasonable level of detail for the particular site at issue. This project streamlining also depends on how well the project has complied with mitigation requirements formulated and adopted in connection with Specific Plan approval. To assist with these determinations, the County has established a “subsequent conformity review process,” as described in Section 2.7 of Chapter Two of the RDEIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-53.)

If the criteria are met most subsequent projects will typically be subject only to approval of tentative and final subdivision maps, improvement plans, and design review by the County, prior to issuance of building permits. As described in the Placer County Zoning Ordinance, through the Design Review process, applications are approved, conditionally approved, or denied, based on consistency with the design standards and guidelines established for each district and the Specific Plan area in general. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-53.)

The Specific Plan provides for a mixed-use environment, which could lead to land use incompatibilities. Certain public and quasi-public land uses such as fire stations and the County corporation yard could also contribute to land use incompatibilities, particularly with regard to noise, light and glare. However, the Specific Plan contains a variety of techniques designed to ensure compatibility of uses and contains goals, policies and guidelines for this specific purpose such as: Goal 3.17 (Compatibility of adjoining land uses), Policy 3.29, (Compatibility of adjoining large lot rural and agricultural uses), Policy 3.30 (Compatibility of residential uses adjacent to commercial and employment uses), and the Design Guidelines included in Chapter VI of the Specific Plan. In addition, all proposed commercial and employment uses will be subject to Design Review, which will permit the County to review proposed uses for compatibility with adjacent existing and proposed land uses and impose compatibility requirements. Other sections of the RDEIR also contain discussions and proposed mitigation for potential incompatibilities. These include Mitigation Measure 4.2-6a related to alteration of views, Mitigation Measure 4.9-2 concerning control of stationary noise sources, and Mitigation Measure 4.9-4 designed to reduce traffic noise incompatibilities. Potential incompatibilities with the existing power line easements and substation within the Specific Plan area are also discussed under Impact 4.1-6 and agricultural conflicts are discussed under Impact 4.1-7. Light and glare from the County corporation yard and noise impacts related to the corporation yard and fire stations are discussed in Sections 4.2 and 4.9 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-53.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-54.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The impact is less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.1-6:** Land use conflicts could occur within the Specific Plan area due to the existing power line easements and proposed substation. This impact is potentially significant. (RDER, p. 4.1-54.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The Specific Plan area is crossed by electric transmission and distribution lines. These existing lines are part of WAPA, PG&E, and SMUD systems. The three power line easement corridors are primarily designated as open space under the proposed Specific Plan, which restricts intensive forms of development immediately adjacent to or under the power lines. Other related types of development proposed under the power lines includes a cemetery, religious site, and County corporation yard. The power line easements contain three 115kV transmission lines and seven 230kV transmission lines. In addition, a new 230/21kV distribution substation is proposed for an approximately six-acre site located at the intersection of Palladay Road and A Street, contiguous to and west of the existing PG&E electric transmission line. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-54.)

The transmission lines and a substation would emit electric magnetic fields (EMFs), which have been implicated in increased cancer risks in some studies (see Section 4.12 of the Revised Draft EIR for more detail). The substation, however, is substantially surrounded by non-residential land uses. In consultation with the California State Department of Health Services (DHS) and electric power companies, the California Department of Education has established the following standards for locating public schools near high-voltage power transmission lines:

1. A minimum of 100 feet from the boundary of a 50-133kV line easement
2. A minimum of 150 feet from the boundary of a 220-230kV line easement
3. A minimum of 350 feet from the boundary of a 500-550kV line easement

(RDEIR, p. 4.1-54.)

According to the Land Use Plan contained in the Specific Plan, the property lines of proposed school sites will be more than 200 feet from the existing 230kV lines in the Specific Plan area. No proposed school sites are in the vicinity of the existing 115kV lines in the western portion of the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-54.)

Currently, there are no standards for locating residential uses near high-voltage power transmission line easements. However, the Land Use Plan does provide a buffer of at least 80 feet between residential property lines and the 230kV power line easement that runs east-west through the Specific Plan area, and a buffer of at least 35 feet between residential property lines and the 115kV and 230kV power line easements that run north-south. (RDEIR, pp. 4.1-54 o 4.1-55.)

Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan suggests that the existing power line easements should be maintained as open space corridors and should be developed as pedestrian, equestrian, and/or bicycle trail systems. The Specific Plan proposes to use the power line
easement that runs diagonally through the western portion of the Specific Plan area as well as the two power line easements that run in a north-south direction across the western portion of the Specific Plan area generally in this manner; however, a corporation yard, cemetery and religious site are also shown within the corridors. Policy decisions that will ultimately be made by the Board of Supervisors will determine the final interpretation of the Specific Plan’s consistency with the Community Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-55.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.1.6 A minimum 100-foot setback shall be maintained between structures intended for permanent residential habitation and the 115kV utility lines (as measured from the nearest utility line). Similarly, a setback of 150 feet shall be maintained for the substation and 230kV utility lines. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-55.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant.

**Impact 4.1-7:** Land use conflicts could occur within and adjacent to the Specific Plan area between current agricultural uses and proposed development. This impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-55.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Because development will occur over a number of years, it is anticipated that some owners of land within the Specific Plan area will choose to retain their land in agriculture for a period of time while neighboring parcels may choose to develop. In addition, properties surrounding the Specific Plan area (including the SPA) could remain in agriculture for some period of time. This has the potential to place incompatible land uses in proximity to one another. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-55.)

Although the Placer County General Plan contains standards for buffers between agriculture and other uses, the buffers are designed to be retained in perpetuity, depending on their width and size, and would not be workable where landowners have approved entitlements that could be exercised at any time, such as properties within the portion of the Specific Plan area proposed for urban development. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-55.)

Properties north of Baseline Road are currently designated for Agriculture and properties within the SPA will remain in an Agriculture designation. Most of the affected area north of Baseline Road is within proposed urban development areas, including the Curry Creek Community Plan area and Sierra Vista Specific Plan area (and separated from the Specific Plan area by a major
thoroughfare: Baseline Road). Most of the affected area north of Baseline Road is also used for grazing and is not actively cultivated. For grazing or pasture land, the General Plan establishes a 50 to 200-foot buffer. The setback provided by the future Baseline Road right-of-way (approximately 100 feet) will satisfy this buffer requirement. South of the Specific Plan area is the Proposed Elverta Specific Plan area and other proposed development projects within the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan area. West of the Specific Plan area are properties designated for development by Sutter County. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-56.)

In the case of lands designated for development, and where entitlements have already been issued, or are being actively pursued, the use of agricultural buffers would not appear to be warranted. This condition appears to apply to virtually all of the surrounding properties, with exception of the SPA, an area north of the existing community of Riego (Figure 4.1-2) and another area north of Baseline Road in Agricultural Preserve (see Impact discussion 4.1-4). The area north of the Riego area would be buffered by the SPA and is unaffected by Specific Plan development; however, the Agricultural Preserve area along Baseline Road and the southern and eastern perimeter of the SPA would potentially be affected, and should be subject to General Plan established agricultural buffers. The proposed Specific Plan contains policies, (Policy 3.1), Urban/Rural Transitions, (Policy 3.2) Aerial Spraying Conflicts, and (Policy 7.17) designed to buffer agricultural lands and the SPA from incompatible uses. Specific Plan policy (Policy 7.17) provides for a minimum 50-foot separation between Specific Plan proposed uses and the SPA, and provides for stepped down densities approaching or adjoining agricultural uses. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-56.)

The majority of the SPA adjacent to the Specific Plan area is used as pasture. The General Plan requires a 50-foot residential exclusion area and a 50- to 200-foot buffer for other uses under such circumstances (the appropriate distance may be established anywhere within this range by a specific plan). All proposed uses adjacent to the SPA are residential or open space in nature. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-56.)

The area within the proposed Elverta Specific Plan area that is adjacent to the Placer County line is proposed for an Agricultural Residential designation with a 1- to 5-acre minimum parcel size. In recognition of this, the Specific Plan includes a 200-foot wide open space buffer adjacent to the Elverta Specific Plan area. East of the Elverta Specific Plan area the open space buffer narrows to 50 feet and is generally adjacent to Gibson Ranch Park. There is, however, an area of existing private open space between the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan and Gibson Ranch Park that is approximately 200 feet wide at its western extremity and tapering to a point as it approaches Dry Creek at the east end of the parcel. The parcel does not appear to be used agriculturally and, therefore, the narrower buffer does not present an agricultural land use conflict issue. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-56.)

In summary, within areas designated for urban development, the County’s Right to Farm Ordinance is still available to protect those continuing in agriculture and the State’s nuisance laws are also still available to protect homeowners and the County. For the SPA, where agriculture will continue, Specific Plan policies have been proposed that meet the standards prescribed by the General Plan. Other buffer areas have also been proposed with Sacramento County. In the event the Board of Supervisors adopts the proposed amendments to General Plan
policies 1.H.5 and 1.H.6, as well as amendments to narrative language on page 21 of the General Plan, as a matter of policy, the potential conflict may no longer exist. However the Specific Plan applicants have demonstrated their willingness to comply with current policy through inclusion of Specific Plan Policy 3.29. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-57.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-57.)

Significance After Mitigation:

This impact is less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.1-8:** There could be potential conflicts with the principles contained in the SACOG Preferred Blueprint Plan, which could lead to physical impacts on the environment. This impact is potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-57.)

Finding:

Changes or alternations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with potential conflicts with the principles contained in the SACOG Preferred Blueprint Plan. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The SACOG Preferred Blueprint Plan is not legally binding on Placer County land use decisions. Even so, however, the Blueprint Plan embodies the closest thing to a regional consensus about how local land use agencies in the greater Sacramento region can best deal with growth management issues over the next several decades, and for this reason the County may exercise its discretion under CEQA to consider whether conflicts between the proposed project and the development principles of the Blueprint Plan could lead to potentially significant environmental effects. (See CEQA Guidelines, Section 15125, subd. (d) (“[t]he EIR shall discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans and regional plans”).) A detailed comparison of the environmental impacts of both the proposed project and the Blueprint Alternative is provided in Chapter Six of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-57.)

SACOG’s seven growth principles are intended to reduce the number and length of automobile trips and conserve natural resources. In the context of developing the Specific Plan project as proposed rather than under the Blueprint Alternative, the following potential impacts are considered:
• increased congestion on regional roadways as a result of less concentrated development in the Sacramento region compared with the Blueprint Alternative, which would theoretically draw development away from areas that are currently in open space

• increased air pollution as a result of a larger number of vehicle miles traveled by residents living within the project area

• increased air pollution as a result of the larger number of vehicle miles traveled because of the less concentrated development in the Sacramento region (greater distances to regional employment centers) compared with more compact regional development under the Blueprint Alternative

• less efficient use of natural resources, such as land, water and energy, associated with the greater number of large-lot, detached single-family homes.

• greater potential to impact sensitive species, wetlands, agricultural lands, and cultural and historic resources when less compact development forms are used to accommodate predicted population growth.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.1-57 to 4.1-58.)

Development under the Blueprint Alternative is demonstrably more compact than under the proposed project. In residential-only land use designations, the Blueprint Alternative increases the overall density by 60% – from 5.4 dwelling units per acre to 8.6 dwelling units per acre. Commercial intensity increases are similar – with the exception of the Town Center commercial designation. The Blueprint Alternative also includes more mixed-use commercial, which means more dwelling units in proximity to commercial services and jobs, and a potential reduction in vehicle miles traveled as well as vehicle emissions. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-58.)

The overall impact on vehicle trips also depends on overall commuting patterns in and out of the Specific Plan area. Under the Blueprint Alternative, the jobs-to-housing ratio actually drops from .69 to .45, which would appear to increase the number of residents traveling to jobs in other areas. The overall effect depends on the location of those jobs. If these commuters work in close-in job centers, such as McClellan Business Center and Roseville light industrial and office parks, then the effect of a low internal jobs-to-housing ratio will be minimized in favor of a more positive regional outcome. A full analysis and comparison of vehicle miles traveled is presented in the Section 4.7 of the RDEIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-58.)

Another Blueprint growth principle designed to reduce vehicle trips and emissions is transit-oriented development. The Blueprint Plan concentrates high-density development along the BRT Line on Watt Avenue and other major thoroughfares that could potentially support bus and/or rail lines. It should be noted that the proposed project already clusters high-density development near potential transit corridors. However, the Blueprint Plan would increase the density in transit-oriented developments, intensifying the effect. Moreover, the increased density around transit corridors would make more frequent stops by buses and trains more economical, further encouraging ridership. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-58.)
In terms of conservation of natural resources, the denser development of the Blueprint Plan will likely reduce per capita water consumption due to a decrease in irrigated landscaping associated with large residential lots. However, overall water consumption may go up since the decreased per capita water consumption may not entirely offset the increased water consumption from a 53% increase in total dwelling units. The PCWA has conducted a Water Supply Assessment, which is discussed in Appendix M and Section 4.11 of the RDEIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-58.)

The Blueprint Plan also offers the potential to preserve habitat and avoid sensitive resources in other parts of the Sacramento region by providing an increased supply of housing that will otherwise over time, be built instead in areas that are currently in agriculture/open space. However, development under a Blueprint Alternative does not currently provide a mechanism for ensuring that this open space is not otherwise lost, with the exception of any purchases or easements that are secured as mitigation for loss of habitat or other resources as a direct result of the project. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-59.)

Due to the large number of variables that Placer County does not control, (e.g., land use decisions on pending planning projects in surrounding jurisdictions such as Roseville, Lincoln, Rocklin, and Sutter and Sacramento Counties), Placer County cannot ensure through adoption of a SACOG Blueprint-compatible plan that the enumerated beneficial regional consequences would materialize. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-59.)

Mitigation Measures:

No feasible mitigation measures are available (other than approval of the Blueprint Alternative, should the Board of Supervisors consider it desirable and feasible from a policy perspective).

Significance After Mitigation:

Potentially significant.

**Impact 4.1-9:** Amendment of the County General Plan to allow project-specific buffers to be established with adoption of a Specific Plan could result in adverse environmental effects. This impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-59.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The current General Plan provides that buffers will be determined through the “…County’s specific plan, land use permit, and/or subdivision review process…,” but also establishes minimum standards that are reflected in Table 1-4 of the RDEIR, and Figures 1-2 through 1-6 of
the *Placer County General Plan*. Through practice, it has been found that the minimum standards are not always compatible or workable in each situation. In addition, minimum standards tend to become maximum standards at the point of implementation. It is, therefore, proposed to amend the General Plan to permit the County to establish buffers that are specific and unique to the project under consideration. This exception would only apply when a specific plan is proposed, and subsequently adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Because adoption of a specific plan is a discretionary action requiring a full CEQA-related environmental review, any specific buffer proposals would be assessed for their environmental effects at the point a specific plan application is submitted. Because the proposed change would only become operative in association with a subsequent discretionary action this is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-59.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-59.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

This impact is less than significant without mitigation.

**Off-Site Infrastructure Impacts**

**Impact 4.1-10:** There could be loss of farmland due to installation of utilities in off-site utility corridors. This impact is *less than significant*. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-60.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Some mapping units present in off-site utility corridors are classified as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Where construction will occur within existing roadways, no impact will occur. Where utility lines are placed on agricultural land, the area of surface disturbance or loss of agricultural use will be temporary during construction. Upon installation of lines, the surface use will be returned with the exception of minor points of access and pump stations. Potential impacts associated with utility line construction are considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-60.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-60)

**Significance After Mitigation:**
This impact is less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.1-11:** Land use conflicts could be created by expansion of existing wastewater treatment plants. This impact is *less than significant.*

(RDEIR, p. 4.1-60.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant.

(Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

It is anticipated that plant expansions could occur at either the DCWWTP and/or the SRWTP. This could result in a minor increase in plant footprint and activity within the existing facility sites. However, both facilities have been long established at their current locations for a significant period of time. DCWWTP is predominantly surrounded by open space and commercial/industrial activity, although there are scattered rural residences north and east of the plant. The most significant land use in proximity to the DCWWTP is the City of Roseville Corporation Yard. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-60.)

The SRWTP treatment facilities currently occupy approximately 900 acres near the center of the 3,500-acre site. Permanent bufferlands surround the existing treatment facilities and planned expansion areas of the SRWTP site to reduce the potential for noise and odor complaints and to protect against urban encroachment. SRCSD has established a 1,000- to 3,000-foot-wide residential incompatibility zone within the northern, eastern, and southeastern boundaries of the SRWTP property. The SRWTP bufferlands are undeveloped and consist primarily of cultivated and undisturbed grassland. Future uses of this land are limited by SRCSD to natural habitat improvements, agricultural production, and other uses that enhance the land’s buffering function. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-60.)

Mitigation measures are already provided in the RDEIR to address construction noise and air quality effects (see Mitigation Measures 4.8-1, 4.8-2, 4.8-5, and 4.9-3). The minor increases in footprint and activity at these existing facilities would have little, if any, affect related to land use conflict. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-60.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-60.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

This impact is less than significant without mitigation.
**Impact 4.1-12:** Acquisition of existing off-site infrastructure and alteration of existing off-site land uses would occur due to the widening of Baseline/Riego Road and Watt Avenue. This impact is significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, pp. 4.1-60 to 4.1-61.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the acquisition of existing off-site infrastructure and alteration of existing off-site land uses due to the widening of Baseline/Riego Road and Watt Avenue. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

The Specific Plan proposes to widen Baseline Road between Valeraga/Fiddyment Road on the east and the Sutter County line on the west. Watt Avenue would be widened from Baseline Road on the north to approximately one thousand feet south of the Sacramento County line. The roadway constructed would be consistent with the Sacramento County General Plan, which provides that Watt Avenue is generally a 6-lane “thoroughfare.” In addition, five intersections would be improved along Baseline/Riego Road. Right-of-ways for road widenings are typically acquired equally on both sides of the existing roadway; however, in the case of Baseline Road, widening along the project’s frontage will initially occur primarily on the south side in order to minimize off-site encroachments. Land to the north of Baseline Road is not within the Specific Plan area and contains some existing structures, including residences that would be avoided under the proposed roadway alignment. Improvement of the five intersections along Baseline/Riego Road will not affect any existing residences or structures. Properties along the west and east sides of Watt Avenue, within and south of the Specific Plan area, also contain existing structures, including residences. The widening of Watt Avenue has the potential to result in the removal of existing structures, including at least one residence, and the alteration of other land uses, including the frontage of a cemetery, which could contain burial sites. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-61.)

Any displacement of persons as result of the roadway widening would be subject to the requirements of the California Relocation Statute (Government Code Section 7260 et seq.) as well as the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance Act and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. Under these statutes, whenever a program or project to be undertaken by a public entity will result in the displacement of any person, the displaced person is entitled to payment for actual moving and related expenses. In addition, owners of property are entitled to compensation at fair market value for any real property acquired or diminished in value. Although compensation will be provided, this impact of project implementation is significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-61.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are available. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-61.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Significant and unavoidable.

Impact 4.1-13: Potential impacts may occur as a result of compliance with Standard 8 (Agricultural Water Supply) of Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan. This impact is potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-61.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with compliance with Standard 8 of Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

As described earlier, Standard 8 of Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan states that “[d]evelopment within the Specific Plan area should assist in the provision of affordable agricultural water to surrounding agricultural lands. Sources of such agricultural water include reclaimed and retained water and newly developed surface water sources.” Based on extensive conversations with representatives from PCWA and others, the Specific Plan proponents propose to satisfy Standard 8 by paying a fee to the County or PCWA, which would expend the funds obtained in a manner that will facilitate the provision of affordable water to agricultural users within western Placer County. At present, PCWA and the City of Lincoln are considering the construction of additional recycled wastewater storage and conveyance facilities that will supplement current agricultural water deliveries in western Placer County. In order to arrive at an estimated fee sufficient to meet the policy objective of Standard 8, a project has been conceptualized for construction at the City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment and Reclamation Facility (WWTRF). The project would include the conversion of an existing stormwater retention basin and related infrastructure modifications to accommodate recycled water from the existing treatment facility. Recycled water would be discharged to Auburn Ravine Creek using the existing WWTRF discharge point. Recycled water would then be conveyed downstream where it would be withdrawn at existing and future PCWA diversion structures and used for irrigation of agricultural cropland. (RDEIR, pp. 4.1-61 to 4.1-62.)

Any alterations or new construction required to facilitate the additional storage and discharge to Auburn Ravine Creek would occur entirely within the current WWTRF site, which was previously approved for such uses by the City of Lincoln using the Environmental Impact Report, City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment and Reclamation Facility, which was certified by
the City of Lincoln City Council on March 9, 1999. Any construction outside the WWTRF site may require additional environmental review. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-62.)

Impacts related to the recycled water project would be primarily beneficial; however, any construction outside the previously assessed WWTRF site could include previously unreported impacts to biological resources, wetlands and riparian areas, as well as unsurveyed cultural resources. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-62.)

Noise and air quality impacts may also occur as a result of construction activity; however, such impacts would be temporary in nature and would occur in rural agricultural areas away from concentrations of people. Water quality impacts during construction and as a result of recycled water discharge to Auburn Ravine Creek could be a concern; however, any future construction would be subject to applicable provisions of Sections 401 and 404 of the federal Clean Water Act, and California Fish and Game Code Section 1600 et seq. Any water discharged to Auburn Ravine Creek must comply with Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations and with Waste Discharge Requirements established by the Regional Water Quality Control Board for the WWTRF. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-62.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.1-13a *Comply with all applicable mitigation measures set forth in the Environmental Impact Report, City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment and Reclamation Facility, certified by the City of Lincoln City Council on March 9, 1999 during construction and operation of the recycled water facility.*

4.1-13b *Prior to construction of any facilities not within the area assessed by the Environmental Impact Report, City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment and Reclamation Facility, such as potential future downstream diversion structures, perform an initial study in accordance with CEQA to determine subsequent environmental assessment needs. This should include consideration of site-specific biological, wetland and cultural resource assessments.*

4.1-13c *Compliance with mitigation measures set forth in the Revised Draft EIR or similar measures proposed by the City of Lincoln designed to reduce impacts to visual quality, water quality, biological resources, soils, cultural resources, air quality, and the noise environment, including Mitigation Measures 4.2-6a, 4.2-6b, 4.3.4-1c, 4.3.4-2a, 4.3.4-2b, 4.3.4-3a, 4.3.4-3b, 4.4-1a, 4.4-1b, 4.4-1c, 4.4-1d, 4.4-1e, 4.4-1f, 4.4-1g, 4.4-1h, 4.4-1i, 4.4-1j, 4.4-1k, 4.4-1l, 4.4-1m, 4.4-1n, 4.4-1o, 4.4-1p, 4.4-1q, 4.4-1r, 4.4-1s, 4.4-1t, 4.4-1u, 4.4-1v, 4.4-1w, 4.4-1x, 4.4-1y, 4.4-1z, 4.4-2a, 4.4-2b, 4.4-2c, 4.4-2d, 4.6-2e, 4.6-2f, 4.6-2g, 4.6-2h, 4.6-3a, 4.6-3b, 4.8-1a, 4.8-1b, 4.8-1c, 4.8-1d, 4.8-1e, 4.9-2, and 4.9-3.*

(RDEIR, p. 4.1-63.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Significant and unavoidable.

Cumulative Impacts

**Impact 4.1-14:** The Specific Plan will contribute to the loss of agricultural and open space land throughout Placer County, the region, and the State. This is considered a *cumulatively considerable significant impact.* (RDEIR, p. 4.1-63.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the cumulative loss of agricultural and open space land throughout Placer County, the region, and the State. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The undeveloped portion of western Placer County is largely comprised of “Important Farmland,” as defined by the State of California Department of Conservation. Most of this land is designated Farmland of Local Importance or Grazing. The majority of active agricultural acreage is used for grazing, but crops are cultivated in the area, including rice and orchards. Development in the cities of Lincoln, Roseville and Rocklin, as well as the unincorporated area of Placer County, has converted grazing and other agricultural lands to urban uses. Thousands of additional acres are approved or proposed for development as shown in Figure 4.1-2, including the Elverta Specific Plan, South Sutter County Industrial/Commercial Reserve, Curry Creek Community Plan, the Regional University and Community Plan, West Roseville Specific Plan, Placer Ranch Specific Plan, Lincoln Crossing, Sierra Vista Specific Plan, Creekview Specific Plan, RioVo Vineyards, Silver Creek, Lincoln 270, and Morgan Place. Most of the land converted by these projects would be of lower-quality soils used primarily for grazing. Farmland is also being converted to urban uses in more distant locales throughout the Central Valley. Although the conversion of individual parcels of grazing land would not have a substantial effect on agricultural productivity, the cumulative loss of thousands of acres of grazing and more productive cultivated land is considered significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.1-63 to 4.1-64.)

Similar to loss of agricultural land, valuable open space containing a variety of diminishing habitats and aesthetic values (see Sections 4.2 and 4.3 of the Revised Draft EIR) will also be lost. The incremental impact of the Specific Plan on the cumulative loss of agricultural and open space land in Placer County, the region and the state by converting over 3,500 acres of agricultural and open space lands to urban uses is considered a *cumulatively considerable significant impact.* (RDEIR, p. 4.1-64.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.1-14  Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-1a as it pertains to open space. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-64.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The impact will remain significant and unavoidable, and the project’s incremental contribution to this impact will be cumulatively considerable and significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.1-64.)

B. VISUAL QUALITY AND AESTHETICS

Standards of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines provides four criteria for judging potentially significant impacts that are related to aesthetics. Placer County has determined that two of the four are relevant to the proposed Specific Plan:

- The project would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
- The project would create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

(RDEIR, p. 4.2-55.)

A common source of technical information on the effects and mitigation of light and glare is the International Dark Sky Association. Although the Association recognizes the necessity for night lighting to maintain security, safety, utility and an attractive environment, it has identified a number of impacts from poor night lighting, including urban sky glow, glare, light trespass, a trashy appearing environment, and energy waste. The Association recommends use of quality lighting designs, shining lights down, use of timing controls, the use of the correct amount of light, and the use of energy efficient light sources. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-55.)

In addition to the above, the Placer County General Plan, Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan, Placer County Design Guidelines Manual and Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines Manual contain goals, policies, standards and guidelines that can be used to judge the significance of impacts. The relevant goals, policies, standards and guidelines have been excerpted from these documents and appear in Section 4.2.3 of the RDEIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-55.)

Impact 4.2-1: Urbanization of the Specific Plan area will alter views from surrounding roadways and properties. This impact is significant and unmitigable. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-55.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the alteration of views from surrounding roadways and properties as a result of the urbanization of the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Implementation of the Specific Plan will eliminate approximately 3,520 acres (this calculation assumes that the Special Planning Area [SPA] retains its present rural residential/agricultural character) of open space and agricultural views from surrounding roadways and properties, and will replace those views with residential, commercial, business park and light industrial uses. A limited amount of open space (714 acres) would be retained and would be visible from Baseline Road, Watt Avenue and Walerga Road; however, the retained open space would exist in an altered condition within an urban setting. Properties surrounding the Specific Plan area contain few residences; however, as development occurs along the east side of the Specific Plan area at Doyle Ranch and other locales, a number of residences would experience a change in their individual viewsheds as the Specific Plan builds out. (RDEIR, pp. 4.2-55 to 4.2-56.)

As noted in the discussion in Section 4.2.2 of the RDEIR, the Specific Plan area is typical of western Placer County and is not unique in appearance. Similar areas to the east within the City of Roseville and to the south within Sacramento County are undergoing a similar transformation from an open space/agricultural landscape to an urbanized setting. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-56.)

Because aesthetic considerations are often subjective and difficult to judge, two generally objective criteria are used in the RDEIR to establish the level of significance of the change. The first addresses the visibility of the landscape being altered and whether it will appear in the foreground, middleground or background of most viewers. Changes in the foreground are most significant, with distance reducing impact. The second criterion concerns visual contrast, which is a measure of the degree of perceptible change. This is often characterized as being a strong, moderate or weak change. Using this approach, a strong change would be immediately apparent and would dominate the landscape, whereas a weak change would be barely noticeable. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-56.)

A substantial number of viewers will see changes from Baseline Road, Watt Avenue, Walerga Road, and existing and future residences east of the Specific Plan area. With buildout of the Specific Plan area, changes will occur within the immediate foreground of those traveling on Watt Avenue and Baseline Road, and to a lesser degree Walerga Road. The project will also appear in the foreground of residences to the east of the Specific Plan area. For those viewers, the change will be strong because the landscape will be significantly altered from rural open space to an urbanized setting with urban density housing, commercial and industrial structures, walls and signs. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-56.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are available. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-56.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Although the urban environment that is ultimately built may be aesthetically pleasing to many, development will, nevertheless, significantly degrade the existing visual character and quality of the Specific Plan area. Based on the standards of significance, this is a significant and unmitigable impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-56.)

Impact 4.2-2: Urbanization of the Specific Plan area will alter views for those currently residing within the Specific Plan area. This impact is significant and unmitigable. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-56.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the alteration of views for those currently residing within the Specific Plan area as a result of the urbanization of the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

As noted above, implementation of the Specific Plan will eliminate approximately 3,520 acres of open space and agricultural views. This agricultural/open space vista is currently viewed from a number of residences in the Riego area that will remain after Specific Plan implementation. Specific Plan development will replace those views with residential, commercial, business park and light industrial uses. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-56.)

This change will generally occur in the foreground and middle ground of Riego area viewers. For most of these viewers the change will be strong, because the landscape will be significantly altered from rural open space to an urbanized setting with urban density housing, commercial and industrial structures, walls and signs. (RDEIR, pp. 4.2-56 to 4.2-57.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are available. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-57.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Although the urban environment that is ultimately built may be aesthetically pleasing to many, development will, nevertheless, significantly degrade the existing visual character and quality of the Specific Plan area. Based on the standards of significance, this is a significant and unmitigable impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-57.)
Impact 4.2-3: Views will be altered due to the construction of proposed water storage tanks. This impact is potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-57.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The Specific Plan proposes, as part of the water supply infrastructure, the construction of six water storage tanks. The proposed locations of these tanks are illustrated on Figure 3-14 and 3-18 in Chapter Three of the RDEIR. As shown on these figures, the storage tanks will be located adjacent to proposed open space, park, or public/quasi-public land use areas, with the exception of the recycled water tank, which is shown in an area designated High Density Residential. It is anticipated that these water storage tanks will be composed of concrete or steel with a capacity of approximately 3 million gallons at each location. The tanks will be circular and will either be 130 feet in diameter and 30 feet in height, or 150 feet in diameter and 24 feet in height. If groundwater wells are developed on-site, it is possible that they could be collocated with one or more of the water storage tanks. However, wells, pumps and water treatment facilities would be subordinate in terms of visual impact, with the viewer’s eye drawn to the larger and taller water storage tank. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-57.)

Construction of these storage tanks has the potential to result in the alteration of views of the Specific Plan area and from open space areas within the Specific Plan area. However, the water storage tanks will not exceed 30 feet in height and will be in proximity to structures of similar height that will be allowed under the Specific Plan; therefore, the water storage tanks will not appear as prominent features when viewing the area. Additionally, the storage tanks will be constructed as part of an overall conversion of the area from rural open space to urban and suburban uses and will therefore be considered common and appropriate to the region by most viewers. Within the context of the proposed development, alteration of views of the Specific Plan area due to the presence of water storage tanks is less than significant. However, because five of the proposed water storage tanks are placed adjacent to open space areas, they have the potential to degrade the visual appearance of and the views from within, open space areas. Based on the standards of significance, this is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-57.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.2-3 Water storage tanks shall be subject to review and approval pursuant to the County’s Design Review process. In concert with Design Review, a landscaping plan that softens the visual appearance of the tanks from open space areas shall be submitted, and shall conform to the standards contained in the Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines Manual. (RDEIR, pp. 4.2-57 to 4.2-58.)
Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant.

**Impact 4.2-4:** New sources of light and glare will be introduced with buildout of the Specific Plan area. This impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-58.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Although approximately 150 rural residences exist in the Specific Plan area, primarily in the northwest corner, the change in landscapes will predominantly be from an open space and agricultural environment to one that is highly urbanized. This will result in the introduction of significant additional sources of light and potential glare. These include automobile headlights, structure lighting, street lights, signs, park and athletic field lighting, and lighting at the proposed County-owned corporation yard. Because much of the Specific Plan area is essentially devoid of light at the present time, this change will be substantial. The Specific Plan contains significant detail concerning project lighting design, including street lighting, pedestrian pathway lighting, recreation areas and athletic facilities lighting, parking lot lighting, landscape lighting, service areas and security lighting, and building identification and street number lighting. Additionally, the Specific Plan contains numerous policies concerning control of light and glare associated with these lighting features in proximity residential and other areas. The Specific Plan also contains a number of design guidelines and standards controlling the use of building materials and painted surfaces, which are intended to control glare from sources such as unpainted metal, or other reflective surfaces. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-58.)

Illumination of signs is addressed in the Placer County Zoning Ordinance in Section 17.54.170F. Lighting is also addressed in the *Placer County Design Guidelines Manual*, which provides for the screening of lighting adjacent to residential areas, directing lighting away from roadways, and the minimization of upward lighting. The *Placer County General Plan* also discourages lighting that shines unnecessarily onto adjacent properties or into the night sky (Policy 1.O.9). (RDEIR, p. 4.2-58.)

The International Dark Sky Association recognizes the necessity for night lighting to maintain security, safety, utility and an attractive environment and has identified a number of impacts from poor night lighting, including urban sky glow, glare, light trespass, a trashy appearing environment, and energy waste. The Association recommends use of quality lighting designs, shining lights down, use of timing controls, the use of the correct amount of light, and the use of energy efficient light sources. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-58.)
The lighting standards and guidelines in the proposed Specific Plan have been reviewed against adopted County policy and the standards maintained by the International Dark Sky Association, and have been found to be in substantial conformity. The Specific Plan contains detailed lighting and building material design guidelines, and policies intended to control light, glare and spill over. These guidelines and policies include directing lighting downward, maximum height requirements, and utilization of cut-off fixtures to minimize visibility from adjacent areas. These guidelines and policies comply with established standards and the impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-58.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-58.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

This impact is less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.2-5:** Potential visual incompatibilities could occur due to the provision of inadequate separation between Gibson Ranch Park and the SPA. This impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-59.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Although implementation of the Specific Plan will alter the existing visual character and quality of the Specific Plan area, it is arguable whether a change from an open space/agricultural landscape to an urban landscape always results in less aesthetic appeal. As noted previously, in order to ensure that urban or developed landscapes have significant aesthetic appeal, the County has adopted several goals, policies, standards and guidelines to promote high quality design and visual appearance. Key Placer County General Plan statements pertinent to Specific Plan design and visual appearance include policies that require transitional landscaping between developed areas and adjacent open space (Policy 1.K.3), creation of mixed-use areas with community focal points (Policy 1.O.7), creation of activity pockets (Policy 1.O.8), and the clustering of the tallest buildings in core areas with a transitioning down of building height in surrounding areas (Policy 1.O.10). (RDEIR, p. 4.2-59.)

Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan provides more precise standards for development of the Specific Plan area, which amplify and expand upon the goals and policies of the Community Plan. The standards emphasize the need to establish buffers between the Specific Plan area and other uses. The policies regarding buffers in Exhibit 1 refer to the operative provisions of the Placer County General Plan, which provide quantitative standards for buffer dimensions and other features, as described in Section 4.1.3 of the Revised Draft EIR.
These standards are set forth as ranges. However, the applicants have proposed that the General Plan be amended to permit deviation from these quantitative standards when adequate buffers are proposed as part of a Specific Plan (see discussion of Land Use Impact 4.1-9). (RDEIR, p. 4.2-59.)

A 200-foot open space corridor is shown along the southern border of the Specific Plan area buffering low density development from the Elverta Specific Plan area (Specific Plan Policy 7.17), and open space corridors are also shown along the southeastern border of the Specific Plan area buffering the low and medium density residential development from Dry Creek. Additionally, various other open space corridors are described as buffers separating uses within the Specific Plan area. However, only a 50-foot buffer is provided between Gibson Ranch Park in Sacramento County, and generally, only a 50-foot buffer is shown between proposed urban uses and the SPA. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-59.)

Land Use Impact 4.1-7 discusses Gibson Ranch Park and SPA buffers from a land use compatibility perspective. Of concern here are visual impacts. In the case of Gibson Ranch Park, there is an area of existing private open space between the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area and Gibson Ranch Park that is approximately 200 feet wide at its western extremity and tapering to a point as it approaches the Dry Creek riparian area at the east end of the parcel. This intervening ownership and existing vegetation visually buffer the Specific Plan area from Gibson Ranch Park. In addition, the Specific Plan makes provisions for added visual separation, as shown on Figure 4.2-6. Similarly with the SPA, the Specific Plan has provided visual separators for the SPA properties (Specific Plan Policy 7.16 and Figures 4.2-6 and 4.2-7). Due to the agricultural/rural residential nature of the SPA, most residences are more than 200 feet from proposed urban development. The proposed separators and landscaping, when combined with existing vegetation and distances to receivers, make visual impacts related to separators less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-60.)

Significance After Mitigation:

This impact is less than significant without mitigation.

Off-Site Infrastructure Impacts

Impact 4.2-6: Views could be altered due to off-site utility line and roadway construction. This is impact is potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-60.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the
alteration of views due to off-site utility line and roadway construction within the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Off-site roadway widening and construction of several off-site utility lines will be required for Specific Plan implementation. Because utilities will be placed underground, visual impacts will be related to the period of construction and revegetation, with the potential exception of utility line access sites, pump stations and similar facilities where some portion of the facility may remain above ground. Pump stations and similar facilities are also a potential source of light and glare. Roadway widening will occur adjacent to existing roadways and will not introduce a new visual element. Revegetation of construction sites will be particularly important where off-site infrastructure construction would affect the Dry Creek corridor. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-60.)

Visual impacts during construction are temporary in nature consisting of views of construction equipment, construction materials and earth stockpiling, and are considered less than significant. Visual impacts related to removal of vegetation and permanent above ground structures/lighting are potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-60.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.2-6a All areas containing natural vegetation or landscape material that are disturbed during utility line and roadway construction shall be revegetated upon completion of work utilizing plant materials similar to those disturbed. Revegetated areas shall be actively maintained until fully established, in accordance with the standards and provisions contained in the County’s Landscape Design Guidelines. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-60.)

4.2-6b All permanent utility line-related structures extending above ground shall be screened where feasible using a combination of berms, mounds, landscape material, decorative fencing/walls, or other screening feature approved by the Placer County Development Review Committee, consistent with the Placer County Design Guidelines and the Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines. In addition, any proposed roadway and utility pump station lighting shall be directed downward using cut-off fixtures to minimize lighting effects on adjacent areas and the night sky. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-61.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Significant and unavoidable.

Impact 4.2-7: Views could be altered due to expansion/improvement of off-site wastewater treatment facilities. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-61.)
Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The Specific Plan will require expansion of the DCWWTP and, potentially, the SRWTP (see Section 4.1 of the Revised Draft EIR for added description of these facilities). These improvements would be constructed entirely within the existing wastewater treatment plant sites and adjacent to existing wastewater treatment facilities, and will therefore not change or have a significant impact on views of the area. This impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-61.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-61.)

Significance After Mitigation:

This impact is less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.2-8: New sources of light and glare may be created due to off-site infrastructure construction. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-61.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Light and glare impacts related to off-site infrastructure construction will be temporary in nature. In addition, extended nighttime activity, when light and glare would most likely occur, will be restricted by mitigation measures contained in Section 4.9 of the Revised Draft EIR, which regulate the hours for construction activity. This impact is, therefore, less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-61.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-61.)

Significance After Mitigation:

This impact is less than significant without mitigation.
Cumulative Impacts

Impact 4.2-9: The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative alteration of views in rural west Placer County. This impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-61.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the cumulative alteration of views in rural west Placer County. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The landscape in western Placer and northern Sacramento counties has changed rapidly over the last decade from one of generally rural open space and agriculture to urban. Antelope and the City of Roseville are rapidly building out, contributing to the landscape change. Several land development proposals envisioned by the Placer County and Sacramento County general plans have received their entitlements, or are seeking them, including the Elverta Specific Plan, Morgan Creek, Doyle Ranch, Riolo Vineyards, Silver Creek and Morgan Place. Other areas north of Baseline Road, including the Sierra Vista Specific Plan, Creekview Specific Plan, and Regional University are now proposed for urbanization, and proponents are seeking general plan amendments. In addition, the City of Roseville has adopted the West Roseville Specific Plan. Although the urban environment that is ultimately built could be aesthetically pleasing to many, these cumulative changes will significantly degrade the existing visual character and quality of the area. (RDEIR, pp. 4.2-61 to 4.2-62.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are available. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-62.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Based on the standards of significance, the cumulative impacts of the project and related projects are significant, and the project’s incremental contribution to this impact is itself cumulatively considerable and thus significant. This impact cannot be mitigated to a less than cumulatively considerable level and thus is unavoidable.

Impact 4.2-10: Cumulative impacts may occur that are related to introduction of new sources of light and glare. This impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-62.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the introduction of new sources of light and glare in the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Similar to alteration of views, continued development in western Placer and northern Sacramento counties will lead to an increase of light and glare. Although project-specific impacts can be mitigated through good design, the continued addition of more forms of night lighting will lead to the spread and intensification of the already present “sky glow” that blocks out views of the night sky. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-62.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are available. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-62.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Based on the standards of significance, the cumulative impacts of the project and related projects are significant, and the project’s incremental contribution to this impact is itself cumulatively considerable and thus significant. This impact, though substantially lessened through project-specific mitigation, cannot be mitigated to a less than cumulatively considerable level and thus is unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.2-62.)

C HYDROLOGY, WATER RESOURCES, AND WATER QUALITY

The purpose of the hydrology, water resources and water quality analysis is to assess potential impacts that could occur with regard to these three topics during and after implementation of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan. Regional hydrological impacts related to surface water supply (e.g., Sacramento River, American River) are also addressed in this section, including the effects of the Specific Plan water supply on hydropower generated by affected reservoirs. The Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) is also proposing that a backup groundwater component be developed in conjunction with the Specific Plan (PCWA Water Supply Assessment, Appendix M of the Revised Draft EIR). This proposal is also assessed in this section. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-1.)

In order to make the discussion in this section more understandable to the reader, it has been divided into the following subsections:

4.3.2 Hydrology and Flood Control
4.3.3 Water Resources (Water Supply)
4.3.4 Water Quality
4.3.2 Hydrology and Flood Control

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a project could have a significant effect on hydrology and flooding if it would:

- substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.

- substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site.

- create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.

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

- place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows.

- expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam.

Impact 4.3.2-1: Urbanization of the Specific Plan area for residential, commercial and roadway purposes would increase impervious surface area and, therefore, increase runoff volume and peak flows. Increased runoff due to urbanization could contribute to downstream flooding and erosion, including downstream impacts on Sacramento and Sutter Counties. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-18.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.
Explanation:

Although the potential drainage area anticipated to be developed within the Specific Plan area would be small in comparison to the 26,000-square-mile drainage basin, the increase in runoff quantity associated with urbanization and roadway improvements would be substantial in relation to existing runoff volumes. Given the existing potential for flooding, the increase in runoff associated with urbanization could contribute to localized and downstream flooding. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-19.)

Impervious areas such as roofs, parking lots, and roads would alter runoff patterns and increase stormwater discharge from the area by limiting ground infiltration. Small local drainage systems and existing culverts might not be able to accommodate the increase in runoff due to the development of the overall area. Increased discharges could increase water levels and could promote potential bank erosion within these smaller creeks. Some existing culverts might be incapable of accepting the increased runoff, which could cause potential localized flooding and possibly undermine roads at crossings. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-19.)

A site-specific model was created for the project as part of the drainage analysis included in the Master Project Drainage Study. The model included the Specific Plan area and contributing watersheds and used pre-project, post-project unmitigated, and post-project mitigated conditions for the 2-year, 10-year and 100-year events. Results of the model include required detention basin peak flows and volumes to accommodate runoff at predevelopment levels and mitigate impacts at the project boundary. Details of the collection methods are contained in Section 4.3 of the Revised DEIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-19.)

The volumetric impacts of the project have been computed using the “Rainfall Excess Methodology” for the eight-day 100-year event. An eight-day duration storm was chosen for this analysis because the accumulated runoff volume over long duration storms has affected low lying residents of Sutter County. The “Rainfall Excess” methodology provides a direct computation of the volume of runoff for a given hourly precipitation distribution and comparison to infiltration rates. The detailed analysis is provided in the Master Project Drainage Study. A summary of the proposed mitigation is provided in Table 4.3-2 of the Revised DEIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-20.)

The results of the 100-year comparison analysis indicate that the proposed detention mitigation adequately mitigates the peak discharge rates to less than the pre-project amounts. In the 200-year analysis the pre-project and post-project mitigated analysis are virtually identical. The results of the analysis demonstrate that no adverse impacts would result from the project at Steelhead Creek, however, a negligible impact is reported in the area between the Specific Plan area and Steelhead Creek due to increased volumes being discharged during the timing of peak flow from the Sankey Gap. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-22.)

According to the Master Project Drainage Study, additional pumping would not reduce this impact, although pumping had been previously recommended (see Appendix S, WRIME Addendum I). After refinement of the hydrology, the Master Project Drainage Study now finds that this impact could be reduced by installing control structures on some of the Steelhead Creek
tributary detention structures within the Specific plan area and monitoring the spill at Sankey Gap. Gates could be installed when the Sankey Gap spill occurs, reducing runoff volumes during this period. The Sankey Gap spill is a special event, which is known to occur when flows in the Natomas Cross Canal overtops Sankey Road and spill into the Natomas and Steelhead Creek basins. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-22.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.3.2-1a  New development applications shall be accompanied by a site-specific project drainage report that is consistent with the approved *Master Project Drainage Study*. The project drainage report shall be reviewed and approved by the Placer County Public Works Department during the Subsequent Conformity Review Process and prior to improvement plan approval for new development. The drainage report shall be prepared by a Registered Civil Engineer and shall be in conformance with the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual and Placer County Code. The project applicant shall be financially responsible for all stormwater drainage facility maintenance requirements. The project drainage report shall include, at a minimum, written text addressing existing conditions, the effects of project improvements, all appropriate calculations, a watershed map, potential increases in downstream flows and volumes, proposed on-site improvements, and drainage easements, if necessary, to accommodate flows from the site. The drainage report shall demonstrate compliance with all mitigation measures included in the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-22 to 4.3-23.)

4.3.2-1b  New development within the Specific Plan area shall reduce post-development stormwater runoff peak flows and volumes to pre-development levels for the 2-, 10-, 25- and 100-year storm events through the construction of regional retention and detention facilities for the Curry Creek and Steelhead Creek watersheds. Retention/detention facilities in the Steelhead Creek watershed shall incorporate gates, as described in the *Master Project Drainage Study*, to control flows during a Sankey Gap spill. A protocol shall be established by Placer County in cooperation with the Sacramento Area Flood Control District for monitoring of the Sankey Gap spill and for operation of the gates. Responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the gates shall be assumed by the County Service Area that will serve the Specific Plan area. Construction of regional retention and detention facilities shall be prior to or concurrent with the initial development of the Specific Plan area. Runoff from development within the Dry Creek watershed shall not be detained or retained. Retention and detention facilities shall be designed in accordance with the requirements of the *Placer County Storm Water Management Manual* that are in effect at the time of submittal, and to the satisfaction of the Department of Public Works. Retention and detention facilities shall be designed to be consistent with the *Master Project Drainage Study for the Specific Plan*. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-23.)

4.3.2-1c  Drainage facilities, for purposes of collecting runoff on individual lots, shall be designed in accordance with the requirements of the *Placer County Storm Water Management Manual* that are in effect at the time of submittal, to the satisfaction of
the Department of Public Works. These facilities shall be constructed with subdivision improvements, and easements provided as required by the Department of Public Works. Maintenance of these facilities shall be provided by a new County Service Area (CSA), an expanded CSA #28, or other responsible entity. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-23.)

4.3.2-1d The location, size and ownership of any canals in the Specific Plan area shall be described in the project drainage report and shown on improvement plans. The Department of Public Works shall be provided with a letter from the agency controlling the canal describing any restrictions, requirements, easements, etc. relative to project construction. Said letter shall be provided to the Department of Public Works prior to the approval of improvement plans. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-23.)

4.3.2-1e New development in the Specific Plan area within the Dry Creek watershed shall be subject to the one-time payment of drainage improvement and flood control fees pursuant to the Dry Creek Watershed Interim Drainage Improvement Ordinance (Ref. Article 15.32, formerly Chapter 4, Subchapter 20, Placer County Code). The actual fees to be paid will be those in effect at the time the payment occurs. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-23 to 4.3-24.)

4.3.2-1f New development in the Specific Plan area within the Dry Creek Watershed shall be subject to payment of annual drainage improvement and flood control fees pursuant to the Dry Creek Watershed Interim Drainage Improvement Ordinance (Ref. Article 15.32, formerly Chapter 4, Subchapter 20, Placer County Code). The applicant shall cause the subject property to become a participant in the existing Dry Creek Watershed County Service Area for purposes of collecting these annual special assessments. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-24.)

4.3.2-1g New development shall not alter the post-development mitigated drainage shed boundaries identified in the Master Project Drainage Study in a way that would increase the peak flow runoff or runoff volume. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-24.)

4.3.2-1h Prior to any improvement plan approval (including plans for backbone infrastructure), the Master Project Drainage Study shall be submitted to the Placer County Department of Public Works for review and approval. The Master Project Drainage Study shall be in conformance with the requirements of Section 5 of the Land Development Manual and the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual that are in effect at the time of submittal. The report shall be prepared by a Registered Civil Engineer and shall include all drainage elements outlined in the Revised Draft EIR. The drainage facilities shall be designed for future, fully-developed, unmitigated flows from upstream development. Regional detention and retention basis, regional water quality basins, as well as regional drainage channel improvements shall be incorporated with appropriate design information along with appropriate phasing information. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-24.)
4.3.2-1i New development in the Specific Plan area within the Steelhead Creek (NEMDC) tributary shall be subject to payment of fair share stormwater volume mitigation fees to the County of Sacramento. The current fees range from $325.00 to $629.00 per acre. (Fee Schedule for Zone 11C) and are adjusted annually. The actual fees to be paid will be those in effect at the time the payment occurs. Prior to improvement plan approval, the applicant shall provide evidence to the Placer County Department of Public Works that the fees have been paid to Sacramento County. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-24.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures will reduce the impact of runoff quantity associated with development in the Specific Plan area to a less than significant level: (RDEIR, p. 4.3-22.)

Impact 4.3.2-2: Urbanization and development of the Specific Plan area could increase runoff to existing and proposed culverts within and downstream of the Specific Plan area. Increased flows conveyed to existing culverts could result in overtopping and flooding due to inadequate capacity for urbanized flow-rates and potential clogging from construction debris, sediment and/or vegetation. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-24.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Flooding is not limited to 100-year events alone, and often occurs in areas that restrict, prohibit or obstruct the flow of runoff during lower-frequency rainfalls. Capacity analysis of culverts, roadways, channels and stormwater facilities (both water quality and detention related) is critical to prevent and minimize areas of flooding. During wet-weather conditions, areas used for emergency access purposes (primary roadways) should be kept free and clear of debris and flooding conditions. Flooding within an area intended for emergency access purposes could result in delayed response to emergencies and limited access. Placer County Flood Control District policy requires the center 12 feet (one lane in each direction) of collector roadways remain unobstructed by runoff during 100-year events and all roadways to remain unobstructed during 10-year events. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-24 to 4.3-25.)

Designated drainageways, channels and swales that convey runoff to culverts can also carry debris, sediment and other potential forms of blockage. Overtopping culverts and potentially roadways can similarly place debris within roadways, result in pavement failure and undermine subgrade of pavement. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-25.)
According to the *Master Project Drainage Study*, culvert sizing for the project is optimized to maximize on-site attenuation, while providing the passage of the 100-year peak flows (for details, see Table IIIB1 of the *Master Project Drainage Study*). However, emergency access limitations, runoff within the travel path of the roadway, and associated potential adverse impacts resulting from flooding and less than adequate culvert capacity is considered to be a **potentially significant impact**. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-25.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.3.2-2a  **New development applications shall be accompanied by a site-specific project drainage report that is consistent with the approved Master Project Drainage Study.** The project drainage report shall be reviewed and approved by the Placer County Public Works Department during the Subsequent Conformity Review Process and prior to improvement plan approval for new development. The drainage report shall be prepared by a Registered Civil Engineer and shall be in conformance with the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual and Placer County Code. The project applicant shall be financially responsible for all stormwater drainage facility maintenance requirements. The project drainage report shall include, at a minimum, written text addressing existing conditions, the effects of project improvements, all appropriate calculations, a watershed map, potential increases in downstream flows and volumes, proposed on-site improvements, and drainage easements, if necessary, to accommodate flows from the site. The drainage report shall demonstrate compliance with all mitigation measures included in the Revised Draft EIR and adopted by the Board of Supervisors. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-25.)

4.3.2-2b  **New development within the Specific Plan area shall upsize any existing undersized culverts within the Specific Plan area conveying increased flows from the proposed development.** All existing culverts conveying development flow shall be identified with pre- and post-development flow quantities and capacities. All culvert analysis (existing and upsized) shall be designed in conformance with the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual to accommodate the 2-, 10-, 25- and 100-year storms. Flow consideration for debris clogging and sediment transport shall be provided. In addition to the 100-year event, 200-year events shall be evaluated for potential impacts to collector roadways, detention pond failure and other life-safety impacts. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-25 to 4.3-26.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

The above mitigation measures will reduce the impact of flooding and culvert capacity that would occur after roadway and storm drain improvements in the Specific Plan area to a **less than significant level**. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-25.)

**Impact 4.3.2-3:** Increased runoff due to urbanization and increase in impervious surface area could increase water surface levels within channels, swales and other drainageways. Urbanization and loss of open area could result in increased levels of flooding. Flooding, along with
increased velocities, could lead to bank erosion, elevated flood levels and increased runoff. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-26.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Existing capacity of the natural drainageways relies upon open undeveloped areas for shallow flooding and runoff storage. Loss of existing storage due to development would result in the need for additional channel capacity. Design considerations for actual urbanization, freeboard, side slopes, vegetation and inflow/outflow facilities will affect overall size of the channels, in addition to periodic crossings at roadways. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-26.)

A hydraulic evaluation was performed for the 2-, 5-, 10-, 25-, 50-, 100-, 200- and 500-year event. The HEC-RAS summary tables for all events are provided in the Master Project Drainage Study for the pre-project and post-project mitigated events respectively. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-26.)

The Specific Plan proposes to collect runoff within storm drainage systems that would discharge into channels and retention/detention facilities. These facilities would generally follow or be placed along the natural drainage courses within the Specific Plan area (see Figure 4.3-6). The flooding limits would be confined within the channels, generally providing three feet of 100-year freeboard to adjacent proposed structures. The channels would be excavated below the existing grades, and daylight at the downstream end to natural grades at the project limits. A low flow channel would be constructed throughout to confine the conveyance of year round nuisance waters. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-26.)

A low dam constructed of uncemented rock and broken concrete has been placed across Dry Creek immediately downstream of the Watt Avenue bridge within the FEMA-designated floodway. The low dam within the channel was constructed to irrigate pasture land that will be converted to other uses upon Specific Plan implementation. With project buildout, the dam, pump, intake structure and pipeline conveying the water will no longer be required. If left in place, the dam would unnecessarily impede flows, causing runoff backwater and clogging. (Also see Impact 4.4-30 and Mitigation Measure 4.4-30.) (RDEIR, p. 4.3-26.)

Although the Master Project Drainage Study proposes a design solution, flooding and increase of flows within drainageways is considered a potentially significant impact until site-specific project drainage reports are prepared and accepted by the County. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-26.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.3.2-3a  No grading or other disturbance shall occur within the post-project 100-year floodplain limit as identified in the Master Project Drainage Study except, as necessary to construct and maintain drainage improvements. The post-project 100-year floodplain shall be designated as a development setback line on improvement plans and final subdivision maps unless greater setbacks are required by other mitigation measures or conditions of approval. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-27.)

4.3.2-3b  New development applications shall be accompanied by a site-specific project drainage report that is consistent with the approved Master Project Drainage Study. The project drainage report shall be reviewed and approved by the Placer County Public Works Department during the Subsequent Conformity Review Process and prior to improvement plan approval for new development. The drainage report shall be prepared by a Registered Civil Engineer and shall be in conformance with the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual and Placer County Code. The project applicant shall be financially responsible for all stormwater drainage facility maintenance requirements. The project drainage report shall include, at a minimum, written text addressing existing conditions, the effects of project improvements, all appropriate calculations, a watershed map, potential increases in downstream flows and volumes, proposed on-site improvements, and drainage easements, if necessary, to accommodate flows from the site. The drainage report shall demonstrate compliance with all mitigation measures included in the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-27.)

4.3.2-3c  New development applications within the Specific Plan area shall identify the limits of existing and proposed floodplains in the site-specific project drainage report. Channel/swale construction and/or improvements with new development shall be designed in accordance with the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual and provide sufficient freeboard for the 100-year event and shall be identified with floodplain delineations. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-27.)

4.3.2-3d  The developer shall construct flood warning devices (e.g., rain gauges, stream gauges with radio transmitters) within floodplains as indicated in the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual and Placer County Code. The flood warning devices shall be shown on the improvement plans. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-27.)

4.3.2-3e  The Master Project Drainage Study shall demonstrate that the proposed development will not increase the 100-year floodplain water surface elevation. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-27.)

4.3.2-3f  The low dam, intake structure, pump and pipeline withdrawing water from Dry Creek shall be removed in its entirety, and the streambed returned to a natural condition, at the time irrigation of existing pasture land located within Property Group #5 of the Specific Plan area ceases. Upon removal of the dam, an effective combination of erosion and sediment control shall be implemented which may include measures...
such as covering exposed areas with mulch, temporary seeding, soil stabilizers, binders, fiber rolls or blankets, temporary vegetation or permanent seeding. In addition, best management practices (BMPs) shall be implemented during construction to reduce or eliminate sedimentation and reduce erosion in result of dam removal activities. BMPs may include sediment control practices such as filtration devices and barriers (e.g. fiber rolls, straw bale barriers and gravel inlet filters) and/or settling devices (e.g. sediment traps or basins). BMPs shall be developed in accordance with applicable federal, State and local agencies. Additionally, the dam removal shall be done in accord with all applicable federal, State and local requirements and/or permit conditions existing at the time of removal. Prior to removal of the structure, a drainage report shall be prepared demonstrating that the removal of the structure will not adversely increase flows downstream. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-27 to 4.3-28.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measures will reduce the impact on drainage capacity due to development within the Specific Plan area to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-27.)

Impact 4.3.2-4: Development and urbanization of the Specific Plan area could reduce pervious area, which in turn would limit the percolation process. Groundwater recharge within Specific Plan area could be limited to open spaces and detention facilities provided. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-28.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Existing agricultural uses of the property rely on groundwater for irrigation purposes. Groundwater relies on annual rainfall and percolation through pervious soils to recharge the system. The Specific Plan area is dominated (in excess of 90%) by Type D hydrologic soils, which have a slow infiltration rate with high runoff potential. As such, the project does not qualify as an important groundwater recharge area within the meaning of General Plan policy 6.A.10b (protection of important groundwater recharge areas). Some Type A and C soils are located in the southeastern part of the Specific Plan area, particularly along Dry Creek. The most likely area for recharge to occur would be along Dry Creek within the Type A soils area. This area, however, will remain in open space and its recharge potential will be unaffected by the proposed development. In addition, to the extent recharge could occur, regular discharges to stormwater treatment and detention basins will provide for regular flows that will remain in the basin areas and be available for recharge. Based on the low value of the Specific Plan area for recharge (with the exception of the Dry Creek Corridor, which will remain in open space), this impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-28.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-28.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.3.2-5:** There could be inconsistencies between the proposed Specific Plan and General Plan goals, objectives and policies related to increased runoff, erosion, and drainage infrastructure capacity. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-28.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

General Plan goals and policies are directed at minimizing impacts associated with increased runoff, erosion, and drainage infrastructure capacity, specific to the protection and utilization of natural drainage patterns. Development associated with the Specific Plan would result in increased surface water runoff, potential erosion and need for drainage infrastructure. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-28.)

The *Placer County General Plan* encourages the use of natural stormwater drainage systems to preserve and enhance natural features (Policy 4.E.1) and supports efforts to acquire land or obtain easements for drainage and other public uses of floodplains where it is desirable to maintain drainage channels in a natural state (Policy 4.E.2). The General Plan also states that the County shall ensure that new storm drainage systems are designed in conformance with the *Placer County Stormwater Management Manual* and the *County Land Development Manual* (Policy 4.E.4), and provides that the County will strive to improve quality of runoff from urban and suburban development through use of appropriate and feasible mitigation measures, including grassy swales, riparian setbacks, and other BMPs (Policy 4.E.10). (RDEIR, p. 4.3-29.)

The *Placer County Storm Water Management Manual* policies require natural drainageways to be used for storm runoff whenever possible. As shown in Figure 4.3-5 of the Revised DEIR, the current *Master Project Drainage Study* and Specific Plan make significant efforts to preserve major drainageways in their natural condition, including construction of parallel channels to avoid volumetric and water quality impacts. *Placer County General Plan* policies “encourage” use of natural drainageways and stormwater drainage systems, but do not mandate their retention. For example, Policy 4.E.2 suggests that natural drainage retention is desirable in some situations, but may not be desirable in all instances. The extent to which the County requires retention of natural drainageways under current General Plan policy is a matter of judgment on the part of decision makers, based on project-specific circumstances. Because General Plan
policy language does not mandate retention of natural drainageways, modification of existing drainageways does not constitute a General Plan conflict, and this impact is therefore less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-29.)

Additional General Plan goals are designed to reduce impacts to water quality from erosion, construction, and urban pollutants. Urbanization and associated improvements assumed in the Specific Plan would result in increased erosion, short-term construction water quality impacts, and long-term operational water quality impacts. Therefore, inconsistencies with General Plan goals and policies could occur. Impacts of the Specific Plan associated with water quality due to erosion, construction, and urban pollutants are identified in Section 4.3.4, and mitigation measures are proposed that would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-29.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-29.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Off-Site Infrastructure Impacts

Impact 4.3.2-6: Installation of off-site infrastructure could increase runoff volumes. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-29.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Installation of utilities to serve the Specific Plan area development is distinct from site urbanization and is not anticipated to result in additional impervious surface area or an increase in runoff. Design and installation of pipelines in off-site utility corridors is anticipated to remove and replace existing surfaces with similar materials. This would include soil and other earthen materials, or replacement of pavement in the case of utility lines within existing roadways. This is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-29.)

Roadway widening, as in the case of Watt Avenue and Baseline Road, planned intersection improvements and additions to wastewater treatment plants would add a minor amount of additional impervious surface. Although potentially significant, increased runoff impacts from these improvements can be mitigated. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-30.)
Mitigation Measures:

Compliance with Mitigation Measures 4.3.2-1a-i will reduce this impact to a less than significant level by requiring practices that will control potential runoff. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-30.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant.

**Impact 4.3.2-7:** Off-site utilities and roadways will encroach into areas that are within FEMA-designated 100-year flood zones. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-30.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The utility lines and roadway improvements along Watt Avenue will encroach into the FEMA 100-year floodplain of the Dry Creek drainage. In addition, the proposed long-term surface water supply line that will transmit potable water to the Specific Plan area will bisect an existing 100-year floodplain located in southern Sutter County. Considering that off-site utilities will be buried and will be enclosed systems, there will be no impact to the floodplain. The widening of Watt Avenue will add width to an existing roadway and bridge, but will add no new impediments to flood flows. Impacts from off-site utility line and roadway installation are, therefore less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-30.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-30.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.3.2-8:** There could be a reduction in the ability of facility operators to achieve and maintain reservoir flood control diagrams. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-30.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

Shasta and Folsom reservoirs are operated to provide flood control protection from November through April as dictated by each of their flood control diagrams. A substantial reduction in the ability of these reservoirs to provide flood control protection (as indicated by reduction in the ability to achieve and maintain the reservoir flood control diagram) would constitute a significant impact. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, diversions from the American River would increase, thereby increasing demand on system reservoirs and indirectly providing a flood control benefit to the region. Over the 70-year hydrologic period of record, long-term monthly average storage in Folsom, Shasta, and Oroville reservoirs during the flood control period would generally be lower (i.e., 0.1%) or unchanged, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-98 to A-103, A-110 to A-115). Persons and property within the area protected by these facilities and under the operation of the reservoir flood control diagrams would not experience any significant increase in exposure to flooding hazards, relative to the existing condition. This would be considered a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-30.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-31.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.3.2-9:** Floodplain characteristics could be altered due to implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-31.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Altered characteristics within the floodplain could, depending on the magnitude of the change, impart an increased risk of flooding. Urbanization, for example, where widespread impervious surfaces no longer permit natural infiltration or percolation of surface water, can generate widespread ponding and runoff. While storm drainage systems are designed to channel these surface waters away from urban areas, if such systems fail, flood risks are enhanced. Similarly, where any structural change to a natural levee, revetment, dike, or terrace embankment occurs, increased risk of flooding can result. However, although the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply proposes structural change, new facilities, and certain direct alterations of the floodplain, urban stormwater drainage is an important feature of the proposed Specific Plan.
From a mass balance hydrologic analysis perspective, the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply is limited to diversions of water from the American and/or Sacramento River systems. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-31.)

A comparison of monthly mean flow for the upper Sacramento River, lower Sacramento River and lower American River between the existing condition and the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply was conducted for each month of the flood control season (November through April) to determine the potential for change in floodplain characteristics. The maximum monthly mean flows on the Sacramento River from Keswick Reservoir and at Freeport would remain unchanged during every month of the flood control season, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-97 and B-98). The maximum monthly mean release from Nimbus Dam on the lower American River would be lower (i.e., up to 0.8 percent) for every month of the flood control season, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-96). These unchanging or slightly decreased flows under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not result in specific changes to the characteristics of the floodplain. Together, this would be considered a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-31.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-31.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.3.2-10:** There could be an increase in lower American River levee stress. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-31.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Levee stress, a primary causal factor in levee failure, is often promoted by high flows over prolonged periods of time. In addition to the kinetic energy imparted by high flows, which can generate substantial erosive potential along the wetted embankment, high flows can also saturate confining levees. With this saturation, positive pore water pressures can build within older levees. Such pressures in an elevated structure of unconsolidated material (levees) can promote significant structural risks, which can result in failures. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-31.)

A comparison of Nimbus Dam releases between the existing condition and the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply for each month of the flood control season (November through April) was conducted to determine effects on the lower American River flood control structures due solely to elevated flows. The analysis revealed that during the flood control season, 70-year
monthly mean Nimbus Dam releases under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be lower (i.e., up to 0.8%) in every month of the flood control season, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-96). For the proposed Specific Plan, these unchanging or slightly decreased flows would not result in a substantial change in hydraulic stress to lower American River levees. Thus, impacts to lower American River levees under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-32.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-22.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Cumulative Impacts**

**Impact 4.3.2-11:** Urbanization within the Specific Plan area and up-gradient of the Specific Plan area could result in a cumulative increase in surface runoff. Increased runoff could exceed design assumptions for proposed culverts, roadways, channels and other conveyance systems and result in overtopping and downstream flooding. This is considered a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-32.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the cumulative increase in surface runoff as a result of the urbanization and up-gradient of the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

Due to the level of existing and proposed development within the watersheds affected by the Specific Plan (see Section 5.2 in Chapter Five of the Revised Draft EIR), there is a potential for a significant cumulative volumetric impact to occur. Design assumptions for off-site improvements and/or existing conditions affect received flow within the Specific Plan area as well as downstream. Because the drainage system design for the Specific Plan area will limit post-project flows contributed by the project in the Curry Creek and Steelhead Creek (NEMDC) Drainage sheds, consistent with the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual, the project will have a less than cumulatively considerable contribution to flows in these watersheds. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-32.)
Within the Dry Creek Drainage Shed, detention of flows is not currently recommended. The Dry Creek Drainage Shed, although the largest regionally, includes only 477 acres along the southeast boundary of the Specific Plan area. However, the Dry Creek watershed is about 80 square miles in area and includes substantial developed areas and areas proposed for development upstream. Downstream, Dry Creek flows into northern Sacramento County through the community of Rio Linda until it reaches Steelhead Creek, which drains into the American River. Although the Dry Creek Drainage Shed is a very small part of the project area, when combined with potential up-gradient flow increases, this is a potentially significant cumulative impact to which the project’s contribution would be cumulatively considerable. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-32.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.3.2-11a Prior to any development pursuant to the Specific Plan within the Dry Creek Drainage Shed, the developer shall submit to the Placer County Department of Public Works project-specific drainage reports, calculations and plans addressing up-gradient and project flows within the Dry Creek drainage shed for review and approval. Placer County Storm Water Management Manual and the Placer County Code require developments to not cause adverse impacts to upstream or downstream properties. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-33.)

4.3.2-11b The Master Project Drainage Study and project-specific drainage reports shall design for conveyance of future, fully-developed, unmitigated flows from upstream development outside of the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-33.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The mitigation measures referenced above will reduce this significant-cumulative impact due to the increased flows in Dry Creek, but absent a showing of no adverse impact to downstream properties, it will not reduce it to a less than significant level. The cumulative impact remains potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-33.)

Impact 4.3.2-12: There could be a cumulative effect on reservoir flood control diagrams, altered floodplain characteristics, lower American river levee stress, and river hydraulic processes. This cumulative impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-33.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

A water supply of 11,500 AFA is a portion of the PCWA’s pending amendatory CVP contract with the Reclamation for 35,000 AFA. This water would be diverted from the Sacramento
River, which has an annual runoff of approximately 18 million AF (PCWA 2001). The entire 35,000 AFA of the PCWA CVP contract water was used for the project’s incremental contribution analysis (for a further description of the cumulative analysis, see Section 4.3.4). The full CVP contract amount of 35,000 AFA (long-term surface water supply) was evaluated based on the premise that this higher diversion amount provides a conservative representation of potential impacts associated with increased diversions from the Sacramento River to meet the proposed project needs. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-33.)

Increased diversions from the CVP system that would occur under the cumulative condition would result in increased reservoir water storage capacity and hence, would provide positive benefits to flood control, relative to the existing condition. Thus, implementation of future actions would result in no significant future impacts to reservoir flood control diagrams, lower American River levee stress, floodplain characteristics, and river hydraulic processes; all key flood control parameters. As there would be no significant impact to flood control under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition, the proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would not incrementally contribute to potential future impacts to flood control. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-33.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-34.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

4.3.3 Water Resources (Water Supply)

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and other adopted policies, Placer County has determined that a project could have a significant effect on water resources/water supply/hydropower if it would:

- Substantially deplete groundwater supplies.
- Be inconsistent with the goals and policies of the adopted Placer County General Plan.
- Be inconsistent with the applicable terms of the Water Forum Agreement.
- Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.
• Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed.

(RDEIR, p. 4.3-75.)

The effect of the proposed Specific Plan on the initial water supply is considered significant if it would result in a reduction of delivery allocations to CVP or SWP customers under federal or State contract obligations, relative to the existing conditions. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-75.)

Specific statutory criteria do not exist for determining impacts related to effects on off-site power supply. Thus, significance standards have been developed specifically for this analysis to address the potential regional and local impacts of implementing the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, 4.3-75.)

Cost-related hydropower impacts on a regional scale could result from changes in hydropower generation or capacity. In the Revised Draft EIR, gross hydropower generation is evaluated, which is the amount of generation before Specific Plan water supply use. Generation from New Melones Dam is included, and the values shown are reduced for transmission loss to represent the energy generation available at the load center near Tracy. The use of dependable hydropower capacity differs from previous environmental documents that used instantaneous hydropower capacity, which corresponds to current reservoir elevation. In response to WAPA’s concerns about the availability of electrical power in California, the Revised Draft EIR evaluates the amount of hydropower capacity available over a specified, extended period of time. This capacity is the monthly generation divided by the hours specified in Table 1 of Contract 2948A between the CVP and PG&E (but not more than the instantaneous capacity). Similar to generation, the capacity is gross (i.e., before Specific Plan use), and includes capacity at New Melones and is adjusted for transmission to reflect capacity at the load center near Tracy.

(RDEIR, p. 4.3-75.)

On a regional scale, a reduction in CVP generation is considered a cost impact because WAPA may no longer have excess energy available for sale, or would be required to purchase additional energy for its customers. A reduction in dependable capacity would produce similar cost impacts. This analysis assumed that such cost impacts would be significant if hydropower generation or dependable capacity were substantially reduced by the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-75.)

At the local and area level, impacts to hydropower could result from changes in pumping requirements at Folsom or EID pumping plants due to changes in reservoir elevation. A reduction in reservoir elevation would produce a cost impact, because more energy would be required for pumping plants to lift water from Folsom Reservoir for distribution to treatment plants, and subsequently water users. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-75.)

While hydropower impacts are not expected to have a direct environmental effect, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan water supply could have significant economic consequences by reducing existing energy resources that could require replacement from other
energy resources. It is likely that thermal generation resources that do emit air pollutants would supply some portion of the replacement energy. Estimating when, where and how “dirty” the replacement energy might be would be speculative, and is beyond the ability to accurately predict, especially given the interconnection of electric utility generation in the western states. (RDEIR, 4.3-75.)

**Impact 4.3.3-1:** The initial surface water supply could affect delivery allocations to CVP customers. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-76.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Although deliveries to all CVP contract categories would be less than 100% in some years, there would be no reduction of deliveries, relative to the existing condition, over the 70-year hydrologic simulation period (Technical Appendices A-571 to -578). In addition, there would be no change in the long-term 70-year average monthly percent allocation of deliveries to CVP customers, under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-16 to B-39). CVP M&I and agricultural customers north of the Delta would continue to receive 89% and 73% of their delivery allocations from CVP, respectively, under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. CVP settlement and refuge customers north of the Delta would continue to receive 98% of their delivery allocations, under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, relative to the existing condition. In addition, CVP M&I and agricultural customers south of the Delta would continue to receive 88% and 64% of their delivery allocations, respectively, under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply. Also, those exchange and refuge customers south of the Delta would continue to receive 98% of their allocated deliveries. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-76 to 4.3-77.)

The combined storage in the CVP and SWP is about 17.3 MAF. The purpose of this storage is to capture the surplus flows that are not required for any downstream purpose at the time they occur (typically in the spring and early summer), and store them for use later in the year or in subsequent years when the flows are not sufficient to meet these purposes. The proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply is a relatively small amount, 0.006 MAF compared to the total annual water supply demand on the system of up to 13.5 MAF, with the CVP contractual demand portion being about 9.3 MAF. The modeling shows some minor changes in reservoir storages due to the increased water supply deliveries that are balanced between various CVP reservoirs. During the following wet season, this reduction in storage is typically made up from increased capture of surplus flood flows allowed by the storage reductions, which results in virtually identical reservoir storages in the late spring/early summer time period each year. This means there is little or no impact to CVP water supply availability at the time the CVP water supply allocations are made, and therefore no impact to CVP water supply delivery. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-77.)
Since all contractors would receive identical deliveries under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply for all years, there would be a less than significant impact upon CVP water supply deliveries under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-77.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-77.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.3.3-2: The initial surface water supply could affect delivery allocations to SWP customers. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-77.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

SWP customers receive contractual deliveries from both the Feather River and Delta. Although deliveries to SWP customers would be at less than 100% in some years, there would be no reduction of deliveries, relative to the existing condition, over the 70-year hydrologic simulation period (Technical Appendix A-579). In addition, there would be no change in the long-term 70-year average monthly percent allocation of deliveries to SWP customers, under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-40 to B-42). SWP customers would continue to receive 83% of their delivery allocations from SWP, under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition. All contractors would receive identical deliveries under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply for all years. Thus, there would be a less than significant impact to any SWP water supply delivery contract under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-77.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required.

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.
**Impact 4.3.3-3:** The initial surface water supply could affect gross hydropower generation. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-78.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, annual gross CVP hydropower generation simulated over the 70-year hydrologic period would be reduced by a total of two gigawatt-hours, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-517). With a total annual CVP hydropower generation capability of 5,115 gigawatt-hours, the reductions resulting from the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would constitute a 0.04% reduction in total annual CVP hydropower generation (Template Output B-10). This reduction in CVP hydropower generation capacity could represent a cost impact because WAPA may no longer have excess energy available for sale or would be required to purchase additional energy for its customers. Such a small reduction in CVP hydropower generation capability, however, would not likely result in direct adverse environmental effects. It is likely that some thermal generation resources that do emit air pollutants may supply some portion of the replacement energy; however, the use of thermal generation resources would be minimal due to the small magnitude of reduction in CVP hydropower generation associated with the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. It would be speculative, moreover, to predict where any such environmental effects (e.g., air pollution) would occur, as it would be speculative to predict what energy sources might be employed to replace lost CVP hydropower generation. The direct environmental impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-78.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-78.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.3.3-4:** The initial surface water supply could affect gross hydropower capacity. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-78.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

Table 4.3-10 in the Revised Draft EIR provides a summary of the difference in capacity between the existing and proposed Specific Plan initial water supply conditions. Presented are the median values of the differences over 70 years and the 90% exceedance value, which indicates that 90% of the time, the difference in CVP gross dependable hydropower capacity between the existing condition and the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would be smaller or negative (i.e., a benefit). There is no change in the greatest median difference in capacity between simulations for the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water surface supply relative to the existing condition. The 90% exceedance in capacity between the existing condition and the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply occurs in February, at five MW. This is a 1% reduction of the 1,598 MW of dependable capacity in February under the existing condition. The reductions could represent a cost impact because WAPA may no longer have excess energy available for sale or would be required to purchase additional energy for its customers. Such reductions would not result in specific adverse environmental effects, because the use of thermal generation resources for replacement energy would be minimal due to the small magnitude of reduction in CVP hydropower capacity associated with the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. It would be speculative, moreover, to predict where any such environmental effects (e.g., air pollution) would occur, as it would be speculative to predict what energy sources might be employed to replace lost CVP hydropower generation. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-78.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-79.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.3.3-5:** The initial surface water supply could affect Folsom pumping energy requirements. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-79.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in both increases and decreases in monthly energy requirements for the Folsom Pumping Plant at Folsom Reservoir, relative to the existing condition, depending on the year (Technical Appendix A-518 to A-529). Over the 70-year period of record, an average annual increase in pumping energy requirements of 465 MWh for the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would occur, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-12). On a monthly average basis, this increase would be 39 MWh.
relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-518 to A-529). This magnitude of change would likely represent a cost impact because more energy would be required for pumping plants to lift water from Folsom Reservoir for distribution. These changes, however, would not result in specific adverse environmental effects, because the use of thermal generation resources for replacement energy would be minimal due to the small magnitude of change in pumping energy requirements associated with the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. It would be speculative, moreover, to predict where any such environmental effects (e.g., air pollution) would occur, as it would be speculative to predict what energy sources might be employed to replace lost CVP hydropower generation. This direct environmental impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-79.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-79.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.3.3-6: The initial surface water supply could affect EID pumping energy requirements. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-79.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in no change in 70-year monthly average energy requirements for the EID Pumping Plant at Folsom Reservoir, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-13). Over the 70-year period of record, however, specific months, in specific years, would experience a slight increase in pumping energy requirements, relative to the existing condition. The greatest increase experienced for all months would be 1 MWh (or 0.5%) relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-530 to A-541). These slight impacts, when they occur, would likely represent a cost impact because more energy would be required for pumping plants to lift water from Folsom Reservoir for distribution. These changes, however, would not result in specific adverse environmental effects, because the use of thermal generation resources for replacement energy would be minimal due to the small magnitude of change in pumping energy requirements associated with the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. It would be speculative, moreover, to predict where any such environmental effects (e.g., air pollution) would occur, as it would be speculative to predict what energy sources might be employed to replace lost CVP hydropower generation. The direct environmental impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-79 to 4.3-80.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-80.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.3.3-7: Use of groundwater as a redundant water source in the Specific Plan area would have a direct impact on the North American River groundwater subbasin. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-80.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

PCWA is proposing that a backup groundwater component be developed in conjunction with the Specific Plan. It is anticipated that sufficient groundwater would be supplied to the Specific Plan area to provide a redundant water source equal to at least 25% of the required water supply on a maximum daily demand basis. This contingency is based on Reclamation’s ability to exercise a maximum dry year reduction in Sacramento River CVP water supply of 25%. Based on a maximum demand of approximately 18,756,342 gpd at Specific Plan area buildout as shown in Table 4.11-10, the necessary redundant water supply from groundwater for any given day would be approximately 4,689,086 gallons. In the highest groundwater use scenario analyzed in the PCWA Integrated Water Resources Plan (Scenario 2b), which includes the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan Blueprint Alternative, a groundwater supply of approximately 15,000 AFA would be necessary to meet dry year supply requirements. However, under the “The Existing General Plans” (Scenario 1), which includes the Specific Plan area, the groundwater requirement would be reduced to approximately 5,000 AFA. Assuming worst case scenario (25% of average demand would be met by groundwater during an entire year), the Specific Plan area would require approximately 2,625 AFA from groundwater. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-80.)

The Western Placer County Groundwater Storage Study recommended a sustainable yield for the Placer County portion of the North American River subbasin of 95,000 AFA. Historical groundwater use in Placer County by individual homes, farms and businesses is estimated to be about 90,000 AFA. However, due to the removal of agricultural land from production, changes in cropping patterns and irrigation techniques, and introduction of surface water supplies to serve urban development, it is currently estimated that groundwater use is in the range of 65,000 to 75,000 AFA in western Placer County (Maische, January 2006). According to the Western Placer County Groundwater Storage Study, groundwater produced in PCWA Zone 5 (western Placer County) was 77,000 AF in 1995. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-80.)
While groundwater resources are used for current water supply in the Specific Plan area, that groundwater use will be gradually displaced by surface water as the area builds out. Approximately 2,400 AFA would be required to meet current agricultural needs within the Specific Plan area. This requirement will be eliminated as the area builds out. This will have a positive effect on the regional groundwater basin. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-81.)

As urban development replaces historic groundwater-irrigated agriculture, there is an opportunity to develop groundwater for use in meeting urban domestic and irrigation demands without adversely affecting groundwater levels or long-term groundwater reliability. A backup groundwater supply to serve the Specific Plan area could be developed and maintained within the established sustainable yield of the groundwater basin with no adverse impact on supply. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-81.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-81.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.3.3-8: Any wells drilled on-site for purposes of a backup groundwater supply will have the potential to affect other wells in the area. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-81.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

It may be necessary to drill wells on-site to provide the backup groundwater supply required by PCWA to serve development under the Specific Plan. Since agricultural and residential users in the Specific Plan area rely on wells, additional wells drilled on-site could result in localized dynamic drawdown impacts to groundwater levels in the immediate vicinity of the wells (cones of depression), thereby increasing pumping (energy) costs for existing wells and potentially leaving existing wells dry (lowering these wells is expensive). (RDEIR, p. 4.3-81.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.3.3-8a Municipal wells constructed for purposes of a backup groundwater supply for development under the Specific Plan shall not be constructed within 800 feet of any existing private well. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-81.)
4.3.3-8b Prior to operation of any municipal wells constructed for purposes of a backup groundwater supply for development under the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, the developer/applicant shall construct groundwater monitoring wells to monitor the impacts of the operation of the municipal wells on local groundwater elevations and any groundwater contaminant movement. The number, location and design of said monitoring wells shall be subject to the approval of PCWA. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-81.)

4.3.3-8c To address potential scenarios in which, despite best efforts to avoid well failure, any of the existing wells in the area fails as a result of the pumping for development under the Specific Plan, the owners of failed wells, upon submission of proof of such failure, shall be compensated through a well insurance program funded through development within the Specific Plan area. No small lot tentative map shall be approved until the developer, working with PCWA, puts in place a legal and financial mechanism for funding a Placer Vineyards Well Insurance Program, to be administered by PCWA, to insure against failure for up to an estimated replacement cost to be determined. Said Well Insurance Program shall include payment of a fee at the issuance of a building permit. Such fee shall be determined based on the number of private wells eligible for the program (existing wells within a two-mile radius of each municipal well to be constructed) multiplied by the cost of a typical residential well construction (to be determined) and divided by the total number of equivalent dwelling units (edu) in the Specific Plan area. Additional components of the Well Insurance Program will be developed prior to approval of the first small lot tentative subdivision map. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-82.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measures will reduce this impact to a less than significant level by imposing performance standards and applying measures designed to protect area wells. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-83.)

Impact 4.3.3-9: Any wells drilled on-site for purposes of a backup groundwater supply will have the potential to affect nearby surface water bodies and could affect associated riparian vegetation. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-82.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

It may be necessary to drill wells on-site to provide the backup groundwater supply required by PCWA to serve development under the Specific Plan. Historically, as groundwater levels in the basin dropped, the rate of induced recharge from surrounding rivers increased. While this induced recharge can be of benefit to the groundwater basin, it can negatively impact surface
water levels, thereby reducing surface water supplies and potentially drying out associated riparian vegetation. Because groundwater pumping would be within the safe yield of the groundwater basin, any potential effects would be localized in nature. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-82.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.3.3-9  
*Prior to installation of any municipal wells for purposes of a backup groundwater supply for development under the Specific Plan, the County, in consultation with PCWA and CDFG, shall determine the appropriate separation distances between wells and nearby surface water bodies. In no case shall these municipal wells be constructed within 800 feet of the Dry Creek riparian corridor, or any other on-site area where established riparian vegetation is observed.*  (RDEIR, p. 4.3-82.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Mitigation Measure 4.3.3-9 will reduce this impact to a less than significant level:  (RDEIR, p. 4.3-82.)

**Impact 4.3.3-10:** Any wells drilled on-site for purposes of a backup groundwater supply will have the potential to cause noise impacts on nearby sensitive receptors. This impact is considered potentially significant.  (RDEIR, p. 4.3-82.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

It may be necessary to drill wells on-site to provide the backup groundwater supply required by PCWA to serve development under the Specific Plan. Although it is assumed that pumps would be electrically driven, the pumps associated with these wells, which may be located adjacent to sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, day care facilities, hospitals and schools), could generate noise levels that may be intrusive or even in excess of allowable noise thresholds.  (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-82 to 4.3-83.)

**Mitigation Measure:**

4.3.3-10  
*Pumps required for any municipal wells for purposes of a backup groundwater supply for development under the Specific Plan shall be located within sound-attenuating acoustical shelters to reduce generated noise levels below noise thresholds established by the Placer County General Plan Noise Element for the affected sensitive receptors.*  (RDEIR, p. 4.3-83.)
Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measure will reduce this impact to a *less than significant level* by requiring compliance with established noise mitigation standards. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-83.)

Cumulative Impacts

**Impact 4.3.3-11:** The Specific Plan surface water supply would contribute to a cumulative effect on CVP gross hydropower generation and gross capacity. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.3-84.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Changes in the future operations of CVP facilities would result in an estimated annual reduction in gross annual CVP hydropower generation of 357 GWh, or 7%, relative to the existing condition. For nearly every month of the 840 months modeled under the 70-year period of hydrologic record, the cumulative condition would result in reductions in gross CVP hydropower generation, relative to the existing condition, with maximum reductions of up to 319 GWh in individual months. While such decreases would not be expected to result in significant direct environmental impacts, they would be expected to result in significant economic impacts that would be passed on to CVP customers. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-84.)

There would be significant reductions in gross CVP capacity under the future cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition. Gross CVP capacity would be reduced in nearly every month of the 840 months included in the analysis, with average monthly reductions ranging from 1% to 10% of existing capacity, and maximum reductions of up to 569 MW, relative to the existing condition. While such decreases in capacity, like hydropower generation, would not result in direct environmental impacts, they would result in direct economic impacts that would be passed on to CVP customers. Any environmental impacts that would result from decreases in capacity could be the product of the need to acquire power from another facility that is less environmentally sound. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-84.)

The proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute substantially to either monthly or annual reductions in CVP hydropower generation; the greatest monthly reduction (of the 840 months included in the analysis) would be 63 GWh (Technical Appendix H-505 to H-517). Average CVP hydropower generation would not decrease more than 2 GWh during any given month over the 70-year simulation under the proposed long-term water supply relative to the cumulative condition (template Output H-10). However, any decrease in generation that could occur in individual months would result in increased costs that would be passed on to CVP customers. Thus, while the proposed long-term water supply would not result in significant
reductions in long-term average gross CVP hydropower generation, decreases in individual months could result in significant cost impacts to CVP customers. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-84.)

The proposed long-term surface water supply would result in a minor contribution to the economic impacts that would occur under the future cumulative condition. The long-term water supply would result in mean monthly increases in capacity of up to 64 MW in August and mean monthly decreases up to 92 MW in October (5.9% and 6.8%, respectively), relative to the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix G-493 to G-504). Therefore, the proposed long-term water supply would have minor contributions to any decreases in capacity that would occur under the cumulative condition. Though the proposed long-term water supply would still result in direct cost impacts passed on to CVP customers, any impacts would not be of sufficient magnitude to be considered potentially significant. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively-considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. Thus, this environmental impact would be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-84 to 4.3-85.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-85.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.3.3-12: The Specific Plan could contribute to a cumulative effect on Folsom and EID pumping energy requirements. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-85.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Increased diversions under the cumulative condition would result in lower water surface elevations in Folsom Reservoir. Consequently, more energy would be required to lift water up to the Folsom and EID pumping plants that divert from Folsom Reservoir. Increases in pumping energy requirements under the cumulative condition also result from the fact that far more water will be delivered by water purveyors through these pumps as compared to the amount delivered under the existing condition. The energy requirement under the cumulative condition would be more than doubled at the Folsom Pumping Plant and six times greater at the EID Pumping Plant (more than 8,000 MWh and 18,000 MWh annual increases, respectively), relative to the existing condition. This significant-cumulative economic impact would be passed on to water users who
rely on pumping at Folsom Reservoir, but would not result in direct environmental impacts. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-85.)

The future average energy requirement, under the proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply, would decrease by 15 MWh at the Folsom Pumping Plant and 1 MWh at the EID Pumping Plant, relative to the cumulative condition (Template Output H-12 to H13). This constitutes a long-term average benefit to the energy requirements at these two pumping plants. The water diversion would shift to another location, so the pumping at these two facilities would be reduced. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan long-term water supply would not contribute to the total increase in pumping requirements that would occur under the cumulative condition. In individual months, however, there would be both increases and decreases in pumping energy requirements, under the cumulative condition. At Folsom Pumping Plant, the largest decrease under the proposed long-term water supply would be 172 MWh during July and the largest increase would be 204 MWh during September (Technical Appendix G-518 to G-529). At EID Pumping Plant, the largest decrease would be 13 MWh during July and the largest increase would be 16 MWh during September (Technical Appendix G-518 to G-541). Such infrequent increases could result in a slight contribution to cost impacts under the cumulative condition, though any effects would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to create a significant impact (Technical Appendix G-518 to G-541). These changes would not result in specific adverse environmental effects, because the use of thermal generation resources for replacement energy would be minimal due to the small magnitude of change in pumping energy requirements associated with the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. It would be speculative, moreover, to predict where any such environmental effects (e.g., air pollution) would occur, as it would also be speculative to predict what energy sources might be employed to replace lost CVP hydropower generation. Therefore, the environmental impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-85 to 4.3-86.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-86.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.3.3-13: The Specific Plan long-term surface water supply could contribute to cumulative effects on deliveries to SWP customers. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-86.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

Under the cumulative condition, reductions in deliveries to SWP customers would range from 5% to 45%, relative to the existing condition, in 45 of the 70 years modeled. Such reductions under the cumulative condition would occur with sufficient frequency and magnitude to constitute potentially significant cumulative impacts to water supply deliveries to SWP customers. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-86.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply

The proposed Specific Plan long-term water supply would not contribute, in either frequency or magnitude, to any anticipated future long-term SWP customer delivery reductions, as shown in Table 4.3-11 (Template Output H-42). In fact, in all 70 years simulated, SWP deliveries would be essentially equivalent under the proposed long-term water supply compared to the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix G-579). (RDEIR, p. 4.3-86.)

The SWP has only one reservoir north of the Delta, Lake Oroville, which is located on the Feather River. SWP has five other reservoirs, all located south of the Delta. The SWP has a combined total of approximately 5.3 MAF of the total. North of the Delta, the only SWP demands are those within the Feather River Service Area (FRSA). FRSA users are entitled to approximately 1.0 MAFA diversion from the Feather River. These deliveries can be reduced due to drought by no more than 50% in any one year, and no more than 100% in any series of seven consecutive years. DWR balances SWP’s many competing objectives in making water supply allocation decisions. When DWR makes water supply allocation decisions, only SWP water demands and system operations are evaluated. Even though the CVP and SWP is an integrated system, the CVP is not evaluated for SWP water supply allocation. The CVP is operated by Reclamation; therefore, CVP water supply allocation decisions are made by Reclamation and do not include the SWP. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-86 to 4.3-87.)

The proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute, in either frequency or magnitude, to any anticipated future long-term SWP customer delivery reductions, and therefore, would have no cumulatively-considerable contribution to significant-cumulative impacts to deliveries to SWP customers. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it also would have no cumulatively-considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. The impact therefore would be considered less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-87.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than signification without mitigation.
Impact 4.3.3-14: The Specific Plan long-term surface water supply could contribute to a cumulative effect on deliveries to CVP customers. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-87.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Under the cumulative condition, CVP water service contractors would experience significant reductions in deliveries, relative to the existing condition. CVP M&I contractors both north and south of the Delta would experience delivery reductions of 5% to 20%, relative to the existing condition, in 24 of the 70 years modeled. CVP agricultural contractors north of the Delta would experience reductions in deliveries of 5% to 25%, relative to the existing condition, in 42 of the 70 years modeled, and agricultural contractors south of the Delta would experience reductions of 5% to 20% in 35 of the 70 years modeled. Reductions to CVP customers both north and south of the Delta would occur with sufficient frequency and magnitude to be considered cumulatively significant impacts. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-87.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply

The proposed long-term water supply would not contribute, in either frequency or magnitude, to any reduction in delivery to any CVP contractor, either north or south of the Delta, as shown in Tables 4.3-12 through 4.3-15 (Template Output H-18, H-21, H-30, and H-33). In fact, in all 70 years simulated, CVP deliveries to M&I and agricultural contractors would be essentially equivalent under the cumulative condition without the project compared, to the proposed long-term water supply (Technical Appendix G-571 to G-572 and G-575 to G-576). (RDEIR, p. 4.3-87.)

CVP Water Service Contractors (agricultural and M&I Water Service Contractors both north and south of the Delta) entered into agreements with Reclamation for delivery of CVP water as a supplemental supply. Water availability for delivery to CVP Water Service Contractors during periods of insufficient supply is determined based on a combination of operational objectives, hydrologic conditions, and reservoir storage conditions. The water availability curtailments and the CVP system operations are further discussed in Impact 4.3.3-2. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-88.)

The proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute, in either frequency or magnitude, to any reduction in delivery to any CVP contractor, either north or south of the Delta; therefore, the Specific Plan would not have a cumulatively-considerable contribution to the significant impacts to CVP deliveries that would occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would have no cumulatively-considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact therefore would be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-88.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-88.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.3.3-14A: The long-term surface water supplies could yield less water than is projected, resulting in a permanent curtailment in development in western Placer County. This impact is considered potentially significant. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-37.)

Finding:

No mitigation is available to substantially lessen or avoid this potentially significant and unavoidable effect.

Explanation:

In the long-term, the Placer Vineyard Specific Plan area would utilize water obtained from new diversion infrastructure connecting the Specific Plan area with the Sacramento River, or alternatively, the American River. If water from the Sacramento or American Rivers does not materialize because the proposed diversions are not constructed, or the amount of water available is inadequate to meet all of PCWA’s service commitments, a permanent curtailment of development within the Specific Plan area could occur. Such curtailment could result from climatic or other environmental conditions that are unforeseen and cannot be predicted or from unexpected regulatory or legal developments. Generally the potential impacts of a permanent curtailment can be grouped into three categories:

- Impacts associated with infrastructure construction and the provision of services.
- Impacts associated with the pattern of development. Examples include land use patterns that are discontiguous and the effects such patterns may have on land use compatibility and other resources.
- Economic Impacts. CEQA documents typically do not include an analysis of economic impacts of a project, unless the economic impact would bring about physical changes to the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15131). However, consistent with CEQA’s informational purpose, a brief discussion of such effects is provided below.

(SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-27.)

Infrastructure. Because of size of the Specific Plan area, with multiple owners, subject to multiple criteria as to parcel development (e.g., potential shifts in the market demand for various
housing types and non-residential uses), project buildout would not occur in discrete phases. To ensure that the development of key infrastructure occurs prior to the development of any given parcel, the County and the property owners within the Specific Plan area (Developers) have entered into a Development Agreement (DA) The DA establishes timing requirements for the development of the following project elements: Core Backbone Infrastructure, Remaining Backbone Infrastructure, and Permit-Driven or As Warranted Infrastructure. Core Backbone Infrastructure consists of major roadway improvements, sewer, water and recycled water improvements within such roadways and certain off-site sewer and water improvements (See DA Exhibit 3.5). DA Exhibit 3.6 sets out the infrastructure that is considered part of the Remaining Backbone as well as the “Permit-Driven” or “As Warranted” infrastructure elements. As set forth in the DA, prior to the issuance by the County to the Developer of the first building permit, the Core Backbone Infrastructure must be under construction. As development continues, the issuance of the 7,000th building permit would trigger the requirement that the Remaining Backbone Infrastructure be in place. In addition to the infrastructure set forth as Core and Remaining Backbone, specific required infrastructure requirements are set out for specific locations, the construction of which meets the particular requirements for issuance of a permit or to fulfill traffic/circulation warrant requirements. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-27.)

The Thresholds of Significance established for the Revised Draft EIR generally state that a significant impact would occur if development resulted in an increase in demand that would not be met by existing water service, storm water drainage systems, sewage systems, or would require the construction of new systems not anticipated by the project. In addition, a significant impact would result if project generated traffic led to a Service Level of “D” on area road ways. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-37.)

Although a permanent decrease in available water would require the curtailment of development, no building permits would have been issued without at least the Core Backbone Infrastructure being in place. Therefore, any existing development constructed or under construction at the time of the curtailment would have adequate infrastructure and service. In fact, given the requirements of the DA that trigger the construction of the Remaining Backbone at issuance of the 7000th permit, it is possible that if the long term water curtailment scenario occurred soon after this trigger point, the Specific Plan area could be infrastructure “rich” with greater capacity than the level of development permitted under curtailment. Based on the above, the impacts of long term development curtailment on the infrastructure of the Specific Plan area would be less than significant. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-37.)

Since the capacity of the regional infrastructure and the level of proposed development at some future time are unknown, the potential impacts to regional infrastructure are speculative. Since it is possible that projects may have been approved and are in the construction phase prior to the completion of the associated infrastructure (especially in the instance of development of roadway/traffic improvements), there are potentially significant impacts to the region’s infrastructure that would result from the long-term curtailment of development resulting from a curtailed water supply. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-37.)

Pattern of Development. As discussed above, the Specific Plan area is under multiple ownerships, so the timing of the development of a specific property is not according to a phasing
plan, but according to the market-driven and personal criteria that each owner has as to when is the right time to develop. While the infrastructure of the Specific Plan area will be in place, there is no assurance that build out of the plan area will occur in a contiguous manner. The following are examples of the types of impacts the resulting permanent checkerboard pattern of development could have if development were curtailed:

- Interference with the continued use or return of abutting undeveloped parcel(s) to their previous land use (e.g., agriculture) as a result of surrounding development. Unused land proximate to or surrounded by development could become an attractive nuisance, including a fire hazard.

- While less biological habitat would be converted, the likely checkerboard pattern of development would lead to the creation of biological resource islands. As development occurs, developers would be required to mitigate their fair share of project impacts. However, partial development would result in only partial payments into mitigation banks or the setting aside and restoration of only portions of proposed mitigation lands.

- Potential isolation of individual homes surrounded by large areas of open space. Single or small clusters of home development with the street system in place but large vacant tracts between the homes and major streets could lead to a variety of land use incompatibilities and service delivery issues, including those related to policing and fire protection.

- While street lights could be in place, the lighting of empty lots is unlikely to occur unless individual standards or groups of standards could be selectively lit. Even if selectively lit, areas that have improved lighting surrounded by unlit areas would create aesthetic or visual impacts.

- As required by the DA, there would be an established street system. Depending on the actual amount of “unused” roads, it is possible that these roadways would attract illegal activities such as street racing. In addition, unused pavement would deteriorate over time.

- Depending on the amount of development that had occurred at the time of permanent curtailment, the enrollment at a given school may result in the closure of that school and the shifting of students to other schools, necessitating the development of alternative school transportation that was not anticipated by the school district.

(SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.3-37 to 4.3-38.)

Similar patterns of development with similar consequences could occur in other western Placer County projects relying on the same water source. These and other similar effects of permanent curtailment are potentially significant impacts. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-38.)

**Economic Considerations.** The long-term curtailment of water leading to the curtailment of development of the Specific Plan area would part of a region wide curtailment in development, since reduction in the permanent water supply would not occur on a project-by-project basis. The reduction in the availability of water could result in a region wide downturn in economic conditions. Lowered economic growth could have substantial impacts to local jurisdictions in
the provision of services (e.g., reduced funding for police and fire protection services) and maintenance of existing service infrastructure (e.g., roads, transportation, water, stormwater and sewage). The curtailment of water supply could serve as a catalyst for a revision in regional population projections, with population growth shifting to areas with better water supplies, if such areas were to exist. (Notably, Placer County, with PCWA as its primary water supplier, appears to be much better positioned for the future than most other urbanizing areas in California, many of which rely on imported water supplies particularly susceptible to reductions due to environmental considerations such as the need to reduce exports from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in order to maintain Delta water quality standards and avoid undue harm to listed aquatic species.) (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.3-38 to 4.3-39.)

While a reduced population and the curtailment in development would lessen the pressure for the potential conversion of farmland and wildlife habitat, constraints placed on development by the reduced level of available water could also place constraints on continued irrigated agricultural practices in the region. It would be speculative, however, to try to predict the level of impact that would occur as the remaining urban and agricultural interests vie for the available water supplies. In general, though, urban water users can typically afford to pay more for water than agricultural users, with the likely result that over time urban users will out-bid and out-compete agricultural users for limited supplies. This trend is already occurring throughout the Central Valley. Likewise, wildlife habitat would not be subject to development pressures; however, there would be pressure to divert water currently used to maintain biological resources to supply the region’s population. Even so, compared with the owners of agricultural lands, the entities managing habitat lands, and especially those preserving habitat for special status species, might enjoy comparatively more legal protections that might allow them to compete on more favorable terms with urban uses than agricultural users are able to do. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-39.)

Absent more concrete cause and effect, the economic effects described above are not treated as significant effects on the environment, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15131. Any possible environmental effects that could result from economic effects are too speculative and attenuated to form the basis for concrete impact characterizations and mitigation measures. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-39.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are available. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-39.)

Significance after Mitigation:

Impacts resulting from permanent water supply curtailment are potentially significant on regional infrastructure, and on patterns of development within the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan and regionally. No mitigation measures are known to the County that would mitigate for the effects of a permanent curtailment of water supply in an unknown amount at an unknown time. The identified impacts, therefore, remain potentially significant and unavoidable. (SPPRDEIR, p. 4.3-39.)
**Impact 4.3.3-15:** Use of groundwater as a redundant water source in the Specific Plan area would have a cumulative impact on the North American River groundwater subbasin. This is considered a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-89.)

**Finding:**

This impact will be significant and unavoidable if the project sends most of its effluent to the Sacramento County Regional Sanitation District (SCRSD) wastewater treatment plant, but will be less than significant if the project sends its effluent instead to the Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (DCWWTP). (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

In the highest groundwater use scenario analyzed in the PCWA Integrated Water Resources Plan (Scenario 2b), which assumes cumulative development in PCWA’s service area, including the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan Blueprint Alternative, a groundwater supply of approximately 15,000 AFA would be necessary to meet dry year supply requirements. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-89.)

Assuming worst case scenario (25% of average demand would be met by groundwater during an entire year), the Specific Plan area would require approximately 2,625 AFA from groundwater. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-89.)

The Western Placer County Groundwater Storage Study recommended a sustainable yield for the Placer County portion of the North American River subbasin of 95,000 AFA. Historical groundwater use in Placer County by individual homes, farms and businesses is estimated to be about 90,000 AFA. However, due to the removal of agricultural land from production, changes in cropping patterns and irrigation techniques, and introduction of surface water supplies to serve urban development, it is currently estimated that groundwater use is in the range of 65,000 to 75,000 AFA in western Placer County (Maische, January 2006). According to the Western Placer County Groundwater Storage Study, groundwater produced in PCWA Zone 5 (western Placer County) was 77,000 total AF in 1995. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-89.)

While groundwater resources are used for current water supply in the Specific Plan area, that groundwater use will be gradually displaced by surface water as the area builds out. Approximately 2,400 AFA would be required to meet current agricultural needs within the Specific Plan area. This requirement will be eliminated as the area builds out. This will have a positive effect on the regional groundwater basin. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-89.)

The PCWA Integrated Water Resources Plan contains several conclusions regarding the cumulative water supply demand that are relevant to the Specific Plan cumulative contribution:

- There is adequate water supply to meet all of the demands for each of the growth scenarios.
- Groundwater supplies are not needed to meet normal climate year demands.
• Dry year water supplies must include groundwater to meet demands for Scenarios 2, 2b and 3.
• Reclaimed water supply is an important supply source, and is required to meet Scenario 2 demands.

(RDEIR, p. 4.3-89.)

Although the Specific Plan area’s incremental contribution to the cumulative condition is less that considerable based on cumulative demand and the safe yield of the groundwater basin (95,000 AFA), this conclusion assumes a significant amount of reclaimed (recycled) water will be available for use (i.e., 12,000 to 15,000 AFA). Impact statement 4.11.8-2 in Section 4.11.8 of the Revised Draft EIR discusses the potential for a significant amount of the wastewater from the Specific Plan area to be treated by the SRCSD, although this is not the preferred option. In this event, recycled water may not be available to the Specific Plan area, which could increase demand for groundwater in a dry year condition (Specific Plan area recycled water demand is estimated to be 1,560 AFA). Because of this uncertainty, this is a potentially significant-cumulative impact to which the project’s contribution could be cumulatively considerable (i.e., significant). It should be noted that if all wastewater is treated at the DCWWTP, which is the preferred option, this potential impact would not occur. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-89 to 4.3-90.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are available for the SRCSD option. No mitigation measures are necessary for the DCWWTP option. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-90.)

Significance After Mitigation:

If the SRCSD option is selected, the impact would remain significant and unavoidable. If the DCWWTP option is selected, there would be no significant environmental impact and therefore no mitigation required under CEQA.

4.3.4 Water Quality

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a project could have a significant effect on water quality if it would:

• Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.

• Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.

• Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.
• Otherwise substantially degrade water quality.

(RDEIR, p. 4.3-114.)

Potential impacts under the proposed Specific Plan water supply were analyzed for water quality as they pertain to drinking and recreation purposes throughout the regional and local study area. Table 4.3-21 lists the impact indicators and significance thresholds used in the water quality analysis for water supply. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-114.)

Ambient water quality, as a function of soluble and insoluble contaminant concentrations, is affected in part by river dilution capacity. Altered river flow regimes, therefore, could have an effect on dilution capacity and, correspondingly, affect the existing levels of nutrients, pathogens, TDS, TOC, and priority pollutant loadings through reduced dilution. Accordingly, the water quality analysis considered potential changes in reservoir storage and river flows. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-115.)

It is recognized, however, that other factors such as increased constituent loading from urban runoff and stormwater, and wastewater discharges would also contribute to increases in the concentrations/levels of nutrients, pathogens, TDS, TOC, turbidity, and/or priority pollutants. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-115.)

**Impact 4.3.4-1:** Surface water quality in the Specific Plan area could be degraded following site development by the introduction of urban pollutants including vehicle oils and greases, heavy metals on roads, parking lots, and driveways, fertilizers and pesticides used on site landscaping, and toxic compounds released from auto maintenance areas into surface runoff. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-115.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Newly planted vegetation, newly paved roadways and anticipated combinations of sod/seed activity could result in long-term water quality degradation as a result of development under the Specific Plan. The high use of roads and parking areas on a daily basis would contribute vehicle oils and grease to the site stormwater discharge. In commercial areas, stormwater runoff could convey a wide range of pollutants to receiving waters. Vehicles contribute oil, grease, and metals onto roads and parking lots. Excessive use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides on the site landscaping can also result in leaching of nutrients and toxic compounds into stormwater runoff. Such compounds are soluble and would not, therefore, be removed by the use of detention basins. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-115.)
Uncontrolled, these urban pollutants can directly or indirectly affect aquatic life. High concentrations of toxins in runoff can be lethal to aquatic life. Chronic, low levels can enter the food chain, affecting the long-term breeding success of populations and lower reproductive potential. Aquatic and wildlife habitat can also be adversely affected by the accumulation of toxins, which can indirectly affect aquatic and wildlife resources. Direct discharge from developments could occur towards the Curry Creek and northern portions of the NEMDC Drainage Sheds. The addition of runoff from the Specific Plan area poses the potential for water quality degradation as a result of direct discharge to the creeks within the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-116.)

BMPs such as detention ponds, wetlands, filters, and vegetated swales have been shown to reduce urban pollutant levels in stormwater. The Master Project Drainage Study provides that on-site project drainage would be designed to provide water quality treatment of runoff from paved and other developed areas prior to release into swales and streams. Treatment would include directing some of the flow to sheet discharge onto grassy areas or open space, installation of “Fossil Filter” or equivalent petroleum absorbing insert assemblies in project drop inlets, placement of water quality interceptor devices, placement of water quality sediment basins within detention facilities and channels, and use of rock-lined ditches below pipe outlets. Other BMPs would involve prompt re-vegetation of disturbed areas. All of these features would assist in reducing project-related surface water quality impacts. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-116.)

The proposed Specific Plan also contains a number of policies related to water quality and the “low impact development” concept. For example, Goal 4.9 specifies that low impact development design principles should be used in site layout. These include minimizing and reducing impervious surfaces, breaking up large areas, directing flows to vegetated areas, maintaining natural drainage courses dispersing detention/retention areas, etc. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-116.)

However, due to the inevitable increase in impervious areas and traffic trips within the Specific Plan area, an increase in urban pollutants could gradually occur over the life of the Specific Plan. Given the extent of proposed development and roadway improvements, the overall potential for generation of urban pollutants, and because drainage from the Specific Plan area is ultimately conveyed into a potable water source, this is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-117.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.3.4-1a Prior to submission of applications for new development within the Specific Plan area, the precise location and preliminary design of the regional water quality detention/sedimentation basins, as described in the Master Project Drainage Study shall be submitted to Placer County for review and approval. This plan shall also include the method or methods for funding the long-term maintenance of regional water quality maintenance measures. Finally, the plan shall also include sanctions available to enforce the implementation and maintenance of measures, should measures fail or not be maintained over time. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-117.)
4.3.4-1b Plans for construction of backbone infrastructure shall include construction of regional basins in sequence and location determined by the Master Project Drainage Study required by Mitigation Measure 4.3.4-1a. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-117.)

4.3.4-1c Plans for construction of backbone infrastructure shall include SWPP plans prepared in conformance with the requirements of Mitigation Measure 4.5-4b. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-117.)

4.3.4-1d Prior to improvement plan approval for new development other than that for backbone improvements, each applicant shall include site specific plans for accomplishment of long-term reductions in water quality impacts. The applicant shall also propose a method of financing the long-term maintenance of such facilities, such as a County Service Area or the expansion of CSA #28, in conformance with Mitigation Measure 4.3.4-1a. Such plans shall conform to all mitigation measures set forth in the Revised Draft EIR and adopted by the Board of Supervisors. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-117.)

4.3.4-1e New development shall submit a site-specific BMP plan showing the on-site locations and effectiveness of the BMP facilities proposed for long-term water quality impact reduction during the Subsequent Conformity Review process and prior to improvement plan approval. Storm drain inlet cleaning shall occur semi-annually (at a minimum) and parking lots shall include the installation of oil/sand/grit separators or as otherwise approved by the Placer County Department of Public Works. The plan shall include a method for financing the long-term maintenance of the proposed facilities and BMPs. The plan shall conform to the Master Project Drainage Study required by Mitigation Measure 4.3.4-1a and the California Stormwater Quality Association Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbook for Construction and New Development/Redevelopment (or other similar source approved by the Department of Public Works). BMPs shall reflect improvements in techniques and opportunities made available over time and shall also reflect site-specific limitations. The County shall make the final determination as to the appropriate BMPS for each project. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-117.)

4.3.4-1f Storm drainage from all new development impervious surfaces (including roadways) shall be collected and routed through specially designed catch basins, vaults, filters, etc. for entrapment of sediment, debris and oils/greases as approved by the Placer County Department of Public Works. Maintenance of these facilities shall be provided by the project owners/permittees unless and until a County Service Area is created and said facilities are accepted by the County for maintenance. Contractual evidence of a monthly parking lot sweeping and vacuuming and catch basin cleaning program shall be provided to the Placer County Department of Public Works upon request. Prior to improvement plan or final subdivision map approval, easements shall be created and offered for dedication to the County for maintenance and access to these facilities in anticipation of possible County maintenance. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-117.)
4.3.4-1g New development (including roadways) within the Specific Plan area shall design water quality treatment facilities (BMPs) such that the treatment of runoff occurs, at a minimum, before discharge into any receiving waters, or as otherwise determined by the Placer County Department of Public Works. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-117.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Through implementation of contemporary techniques for treatment and control of runoff, the direct water quality impacts of the project can be mitigated to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-117.)

Impact 4.3.4-2: Construction during both wet and dry weather will affect water quality with increased sedimentation, operation and maintenance of construction vehicles and storage of materials that could release contamination to surface waters. This impact is considered a significant short term impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-118.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Development and ultimate urbanization of the Specific Plan area improvements could result in water quality degradation over the duration of construction. Grading operations result in a loss of vegetation, exposing the soil to erosion, particularly in steep areas. The exposed soils could be carried by storm runoff during the rainy season to downstream waters, resulting in sediment transport. These increased sediment loads could substantially degrade water quality in downstream drains, especially over the construction duration and buildout of the Specific Plan area. In addition, the operation and maintenance of construction vehicles and equipment, the loading and unloading of construction materials, and construction waste could release contaminants to the Specific Plan area that would be washed off by stormwater discharges. This increase in sediment loads and turbidity in local drains would be considered a significant short term water quality impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-118.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.3.4-2a Projects with ground disturbance exceeding one acre that are subject to construction stormwater quality permits of the NPDES program shall obtain such permits from the SRWQCB and shall provide the Placer County Department of Public Works evidence of a State-issued Waste Discharge Identification (WDID) number of filing of a Notice of Intent and fees prior to start of construction. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-119.)

4.3.4-2b During the Subsequent Conformity Review Process and prior to improvement plan approval, new development projects shall submit to the Placer County Department of
Public Works, for review and approval, an erosion control plan consistent with the County’s Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance (reference pages 4-3-9 through 4-3-12). The erosion control plan shall indicate that proper control of siltation, sedimentation and other pollutants will be implemented per NPDES permit requirements and County ordinance standards. The plan shall address storm drainage during construction and proposed BMPs to reduce erosion and water quality degradation. All on-site drainage facilities shall be constructed to County specifications. BMPs shall be implemented throughout the construction process. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-119.)

4.3.4-2c All BMPs for water quality protection, source control, and treatment control shall be developed in accordance with the California Stormwater Quality Association Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbook for Construction and New Development/Redevelopment (or other similar source approved by the Department of Public Works) for the applicable type of development and/or improvement. Provisions shall be included for long-term maintenance of BMPs. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-119.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measures reduce the significant impact of short-term surface water quality degradation that would occur during the development of the Specific Plan area to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-119.)

Impact 4.3.4-3: Improvements to drainage swales and channels could result in the removal of existing vegetation. Loss of vegetation could result in increased bank erosion, higher water velocities and water quality degradation. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-119.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Existing seasonal wetlands as identified in the wetlands delineations (see Section 4.4 of the Revised Draft EIR) occur in proximity to drainage improvements. Hydraulic features of channels would be affected by vegetation removal and minor ephemeral drainage areas are to be replaced with storm drains. Sediment transport and increased project site and upstream flows would require new channels to be created and a new water quality regimen for design. This new basis will reflect urbanized conditions and not conditions that exist at present. Roughness coefficients for existing natural drainageways are relatively high and would result in lower velocities, longer durations for sediment drop-out and overall increased water quality. Removal of the bank and channel vegetation would result in lower roughness coefficients, greater velocities, and in turn greater risk of bank erosion. Less vegetation would also limit the ability to
naturally enhance water quality and result in direct outflow of potential contaminants to downstream systems, including groundwater recharge areas used in connection with potable water sources. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-119 to 4.3-120.)

The Master Project Drainage Study proposes to collect runoff from the project area within storm drainage systems that would discharge into channels and detention facilities. Channels would consist of newly constructed channel systems and parallel flood control channels where “avoidance” areas are to be maintained in a natural state. The channels would be excavated below the existing grade and would “daylight” at the downstream end to natural grades at the project boundaries. Low flow channels would be constructed to confine the conveyance of year round nuisance waters. Figure 4.3-5 shows the locations of proposed improvements and natural features to remain. The figure also references a number of cross sections that provide a concept of how the channelization and “avoidance” areas would appear within the project open space areas. Three of the cross sections are shown in Figure 4.3-6. The remainder of the cross sections are available for viewing in Appendix V of the Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-120.)

In order to preserve the integrity of avoidance areas within the project where wetlands and critical habitat are to be preserved, it is necessary that the project not adversely affect mean annual and peak annual events. This means that increases in flow rates for these events should not be allowed within the unaltered swales. Additionally, where seasonal wetlands are identified (see Section 4.4 of the Revised Draft EIR), nuisance waters from non-storm discharges should be diverted to the flood control facilities to retain the seasonal nature of the existing features. Special structures are proposed to divert excess flood waters to the flood control channels, or to divert nuisance waters away from the existing swales. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-120.)

The Master Project Drainage Study proposes the use of several types of facilities to provide attenuation in reducing peak flow discharges from the project site that may have an affect on water quality. The main method of providing detention attenuation will be through the use of existing swales and excavated flood control channel detention facilities upstream of regulating culvert facilities. Other types of attenuation facilities proposed with the project include excavated lake areas, constructed wetlands area and water quality basin and channels. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-120.)

Although it is planned that major swales and drainage channels on the site be retained, loss of vegetation within and adjacent to existing swales and channels will occur due to project construction. This is considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-120.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.3.4-3a New development applications shall be accompanied by a site-specific project drainage report that is consistent with the approved Master Project Drainage Study. The project drainage report shall be reviewed and approved by the Placer County Department of Public Works during the Subsequent Conformity Review Process and prior to improvement plan approval for new development. The drainage report shall be prepared by a Registered Civil Engineer and shall be in conformance with the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual and Placer County Code. The
project applicant shall be financially responsible for all stormwater drainage facility maintenance requirements. The project drainage report shall include, at a minimum, written text addressing existing conditions, the effects of project improvements, all appropriate calculations, a watershed map, potential increases in downstream flows and volumes, proposed on-site improvements, and drainage easements, if necessary, to accommodate flows from the site. The drainage report shall demonstrate compliance with all mitigation measures included in the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-121.)

4.3.4-3b **New development shall submit a revegetation plan for disturbed swale and channel areas and banks to the Placer County Department of Public Works for review and approval.** The revegetation plan shall be designed to minimize erosion potential while emphasizing use of native or endemic species. The plan shall include provision for regular watering between April 1 and October 1 to ensure continuous coverage of 95% of disturbed areas and survival of species during the first year. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-121.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

The above mitigation measures will reduce the potentially-significant impact of vegetation loss that would occur during and after drainage improvements within the Specific Plan area to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-120.)

**Impact 4.3.4-4:** Groundwater quality in the Specific Plan area could be degraded during and after construction by the introduction of construction pollutants and urban pollutants, including vehicle oils and greases; heavy metals on roads, parking lots, and driveways; fertilizers and pesticides used on site landscaping; and toxic compounds released from auto maintenance areas. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-121.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Contaminants can be naturally-occurring as well as introduced. Comparison of groundwater quality data with applicable water quality standards and guidelines for drinking and irrigation indicate elevated levels of TDS/specific conductance, chloride, sodium, bicarbonate, boron, fluoride, nitrate, iron manganese, and arsenic may be of concern in some locations within the groundwater subbasin. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-121.)

A groundwater contamination plume exists beneath McClellan Park, approximately four miles south of the Specific Plan area (see Figure 4.3-10). Remediation is in progress at McClellan...
Park and the plume is not expanding. Any effects on area groundwater resources from the plume would be less than significant, due to the ongoing remediation efforts and distance. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-121.)

Project-related activity during construction and operation could degrade groundwater quality; however, due to the characteristics of soils on-site (predominantly hydrological Group D) and depth to groundwater (measured at 55 to 125 feet in depth), little percolation to groundwater occurs. Existing wells on-site could, however, transmit pollutants to groundwater, if not properly sealed and abandoned upon cessation of agriculture. Further individual wells that continue to be used in the SPA for domestic and agricultural purposes could be contaminated from new sources established within the Specific Plan area. This is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-121 to 4.3-122.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.3.4-4 All existing groundwater wells within the Specific Plan area shall be abandoned and sealed in accordance with Placer County Environmental Health Division standards upon abandonment of use, prior to any project-related construction activity within one hundred feet of any affected well. Wells that will remain within the SPA or other adjoining areas that are within 100 feet of active development within the Specific Plan area shall, where landowner permission is granted, be inspected and, if found to be improperly sealed, properly sealed, or destroyed and replaced, in accordance with Placer County Environmental Health Division Standards. Seals, inspections, and well destruction and construction shall be at the expense of the Specific Plan area developer. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-122.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The mitigation measure above will reduce impacts related to contamination of wells and groundwater to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-122.)

Impact 4.3.4-5: The initial surface water supply could affect the concentration of contaminants in the lower American River, which could affect the quality of drinking water available at other locations in the CVP system. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-123.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Increased diversions from Folsom Reservoir associated with the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply could reduce storage levels in Folsom Reservoir and reduce
The proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in either no change or slight increases (up to 0.1%) in 70-year mean monthly CVP reservoir storage levels relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-105 to B-107). Long-term average monthly mean flows in the lower American and Sacramento rivers would remain unchanged or decrease slightly (up to a maximum 0.7% for the lower American River) relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-108 to B-111). These small reductions in reservoir storage and flows, acting indirectly to dilute the concentrations of water quality parameters, would have a small and immeasurable potential-adverse impact to ambient water quality. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-123.)

Concentrations of water quality parameters of interest such as nutrients, pathogens, TDS, TOC, turbidity, and priority pollutants (e.g., metals, organics) would not be expected to be altered substantially, if at all, by the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition. Dilution capacities, potentially affected by altered hydrology, would not be significantly affected. Thus, any impacts to water quality for waterbodies associated with the CVP resulting from reductions in Folsom Reservoir storage or lower American River flows would be less than significant relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-123.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-123.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.3.4-6:** The initial surface water supply could affect Delta water quality. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-123.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Throughout the 70-year period of hydrologic record, the long-term average monthly Delta outflow for the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would remain unchanged, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-413). While in some individual years the reduction in Delta outflow would be measurable (i.e., up to 8 cfs), overall, the magnitude of change, relative to the existing condition, would not likely impart a measurable or significant impact to Delta...
water quality in the long-term. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, the
greatest shift in the long-term average monthly position of X2 relative to the existing condition
would be 0.2 km (Technical Appendices A-13 to A-24). (RDEIR, p. 4.3-123.)

The model simulations conducted for the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply included
conformance with X2 requirements set forth in the SWRCB Initial Water Quality Control Plan,
as well as Interior’s Final Administrative Proposal for the Management of 3406(b)(2) Water.
Therefore, the export-to-inflow ratios under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water
supply would not exceed the maximum export ratio as set by the SWRCB Interim Water Quality
Control Plan. Overall, there would be less than significant impacts to Delta water quality under
the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p.
4.3-124.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-124.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Off-Site Infrastructure Impacts

Impact 4.3.4-7: Construction of off-site infrastructure can affect water quality causing
increased sedimentation, operation and maintenance of construction
vehicles, and storage of materials that could release contamination to
surface waters. This is considered a significant short term impact.
(RDEIR, p. 4.3-124.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the
significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Installation of utilities and roadway widening could result in water quality degradation over the
duration of construction. Grading operations result in a loss of vegetation, exposing the soils to
erosion. The exposed soils could be carried by storm runoff during the rainy season to
downstream waters resulting in sediment transport. These increased sediment loads could
substantially degrade water quality in downstream areas. In addition, the operation and
maintenance of construction vehicles and equipment, the loading and unloading of construction
materials, and construction waste could release contaminants to the site that would be washed off
by stormwater discharges. This increase in sediment loads and turbidity in local drains would be
considered a significant short term water quality impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-124.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.3.4-7a Prior to approval of improvement plans for improvement projects of one acre or greater, the developer/project proponent shall submit a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP), obtain from the SWRCB a General Construction Activity Stormwater Permit under the NPDES and comply with all requirements of the permit to minimize pollution of stormwater discharges during construction activities. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-125.)

4.3.4-7b Prior to construction of any off-site infrastructure within Placer County, the project developer/project proponent shall submit to the Placer County Department of Public Works, for review and approval, an erosion control plan consistent with the County’s Grading, Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance (reference pages 4-3-9 through 4-3-12). The erosion control plan shall indicate that proper control of siltation, sedimentation and other pollutants will be implemented per NPDES permit requirements and County ordinance standards. The plan shall address storm drainage during construction and proposed BMPs to reduce erosion and water quality degradation. All on-site drainage facilities shall be constructed to Placer County specifications. BMPs shall be implemented throughout the construction process. The developer shall comply with all similar requirements within other affected jurisdictions. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-125.)

4.3.4-7c BMPs for construction shall be developed in accordance with the California Stormwater Quality Association Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbook for Construction and New Development/Redevelopment (or other similar source approved by the County Department of Public Works. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-125.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Although Placer County cannot compel compliance with mitigation measures in other jurisdictions, SWRCB requires compliance with NPDES and the above mitigation measures would reduce the significant impact of short-term surface water quality degradation that could occur during the development of off-site infrastructure in Placer County to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-125.)

Cumulative Impacts

Impact 4.3.4-8: The Specific Plan area could contribute to the cumulative affect of water quality due to the introduction of urban pollutants including vehicle oils and greases; heavy metals on roads, parking lots, and driveways; fertilizers and pesticides used on site landscaping; and toxic compounds released from auto maintenance areas into surface runoff. This is considered a cumulatively considerable significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-126.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the cumulative affect of water quality in the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Newly planted vegetation, newly paved roadways and anticipated combinations of sod/seed activity from planned development (see Figure 4.1-2 in Section 4.1 of the Revised Draft EIR) in the watersheds of Dry Creek, Curry Creek, and Steelhead Creek could result in long-term water quality degradation. The high use of roads and parking areas daily within the region would contribute vehicle oils and grease to the site stormwater discharge. In commercial areas, stormwater runoff may convey a wide range of pollutants to receiving waters. Vehicles contribute oil, grease, and metals onto roads and parking lots. Excessive use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides on the site landscaping can also result in leaching of nutrients and toxic compounds into stormwater runoff. Such compounds are soluble and would not, therefore, be removed by the use of detention basins. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-125.)

Uncontrolled, these urban pollutants can directly or indirectly affect aquatic life. High concentrations of toxins in runoff can be lethal to aquatic life; chronic, low levels may enter the food chain, affecting the long-term breeding success of populations and lower reproductive potential. Aquatic and wildlife habitat can also be adversely affected by the accumulation of toxins, which can indirectly affect aquatic and wildlife resources. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-125.)

BMPs such as detention ponds, wetlands, filters, and vegetated swales have been shown to reduce urban pollutant levels in stormwater. The Specific Plan would add over 4,000 acres of urban development that would incrementally contribute to an increase in urban pollutants within the watersheds. Given the extent of proposed development in the Curry Creek, Steelhead Creek and Dry Creek watersheds (in excess of 30,000 acres) and roadway improvements, the cumulative potential for the generation of urban pollutants, and because drainage from the area is ultimately conveyed into a potable water source (Sacramento River), this potential long-term water quality degradation is considered a cumulatively considerable significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-126.)

Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measure 4.3.4-1a–e, above, will reduce the impact of cumulative long-term surface water quality degradation that would occur after the development of improvements in the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-126.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Placer County cannot assure that pollutant levels will be reduced to pre-development levels on an area-wide basis, therefore long-term impacts will remain *significant, cumulative and unavoidable.* (RDEIR, p. 4.3-126.)

**Impact 4.3.4-9:** The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative degradation of Dry Creek water quality, including additional erosion and sedimentation due to increased effluent discharge from the DCWWTP. This is considered a *cumulatively considerable and significant impact.* (RDEIR, p. 4.3-126.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

An excerpted analysis from an October, 2005, technical memorandum prepared by Merritt Smith Consulting is available in the Revised Draft EIR (see RDEIR, pages 4.3-127 through 4.3-136.) Based on this analysis, the following effects on water quality, erosion and sedimentation are *cumulatively less than significant* and no mitigation is required: mercury loading, changes in pH, nutrient loading, change in taste or creation of odors, velocity, bank scour, and turbidity. The following effects are *cumulatively considerable and significant* but can be mitigated to a less than significant level by application of mitigation measures set forth in the 1996 WWTP Master Plan EIR: temperature change, introduction of trace metals and organics, and changes in dissolved oxygen. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-136.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.3.4-9a  *Install advanced treatment facilities (DCWWTP Master Plan EIR Mitigation Measure 7-2).*

4.3.4-9b  *Institute metals source controls/pre-treatment (DCWWTP Master Plan EIR Mitigation Measure 7-3).*

4.3.4-9c  *Install cooling towers if necessary (DCWWTP Master Plan EIR Mitigation Measure 7-4).*

Significance After Mitigation:

The mitigation measures above appear in the 1996 DCWWTP Master Plan EIR. Merritt Smith Consulting has determined, after recent analysis, that continued compliance with these mitigation measures is sufficient to reduce impacts related to temperature change, introduction of
trace metals and organics, and changes in dissolved oxygen to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-136.)

**Impact 4.3.4-10:** The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative degradation of Sacramento River water quality due to increased effluent discharge from the SRWTP. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-137.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The SRWTP 2020 Master Plan EIR evaluated potential impacts to water quality associated with treatment and discharge of anticipated future SRWTP discharges in Sacramento River. Effects on water quality were considered to be significant if the project: substantially degrades Sacramento River or Delta water quality; causes or substantially contributes to the exceedance of water quality standards, objectives, or criteria required to protect beneficial uses, outside the zone of initial mixing; or substantially impairs the integrity of the Sacramento River or Delta as a whole. The project would contribute to, but would not exceed the flows analyzed in the 2020 Master Plan EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-137.)

The SRWTP 2020 Master Plan EIR found all impacts associated with increased effluent discharge from SRWTP to the Sacramento River to be less than significant. Although the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan would contribute to future discharge volumes, the above described water quality conclusions would not be altered. This impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-137.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-137.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.3.4-11:** The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects resulting from increased diversions and changes in CVP operations that could result in reduced river flows and reservoir storage. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-138.)
Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Changes in the operation of the CVP and SWP under the cumulative condition could be expected to substantially reduce water storage levels in Folsom, Shasta, and Trinity reservoirs, and substantially reduce flows in the lower American and Sacramento rivers, relative to existing conditions. Under the cumulative condition, long-term average Folsom Reservoir water storage would be reduced by up to 11% during September, relative to the existing condition. Similarly, Shasta Reservoir long-term average water storage would be reduced by up to 7% in September under the cumulative condition, and Trinity Reservoir long-term average water storage would be reduced by up to 5% during June, relative to the existing condition. For the lower American River at Nimbus Dam, long-term average flows under the cumulative condition would be reduced by up to 15%, relative to the existing condition. Long-term average upper Sacramento River flows under the cumulative condition would be reduced by up to 9%, and long-term average lower Sacramento River flows would be reduced by up to 5%, relative to the existing condition. The greatest reductions in storage and flows would be from September through November, when existing flows are already low. Such reductions in storage and flow rates would result in increased concentrations of contaminants of concern. Increases in constituent concentrations that may occur under the cumulative condition could be sufficiently large to cause state or federal water quality criteria or standards to be exceeded, while such standards are not exceeded under the existing condition. Therefore, impacts to water quality under the cumulative condition would be potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-138.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Water Supply

The proposed long-term water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to reductions in reservoir water storage or flow rates that would occur under the cumulative condition. In regards to Folsom Reservoir end-of-month water storage, the proposed long-term water supply would not contribute substantially to the reductions in long-term average storage that occur under the cumulative condition. Furthermore, the proposed long-term water supply would result only in increases in Folsom Reservoir end-of-month storage relative to the cumulative condition. The largest increase would be 0.2% during July and December (Template Output H-105). The proposed long-term water supply would contribute up to 1% of the cumulative reduction in long-term average water storage in Shasta Reservoir in any given month. During June and July, under the proposed long-term water supply, end-of-month storage would decrease by a maximum of 1,000 AF relative to the cumulative condition (Template Output H-106). At Trinity Reservoir, there would be no cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative reductions in long-term average water storage at Trinity Reservoir. In fact, reductions in water storage at Trinity Reservoir would not occur and the greatest increase that would occur under the proposed long-term water supply, relative to the cumulative condition, would be 0.1% during all months except January and April (Template Output H-107). Therefore, the proposed long-term water supply would have no cumulatively considerable
contribution to water quality impacts to CVP reservoirs that could occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.3-138 to 4.3-139.)

The proposed long-term water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to flow reductions under the cumulative condition in either the lower American or the Sacramento rivers. The proposed long-term water supply would contribute up to 8% of the total cumulative reduction in long-term average lower American River flows in any given month (Template Output H-108 to H-109). The greatest flow reduction that would occur in the lower American River below Nimbus Dam and at the mouth under the proposed long-term water supply would be 250 cfs compared to the cumulative condition. These flow reductions of up to 250 cfs occur as a step function in the model as a result of small changes in Folsom Reservoir storage (i.e., decreases in storage ranging from 4 to 12 TAF). These changes occur as a result of a modeling trigger (which releases water from Folsom Reservoir during dry year conditions, as defined in the model framework), and would not be experienced under real-time operations. Accordingly, the greatest reduction in flow that would occur under the proposed long-term water supply under real time operations in the lower American River below Nimbus Dam and at the mouth would be 196 cfs, respectively, compared to the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix G-313 to G-324 and G-361 to G-372). These reductions would be considered small because 196 cfs out of 4,821 cfs (monthly mean flow in the lower American River below Nimbus Dam) and 197 cfs out of 4,774 cfs (monthly mean flow in the lower American River at the mouth) would not be reductions of enough magnitude to constitute a significant effect to lower American River flows. In addition, the long-term average flow in the lower American River below Nimbus and at the mouth would not decrease more than 0.2% in all months simulated, under the proposed long-term water supply (Template Output H-108 to H-109). (RDEIR, p. 4.3-139.)

For the upper Sacramento River below Keswick, the proposed long-term water supply would contribute up to 3% of the cumulative reduction in long-term average flow in any given month. The long-term average flow in the upper Sacramento River under the proposed long-term water supply, relative to the cumulative condition, would not reduce more than three cfs in any given month (Template Output H-110). In the lower Sacramento River at Freeport, the proposed long-term water supply would contribute up to 1% of the cumulative reduction in long-term average flow in any given month. Long-term average flow at Freeport would only decrease a maximum of 0.1% during October and August under the proposed long-term water supply (Template Output H-111). (RDEIR, 4.3-139.)

The changes in monthly river flow under the proposed long-term water supply would not be of sufficient magnitude or frequency to result in a substantial increase in the concentration of contaminants in these water bodies. In addition, the greatest decreases in flow would not be experienced under real time operations. Consequently, the proposed long-term water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to significant water quality impacts that could occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively
considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact is therefore considered *less than significant*. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-139.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-140.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.3.4-12:** The proposed Specific Plan could contribute to a cumulative effect on Delta water quality. This impact is considered *less than significant*. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-140.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Reductions in long-term average Delta outflow of up to approximately 8% would occur during all months except April, July and August, when slight increases would occur under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition. Reductions in monthly mean flows of 5% or more (up to 42%), relative to the existing condition, would occur in 233 of the 840 months analyzed throughout the 70-year period of hydrologic record. Such reductions would occur with sufficient frequency and magnitude to result in *potentially significant cumulative impacts* to water quality. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-140.)

The long-term average position of X2 would move upstream less than one kilometer during any given month under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition. However, there would be 31 occurrences, of the 840 months included in the analysis, in which the position of X2 would shift by one km or more, relative to the existing condition. Such shifts would be of sufficient magnitude to result in *potentially significant cumulative impacts* to water quality parameters that are influenced by the position of X2. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-140.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Water Supply**

The proposed long-term water supply would contribute to reductions in Delta outflow of 5% or more in 1 month to the 233 months under the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix H-1 to H-12). In 756 out of the 840 months simulated, monthly mean Delta outflow under the long-term water supply would be essentially equivalent to or greater than the cumulative condition. Furthermore, the proposed long-term water supply would result in maximum changes in the long-term average Delta outflow to be within 12 cfs, relative to the cumulative condition (Template Output H-413). Therefore, the proposed long-term water supply would not result in
outflow reductions of sufficient frequency or magnitude to have a cumulatively considerable contribution to the potentially significant reductions in Delta outflow that would occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-140.)

The proposed long-term water supply would not have a cumulatively considerable contribution to shifts in the position of X2. Specifically, the long-term average position of X2 would not shift during any given month under the proposed long-term water supply condition (Template Output 429). Moreover, in 806 of the 840 months simulated, the monthly mean position of X2 under the proposed long-term water supply would be essentially equivalent to the position under the cumulative condition. The greatest shift in the position of X2 under the proposed long-term water supply would be 0.3 km, representing a maximum change of 0.003%, relative to the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix H-13 to H-24). Therefore, the proposed long-term water supply would not have a cumulatively considerable contribution to future potentially significant water quality impacts in the Delta. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-140.)

Reductions in long-term average Delta outflow of up to approximately 8% would occur under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition. Monthly reductions of 5% or more (up to 42%), relative to the existing condition, would occur in 233 of the 840 months analyzed throughout the 70-year period of hydrologic record. Such reductions would occur with sufficient frequency and magnitude to result in potentially significant cumulative impacts to water quality. The proposed Specific Plan long-term water supply would contribute 1 month to the 233 months with outflow reductions under the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix G-1 to G-12). Therefore, the proposed long-term water supply would not result in outflow reductions of sufficient frequency or magnitude to contribute substantially to the potentially significant reductions in Delta outflow that would occur under the cumulative condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-141.)

The long-term average position of X2 would move upstream less than one kilometer under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition. However, there would be 21 occurrences, of the 840 months included in the analysis, in which the position of X2 would shift by one km or more, relative to the existing condition. Such shifts would be of sufficient magnitude to result in potentially significant impacts to water quality parameters that are dependent upon the position of X2. The proposed Specific Plan long-term water supply, however, would not contribute considerably to shifts in the position of X2 (Technical Appendix G-13 to G-24). Therefore, the proposed long-term surface water supply’s contribution to future significant water quality impacts in the Delta, would be less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., less than significant). (RDEIR, p. 4.3-141.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.3-141.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

D. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Standards of Significance

Section 15064.7 of the CEQA Guidelines encourages local agencies to develop and publish the thresholds that the agency uses in determining the significance of environmental effects caused by projects under its review. However, agencies may also rely upon the guidance provided by the expanded Initial Study checklist contained in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a) includes what amount to mandated thresholds of significance involving biological resources. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-76.)

Pursuant to Section 15065(a)(1), the biological impacts of the proposed Specific Plan are considered significant if the project would:

- Substantially\(^2\) 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; or
- Substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare or threatened species.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.4-76 to 4.4-77.)

CEQA Guidelines Section 15380 defines what is meant in Section 15065 by the term “endangered, rare or threatened species.” A species of animal or plant is presumed to be “endangered, rare, or threatened” if the species has been officially listed or designated as such under the FESA or the CESA and the regulations implementing those statutory schemes [CEQA Guidelines, Section 15380(c)]. In addition, a species that has not been officially listed under these statutes and regulations may still be considered endangered, rare or threatened under the following circumstances:

\(^2/\) CEQA does not quantitatively define the term “substantially,” as used to describe a reduction of a species; population, its habitat, or its range. What is “substantial” varies with each species, based on limiting factors, natural variability, and the sum of the project-related effects on all life stages of a species. Determining if a reduction is “substantial” is considered relative to background natural variation; the impact should also be measured in a well-designed sampling program.
• If the species’ survival and reproduction in the wild are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes, including loss of habitat, change in habitat, overexploitation, predation, competition, disease or other factors;

• If the species, although not presently threatened with extinction, exists in such small numbers throughout all or a significant portion of its range that it could become endangered if its environment worsens; or

• If the species is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range and could be considered under the federal definition of “threatened.”

(RDEIR, p. 4.4-77.)

Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines includes a series of questions addressing projects’ potential impacts on various categories of environmental resources. These questions, formulated by the California Resources Agency in 1998 after extensive public input (including input from leaders in the statewide community of environmental consultants), identify areas of inquiry in which agencies should engage, and are commonly used by lead agencies in the formulation of criteria for determining the significance of impacts. In reliance on the areas of inquiry, Placer County has determined that impacts to biological resources could be considered significant if the project would:

• Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, of the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

• Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

• Have a substantial adverse effect on federally-protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool and coastal) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

• Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

• Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

• Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.
• 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, or substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.4-77 to 4.4-78.)

Notably, the criteria quoted above addressing impacts to “wetlands” apply only to “federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.” In 1998, when Appendix G to the CEQA Guidelines was most recently updated, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contended that federal jurisdiction over wetlands extended to isolated waters not adjacent to navigable waters. In *Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*, (2001) 531 U.S. 159, however, the United States Supreme Court held that federal jurisdiction applied only to navigable waters, their tributaries, and areas adjacent thereto. In contrast, the 1994 *Placer County General Plan* employs a broader definition, though in 1994 it tracked the understanding employed by federal agencies. The Glossary to the General Plan defines “wetlands” as “transitional areas between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or the land is covered by shallow water.” Under a ‘unified’ methodology now used by all federal agencies, wetlands are defined as “those areas meeting certain criteria for hydrology, vegetation, and soils.”

General Plan Policy 6.B.1 states that “[t]he County shall support the ‘no net loss’ policy for wetland areas regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Department of Fish and Game. Coordination with these agencies at all levels of project review shall continue to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures and the concerns of these agencies are adequately addressed.” Because, at the time the General Plan was adopted in 1994, this policy was thought to extend County regulatory authority to isolated waters such as vernal pools that are not adjacent to navigable waters or their tributaries, the County currently interprets the reach of this policy as extending beyond what the United States Supreme Court has said is the statutory jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. For this reason, Placer County has determined that impacts to biological resources could be considered significant if the project would:

• Have a substantial adverse effect on wetlands as defined by the 1994 *Placer County General Plan* (including, but not limited to, marsh and vernal pools) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

(RDEIR, p. 4.4-78.)

In addition, although Placer County does not yet have an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, or Natural Community Conservation Plan, interim planning agreements have been executed that are precedent to the habitat plans now under development. For this reason, Placer County has determined that impacts to biological resources could also be considered significant if the project would:
• Conflict with the provisions of an executed interim planning agreement that has been entered precedent to the adoption of a Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.4-78 to 4.4-79.)

**Impact 4.4-1:** Development will remove the majority of open space in the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered **significant.** (RDEIR, p. 4.4-94.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the removal of the majority of open space in the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

For the purposes of the following discussion, development impacts refer to impacts resulting from the development of residential lots, commercial facilities, public facilities, utilities, access roads, and active use parks. Development of the proposed Specific Plan (excluding off-site infrastructure) potentially would result in the loss of approximately 3,520 acres of open space and agricultural land which serves as Swainson’s hawk foraging habitat (the project site is within five miles of known active Swainson’s hawk nests), including approximately 61 acres of vernal pool habitat (consisting of vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, seasonal wetland swales, and drainage swales), 28.3 acres of other waters or wetlands, and approximately 18 acres of oak savannah habitat (as shown in Tables 4.4-10 and 4.4-11). On-site open space and avoidance areas could be used to establish compensatory habitat for some habitat loss associated with these impacts, if capable of supporting such habitat mitigation and the resulting conditions provide suitable long-term conservation of the newly-established values. Specific mitigation measures will be determined and incorporated into the Open Space Mitigation and Management Plans required by Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 below. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-94.)

Special-status species and more common wildlife and plant species are found throughout project area open space. Some species use more than one habitat (i.e., raptors could nest in a riparian corridor and forage in agricultural land). Open space can also be used by wildlife to move from one habitat area to another. Even though a portion of the project will be retained in open space (particularly drainage and riparian areas), urbanization of the area will fragment the large mosaic of habitats that occur on-site and in the surrounding area. This fragmentation could affect the range of some species, and reduce the value of preserved habitat (e.g., by removing foraging habitat from the vicinity of nesting habitat). Furthermore, the Placer County General Plan supports preservation and enhancement of natural vegetation and resources as open space, particularly open space that is interconnected and of sufficient size to protect biodiversity, accommodate wildlife, and sustain ecosystems (General Plan Goal 6E and Policies 6.D.6, 6.E.1
and 6.E.3). For these reasons, the loss of open space, regardless of the habitat it supports, is considered a **significant impact.** (RDEIR, p. 4.4-95.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.4-1a The following criteria shall be applied in accordance with the Mitigation Strategy to the conversion of open space, including cultivated agricultural land, to urban uses within the Specific Plan area. This measure shall not apply to the Special Planning Area (SPA) where no urban development is proposed:

*Open Space/Agricultural Land Mitigation:* One acre of open space will be preserved within Placer County for each acre of open space impacted within the Specific Plan area. This is to be accomplished through the approval and implementation of a series of Open Space Mitigation and Management Plans that address the management of a specific property to be preserved for mitigation of lost open space, agricultural land, and habitat (each, a “mitigation property” or “preserve site” and collectively, “mitigation lands” or “preserve lands”). Open Space Mitigation and Management Plans for individual preserve sites shall accompany each proposed development project, or group of projects, within the Specific Plan area. For the purposes of assessing impacts associated with a specific development project, “open space” impacts shall include all land proposed to be developed for urban uses. For purposes of mitigation for the specific development project, the term “open space” shall include any and all undeveloped land proposed to be preserved or otherwise required by any governmental agency to be preserved for any reason, specifically including all lands preserved for habitat or agricultural mitigation as set forth below and lands in agricultural use. No additional agricultural mitigation is required beyond the 1:1 open space requirement noted above, as long as a substantial portion, as determined by the Planning Director, in consultation with the County Agricultural Commissioner, of the mitigation lands acquired are: (1) in agricultural production, or have the potential to support agriculture, (2) are undeveloped and have an NRCS soils classification of the same or greater value than lands being affected within the Specific Plan property at issue, or (3) are undeveloped and have the same or higher value CDC categorization than lands being affected within the Specific Plan property at issue. In-kind mitigation is not required for agricultural land developed within the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-95 to 4.4-96.)

*Initial Core Preserve Area:* To address the fragmentation of open space in the Specific Plan area, the applicant shall establish a core preserve area of approximately one thousand acres, or minimum 200-acre areas will be added to an existing preserve that is at least one thousand acres. This initial core preserve area shall be established with approval of the first final map (excluding large-lot final maps that do not result in any disturbance of existing natural conditions), and shall include acreage to mitigate loss due to backbone infrastructure installation. The establishment of a core preserve area will partially mitigate for fragmentation of the Specific Plan area and loss of agricultural land and biological function and value associated with the installation of infrastructure and site development. To the extent feasible and appropriate, the core preserve shall be surrounded by lands designated as Agriculture within the Placer County General Plan.
Preserve lands shall be suitable for mitigation of project impacts and shall be evaluated for this purpose by Placer County. Each proposal for a preserve project pursuant to the Specific Plan shall provide sufficient detail to allow for adequate County review of site characteristics, potential values and the long-term integrity of each proposed mitigation site. The County shall also consider the terms of any existing or proposed conservation easements on properties within the proposed preserve areas. Proposals for preserve lands to be encumbered with easements or purchased in fee shall include adaptive management strategies allowing for appropriate management modifications and access for monitoring. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-96.)

Subsequent Projects: Subsequent Specific Plan projects (not including backbone infrastructure) shall mitigate through the establishment of preserve areas that, to the extent feasible and appropriate, are located adjacent to the core preserve or are associated with other existing preserve sites currently under easement or fee title for purposes of wildlife conservation and are surrounded by lands designated as Agriculture within the Placer County General Plan or are in areas deemed acceptable by the County Board of Supervisors. Future preserve sites, if not contiguous to an existing designated open space area or a preserve 200 acres or greater in size, shall be a minimum of 200 acres or greater in size. After the establishment of the core preserve area, such land dedication need not include more land than is necessary to mitigate for open space and habitat impacts associated with entitlements being sought at that time. In determining whether it is feasible and appropriate to require that mitigation lands for subsequent Specific Plan projects be consistent with the criteria stated above, the County shall take into consideration both the overall objectives of the proposed PCCP and the realities of the agricultural real estate market in south Placer County. Habitat and open space areas available in the real estate market for purchase, either in fee or through conservation easements, do not necessarily occur in contiguous pieces. Existing high quality habitat and open space areas themselves are not always contiguous with each other, as they have often been separated and disrupted by long-standing agricultural practices or roads and other structures or landscape features. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-96 to 4.4-97.)

4.4-1b Habitat Mitigation: Applicants for projects developed under the Specific Plan shall obtain applicable permits from the state and federal resource agencies, as needed. Land preserved to meet the habitat mitigation requirements of this Mitigation Measure and/or any additional habitat mitigation that is required by any governmental agency for any development project undertaken pursuant to the Specific Plan shall be counted towards the required “open space” mitigation set forth in Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, provided that the mitigation land is within Placer County. Preservation of mitigation land may occur through a permanent conservation easement, fee title, or purchase of mitigation credits satisfactory to Placer County. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-97.)

Applicants for projects developed under the Specific Plan are required to satisfy the Placer County General Plan “no net loss of wetlands” standard in connection with proposed development that impacts aquatic resources. To satisfy the “no net loss of wetlands” standard, the applicants shall include a preservation component and a variety
of wetland enhancement, restoration and creation activities that are to be conducted on lands preserved. The measures that follow describe ratios to be achieved to provide for preservation, restoration, creation, and enhancement to offset impacts to wetland (non-vernal pool) impacts, vernal pool impacts, and riparian impacts as shown in Table 4.4-12. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-97.)

**Wetland (Non-Vernal Pool) Impacts:** Impacts to “waters of the United States” (not including vernal pools) and other non-jurisdictional wetlands identified in the Placer County General Plan will be mitigated to provide “no net loss” through avoidance, minimization and/or compensatory mitigation techniques. Buffers of such off-site mitigation lands will be consistent with requirements of the PCCP as ultimately adopted by the County to the extent that the PCCP is adopted prior to the acquisition of preserve sites and to the extent feasible. Both the wetland and upland components of all wetland mitigation lands shall be credited towards open space mitigation requirements and uplands shall count as wetland buffers when appropriate. To minimize indirect effects to the preserve site, the County may impose measures such as controlling and redirecting runoff from adjoining properties or the construction or removal of fences. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-97.)

**Vernal Pool Habitat Impacts:** Impacts to vernal pool (fairy shrimp and tadpole shrimp) habitat will be mitigated through preservation or restoration of acreage based on each acre directly impacted (see Table 4.4-12 for mitigation ratios). In this context, restoration is intended to be construction of vernal pools at densities within the range of historical levels as identified on 1937 aerial photos, or other valid historical evidence, for the proposed preserve site to be restored. Required ratios are set forth in Table 4.4-12. Buffers of such off-site mitigation lands will be consistent with requirements of the PCCP as ultimately adopted by the County to the extent that the PCCP is adopted prior to the acquisition of preserve sites, and to the extent feasible. Both the wetland and upland components of all wetland mitigation lands shall be credited towards open space mitigation requirements and uplands shall count as wetland buffers when appropriate. To minimize indirect effects to the preserve site, the County may impose measures such as controlling and redirecting runoff from adjoining properties or the construction or removal of fences. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-97 to 4.4-98.)

The re-creation/restoration of pools must include adequate upland areas to maintain the value of the vernal pools. Additional acreage may be required to address impacts to non-vernal pool type wetlands that function as habitat for federally-listed species, and indirect impacts to similar avoided habitat. The total required acreage shall be determined by the County, except for determinations regarding purely federal obligations, which shall be made by federal agencies working with project applicants. As an alternative, once the Placer County Conservation Plan (PCCP) is adopted, project applicants may participate in the PCCP, which is intended to provide for adequate mitigation of vernal pool habitat. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-98.)

**Riparian Impacts:** For each riparian tree removed, one 15-gallon tree, one deepot-40 seedling for each inch, and three 1-gallon shrubs will be planted within existing riparian
or improved drainage corridors in the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-98.)

**Oak Tree Impacts:** For each oak tree greater than six inches DBH that is removed, one 15-gallon planting, one deepot-40 seedling for each inch removed and three 1-gallon shrubs will be planted. De minimus impacts to areas containing oak trees, not including actual tree removal, associated with passive trail use shall not be considered an impact requiring mitigation. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-98.)

**Swainson’s Hawk Foraging Impacts:** Swainson’s hawk foraging habitat shall be mitigated according to California Department of Fish and Game Guidelines: one acre for each acre lost within one mile of a nest, 0.75 acre for each acre lost within one to five miles of a nest, and 0.5 acre lost within five to ten miles of a nest, unless otherwise addressed through the PCCP. Additionally, the applicant shall be required to obtain a CESA take permit for any nest tree that may be removed as part of any proposed construction under the Specific Plan. Additional mitigation measures for the loss of active nest trees shall include planting of suitable nest trees at a 15:1 ratio on suitable foraging habitat areas within west Placer County. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-98.)

4.4-1c **Out-of-County Habitat Mitigation:** Out-of-County habitat mitigation shall only be used when, as determined by the County, such lands are of equal or of higher value than those in the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-98.)

4.4-1d **“Out-of-Kind” Habitat Mitigation:** “Out-of-kind” habitat mitigation shall only be used as mitigation for loss of a particular habitat type after approval by the County. “Out-of-kind” mitigation may be appropriate where the mitigation lands include areas with a mosaic of riparian habitat, creek corridors, flood plains and upland areas, where an assemblage of vernal pool complexes in fallow or grazed lands is in close proximity to such riparian habitat, or where the County deems that the “out-of-kind” mitigation lands contain other unique or desirable characteristics that provide a comparable level of open space and habitat mitigation. Any “out-of-kind” mitigation that is allowed by the County shall be described in an approved Open Space Mitigation and Management Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-98.)

4.4-1e **Funding for Mitigation Land Acquisition (or Easement Establishment) and Monitoring and Maintenance:** Funding for mitigation land acquisition (or easement establishment) and monitoring and maintenance may be financed, if acceptable to the County, through a Mello-Roos CFD or other funding mechanism similar to the funding mechanism used to fund Specific Plan infrastructure construction. The specific funding plan, including a method for preserve acquisitions and for long-term preserve management, shall be described in an approved Open Space Mitigation and Management Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-99.)

4.4-1f **Excess Open Space and/or Habitat:** Excess open space and/or habitat (after taking into account habitat mitigation requirements stated above) within mitigation lands acquired for the mitigation of impacts associated with an approved development project within the Specific Plan area may be used to mitigate for subsequent development projects within
the Specific Plan area. Transfer of excess open space and habitat shall be accomplished through a private cost sharing agreement. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-99.)

4.4-1g Phasing of Mitigation: Implementation of Open Space Mitigation and Management Plans shall occur commensurate with each development project or set of projects developed under the Specific Plan. In order to ensure that Open Space Mitigation and Management Plans are fully implemented, the applicant shall demonstrate compliance to the County prior to improvement plan approval, recordation of a final subdivision map, (not including a large-lot final map that results in no disturbance of any existing natural condition), or as a condition of issuance of a project-level discretionary approval for non-residential land uses that do not require a tentative subdivision map, as well as prior to development of any off-site infrastructure project associated with the Specific Plan. Each Open Space Mitigation and Management Plan shall identify the specific mitigation lands that will be necessary to fully mitigate impacts to habitat and special status species, and shall demonstrate control of said property by option, fee title, permanent conservation easement or mitigation credits to the satisfaction of the County and state and federal agencies to the extent required by applicable state or federal permits. The Plan shall also identify the necessary funding mechanism for the long-term maintenance and management of the mitigation lands or acquisition of required habitat credits shall be identified in the Open Space Mitigation and Management Plans, and a specific maintenance and management plan shall be included for perpetual conservation of the mitigation lands, along with provisions for adaptive management. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-99.)

4.4-1h Dedication of Mitigation Lands for Placer Vineyards Specific Plan Projects: The mitigation lands necessary to mitigate for the impacts of developing a project within the Specific Plan area, as well as developing an off-site infrastructure project associated with the Specific Plan, shall be dedicated to the County (or other County approved entity) prior to approval of improvement plans, recordation of the first final map (excluding large-lot final subdivision maps that do not result in any disturbance of existing natural condition), or as a condition of issuance of a project-level discretionary approval for non-residential land uses that do not require a tentative subdivision map. The administering entity shall hold, as grantee, all conservation easements acquired for the mitigation lands or fee title for those lands acquired in fee. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-99.)

4.4-1i Placer County Conservation Plan: As previously described, at the time of the release of the Revised Draft EIR, Placer County was preparing a Natural Community Conservation Plan, a Habitat Conservation Plan Programmatic Section 404/401 Compliance and a Master Streambed Alteration Agreement to comply with the state and federal Endangered Species Acts. Collectively, this planning effort is known as the Placer County Conservation Plan (PCCP). Once the approved PCCP is in place, open space and biological resource mitigation measures shall be implemented in such a manner as to be consistent with the PCCP. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-99 to 4.4-100.)

4.4-1j Preserves for Agricultural or Open Space Mitigation Only: As an alternative to the establishment of preserves that mitigate for one or more biological resources in addition to mitigating for lost open space and agricultural lands, applicants for individual
projects within the Specific Plan area may instead establish preserves intended only to mitigate for loss of open space or agricultural lands without a complementary wetland, Swainson’s hawk or other significant biological mitigation purpose. In such cases, the preserve may occur in any portion of western Placer County so long as the preserve is within an area designated for agricultural or open space use on the Placer County General Plan. Such preserves are only required to meet the minimum 80 acre parcel size requirement for parcels in the Agricultural/Open Space land use category of the General Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-100.)

In lieu of the above described measures, the Specific Plan or subsequent phases of the Specific Plan may fulfill mitigation requirements by compliance with the terms of the adopted PCCP. Such compliance, as determined by Placer County, shall constitute sufficient mitigation that will obviate the need to comply with this mitigation measure, to the extent that an affected agricultural and/or biological resource is addressed in the PCCP. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-100.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would substantially lessen the significant impacts to biological resources due to the conversion of open space and agricultural land, and would preserve habitat for a variety of special status species, but will not mitigate the impact to a less than significant level. Although these measures will ensure that similar open space is preserved elsewhere in the County, the project site itself will still be converted to urban uses, so there will be a net reduction in open space. It would not be feasible to create 3,520 acres of new open space to offset development of the Specific Plan area. Therefore, while the loss of open space will be substantially lessened by Mitigation Measures 4.4-1a through 4.4-1j, the impact will still remain significant and unavoidable.

**Impact 4.4-2:** Development could remove habitat for potentially occurring listed vernal pool invertebrates. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-100.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the possible removal of habitat for vernal pool invertebrates within the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

Development of the Specific Plan area is estimated to result in the loss of approximately 41 acres of vernal pools, primarily within properties that have been surveyed for wetlands (see Table 4.4-10). Vernal pools are considered potential habitat for vernal pool fairy shrimp and vernal pool tadpole shrimp, both federally-listed species. Depending upon determination by the USFWS,
these non-vernal pool type wetlands are also sometimes considered to be habitat for federally-listed aquatic invertebrate species. Landowners are currently conducting surveys to determine the presence/absence of federally-listed aquatic invertebrates in vernal pools and other wetlands on several properties within the Specific Plan area. If negative results are obtained, then impacts actually experienced from development will be less than stated above. The Placer County General Plan also supports protection of habitat for areas that support rare or endangered species (Policy 6.C.6). The loss of habitat for these protected species could reduce the number of these species occurring in Placer County and the surrounding region. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-100.)

Seasonal wetlands such as vernal pools and swales and seasonal marsh areas are characterized by small watersheds and brief periods of inundation and saturation during the winter and early spring. Therefore, the hydrology of seasonal wetlands is sensitive to variations in precipitation, evapo-transpiration, soil water-holding capacity, soil permeability, and the storage capacity of the wetland. Development proposed under the Specific Plan would alter the natural topography and drainage patterns of the Specific Plan area. The addition of paved surfaces, summer irrigation, and changes in the rates of soil infiltration could potentially change the amount and timing of water entering adjacent seasonal wetlands. Special status wildlife species such as vernal pool fairy shrimp are associated with wetlands that have specific hydrologic characteristics. Changing the average duration of inundation in seasonal wetlands adjacent to developed areas may adversely impact these species. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-100 to 4.4-101.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-2 Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 as it pertains to vernal pools. Additional steps shall be taken as may be required through the state and federal permitting process for properties requiring more detailed resource identification prior to development, including: wetlands delineated and submitted to the USACE, habitat types mapped, and special-status species determined to be or potentially be within the Specific Plan area with protocol surveys conducted if required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-103.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the mitigation measure 4.4-2 would substantially lessen the impact of the loss of vernal pool habitat; however, the impact would remain significant after mitigation. To the extent that replacement, re-creation or restoration of vernal pools may be approved, this impact would be reduced; however, because the mitigation measure does not guarantee preservation of the affected on-site vernal pools, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-102.)

Impact 4.4-3: Construction activities could remove habitat for valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a federally-listed species potentially occurring in the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-103.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Elderberry shrubs (the host plant for VELB) could occur on properties requiring more detailed resource identification. Therefore, development within these areas could remove potential habitat for this species. Removal of potential habitat for these species would be considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-103.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-3 Prior to approval of grading/engineering plans for any property within the Specific Plan area, a focused survey for elderberry shrubs shall be conducted to determine the presence/absence of the shrubs. The survey shall be completed by a qualified biologist anytime throughout the year. If elderberry shrubs are found, locations of these occurrences shall be mapped. If these resources can be avoided, no further studies are required. However, if projects within the Plan area will likely adversely affect these shrubs, then a detailed mitigation/conservation plan that includes long-term strategies to ensure no net loss of VELB habitat shall be developed.

The replacement of elderberry shrubs required by this measure could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes areas appropriate for elderberry shrubs and VELB. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-103.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measure would reduce the loss or disturbance of VELB habitat to a less than significant level on properties requiring more detailed resource identification. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-103.)

Impact 4.4-4: Construction activities could remove habitat for the western pond turtle, a special-status species potentially occurring in the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-103.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.
Potential habitat for western pond turtle likely occurs on the properties surveyed and could occur on properties requiring additional resource identification. Western pond turtle is a special-status species identified by the CDFG. Removal of potential habitat for this species could reduce their numbers, which would be considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-103.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-4 Construction shall be designed to avoid impacts to potential habitat for western pond turtle, if feasible. If construction is required in areas of potential habitat, then a focused survey for this species shall be conducted prior to approval of engineering plans. The survey is required to determine the presence or absence of this species on the properties surveyed. If pond turtles are found on the properties surveyed, locations of these occurrences shall be mapped.

A detailed mitigation/conservation plan that provides for “no net loss” of individuals of the species or its habitat shall be developed upon confirming the presence of this species on the properties surveyed. If this species is not found on the properties surveyed, no further studies are necessary.

The replacement of western pond turtle habitat required by this measure could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes areas appropriate for western pond turtle. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-104.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above measure would reduce the loss of western pond turtle habitat to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-103.)

Impact 4.4-5: Construction activities could destroy active nests or disturb nesting burrowing owls, a California Species of Special Concern. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-104.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Burrowing owl has not been recorded within the properties surveyed, but potential foraging and nesting habitat for burrowing owls is present on properties surveyed and those requiring additional resource identification. Burrowing owl nests could be established in the future. Burrowing owls nest in burrows, so site preparation activities could destroy or damage a nest, or
disturb nesting owls. All raptors are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code, and destruction of active raptor nests, including owl burrows, is considered a violation of this code and the MBTA. The disruption of nesting burrowing owls would be considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-104.)

If burrowing owls establish nests within the properties surveyed, nesting surveys will detect them. If present, the nesting owls would not be disturbed by construction activities, because no activity will be allowed within five hundred feet of a nest. Once the young have fledged, the nests can be removed, because the owls would then establish nests in a new area. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-104.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-5 When construction is proposed during the burrowing owl breeding season (April-September), a focused survey for burrows shall be conducted within 30 days prior to the beginning of construction activities by a qualified biologist in order to identify any active burrows. If active nests are found, no construction activities shall take place within five hundred feet of the nest until the young have fledged. Burrows that must be removed as a result of Specific Plan implementation shall be removed during the non-breeding season (October to March). If no active nests are found during the focused survey, no further mitigation will be required.

If burrows are removed as a result of implementation and there is suitable habitat on-site, on-site passive relocation shall be required. Owls will be encouraged to move from occupied burrows to alternate natural or artificial burrows that are beyond 50 meters from the impact zone and that are within or contiguous to a minimum of 6.5 acres of foraging habitat for each pair of relocated owls. Relocation of owls should only be implemented during the non-breeding season. On-site habitat shall be preserved in a conservation easement and managed to promote burrowing owl use of the site.

If there is not suitable habitat on-site, off-site passive relocation shall be required. Off-site habitat must provide suitable burrowing owl habitat. Land shall be purchased and/or placed in a conservation easement in perpetuity and managed to maintain suitable habitat. Off-site mitigation shall use one of the following ratios:

1. Replacement of occupied habitat with occupied habitat: 1.5 times 6.6 (9.75) acres per pair or single bird.

2. Replacement of occupied habitat with habitat contiguous to currently occupied habitat: 2 times 6.5 (13.0) acres per pair or single bird.

3. Replacement of occupied habitat with suitable unoccupied habitat: 3 times 6.5 (19.5) acres per pair or single bird.
In the event passive relocation and use of artificial burrows is required on- or off-site, a banding and tracking program shall be established in accordance with accepted protocols to allow measurement of success. In the event the relocation program is proven not to be successful, additional steps shall be undertaken as required by the County in consultation with CDFG.

The replacement of burrowing owl habitat required by this measure could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes areas appropriate for burrowing owl.

Loss of burrowing owl foraging habitat is addressed in Impact 4.4-1. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-104 to 4.4-105; Final EIR, Response to Comment 24X.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce impacts associated with disturbance of nesting burrowing owls to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-104.)

Impact 4.4-6: Development could result in removal of nesting and foraging habitat for Swainson’s hawk, a state-listed species. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-105.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the loss of Swainson’s hawk foraging habitat within the Specific Plan area as a result of the urbanization of the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

However, changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental impact to Swainson’s hawk nests as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Agricultural land and non-native grassland habitats are considered potential foraging habitat for Swainson’s hawks. Swainson’s hawks are known to nest within ten miles of foraging habitat. Since the majority of the Specific Plan area would be considered potential foraging habitat, full buildout could remove up to 3,520 acres of foraging habitat. Currently, the CDFG considers the removal of five or more acres of Swainson’s hawk foraging habitat a potentially significant effect to this species. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-105.)

Although no Swainson’s hawk nests have been observed within the Specific Plan area, they have been recorded in proximity (within one mile) to the Specific Plan area. There are trees within the Specific Plan area that are suitable nesting trees. The removal of such trees would reduce
opportunities for Swainson’s hawks to nest in proximity to their foraging habitat. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-105.)

For the reasons discussed above, removal of potential foraging habitat and nesting trees for Swainson’s hawk would be considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-105.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.4-6 Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 as it pertains to Swainson’s hawk foraging habitat and nesting trees. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-106.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-6 will substantially lessen loss of Swainson’s hawk foraging habitat, but will not mitigate the impact to a less than significant level. Although the measure would ensure that similar foraging habitat is preserved elsewhere in the county, properties surveyed would still be converted to urban uses, so there would be a net reduction in available foraging habitat. It would not be feasible to restore or create new foraging habitat to completely offset the development. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-106.)

Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 above requires preservation of off-site foraging habitat at ratios recommended by the CDFG: 1:1 for each acre lost within one mile of a nest, 0.75:1 for each acre lost within one to five miles of a nest, and 0.5:1 for each acre lost within five to ten miles of a nest. Because new nests could be established in closer proximity to surveyed properties surveyed, which would affect the amount of acreage that must be preserved, Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 would also require new nesting surveys as development proposals within surveyed properties surveyed are implemented. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-106.)

Because Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 calls for preservation of open space at a 1:1 ratio, the highest ratio required for Swainson’s hawk mitigation, CDFG recommendations would likely be met entirely by Mitigation Measure 4.4-1. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-106.)

Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 also requires that any Swainson’s hawk nesting trees that are removed be replaced at a 15:1 ratio in areas suitable for Swainson’s hawk foraging and nesting. This measure would ensure that there is “no net loss” of nesting trees over time. The impact due to loss of foraging habitat will remain significant and unavoidable; however, the impact to nests is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-106.)

**Impact 4.4-7:** Development could result in removal of nesting and foraging habitat for non-raptor special status bird species. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-106; PRRDEIR, p. 4.4-106.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.
Explanation:

Numerous non-raptor special status bird species, including tricolored blackbird and black rail, could nest and forage within sections of the Specific Plan area. Tricolored blackbirds are protected under the MBTA and the California black rail is State listed as well as protected under the MBTA. Destruction of active nests is considered a violation of the MBTA, and, consequently, impacts to nesting special-status birds would be considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-106; PRRDEIR, p. .4-106.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-7 Prior to construction activities, a focused survey for non-raptor special status bird nests and/or nesting colonies shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 30 days prior to the beginning of construction activities in order to identify active nests within the construction area. If active nests are found, no construction activities shall take place within five hundred feet of the nest and/or nesting colony until the young have fledged. The biologist shall consult with the CDFG, particularly with respect to vegetation removal as a result of project construction. If no active nests and/or nesting colonies are found during the focused survey, no further mitigation will be required.

This measure would ensure nests and/or nesting colonies are avoided when active, so that eggs and young would be protected. Once the young have fledged their nests, the nests can be removed without harm to the birds. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-106 to 4.4-107; PRRDEIR, p. 4.4-107.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measure would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of nests to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-106; PRRDEIR, p. 4.4-107.).)

Impact 4.4-8: Construction activities could destroy active nests or disturb nesting raptors. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-107.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Raptors, including red-tailed hawk and great horned owl, are likely to nest within the Specific Plan area. One potentially active raptor nest was found in a small tree along the seasonal marsh area in the south-central portion of the Specific Plan area. Other nests could be established over
time. If an active nest is located in a tree slated for removal or pruning, the nest could be lost and the eggs and/or young could be destroyed. Specific Plan implementation could result in removal of nest trees. All raptors are protected under the MBTA and Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code, and destruction of active raptor nests is considered a violation of this code and the MBTA. In addition, construction activities near active nests could disturb nesting raptors, and even result in the abandonment of a nest. Consequently, construction near trees containing active nests would be considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-107.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-8 When construction is proposed during the raptor breeding season (March to early September), a focused survey for raptor nests shall be conducted within 30 days prior to the beginning of construction activities by a qualified biologist in order to identify active nests on-site. If active nests are found, no construction activities shall take place within five hundred feet of the nest until the young have fledged. Trees containing nests shall be removed during the non-breeding season (late September to March). If no active nests are found during the focused survey, no further mitigation will be required. This measure will ensure that active nests are not moved or substantially disturbed during the breeding season, so that raptor eggs and young are not destroyed or abandoned as a result of construction. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-107.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the mitigation measure above would reduce the potential disturbance of nesting raptors to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-107.)

Impact 4.4-9: Construction activities could destroy active roosts or disturb several species of bats. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-107.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Several species of bats could occupy structures (such as bridges) located within the Specific Plan area. Construction activities could destroy roosting sites and/or disturb roosting bats, which would be considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-108.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-9 Prior to construction, a qualified biologist shall survey any affected structures for evidence of bat roosts (e.g., bat guano). If roosts are found, they shall be removed in
April, September or October in order to avoid the hibernation and maternity seasons. Appropriate exclusion methods will be used, as needed, during habitat removal.

The initial assessment will involve looking for bats or bat signs such as guano, urine staining, and culled food parts, and will identify those specific locations that represent potential habitat (i.e., which specific buildings, trees, bridges could support roosting bats). If no potential habitat is identified or no potential habitat will be affected (i.e., removed), no further measures are required.

Bat habitat can be removed with minimal impact to the resident bat population if it is done outside of the hibernation season (November through March) and outside of the maternity season (May through August). During the removal period, a roost exit survey shall be conducted prior to habitat removal. If bats are detected, standard humane exclusion methods shall be implemented (e.g., placing plastic over roost entrance areas such that bats can exit the roost but not return). Exclusion shall be conducted for two nights prior to habitat removal and habitat removal shall occur immediately following implementation of these exclusion measures. If there is a delay, then the exclusion measures shall be repeated. During the maternity season (May through August), habitat removal may occur following a roost exit survey that confirms no bats are present; however, if bats are detected they may not be excluded until the end of the maternity season. During the hibernation season (November through March), bats do not exit the roost, so exit surveys cannot be used to assess presence and removal shall be delayed to the end of this time period.

If bats must be excluded, the project proponent shall work with a qualified biologist to determine if any additional steps (such as installation of alternative roost habitat in the form of bat boxes) are appropriate for the particular habitat. Determination of these additional measures will depend on the species present and their specific ecological preferences/requirements. Other steps could include improvement of other avoided bat habitat or design of new project elements such as bridges to be “bat-friendly.” (RDEIR, p. 4.4-108.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

The following measure would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of bat roosts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-108.)

**Impact 4.4-10:** Development could result in removal of individual oak trees. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-108.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the removal of individual oak trees within the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to
render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

Approximately 44 acres of native oak trees (approximately 254 individual trees) and two stands of blue oak woodland are present within the Specific Plan area (see Figure 4.4-1 and Appendix F for Arborist Report). The California Department of Fish and Game classifies the term oak woodland as “a oak stand with a greater than 10% canopy cover or that may have historically supported greater than 10% canopy cover.” The two stands of blue oak woodland that would qualify as “oak woodland” under the above definition would be protected within open space preserved as part of the Specific Plan land use plan (Specific Plan Policy 7.18). Oak woodlands provide cover, foraging, and breeding habitat for numerous species of common resident and migratory wildlife, and the loss of these habitats is protected under Public Resources Code Section 21083.4. The Placer County General Plan recognizes the value of both individual trees (Policy 6.D.12) and groves of trees (Policies 6.D.4 and 6.D.8). Construction activities could damage trees that are intended to be preserved (e.g., by excavating within the root zone), resulting in additional losses. A significant number of individual oak trees occur along Watt Avenue and Dyer Lane. However, the Specific Plan provides a unique roadway design for Dyer Lane that preserves most of the existing oak trees. Due to existing roadway design constraints, oak trees will be lost along Watt Avenue. Because approximately 254 individual oak trees are scattered across the Specific Plan, some of which will be lost to development, the impact to individual oak trees is a significant impact. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-108 to 4.4-109.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.4-10a  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 as it pertains to oak trees.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-109.)

4.4-10b *Trees that are not planned for removal shall be preserved and protected. These oak trees shall be preserved and avoided by implementation of the following measures:*

- *Trees that are not proposed for removal and that are within two hundred feet of grading activities shall be protectively fenced five feet beyond the dripline and root zone of each oak tree (as determined by a certified arborist). This fence, which is meant to prevent activities that result in soil compaction beneath the canopies or over the root zone, shall be maintained until all construction activities are completed. No vehicles, construction equipment, mobile offices, or materials shall be placed within this fenced area.*

- *Grade changes shall be minimized to the extent feasible within or adjacent to the drip line of existing trees. No soil surface removal greater than one foot in depth shall occur within the drip lines of oak trees to be preserved. No cuts shall occur within five feet of their trunks. No earthen fill greater than one foot deep shall be placed within the drip lines of preserved oak trees, or within five feet of their trunks.*

- *Paving shall not be placed in the drip lines of oak trees to be preserved.*
• **Underground utility line trenching shall be not be placed within the drip lines of oak trees to be preserved.** If it is absolutely necessary to install underground utilities within the drip lines of oak trees, the trench shall either be bored or drilled, but not within five feet of the trunk.

• **For trees that will be removed, the project applicant shall submit a tree survey map of oaks to be removed or disturbed during project construction.** Within these impact areas, an inventory of the location, number and health of oaks shall be prepared by a certified arborist. A certified arborist shall also prepare a monitoring and management plan for each project disturbing or removing oak trees. The plan shall address planting techniques, proposed mitigation sites, monitoring requirements, management recommendations, and minimization and avoidance measures.

• **Annual monitoring shall be included to ensure that an 80% survival rate is achieved over a five-year period.** During monitoring, the following information shall be evaluated: average tree height, percent canopy cover, and percent survival. An oak tree mitigation and monitoring plan shall be submitted that includes a description of irrigation methods that will be used to ensure that saplings survive the first several years of growth. During the revegetation process, tree survival shall be maximized by using gopher cages, deer screens, regular maintenance, and replanting as needed. Monitoring reports shall be submitted to Placer County on an annual basis.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.4-109 to 4.4-110.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the mitigation measures 4.4-10a and 4.4-10b would substantially lessen impacts associated with removal of oak trees; however, the impact would remain significant and unavoidable. For trees planted as mitigation, Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 requires replacement of any removed oak tree of greater than six inches in diameter at breast height (dbh) with one 15-gallon tree, one deepot-40 seedling for each inch of dbh and three 1-gallon shrubs. By replanting with several trees of various sizes and maturity, Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 would replace the individual trees that are lost. Although the monitoring requirement would ensure the long-term viability of the replacement trees, oak trees take many years to mature, so initially the mitigation area would not provide the same habitat value as the individual trees that are removed. Therefore, the impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-109.)

**Impact 4.4-11:** Development would fill jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands, and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-110.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the filling of jurisdictional and no-jurisdictional wetlands, and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

As discussed in Impact 4.4-2, development will result in the loss of vernal pool habitat. Other wetlands, including intermittent drainages, seasonal wetlands and seasonal marshes, would also be lost to development. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers protects jurisdictional wetlands under the Clean Water Act. Federal policy calls for “no net loss” of jurisdictional wetlands. Wetlands that are not considered “jurisdictional” by the Corps could provide habitat for special-status species and/or meet the Placer County General Plan definition of “wetland.” The General Plan has identified wetland communities and related riparian areas as resources that should be protected (See, for example, Policies 6.B.1 and 6.B.2, which call for “no net loss” of jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands, 6.B.4, supporting preservation of upland areas, and 6.B.5, requiring development to avoid, minimize and/or compensate for impacts on wetlands). Therefore the loss of jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands would be considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-110.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-11a Since all potential jurisdictional waters of the U.S. will not be avoided in the Specific Plan design, the wetland delineation shall be finalized and the results shall be mapped and submitted to the Corps for verification through the section 404 permit process. Completion of the delineation will ensure precise acreage of various wetland types occurring in within properties surveyed. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-111.)

4.4-11b Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 as it pertains to non-vernal pool wetlands. For every acre of non-vernal pool wetland (jurisdictional or non-jurisdictional) lost directly to development, Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 requires replacement, re-creation, or restoration of the appropriate amount of acreage necessary to meet the no net loss standard. Assuming that the project will result in the direct loss of 29.7 acres of non-vernal pool complex habitat-type wetlands, Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 would require the preservation and/or replacement, re-creation or restoration of similar wetlands. Mitigation acreage amounts are reflected in Table 4.4-12 based on typical mitigation bank ratios. The total required acreage shall be determined by the County.

Additional steps shall be taken for properties that require more detailed resource identification prior to development, including: wetlands delineated and submitted to the USACE, habitat types mapped, and special-status species determined to be or potentially be within the Specific Plan area with protocol surveys conducted if required.
Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would substantially lessen potential impacts on wetlands; however, the impact would remain significant after mitigation. To the extent that replacement, re-creation or restoration of wetlands may be approved, this impact would be reduced; however, because the mitigation measure does not guarantee preservation on-site within the Specific Plan area, this impact must remain significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-110 to 4.4-111.)

Impact 4.4-12: Development could result in the loss of riparian habitat and disturbance of drainages. This impact is significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-111.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Riparian habitat occurs along some minor drainages and along Dry Creek. Because the riparian habitat associated with Dry Creek, the riverine seasonal marsh/riparian system in the southern portion of the Specific Plan area (i.e., Ownership Unit #19), and the intermittent drainage/riparian unit between Ownership Units #4 and #7 will all be avoided, no direct adverse effects are anticipated within the Specific Plan area. Impacts could, however, occur in off-site infrastructure areas, including widening associated with the Watt Avenue bridge (for a discussion of off-site infrastructure impacts, see Impacts 4.4-27 and 4.4-30 below). Indirect impacts to riparian corridors could negatively affect species dependent up on riparian habitat, even though riparian vegetation is not directly impacted; however, project setbacks and project design elements should reduce such impacts to a less than significant level). Nonetheless, riparian habitat could be adversely affected by the installation of offsite infrastructure. Furthermore, while some of these areas will remain undeveloped as open space, it may be necessary to construct roadway or utility lines across these drainages (e.g., widening of Watt Avenue Bridge at Dry Creek). Construction of these crossings could result in the disturbance of stream channels and loss of riparian habitat. Both the State of California (FGC 1601) and the Placer County General Plan have identified streams and riparian areas as important natural resources (see, for example, General Plan Policies 6.C.1, 6.C.5, 6.C.9, 6.D.3, 6.D.7, 6.D.14, 6.E.1, and 6.E.2, all of which support preservation and enhancement of riparian areas). This impact would be considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-111.)

In addition, Placer County has recently commissioned a technical report entitled Setback Recommendations to Conserve Riparian Areas and Streams in Western Placer County (Jones and Stokes Associates 2005). This study calls for preservation of the “active floodplain” (functionally defined as the 2-10 year floodplain), associated riparian zones, and additional
associated upland habitats (e.g., grasslands). In many cases, this strategy would result in even larger setbacks than those stipulated by the above-referenced policies. Briefly, the report recommends that the entirety of the active floodplain and an additional 30 m (98 feet) be preserved in order to prevent degradation of normal geomorphological processes and resultant decreases in water quality and flood storage and/or conveyance capacity. Further, the report recommends that an additional 70-120 m (230-394 feet) be preserved along third (and higher) order stream segments (such as the reach of Dry Creek adjacent to the Specific Plan area) in order to provide for wildlife habitat values. Thus, recommended setbacks in this area could be as much as 100-150 m (328-492 feet) from the “active floodplain.” Jones and Stokes (2005) estimates that these recommendations could result in setbacks of “over 150-200 m (492-656 feet) on higher order streams near Placer County’s western boundary.” (RDEIR, p. 4.4-112.)

Buildout of the Specific Plan development footprint avoids impacts to Dry Creek riparian habitat by adjacent land use, and is consistent with the 100-foot setback from perennial streams (Curry Creek) required by the General Plan. In most places along the stream corridor, the setback is considerably wider. Jones and Stokes (2005) recognizes the ineffectiveness of these increased setbacks in areas where land uses (i.e., agriculture and development) degrade habitat potential. Further, Jones and Stokes (2005) recognizes that …

Most wildlife habitat functions probably could be conserved in western Placer County by means of extensive sites with wider setbacks (>100 m [328 feet]) connected by stream corridors with narrower setbacks (e.g., 30 m [98 ft]).

(RDEIR, p. 4.4-112.)

The Specific Plan includes approximately 35 acres of oak woodland to be preserved at the upstream end of its frontage upon Dry Creek. This oak woodland would represent a wide node of high quality wildlife habitat in the Dry Creek corridor that would provide migratory linkage with other nodes, both upstream and downstream. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-112.)

Further, given the topography of the streambanks along the reach of Dry Creek adjacent to the Specific Plan area, the majority of the “active floodplain”, upstream of Watt Avenue, lies on the opposite southeast (i.e., left) bank. Given these considerations, indirect impacts resulting from encroachment of Specific Plan development within the larger buffers recommended in Setback Recommendations to Conserve Riparian Areas and Streams in Western Placer County (Jones and Stokes Associates 2005), are considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-112.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-12a Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, a Streambed Alteration Agreement shall be obtained from CDFG, pursuant to Section 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code, for each stream crossing and any other activities affecting the bed, bank, or associated riparian vegetation of the stream. If required, the project applicant shall coordinate with CDFG in developing appropriate mitigation, and shall abide by the conditions of any executed agreements. All stream crossings shall be performed using a “jack and bore” construction technique, unless otherwise specified by CDFG.
Streambed Alteration Agreement measures to protect the channel bank of a stream from erosion and related effects of construction shall be included in all related construction contracts. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-113.)

4.4-12b Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 as it pertains to riparian habitat. Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 requires replacement of all riparian trees removed to accommodate development. New trees and shrubs must be planted within existing riparian areas or improved drainage corridors. The replacement ratios exceed 1:1 in order to ensure that over the long-term the value of new riparian habitat equals or exceeds the value of the habitat that was lost. As an alternative, once the Placer County Conservation Plan is adopted, project applicants may participate in the PCCP, to the extent that it provided adequate mitigation for impacts on riparian areas.

Additional steps shall be taken for properties that require more detailed resource identification prior to development, including: wetlands delineated and submitted to the USACE, habitat types mapped, and special-status species determined to be or potentially be within the Plan area with protocol surveys conducted if required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-113.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would ensure that on-site riparian areas that are to be retained (such as streams) would be protected from damage or disturbance by construction and that there would be “no net loss” of riparian habitat within these areas. Although it is anticipated that jack and bore construction techniques will be utilized on-site and off-site, in the event a stream crossing cannot be avoided, implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce potential impacts on streams and riparian habitat to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-112.)

Impact 4.4-13: Development could result in removal of nesting and foraging habitat for Loggerhead shrike. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-113.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Tricolored blackbirds could nest and forage within sections of the Specific Plan area. Loggerhead shrike are a State species of concern, and destruction of active nests could have a detrimental impact on this species. Consequently, impacts to nesting Loggerhead shrike would be considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-113.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.4-13 If construction activities are proposed during the Loggerhead shrike breeding season (March to July), a focused survey for nesting pairs shall be conducted within 30 days prior to the beginning of construction activities by a qualified biologist in order to identify active nests within the construction area. If active nests are found, no construction activities shall take place within five hundred feet of the nesting colony until the young have fledged. Vegetation that must be removed as a result of construction shall be removed during the non-breeding season (March to July). If no active nests are found during the focused survey, no further mitigation will be required.

This measure would ensure that Loggerhead shrike nests are avoided when active, so that eggs and young would be protected. Once the birds have fledged, their nests can be removed without harm to the birds. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-113 to 4.4-114.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above measure would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of Loggerhead shrike to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-113.)

Off-Site Infrastructure

Impact 4.4-14: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could result in removal/loss of open space. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-114.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Agricultural (cultivated) land and uncultivated grasslands occur in the offsite infrastructure areas. This open space provides cover, foraging, and breeding habitat for numerous species of common resident and migratory wildlife. In many cases, installation would be in roadway rights-of-way. Where utility lines are extended through agricultural land or undeveloped open space, the lands, value as open space would be temporarily removed during construction. Once construction was complete, the land would be revegetated. Roadways would be widened in the case of Watt Avenue, Baseline Road and Riego Road; however widening would occur in an urbanized area, or in the case of Riego Road, it would occur on already established roadside shoulder areas where open space value is nominal. In the case of wastewater treatment plant improvements, all activity would occur within existing facility footprints and would not remove usable open space. Because the amount of acreage that would be disturbed would be small, and would only be removed from its open space condition temporarily, this impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-114.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-114.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-15:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for special-status plant species potentially occurring there. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-115.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could remove special-status plant species habitat. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Potential habitat for special-status plants occur in the off-site infrastructure areas, particularly vernal pool plants, such as dwarf downingia, Bogg’s Lake hedge hyssop, Red Bluff dwarf rush, Legenere, and Valley sagittaria. Other plants that could also occur in off-site infrastructure areas include Henderson’s bent grass, Ahart’s dwarf rush, Pincussion navarretia and Hartweg golden sunburst. Loss of habitat for these plants could reduce their numbers in the region. Therefore, removal of potential habitat for these species would be considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-114 to 4.4-115.)

It should be noted, however, that special status plant species have certain State and federal protections, regardless of local jurisdiction. Further, the City of Roseville, Sacramento County, and Sutter County have policies calling for protecting wetlands, which provide habitat for the special-status plants species likely to be affected by off-site infrastructure (see, for example, Vegetation and Wildlife Policies 2, 3, 4 and 8 in the Roseville General Plan, Sacramento County General Plan Policies CO-78 through 102 and County of Sutter General Plan 2015 Policies 4.B-1 through 4.B-4), so it is likely that the following or similar measures would be required of any project-related infrastructure in those jurisdictions. At the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that such policies can and should be followed by other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-115.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.4-15 Installation of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas shall be designed to avoid impacts to potential special-status plant species habitat, if feasible. If special-status plant habitat cannot be avoided, then a mitigation/conservation plan shall be prepared and implemented. The plan shall include measures to ensure “no net loss” of special-status plant species habitat.

If installation of infrastructure is required in areas of potential habitat, then a focused rare plant survey for these species shall be conducted prior to approval of grading/engineering plans. The survey is required to determine the presence or absence of these species in these areas. The survey shall be completed by a qualified botanist during the appropriate peak blooming period for these species. If special-status plants are found, locations of these occurrences shall be mapped. A detailed mitigation/conservation plan that includes long-term strategies for the conservation of the species shall be developed upon confirming the presence of these species. The plan shall provide for preservation and restoration at ratios that would ensure “no net loss” of the affected plant habitat. If these species are not found, no further studies will be necessary.

The mitigation acreage required by this measure could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes vernal pools that provide equal or greater habitat value for the affected special-status species plants.

Avoidance and/or loss of habitat for special-status plants outside of Placer County would be regulated by the USACE, CDFG, Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, depending on the location of such plants and whether they are federal or state listed species. These jurisdictions can and should implement similar measures to ensure “no net loss” of special-status plant habitat. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-115 to 4.4-116.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measure would substantially lessen the loss or disturbance of special-status plant habitat; however, the impact would remain significant after mitigation. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. For this reason and because the mitigation does not guarantee preservation of habitat within Placer County, the potential impact on special-status plant habitat is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-115.)

Impact 4.4-16: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could result in removal of habitat for listed
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could result in removal of listed vernal pool invertebrates’ habitat. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

The vernal pools in the off-site infrastructure areas are considered potential habitat for vernal pool fairy shrimp, vernal pool tadpole shrimp, and California linderiella, although many habitats are degraded due to discing or road maintenance. Because these features could support these species, removal is likely to be regulated under the Endangered Species Act. The Placer County General Plan also supports protection of habitat for areas that support rare or endangered species (Policy 6.C.6). Removal of potential habitat for these species would be considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-116.)

It should be noted, however, that the City of Roseville, Sacramento County and Sutter County have policies calling for protecting wetlands, including vernal pools (see, for example, Vegetation and Wildlife Policies 2, 3, 4 and 8 in the Roseville General Plan, and Sacramento County General Plan Policies CO-78 through CO-102, and County of Sutter General Plan 2015 Policies 4.B-1 through 4.B-4), so it is likely that the following or similar measures would be required of any project-related infrastructure in those jurisdictions. At the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that such policies can and should be followed by other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). Furthermore, all projects would need to comply with federal regulations pertaining to jurisdictional wetlands, which would protect habitat for species occurring in those wetlands. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-116.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-16 Installation of off-site infrastructure shall be designed to avoid vernal pools, if feasible. If pools will be filled or degraded by off-site infrastructure areas, implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-2.

Under this mitigation, vernal pools in Placer County will need to be delineated if they fall within the off-site infrastructure areas and cannot be avoided. Consideration shall also be given to degradation of vernal pools that would be avoided, but that could be
degraded due to construction and other activities (due to, for example, contaminants in runoff if a road is placed over the utility line). For vernal pools that would be filled or adversely affected, preservation, re-creation, replacement and/or restoration would be required at ratios that would ensure there would be “no net loss” of vernal pool habitat. See Mitigation Measure 4.4-2 for a more detailed discussion of the specific ratios.

The mitigation acreage required by this measure could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes vernal pools similar in type and equal or greater in habitat value to those pools lost to the off-site infrastructure areas.

Avoidance and/or fill of vernal pools outside of Placer County will be regulated by the USACE, Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, depending on the location and type of vernal pools that would be affected. Both federal policy (for jurisdictional wetlands), Sacramento County policy and Sutter County policy all call for “no net loss” of wetlands. These jurisdictions can and should implement measures similar to those provided in Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 to ensure “no net loss” of vernal pools. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-116 to 4.4-117.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measure would substantially lessen the loss or disturbance of habitat for listed vernal pool invertebrates; however, the impact would remain significant after mitigation. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. For this reason and because the mitigation does not guarantee preservation of habitat within Placer County, the potential impact on habitat for vernal pool invertebrates will have to be considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-116.)

Impact 4.4-17: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a federally-listed species. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-117.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could result in removal of valley elderberry longhorn beetle habitat. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.
Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

**Explanation:**

Elderberry shrubs (the host plant for VELB) could occur in the off-site infrastructure areas. Therefore, development within these areas could remove potential habitat for this species. Removal of potential habitat for these species would be considered a **potentially significant impact**. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-117.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.4-17 Prior to approval of grading/engineering plans, a focused survey for elderberry shrubs shall be conducted to determine the presence/absence of the shrubs. The survey shall be completed by a qualified biologist anytime throughout the year. If elderberry shrubs are found, locations of these occurrences shall be mapped. If these resources can be avoided, no further studies are required. However, if projects within the off-site infrastructure areas will likely adversely affect these shrubs, then a detailed mitigation/conservation plan that includes long-term strategies to ensure “no net loss” of VELB habitat shall be developed.

The replacement of elderberry shrubs required by this measure could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes areas appropriate for elderberry shrubs and VELB.

*This measure would ensure “no net loss” of VELB habitat within Placer County. If elderberry shrubs are present in off-site infrastructure areas in Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, these jurisdictions could also require measures to ensure “no net loss” of VELB habitat.* (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-117 to 4.4-118.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

The above measure would reduce the loss or disturbance of VELB habitat to a *less than significant level*. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential impact on VELB habitat will have to be considered *significant and unavoidable*. It should be noted, however, that the project would need to comply with federal regulations and the Valley elderberry longhorn beetle is protected under federal law. Further, at the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that the following mitigation should be adopted by other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)).
Impact 4.4-18: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for western pond turtle, a special-status species potentially occurring there. This impact is considered **potentially significant**. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-118.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could result in removal of western pond turtle habitat. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Potential habitat for western pond turtle likely occurs in the off-site infrastructure areas. Western pond turtle is a special-status species identified by the CDFG. Removal of potential habitat for these species could reduce their numbers, which would be considered a **potentially significant impact**. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-118.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-18 Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-4, which requires that construction be designed to avoid impacts to potential habitat for western pond turtle, if feasible. If installation is required in areas of potential habitat, then a focused survey for this species shall be conducted prior to approval of engineering plans. The survey is required to determine the presence or absence of this species in the off-site infrastructure areas. If pond turtles are found in the off-site infrastructure areas, locations of these occurrences shall be mapped.

A detailed mitigation/conservation plan that provides for “no net loss” of individuals of the species or its habitat shall be developed upon confirming the presence of this species in the off-site infrastructure areas. If this species is not found in the off-site infrastructure areas, no further studies are necessary.

The replacement of western pond turtle habitat, if necessary, could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes areas appropriate for western pond turtle. If western pond turtle is present in off-site infrastructure areas in Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, these jurisdictions could also require measures to ensure “no net loss” of its habitat. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-118 to 4.4-119.)
Significance After Mitigation:

The mitigation measure above would reduce the loss or disturbance of western pond turtle habitat to a less than significant level. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential impact on western pond turtle will have to be considered significant and unavoidable. However, at the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that the following mitigation should be adopted by other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR< p. 4.4-118.)

Impact 4.4-19: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active nests or disturb burrowing owls. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-119.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could destroy active nests or disturb burrowing owls. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Burrowing owl (a California Species of Special Concern) could potentially nest in the off-site infrastructure areas, so project construction activities could destroy an active nest and/or disturb nesting owls. The destruction of active nests and/or the disturbance of nesting burrowing owls would be considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-119.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-19 Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-5, which requires nesting surveys prior to construction, so if burrowing owls establish nests in the off-site infrastructure areas, they would be detected. This measure also prohibits construction activities within five hundred feet of a nest, so that nesting owls would not be disturbed. Once the young have fledged, the nests can be removed, because the owls would then establish nests in a new area. Therefore, with implementation of this measure, the impact on nesting burrowing
owls would be less than significant. Similar measures could be implemented by Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, if needed, to protect nesting burrowing owls. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-119.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above measure would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of burrowing owl nests to a less than significant level. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential impact on burrowing owl will have to be considered significant and unavoidable. However, at the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that the following mitigation should be adopted by the other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-119.)

Impact 4.4-20: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for Swainson’s hawk. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-119.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Agricultural land and non-native grassland habitats are considered potential foraging habitat for Swainson’s hawks, which are known to nest within ten miles of foraging habitat. Installation of infrastructure could temporarily remove some of this foraging habitat. However, after construction the off-site infrastructure areas would typically be revegetated, so impacts on foraging habitat would be temporary. Any impacts from roadway improvement would be extremely minor and would not occur in locations that would have high value for foraging. Therefore, removal of raptor foraging habitat would be considered a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-119 to 4.4-120.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-120.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.
Impact 4.4-21: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for non-raptor special status bird species. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-120; PRRDEIR, p. 4.4-120.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could remove habitat for non-raptor special status bird species. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Non-raptor special status bird species, such as tricolored blackbirds and California black rail, could nest within the off-site infrastructure areas. Tricolored blackbirds are protected under the MBTA and the California black rail is State listed as well as protected under the MBTA. Destruction of active nests of special status bird species is considered a violation of the MBTA, and, consequently, impacts to nesting special-status birds would be considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-120; PRRDEIR, p. 4.4-120.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-21 If installation of infrastructure is proposed in areas where identified non-raptor special-status bird species may occur, a focused survey for non-raptor special-status bird nests and/or nesting colonies shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within 30 days prior to the beginning of construction activities by a qualified biologist in order to identify active nests within the construction area. If active nests and/or nesting colonies are found, no construction activities shall take place within five hundred feet of the nest and/or nesting colony until the young have fledged and the biologist has consulted with the CDFG, particularly with respect to vegetation removal as a result of installation of project infrastructure. If no active nests are found during the focused survey, no further mitigation will be required.

This measure would ensure that bird nests are avoided when active, so that eggs and young would be protected. Once the birds have left their nests, the nests can be removed without harm to the birds. Similar measures could be implemented by Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, if needed, to protect nesting non-raptor special status bird species. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-120; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.4-120 to 4.4-121.)
Significance After Mitigation:

The mitigation measure above would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of nests and/or nesting colonies to a less than significant level. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential impact on nesting birds will have to be considered significant and unavoidable. However, at the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that the following mitigation should be adopted by the other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-120; PRRDEIR, p. 4.4-120.)

Impact 4.4-22: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active raptor nests or disturb nesting raptors. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-120.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could destroy active nests or disturb nesting raptors. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Raptors, including red-tailed hawk and great horned owl, could nest in the off-site infrastructure areas. Raptors are protected under the MBTA and Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code, and destruction of active raptor nests is considered a violation of this code and the MBTA. Consequently, impacts to nesting raptors and migratory birds would be considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-121.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-22 Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-8, which requires nesting surveys prior to construction, so if raptor nests are present in the off-site infrastructure areas, they will be detected. This measure also prohibits construction activities within five hundred feet of a nest, so that nesting raptors will not be disturbed. Once the young have fledged, the nests can be removed, because the raptors would then establish nests in a new area.
Therefore, with implementation of this measure, the impact on nesting raptors would be less than significant. Similar measures could be implemented by Sutter County, Sacramento County and/or the City of Roseville, if needed, to protect nesting raptors. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-121.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above measure would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of raptor nests to a less than significant level. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential impact on nesting raptors will have to be considered significant and unavoidable. However, at the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that the following mitigation should be adopted by the other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-121.)

Impact 4.4-23: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could harm or destroy the California horned lizard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-121.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could harm or destroy the California horned lizard. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Potential habitat for California horned lizard could occur in the off-site infrastructure areas. Removal of potential habitat for this species could reduce their numbers, which would be considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR< p. 4.4-121.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-23 Installation of off-site infrastructure shall be designed to avoid impacts to potential habitat for California horned lizard, if feasible. If installation is required in areas of potential habitat, a focused survey for this species shall be conducted prior to approval.
of engineering plans. The survey is required to determine the presence or absence of this species in the off-site infrastructure areas. If horned lizards are found in the off-site infrastructure areas, locations of these occurrences shall be mapped.

A detailed mitigation/conservation plan that provides for “no net loss” of individuals of the species or its habitat shall be developed upon confirming the presence of this species in the off-site infrastructure areas. If this species is not found in the off-site infrastructure areas, no further studies are necessary.

This measure would protect the California horned lizard, if present, from harm. Surveys of proposed impact areas shall be conducted during the active season for the lizard (generally April to October). During the spring, lizards are typically active during mid-day. During summer, activity transitions to morning and late afternoon.

The replacement of habitat, if necessary, could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes areas appropriate for the affected habitat. If California horned lizard is present in off-site infrastructure areas in Sutter County, Sacramento County and/or the City of Roseville, these jurisdictions could also require measures to ensure “no net loss” of its habitat. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-122.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The measure above would reduce the harm to or destruction of California horned lizard to a less than significant level. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential impact on California horned lizard will have to be considered significant and unavoidable at the time of Specific Plan approval, should the Plan be approved. However, at the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that the following mitigation should be adopted by the other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-121.)

Impact 4.4-24: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active roosts or disturb several species of bats. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-122.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could destroy active roosts or
disturb several species of bats. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

**Explanation:**

Several species of bats could occupy structures (such as bridges) located within the off-site infrastructure areas. Off-site infrastructure construction activities could destroy roosting sites and/or disturb roosting bats, which would be considered a **potentially significant impact**. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-122.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.4-24 *Prior to construction, a qualified biologist shall survey any affected structures for evidence of bat roosts (e.g., bat guano). If roosts are found, they shall be removed in April, September or October in order to avoid the hibernation and maternity seasons. Appropriate exclusion methods will be used, as needed, during habitat removal.*

The initial assessment will involve looking for bats or bat sign such as guano, urine staining, and culled food parts and will identify those specific locations that represent potential habitat (e.g., which specific buildings, trees, bridges could support roosting bats). If no potential habitat is identified or no potential habitat will be impacted (i.e., removed), no further measures are required.

*Bat habitat can be removed with minimal impact to the resident bat population if it is done outside of the hibernation season (November through March) and outside of the maternity season (May through August). During the removal period, a roost exit survey shall be conducted prior to habitat removal. If bats are detected, standard humane exclusion methods shall be implemented (e.g., placing plastic over roost entrance areas such that bats can exit the roost but not return). Exclusion shall be conducted for two nights prior to habitat removal and habitat removal shall occur immediately following implementation of these exclusion measures. If there is a delay, then the exclusion measures shall be repeated. During the maternity season (May through August), habitat removal may occur following a roost exit survey that confirms no bats are present; however, if bats are detected they may not be excluded until the end of the maternity season. During the hibernation season (November through March), bats do not exit the roost, so exit surveys cannot be used to assess presence and removal shall be delayed to the end of this time period.*

*If bats must be excluded, the project proponent shall work with a qualified biologist to determine if any additional steps (such as installation of alternative roost habitat in the form of bat boxes) are appropriate for the particular habitat. Determination of these additional measures will depend on the species present and their specific ecological*
preferences/requirements. Other steps could include improvement of other avoided bat habitat or design of new project elements such as bridges to be “bat-friendly.” Similar measures to those described in this mitigation measure could be used by Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-122 to 4.4-123.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Mitigation Measure 4.4-24 would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of bat roosts to a less than significant level. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sacramento County and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential impact on bat roosts will have to be considered significant and unavoidable. However, at the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that the following mitigation should be adopted by the other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-122.)

Impact 4.4-25: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could result in removal of oak trees. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-123.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could result in removal of oak trees. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Native oak trees are present in the off-site infrastructure areas. Oak woodlands provide cover, foraging, and breeding habitat for numerous species of common resident and migratory wildlife, and the loss of these habitats is protected under Public Resources Code Section 21083.4. However, with the exception of the widening of Watt Avenue south of the Specific Plan area and expansion of the DCWWTP, it is not anticipated that off-site infrastructure will result in removal of a significant number of oak trees. Utility lines and appurtenant structures will primarily be located within existing roadways; however, construction in the vicinity of Dry Creek could affect individual oak trees and could damage trees by excavating within the root zone. Individual trees and oak woodland in Placer County are protected under both the Placer County General Plan and the Placer County Tree Ordinance. Oak trees that could be affected by the expansion of the...
DCWWTP could qualify as oak woodland under Public Resources Code Section 21083.4. However, this requirement applies only to counties and the trees that could be affected are within the City of Roseville. Therefore, there are no unique requirements that apply to this potential oak woodland. Impacts to oak trees in off-site infrastructure areas are considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-123 to 4.4-124.)

It should be noted, however, that the City of Roseville and Sacramento County have policies and ordinances calling for the protection of oak trees, and the replacement of trees that are to be removed, so it is likely that these or similar measures would be required of any project-related infrastructure in those jurisdictions. While these measures could assist in reducing long-term impacts on oak trees to a less than significant level, the short-term impact would remain significant. However, at the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that the following mitigation should be adopted by the other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-124.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-25 Implement Mitigation Measures 4.4-10a and 4.4-10b. Mitigation Measure 4.4-10a requires implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 as it pertains to oak woodland communities and individual oak trees. The applicant is to provide a tree survey map of all trees that would be removed or disturbed during construction of the off-site infrastructure areas. These trees shall be replaced as specified in Mitigation Measure 4.4-1. Replacement trees shall be monitored annually to ensure that the new oaks and oak woodland are successful. Mitigation Measure 4.4-10b specifies measures to be taken to protect remaining trees from damage during construction. Similar measures could be implemented by Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, if needed to protect oak woodland and individual trees. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-124.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Over the long-term, the above mitigation measure would reduce the loss or disturbance of oak trees to a less than significant level. However, in the short-term, the impact would remain significant and unavoidable because of the length of time it will take for newly planted oak trees to mature to the point of providing comparable habitat value to those trees that are removed. Furthermore, while Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County, the County cannot compel Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential long-term impact on oak woodland and individual oak trees will also have to be considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-124.)

Impact 4.4-26: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within the off-site infrastructure areas could fill jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-124.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could fill jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

An estimated eight acres of potential jurisdictional waters of the U.S. have been mapped that could be filled as a result of infrastructure installation. Other wetlands could also be lost to off-site infrastructure areas, including intermittent drainages, seasonal wetlands and seasonal marshes. These areas are considered important biological resources by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and/or the County (depending on the type of wetland). Therefore, the loss of both jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands would be considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-124.)

It should be noted, that the City of Roseville, Sacramento County, and Sutter County have policies calling for protection of wetlands (see, for example, Vegetation and Wildlife Policy 8 in the Roseville General Plan, Sacramento County General Plan Policies CO-78 through CO-102 and County of Sutter General Plan 2015 Policies 4.B-1 through 4.B-4), so it is likely that the following or similar measures would be required of any project-related infrastructure in those jurisdictions. However, at the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that the following mitigation should be adopted by the other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-125.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-26 Infrastructure installations shall be redesigned to avoid impacts to wetlands, and other waters of the U.S., if feasible. If wetlands cannot be feasibly avoided, implement Mitigation Measures 4.4-2, which requires delineation of all wetlands that could not be avoided. Mitigation Measures 4.4-2 and 4.4-11 require preservation, re-creation, replacement and/or restoration of vernal pools and other wetlands that would be filled due to construction of off-site infrastructure areas. Successful restoration of vernal pools and other wetlands under Mitigation Measures 4.4-2 and 4.4-11 would result in more wetland acreage than would be lost to development. Sutter County, Sacramento County and/or the City of Roseville could require similar measures to ensure “no net loss” of wetlands.
The mitigation acreage required by these measures could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes vernal pools similar in type and equal or greater in habitat value to those pools lost to the off-site infrastructure areas. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-125.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The following measure would substantially lessen the loss or disturbance of wetlands; however, the impact remains significant after mitigation. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. For this reason and because the mitigation does not guarantee preservation of jurisdictional waters within Placer County, the potential impact on wetlands will have to be considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-125.)

Impact 4.4-27: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within the off-site infrastructure areas could result in the loss of riparian habitat and disturbance of drainages. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-125.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could result in the loss of riparian habitat and disturbance of drainages. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Utility lines will cross streams or other drainages (e.g., Dry Creek); however, project proponents will use jack and bore construction techniques in order to avoid any direct impact to these features. Impacts would, however, occur due to widening associated with the Watt Avenue bridge, including disturbance of stream channels and loss of 0.54 acres of riparian habitat. This impact would be considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-125.)

It should be noted, however, that the City of Roseville, Sutter County and Sacramento County have policies calling for protecting riparian areas (see, for example, Vegetation and Wildlife Policy 2 in the Roseville General Plan, Sacramento County General Plan Policies CO-62, CO-65, and CO-70 and County of Sutter General Plan 2015 Policies 4.B-1 through 4.B-4), so it is
likely that the following or similar measures would be required of any project-related infrastructure in those jurisdictions. At the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that such policies can and should be followed (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-126.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.4-27 *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-12, which requires a Streambed Alteration Agreement from CDFG whenever a road (bridge) or utility line would be constructed across a stream. The Agreement would include measures to protect the channel and bank of a stream from erosion and related effects of construction. The measure also requires that Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 be implemented as it pertains to riparian habitat. New trees and shrubs would be planted to replace those removed for development. The replacement ratios would exceed 1:1 in order to ensure that over the long-term the value of new riparian habitat equals or exceeds the value of the habitat that was lost. Any stream crossings proposed in Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville would also likely be required to obtain a Streambed Alteration Agreement.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-126.)

Also see Impact 4.4-30 and Mitigation 4.4-30. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-126.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

The above measure would reduce the disturbance of riparian areas to a less than significant level. Implementation of the measure would ensure that riparian areas that are to be retained (such as streams) would be protected from damage or disturbance by construction and that there would be “no net loss” of riparian habitat due to construction and maintenance of off-site infrastructure areas. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential impact on riparian areas will have to be considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-126.)

**Impact 4.4-28:** Installation of infrastructure within the Natomas Basin could affect Giant Garter snake habitat and/or individual snakes. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-126.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation of infrastructure within the Natomas Basis which could affect Giant Garter snake habitat and/or individual snakes. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.
Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Installation of infrastructure within the Natomas Basin area may disturb Giant Garter snake habitat and could harm individual snakes (see Figure 3-5, long-term surface water supply, and Figure 3-6, SRCSD Connection Alternative A). Most infrastructure installation would occur in roadways and other previously disturbed areas. Although infrastructure construction is temporary and surface conditions would generally be returned to their original condition (with the exception of points of access), construction could occur within and adjacent to habitat areas, including Steelhead Creek and ricelands, where snakes may be encountered. Consequently, impacts to this special-status species would be considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-126.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-28 All construction activity involving disturbance of habitat, shall be restricted to the period between May 1 and September 30. This is the active period for Giant Garter snake and direct mortality is lessened, because snakes are expected to actively move and avoid danger.

24-hours prior to construction activities, the project area shall be surveyed for Giant Garter snake. Survey of the project area shall be repeated if a lapse in construction activity of two weeks or greater has occurred. If a snake is encountered during construction, activities shall cease until appropriate corrective measures have been completed or it has been determined that the snake will not be harmed. Any incidental take and any sightings shall be reported to the USFWS immediately.

Movement of heavy equipment shall be confined to existing roadways to minimize habitat disturbance.

Construction personnel shall (to the extent practical) receive USFWS-approved worker environmental awareness training. This training instructs workers to recognize Giant Garter snakes and their habitat(s), and what to do if a Giant Garter snake is encountered during construction activities.

No plastic, monofilament, jute, or similar erosion control matting that could entangle snakes will be placed on a project site when working within 200 feet of snake aquatic or rice habitat. Substitutions include coconut coir matting, tactified hydroseeding compounds, or other material approved by the Wildlife Agencies.

Between April 15 and September 30, all irrigation ditches, canals, or other aquatic habitat shall be completely dewatered, with no puddle water remaining, for at least 15 consecutive days prior to the excavation or filling in of the dewatered habitat. Make sure
dewatered habitat does not continue to support Giant Garter snake prey, which could detain or attract snakes into the area. If a site cannot be completely dewatered, netting and salvage of prey items may be necessary.

Confine clearing to the minimal area necessary to facilitate construction activities. Flag and designate avoided Giant Garter snake habitat within or adjacent to the project as Environmentally Sensitive Areas. This area shall be avoided by all construction personnel.

If a live Giant Garter snake is found during construction activities, immediately notify the USFWS and the project’s manager. The manager shall do the following:

Stop construction in the vicinity of the snake. Monitor the snake and allow the snake to leave on its own. A monitor shall remain in the area for the remainder of the work day to make sure the snake is not harmed or if it leaves the site, does not return. Escape routes for Giant Garter snake should be determined in advance of construction and snakes should always be allowed to leave on their own. If a Giant Garter snake does not leave on its own within one working day, further consultation with USFWS is required.

Fill or construction debris may be used by Giant Garter snake as an over-wintering site. Therefore, upon completion of construction activities, remove any temporary fill and construction debris. If this material is situated near undisturbed Giant Garter snake habitat and it is to be removed between October 1 and April 30, it shall be inspected by a qualified biologist to assure that Giant Garter snake are not using it as hibernaculae. Wherever feasible, restore disturbed areas to pre-project conditions. Restoration work may include such activities as replanting species removed. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-127 to 4.4-128.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above measures derived from the approved Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP) would reduce the disturbance of Giant Garter snake and Giant Garter snake habitat to a less than significant level. However, the affected infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County and Sacramento County and would be undertaken by PCWA, and potentially the SRCSD. Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions and agencies to adopt or implement mitigation measures. However, because there is an approved and enforceable Habitat Conservation Plan that is applicable to the affected area, Sutter County may require that construction of the infrastructure improvements within its jurisdiction per subject to the NBHCP requirements because Sutter County is a permittee. Nonetheless, because PCWA, SRCSD, Sacramento County, and the Specific Plan applicants are not permittees under the NBHCP and the associated incidental take permits, Placer County cannot compel these agencies to adopt or implement the NBHCP conservation measures. Consequently, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable to the extent the NBHCP provisions are not implemented. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-127.)
Impact 4.4-29: Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove nesting habitat for Loggerhead shrike. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-128.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the installation and maintenance of off-site infrastructure which could remove nesting habitat for Loggerhead shrike. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Additionally, some of the changes or alterations required to mitigate the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Loggerhead shrike could nest within the off-site infrastructure areas. Loggerhead shrike are a State species of concern, and destruction of active nests could adversely affect the species. Consequently, impacts to nesting Loggerhead shrike would be considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-128.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.4-29 If installation of infrastructure is proposed during the Loggerhead shrike breeding season (March to July), a focused survey for nesting pairs shall be conducted within 30 days prior to the beginning of construction activities by a qualified biologist in order to identify active nests within the construction area. If active nests are found, no construction activities shall take place within five hundred feet of the nesting colony until the young have fledged. Vegetation that must be removed as a result of installation shall be removed during the non-breeding season (March to July). If no active nests are found during the focused survey, no further mitigation will be required.

This measure would ensure that Loggerhead shrike nests are avoided when active, so that eggs and young would be protected. Once the birds have left their nests, the nests can be removed without harm to the birds. Similar measures could be implemented by Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, if needed, to protect nesting tricolored blackbirds. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-129.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above measure would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of Loggerhead shrike nests to a less than significant level. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-
related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential impact on nesting Loggerhead shrike will have to be considered significant and unavoidable. However, at the time of Specific Plan consideration, the Placer County Board of Supervisors will likely find that the following mitigation should be adopted by the other jurisdictions (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(2)). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-129.)

**Impact 4.4-30:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within and adjacent to Dry Creek could remove habitat for special-status fish species potentially occurring there. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-129.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Potential construction-related effects to Chinook salmon and steelhead include temporary modification of edgewater habitat associated with bridge-widening activities (installation of in-channel footing) and removal of a low rock dam (see Impact 4.3.2 and Mitigation Measure 4.3.2-3f) in Dry Creek at the Watt Avenue crossing. Utility line crossings will be constructed using jack and bore construction techniques and will have no direct impact on edgewater habitat. Edgewater habitat is important to both upstream-migrating adults and downstream-migrating (i.e., emigrating) juvenile (“smolt”) Chinook salmon and steelhead as foraging habitat and cover (i.e., protection from predators). Modification to edgewater habitat may include localized loss of food-producing habitat and associated prey items. In addition, installation of bridge support piles will remove localized benthic resources associated with the river substrate. Potential long-term impacts to Chinook salmon and steelhead may include a localized degradation of edgewater habitat due to increased human-related activities, including streambed erosion. This is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-129.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.4-30a Implement Mitigation Measures 4.4-12a and 4.4-12b. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-129.)

4.4-30b A qualified fish biologist shall be present on-site during any dewatering activities at construction sites to minimize impacts to special-status species (i.e., prevent stranding of special-status species). Individual fish collected during dewatering shall be identified and released in an uninterrupted waterway adjacent to the area of disturbance. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-130.)
Chinook salmon and steelhead resources shall be protected from potential construction-related activities by adherence to a construction window, whereby construction activities would be precluded from October 15 through June 15. This window corresponds to the time when both adult and juvenile Chinook salmon and steelhead are expected to migrate through the area. Further measures to protect salmon resources include use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize and localize siltation and other water quality impacts and to provide for riparian restoration activities. Such BMPs may include the use of cofferdams and other structures during dewatering and construction activities. Water quality monitoring shall also be performed to ensure that state and federal water quality standards are met. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-130.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Both construction-related and long-term impacts to Chinook salmon and steelhead populations are considered less than significant with mitigation, primarily because of the absence of spawning habitat. Juvenile and adult Chinook salmon and steelhead use available instream habitat adjacent to off-site infrastructure areas primarily as a migration corridor. Juveniles may use the edgewater habitat for feeding when migrating to the Pacific Ocean. However, the area of potential disturbance is small when compared to the abundance of existing edgewater habitat. Also, the addition of bridge support piles will provide cover for fishes, as well as increased structure as substrate for prey items. The piles will also result in localized riverflow divergence, creating habitat complexity, which may further increase fish cover. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-129.)

Impact 4.4-31: The Specific Plan could adversely affect vegetation associated with Folsom, Shasta, and Trinity reservoirs. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-131.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Folsom, Shasta, and Trinity reservoirs have water levels that fluctuate frequently on an annual basis, thus non-native, disturbance-adapted (or weedy) vegetation typically becomes established in areas below the high water line during the growing season. The drawdown zone at each of these reservoirs is vegetated primarily with weedy herbaceous plants and scattered willow shrubs that do not form a contiguous riparian community, and thus is not considered to have high habitat value for typically associated wildlife species. This type of plant community structure in the drawdown zone is due to changing water levels; a continuous band of riparian vegetation can establish over time if water levels were maintained at a more constant elevation. However, because maintenance of a consistent water elevation is counter to inflow patterns and common flood control and water supply practices, water levels constantly fluctuate, and quality nearshore vegetation and the habitat it would provide rarely establish or persist. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-131.)
Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, there would be little to no change (two feet msl on average) in the long-term 70-year average monthly water surface elevation of Folsom, Shasta, and Trinity reservoirs, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-193 to A-204, A-181 to A-192, A-169 to A-180). Quality wildlife habitat rarely establishes in the drawdown zone under the existing condition; therefore, there would be no further contribution under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply to preventing the establishment of riparian vegetation. Thus, there would be no significant impact to the riparian and nearshore vegetation associated with Folsom, Shasta, or Trinity reservoirs under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition. Impacts to the vegetation communities associated with Folsom, Shasta, or Trinity reservoirs are therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-131.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-131.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-32: The Specific Plan could adversely affect riparian vegetation of the upper Sacramento River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-131.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The peak growing season for riparian vegetation is typically March through July, with the remainder of the growing season spanning from August through October. The analysis of effects on riparian vegetation of the upper Sacramento River is based on changes in monthly mean river flows below Keswick Dam resulting from the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to flows under the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-131.)

Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, monthly mean flows would be reduced negligibly (i.e., by up to four cfs in April, up to three cfs in July, and would increase by one cfs to eight cfs throughout the other months of the growing season, with no detectable change to monthly mean flows in September), relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-110). In the context of riparian vegetation effects, such changes in monthly mean flows ranging from increases of eight cfs to reductions of four cfs would be small and imperceptible, considering modeled monthly flows of 6,387 cfs to 13,255 cfs during the months of the growing season. Such small differences are not of sufficient frequency or magnitude to
adversely affect riparian vegetation along the river. Therefore, impacts would be considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-131.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-132.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-33:** The Specific Plan could adversely affect the lower Sacramento River and the Delta. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-132.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The analysis of potential effects on riparian vegetation of the lower Sacramento River and the Delta is based on changes in river flows below Freeport caused by the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to flows under the existing condition. As discussed in Impact 4.4-32, the growing season for riparian vegetation is typically from March through October, with peak growing periods associated with the months of March through July. In addition to lower Sacramento River flows, the Delta wetlands are very sensitive to fluctuations in water salinity, which are determined by water flows into the Delta (San Francisco Estuary Project, 1993). The long-term position of X2 is also examined to assess any changes in salinity that could adversely affect Delta vegetation. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-132.)

**Vegetation Associated with the Lower Sacramento River and Delta.** Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, reductions in monthly mean flows at Freeport during the peak growing season would be negligible, ranging from one cfs to four cfs in June through July, with an increase of four cfs in May, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-147). For the remainder of the growing season, monthly mean flows would not decrease and would experience similar negligible increases (i.e., up to five cfs), with the greatest increase in October relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-147). In the context of riparian vegetation effects, such changes in monthly mean flows would be small and imperceptible, considering modeled monthly flows of 12,046 cfs to 33,466 cfs during the months of the growing season, as well as the tidal influence at this stage of the river. These small differences in flows are not of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect riparian vegetation along the river or Delta, so impacts will be *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-132.)
**Delta Wetland and the Position of X2.** Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, there would be no shift in the position of X2 relative to the existing condition over the entire 70-year period of record (Template Output B-429). Changes in Sacramento River flows due to the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not occur, thus there would be no shift in the long-term average X2 position. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not result in adverse effects to riparian vegetation of the Delta, and impacts will be *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-132.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-132.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-34:** The Specific Plan could have effects on Delta habitats of special-status species. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-132.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

A number of special-status species included in Table 4.4-4 are known to occur in a range of Delta habitats. As discussed in Impact 4.4-33, there would be small, albeit immeasurable, changes in monthly mean flows in the lower Sacramento River during certain times of the year resulting from the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. These flows would not be expected to be reduced by any sufficient magnitude or frequency. Accordingly, they would not be expected to significantly alter habitats of special-status species dependent on the Delta. Furthermore, there would be no shift in the position of X2 under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, and hence no impacts anticipated due to changes in salinity (Template Output B-429). Thus, overall, there would be no impact to special-status species of the Delta resulting from reductions in flow of the lower Sacramento River or the position of X2 under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition. This impact is therefore considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-132 to 4.4-133.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-133.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-35:** The Specific Plan could have effects on riparian vegetation of the lower American River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-133.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

**Flows to Support Mature Cottonwood Radial Growth Maintenance - 1,765 cfs Index (March through October).** Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, monthly mean flows during the growing season months of March through October would not be significantly reduced below the 1,765 cfs index, the long-term flow value required for the maintenance of radial growth of mature cottonwoods relative to the existing condition. Under the existing condition, monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam fall below 1,765 cfs in 128 months out of the 560 months included in the analysis. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam would fall below the 1,765 cfs index in an additional two months (Technical Appendix A-313 and A-318 to A-324). Lower American River flows simulated below the H Street Bridge under the existing condition fall below 1,765 cfs in 138 months of the 560 months included in the analysis. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, lower American River flows would fall below the 1,765 cfs index in an additional three months (Technical Appendix A-337 and A-342 to A-348). Overall, there would be no significant increase in the frequency with which monthly mean flows under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be below the 1,765 cfs index, relative to the existing condition. Therefore, impacts to the maintenance of mature cottonwoods, relative to the existing condition, will be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-133.)

**Flows to Support Some Cottonwood Growth - 2,000 cfs Index (March through October).** Under the existing condition, flows below Nimbus Dam would be below 2,000 cfs, the long-term flow value required to support some growth of cottonwoods, in 140 of the 560 months included in the analysis. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam would fall below the 2,000 cfs index in three additional months (Technical Appendix A-313 and A-318 to A-324). The proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would, therefore, result in monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam that would be below the maintenance index approximately 1.4% more often than under the existing condition. Monthly mean flows for the existing condition below the H Street Bridge would fall below the 2,000 cfs index in 176 of the 560 months included in the analysis. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, lower American River flows would fall below the 2,000 cfs index in one additional month (Technical Appendix A-337 and A-342 to A-348). The proposed
Specific Plan initial surface water supply would, therefore, result in monthly mean flows below H Street Bridge that would be below the maintenance index approximately 0.6% more often than under the existing condition. Thus, overall, under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the increase in the frequency with which monthly mean flows would fall below the 2,000 cfs index will be less than significant. Accordingly, no significant impact would be expected to occur to flows considered necessary to support some cottonwood growth, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-133 to 4.4-134.)

Flows to Support Reasonable to Maximum Cottonwood Growth Rates - 3,000 cfs Index (March through October). Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, monthly mean flows would not be significantly reduced below the 3,000 cfs index, the long-term flow value required to support some growth of cottonwoods during the growing season months of March through October. Under the existing condition, monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam would fall below the 3,000 cfs index 302 months out of the 560 months modeled for this period. The proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in no increase relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-313 and A-318 to A-324). For flows below the H Street Bridge, monthly mean flows under the existing condition would fall below the 3,000 cfs index in 320 months of the 560 months modeled. The proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in one additional month relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-337 and A-342 to A-348). Thus, under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, there would be no significant increase in the frequency with which monthly mean flows would fall below the 3,000 cfs index. Therefore, the effect on flows considered necessary to support reasonable to maximum cottonwood growth will be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-134.)

Flows to Support Terrace Inundation for Cottonwood Germination - 5,000 cfs Index. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in a negligible reduction in the number of occurrences below Nimbus Dam or the H Street Bridge in which monthly mean peak flows would be above 5,000 cfs, the minimum flow considered appropriate for inundation of terraces essential for cottonwood germination during the seed release period of April through July (CCOMWP 1999). There would be no difference in the number of months above the 5,000 cfs index below Nimbus Dam under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-87). At the H Street Bridge, lower American River flows are above the 5,000 cfs index 105 out of 840 months modeled, under the existing condition. The proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in 104 months above this index, equivalent to a decrease of less than 1%, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-91). Thus, under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, there would be no significant decrease in the frequency of monthly mean flows above the 5,000 cfs index, therefore the effect on cottonwood germination relative to the existing condition will be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-134.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-134.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-36:** The Specific Plan could have effects on backwater recharge in the lower American River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-134.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

**Flows to Support Adequate Recharge of the Ponds Closest to the Lower American River - 2,700 cfs Index.** Vegetation around backwater ponds closest to the river is typical of the riparian associations in the area and is composed of mixed-age willow, alder, and cottonwood. The water is slower moving and the ponds are isolated from human disturbances. These areas, as a result, tend to be of higher value to wildlife (Sands et al., 1985). Wildlife species that have been recorded in these areas include pied-billed grebe, American bittern, green heron, common merganser, white-tailed kite, wood duck, yellow warbler, warbling vireo, dusky-footed woodrat, western gray squirrel, Pacific tree frog, and western toad. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-134 to 4.4-135.)

Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, monthly mean flows would not be substantially reduced below the 2,700 cfs index. Under existing conditions, monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam would fall below the 2,700 cfs threshold in 469 months out of the 840 months modeled. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, monthly mean flows would fall below this threshold 470 months, representing a 0.2% increase in frequency relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-313 to A-324). For flows below the H Street Bridge, the long-term monthly mean flows below 2,700 cfs under the existing condition would occur in 492 months, with flows falling below this threshold in two additional months under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply (Technical Appendix A-337 to A-348). This constitutes a 0.4% decrease in frequency relative to the existing condition. There would be no significant increase in the number of monthly occurrences below the 2,700 cfs threshold, consequently the impact to backwater recharge for ponds closest to the lower American River under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply will be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-135.)

**Flows to Support Continued Recharge of Off-River Ponds - 4,000 cfs Index.** Vegetation associated with off-river ponds would be similar to vegetation for ponds closest to the river (discussed above). Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, monthly mean flows would not be substantially reduced below the 4,000 cfs index, the reported long-term flow value required to provide continued recharge of off-river ponds relative to the existing condition. Under the existing condition, monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam below 4,000 cfs would occur in 609 of the 840 months included in the analysis. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial
surface water supply, monthly mean flows would fall below this threshold in two additional months, representing a 0.5% increase in frequency relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-313 to A-324). For the lower American River at the H Street Bridge, monthly flows would fall below the 4,000 cfs index in 643 months out of 840 months modeled under the existing condition, with flows falling below this threshold in 627 months under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply (Technical Appendix A-337 to A-348). This would represent a 2.5% decrease in frequency relative to the existing condition. As there would be no significant increase in the number of monthly occurrences below the 4,000 cfs threshold, the impact to backwater recharge for American River off-river ponds under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply will be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-135.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-135.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-37: The Specific Plan could have affects on special-status species dependent on lower American River riparian and open water habitats. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-135.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Bald eagle, bank swallow, yellow warbler, yellow-breasted chat, river otter, and several other species are special status species known to occur, nest, or periodically forage in open water and cottonwood forest habitats along the lower American River. Thus, potential impacts to cottonwood forests are typically used to determine whether special-status species dependent on this habitat would be affected by the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-135 to 4.4-136.)

As discussed in Impact 4.4-36, there would be no significant impact to the maintenance, growth, and establishment of cottonwood forests along the lower American River under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply relative to the existing condition. The impacts to cottonwood radial growth maintenance, maximum growth, and establishment would be less than significant under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply; therefore, impacts to special-status species associated with riparian and open water habitats would also be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-136.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-136.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-38: The Specific Plan could have affects on special-status species dependent on lower American River backwater pond/marsh habitats. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-136.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Sanford’s arrowhead, western pond turtle, valley elderberry shrubs, the VELB, and tricolored blackbirds are special-status species known to occur in backwater pond areas along the lower American River. Thus, potential impacts to backwater ponds are used to determine whether special-status species dependent on this habitat would be affected by the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-136.)

As discussed in Impact 4.4-36, there would be no significant impact to the recharge of backwater ponds along the lower American River under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply relative to the existing condition. As the impacts to adjacent and off-river ponds would be less than significant, impacts to special-status species associated with backwater pond/marsh habitats would also be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-136.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-136.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-39: The Specific Plan could have effects on elderberry shrubs and VELB along the lower American River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-136.)
Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The USFWS has designated the American River Parkway as Critical Habitat for VELB, and this species has been recorded in elderberry shrubs near backwater ponds along the lower American River. Thus, potential impacts to backwater ponds are typically used to determine whether VELB would be affected by the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-136.)

As discussed in Impact 4.4-36, there would be no significant impact to the recharge of backwater ponds along the lower American River under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply relative to the existing condition. As the impacts to adjacent and off-river ponds would be less than significant, impacts to elderberry shrubs and VELB would also be less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-136 to 4.4-137.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-137.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-40: The Specific Plan could cause impacts to Shasta and Trinity reservoirs' warm water fisheries. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-137.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Shasta Reservoir. Hydrologic conditions under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in no change in the long-term average end-of-month water surface elevation in Shasta Reservoir during the March through September period, when warm water fish spawning and initial rearing may be expected (Template Output B-487). End-of-month elevation at Shasta Reservoir would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 486 of the 490 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-186 to A-192). Reductions in average end-of-month elevation of up to two feet msl would, however, occur 0.8% of the time during the March through September period. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-137.)
Such changes in water surface elevation in Shasta Reservoir during the March through September period would result in minimal changes in the availability of reservoir littoral habitat. The amount of littoral habitat potentially available to warm water fish for spawning and/or rearing in Shasta Reservoir would remain, for the most part, unchanged. The greatest decrease in the long-term average number of acres of littoral habitat under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be two acres during April, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-494). With the small changes in the availability of littoral habitat under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average initial year-class strength of warm water fish populations would also remain unaffected. As littoral habitat availability would not change as a result of potentially changing water surface elevations, this would constitute a less than significant impact to Shasta Reservoir's warm water fisheries under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-137.)

In addition, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply could alter the rates by which water surface elevation in Shasta Reservoir change during each month of the primary warm water fish-spawning period (March through July). The frequency with which potential nest-dewatering events would occur in Shasta Reservoir during the spawning period would not change relative to the existing condition, as shown in Table 4.4-13. Therefore, impacts to Shasta Reservoir's warm water fisheries resulting from increases in nest-dewatering events, under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, would be less than significant (RDEIR, p. 4.4-137.)

**Trinity Reservoir.** Hydrologic conditions under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not result in substantial changes in the long-term average end-of-month water surface elevation in Trinity Reservoir during the March through September period (Template Output B-489). End-of-month elevation at Trinity Reservoir under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be equivalent to the existing condition in all of the 490 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-174 to A-180). Reductions in the long-term average amount of littoral habitat potentially available to warm water fish for spawning and/or rearing in Trinity Reservoir under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be within two acres from the existing condition during all months of the March through September period (Template Output B-495). The long-term average initial year-class strength of warm water fish populations, relative to the existing condition, would not substantially change. Consequently, seasonal reductions in littoral habitat availability resulting from potential changes in reservoir water surface elevation would not be of sufficient frequency to adversely affect long-term population levels of warm water fish and would constitute a less than significant impact to Trinity Reservoir's warm water fisheries. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-138.)

In addition, the frequency with which potential nest-dewatering events could occur in Trinity Reservoir would not be increased under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition, during any month of the March through July spawning period (Technical Appendices A-174 to A-178). Overall, impacts to Trinity Reservoir's warm water fish populations would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-138.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-138.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-41: The Specific Plan could cause impacts to Shasta and Trinity reservoirs' coldwater fisheries. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-138.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Shasta Reservoir. Hydrologic conditions under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not result in substantial changes in long-term average Shasta Reservoir storage during any month of the April through November period, relative to the existing condition. The greatest reduction in storage under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be one TAF, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-481). Shasta Reservoir end-of-month storage under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 558 of the 560 months included in the analysis. In individual years during the April through November period (when Shasta Reservoir thermally stratifies), reductions in Shasta Reservoir end-of-month storage of more than 3% would not occur in any of the individual months (out of the 560 months included in the analysis) under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-103 to A-108 and A-97 to A-98). The largest individual storage reduction for any given month under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply over the 70-year period of record for the April through November period would be 1.1%. Physical habitat availability, however, is not believed to be among the primary factors limiting coldwater fish populations within the reservoir, and anticipated changes in seasonal storage would not be expected to result in substantial adverse effects on the primary prey base used by the reservoir's coldwater fish populations; therefore, the infrequent and minimal seasonal reductions in storage that could occur under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient magnitude to adversely affect long-term population levels of coldwater fish and would have less than significant impacts to Shasta Reservoir's coldwater fisheries. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-138 to 4.4-139.)

Trinity Reservoir. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average monthly storage in Trinity Reservoir would be essentially unchanged during all months of the April through November period (when Trinity Reservoir thermally stratifies). The greatest decrease in storage under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be one
TAF (0.1%) relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-482). For the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, Trinity Reservoir storage would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition all months of the 560 months included in the analysis. Consequently, reductions of greater than 3% would not occur in any of the individual months (out of the 560 months included in the analysis). The maximum reduction in storage for any month out of the entire 70-year period of record would be 1.0%, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-85 to A-86 and A-91 to A-96). Similar to Shasta Reservoir, physical habitat availability is not believed to be among the primary factors limiting coldwater fish populations within the reservoir, and anticipated changes in seasonal storage would not be expected to result in substantial adverse effects on the primary prey base used by the reservoir's coldwater fish populations. Therefore, the infrequent and minimal seasonal reductions in storage that could occur under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient magnitude to adversely affect long-term population levels of coldwater fish and would have less than significant impacts to Trinity Reservoir's coldwater fisheries. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-139.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-139.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-42: The Specific Plan could cause impacts to winter-run Chinook salmon in the Sacramento River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-140.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Flow-Related Impacts to Winter-Run Chinook Salmon Adult Immigration (December through July). The long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam differs by less than 0.2% under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, compared to the existing condition, during all months of the adult immigration period (December through July). In fact, long-term average Sacramento River flow below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not differ by more than five cfs less than flows under the existing condition, during the December through July period (Template Output B-141). Further, in 554 out of 560 months simulated in this period, Sacramento River flow below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-351 to A-358). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-140.)
Overall, the increases in flow that would be expected to occur in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam and at Freeport under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect attraction or passage of adults immigrating into the Sacramento River. Therefore, the Specific Plan initial surface water supply is not likely to adversely affect immigration of winter-run Chinook salmon in the Sacramento River and the impact would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-140.)

**Temperature-Related Impacts to Winter-Run Chinook Salmon Adult Immigration (December through July).** Long-term average water temperature in the Sacramento River at Bend Bridge would not differ by more than 0.1°F during any month of the December through July period, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-307). Similarly, long-term average water temperature in the Sacramento River at Jelly’s Ferry and Freeport would not differ during any month of the December through July period (Template Output B-314 and B-321). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-140.)

Overall, changes in Sacramento River water temperatures throughout the December through July period under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in substantial temperature-related impacts to winter-run Chinook salmon adult immigration. Therefore, the Specific Plan initial surface water supply is not likely to adversely affect winter-run Chinook salmon adult immigration. Consequently, potential temperature-related impacts to winter-run Chinook salmon adult immigration under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-141.)

**Flow-Related Impacts to Winter-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (April through August).** The long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be within 0.1% of the flow under the existing condition during all months of the April through August period (Template Output B-141). In 348 of the 350 months simulated during this period, flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam would be either essentially equivalent to or greater than flows under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-355 to A-359). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-141.)

Overall, changes in Sacramento River flows under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in a reduction in winter-run Chinook salmon spawning habitat. Such changes are not likely to have an adverse impact on long-term initial year-class strength of Sacramento River winter-run Chinook salmon. Therefore, potential flow-related impacts to winter-run Chinook salmon spawning and initial rearing under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-142.)

**Temperature-Related Impacts to Winter-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (April through August).** Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average water temperatures would not differ by more than 0.1°F from those under the existing condition during the April through August period at Bend Bridge and at Jelly’s Ferry (Template Output B-307 and B-314). In fact, in 345 out of the 345 months included in the analysis, the
water temperatures under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply at these locations would be essentially equivalent to water temperatures under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-463 to A-467 and A-475 to A-479). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-142.)

Based on modeling results, small temperature changes in the Sacramento River resulting from the Specific Plan initial surface water supply during the April through August period are not of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to spawning and incubation success of winter-run Chinook salmon, relative to the existing condition. Therefore, potential water temperature impacts to winter-run Chinook salmon spawning and incubation in the Sacramento River resulting from the implementation of the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-142 to 4.4-143.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Winter-Run Chinook Salmon Juvenile Rearing and Emigration (August through December). Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the simulated long-term average flow below Keswick Dam would increase slightly, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-141). Long-term average flows in the Sacramento River would increase by 0.1% (i.e., eight cfs) in August. In 348 out of the 350 months simulated for the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, Sacramento River flow below Keswick Dam would be essentially equivalent to flows simulated under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-349 to A-360). In addition, flows would not be reduced below the 3,250 cfs flow criterion specified by the NOAA winter-run Chinook salmon Biological Opinion more frequently under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply compared to the existing condition during the October through December period in which flow requirements must be maintained (Technical Appendix A-349 to A-360). Although small flow reductions in Sacramento River flows below Keswick Dam would occur under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply in a few years during the August through December period, such changes would not be likely to result in measurable changes to winter-run Chinook salmon juvenile emigration. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-143.)

Overall, changes in Sacramento River flows would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect the success of juvenile salmonid emigration. Therefore, impacts to juvenile winter-run Chinook salmon emigration under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-143.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Winter-Run Chinook Salmon Juvenile Rearing and Emigration (August through December). The long-term average water temperature in the Sacramento River at Bend Bridge and at Jelly’s Ferry during August through December under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not change substantially, relative to temperatures under the existing condition (Template Output B-307 and B-314). In the 69-year simulation, monthly mean water temperature at Bend Bridge would increase more than 0.3°F in one year during September, and would not increase by more than 0.1°F in any year modeled for the remainder of the August through December period (Technical Appendix A-469 to A-480). At Jelly’s Ferry, monthly mean water temperature would increase more than 0.3°F in one year during September, and would not increase by more than 0.1°F (i.e., would remain essentially equivalent to the existing condition) in any year modeled for the remainder of the August through December period (Technical Appendix A-457 to A-468). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-143.)
Based on the results discussed above, potential water temperature changes resulting from the Specific Plan initial surface water supply are not of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect juvenile winter-run Chinook salmon emigration. Therefore, potential water temperature-related impacts to winter-run Chinook salmon emigration under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be *less than significant*, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-144.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-144.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-43:** The Specific Plan could cause impacts to spring-run Chinook salmon in the Sacramento River. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-144.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

**Flow-Related Impacts to Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Adult Immigration and Holding (March through September).** The long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be within 0.1% of flows under the existing condition, during all months of the adult immigration period (March through September) (Template Output B-141). In 487 out of 490 months simulated in this period, the flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam would be essentially equivalent to or greater than flows under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-349 to A-360). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-144.)

The difference in Sacramento River flow below Keswick Dam and at Freeport that would occur under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to attraction of adult spring-run Chinook salmon immigrating into the Sacramento River. Therefore, potential changes in flows under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in a *less than significant* impact to immigration of spring-run Chinook salmon immigration and holding. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-145.)

**Temperature-Related Impacts to Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Adult Immigration and Holding (March through September).** The long-term average water temperatures in the Sacramento River modeled for the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not differ by
more than 0.1°F from those under the existing condition at the Bend Bridge and Jelly’s Ferry during all months of the March through September adult immigration period (Template Output B-307 and B-314). Moreover, under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, water temperatures in the Sacramento River at Bend Bridge would remain essentially equivalent to those under the existing condition in 482 out of 483 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-474 to A-480). Water temperatures at Jelly’s Ferry under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would remain essentially equivalent to those simulated under the existing condition in 482 of the 483 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-462 to A-468). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-145.)

Overall, changes in water temperatures in the Sacramento River under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to spring-run Chinook salmon adult immigration and holding. Therefore, impacts to spring-run Chinook salmon adult immigration and holding under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-145.)

**Flow-Related Impacts to Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (August through January).** The long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be within 0.1% of the flow under the existing condition during all months of the August through January period (Template Output B-141). In 417 of the 420 months simulated during this period, Sacramento River flow below Keswick Dam would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-349 to A-360). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-145.)

Overall, changes in flow in the Sacramento River would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse impacts to long-term initial year-class strength of Sacramento River spring-run Chinook salmon. Thus, potential impacts to spring-run Chinook salmon in the Sacramento River under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-146.)

**Temperature-Related Impacts to Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (August through January).** Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, long-term average water temperatures would not differ from those modeled under the existing condition during the August through January period at Bend Bridge and Jelly’s Ferry (Template Output B-307 and B-314). In fact, in 413 months out of the 414 months included in the analysis, the water temperatures at Bend Bridge and Jelly’s Ferry would be essentially equivalent to or less than water temperatures under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-469 to A-480 and A-457 to A-468). Further, there would not be any additional occurrences of water temperatures in the Sacramento River above 56°F under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition, at either Bend Bridge or Jelly’s Ferry (Technical Appendix A-469 to A-480 and A-457 to A-468). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-146.)

Based on these modeling results, potential water temperature changes in the Sacramento River resulting from the implementation of the Specific Plan initial surface water supply are not of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect spring-run Chinook salmon spawning and
incubation. Therefore, changes in Sacramento River water temperatures during August through January under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in a less than significant impact to spawning and incubation success of spring-run Chinook salmon, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-147.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Juvenile Rearing and Emigration (December through April). Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam would be within 0.1% of flows modeled under the existing condition during the December through April period (Template Output B-141). In 345 out of 350 months simulated, the flow below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-351 to A-355). Flow exceedance curves during the December through April period for the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam indicate that flows below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be nearly identical to flows under the existing condition. Therefore, flows modeled under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be likely to result in adverse effects to long-term juvenile spring-run Chinook salmon rearing and emigration (Template Output B-138 to B-139). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-147.)

Overall, flows in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam and at Freeport would not differ substantially under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition. Potential flow decreases, which could result in a reduction in juvenile spring-run Chinook salmon spawning habitat, would not be greater than 0.1 percent during the December through April period under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply. Slight increases in simulated flows under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to juvenile spring-run Chinook salmon emigration. Therefore, potential flow-related impacts to spring-run Chinook salmon juvenile rearing and emigration under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-147.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Juvenile Rearing and Emigration (December through April). Modeling associated with the Specific Plan initial surface water supply indicates that the long-term average water temperature at Bend Bridge would not change during any month of the December through August period, compared to the existing condition (Template Output B-307). Monthly mean water temperature in the Sacramento River at Bend Bridge would not increase more than 0.1°F, relative to the existing condition, in any month of the December through April period (Technical Appendix A-471 to A-475). Further, the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not result in an increase in the frequency in which monthly mean water temperatures would exceed 65°F for each month of the December through April period (Technical Appendix A-471 to A-475). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-148.)

Overall, the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in negligible changes in Sacramento River water temperatures at Bend Bridge, Jelly’s Ferry, and Freeport throughout the December through April spring-run Chinook salmon juvenile rearing and emigration period. Changes in water temperatures under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect spring-run Chinook salmon juvenile
rearing or emigration. In addition, there would be no increase in the frequency in which water temperatures at Bend Bridge, Jelly’s Ferry, or Freeport would exceed the upper end of the suitable range of water temperatures for juvenile Chinook salmon rearing. Therefore, potential impacts to spring-run Chinook salmon juvenile rearing and emigration under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-148.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-148.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-44: The Specific Plan could cause impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead in the Sacramento River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-149.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Flow-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon/Steelhead Adult Immigration (September through November). The long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam would increase by a maximum of 0.1% (i.e., 7 cfs) under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, compared to the existing condition, during all months of the adult immigration period (September through November). Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, Sacramento River flows below Keswick Dam would be essentially equivalent to those under the existing condition in 209 out of 210 months simulated in this period (Technical Appendix A-349 to A-360). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-149.)

Overall, potential changes in flows in the Sacramento River under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead adult immigration. Therefore, potential impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead adult immigration under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-149.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon/Steelhead Adult Immigration (September through November). The long-term average water temperatures modeled for the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not differ from those under the existing condition at Bend Bridge in the Sacramento River during all months of the September through
November adult immigration period (Template Output B-307). Similarly, at Jelly’s Ferry, long-term average water temperatures in the Sacramento River would not differ between the Specific Plan initial surface water supply and existing condition during all months of the September through November period (Template Output B-314). Moreover, under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, water temperatures in the Sacramento River at Bend Bridge would remain essentially equivalent to those under the existing condition in 206 out of 207 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-469 to A-480). Monthly mean water temperatures at Jelly’s Ferry under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would remain essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 206 of the 207 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-457 to A-468). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-149.)

Overall, changes in Sacramento River water temperatures throughout the September through November period under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead adult immigration. Therefore, potential temperature-related impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead adult immigration under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-150.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (October through February). The long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would differ by less than 0.1% from flows under the existing condition during all months of the October through February period (Template Output B-141). Monthly mean flows under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition in 346 of the 350 months simulated for the October through February period (Technical Appendix A-349 to A-353). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-150.)

Overall, changes in Sacramento River flows below Keswick Dam and at Freeport under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse flow-related effects to fall-run Chinook salmon spawning and incubation. Therefore, potential flow-related impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon spawning under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-150.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (October through February). Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average water temperatures would not differ from those modeled under the existing condition during the October through February period at Bend Bridge and Jelly’s Ferry (Template Output B-307 and B-314). In fact, in 345 out of the 345 months included in the analysis, the water temperatures at these locations under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to those under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-457 to A-461 and A-469 to A-473). At Freeport in the lower Sacramento River, long-term average water temperatures under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not differ from those water temperatures under the existing condition (Template Output B-321). Monthly mean water temperatures under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply at this location would be essentially equivalent to those under the existing condition in 345 months out
of the 345 months modeled for the October through February period (Technical Appendix A-481 to A-485).  (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-150 to 4.4-151.)

Based on these modeling results, small temperature changes in the Sacramento River resulting from the implementation of the Specific Plan initial surface water supply during the October through February period would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to fall-run Chinook salmon spawning, incubation, and annual early lifestage survival. Therefore, potential water temperature changes in the Sacramento River resulting from the implementation of the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in less than significant impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon spawning and incubation, relative to the existing condition.  (RDEIR, p. 4.4-151.)

Flow- and Temperature-related Impacts to Steelhead Adult Immigration, Spawning, and Incubation (December through March). Monthly mean flows below Keswick Dam and at Freeport in the Sacramento River under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition for 276 and 277 months, respectively out of 280 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-351 to A-354 and A-387 to A-390). Additionally, monthly mean water temperatures under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply at Bend Bridge and Jelly’s Ferry would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition for 276 of the 276 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-471 to A-474 and A-459 to A-462). Similarly, monthly mean water temperatures at Freeport under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition in 276 of the 276 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-483 to A-486).  (RDEIR, p. 4.4-151.)

Overall, there would be no detectable change to monthly mean flows or water temperatures in the upper or lower Sacramento River under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition. Consequently, flow- and temperature-related changes under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply during the steelhead adult immigration, spawning, and incubation period represent a less than significant impact, relative to the existing condition.  (RDEIR, p. 4.4-152.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Juvenile Rearing and Emigration (February through June). Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average flow below Keswick Dam would be within 0.1% of flows modeled under the existing condition during the February through June period (Template Output B-141). In 347 out of 350 months simulated, the monthly mean flow below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-353 to A-357). Flow exceedance curves for the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam during the February through June period indicate that flows in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be nearly identical to flows under the existing condition (Template Output B-139 and B-140).  (RDEIR, p. 4.4-152.)

Overall, the slight decreases in flow that would occur under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not occur with sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects
to long-term juvenile fall-run Chinook salmon or steelhead rearing success, and are not likely to result in adverse effects to juvenile emigration, relative to the existing condition. Therefore, the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in less than significant impacts to juvenile rearing and emigration of fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead in the Sacramento River. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-153.)

**Temperature-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Juvenile Rearing and Emigration (February through June).** Modeling associated with the Specific Plan initial surface water supply indicates that simulated long-term average water temperature at Bend Bridge would not change during any month of the February through June period, compared to the existing condition (Template Output B-307). Monthly mean water temperatures in the Sacramento River at Bend Bridge under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not increase in any of the 345 months simulated for the February through June period (Technical Appendix A-473 to A-477). Further, there would not be any additional occurrences under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply in which water temperatures would be above 65°F at Bend Bridge, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-473 to A-477). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-153.)

Overall, changes in Sacramento River water temperatures at Bend Bridge, Jelly’s Ferry, and Freeport under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply throughout the February through June period would be negligible, relative to the existing condition. Therefore, potential changes to water temperatures under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect rearing and emigration and would result in less than significant impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead juvenile rearing and emigration, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-154.)

**Flow-Related Impacts to Steelhead Juvenile Over-Summer Rearing (July through September).** Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam would not decrease by more than three cfs for any month of the July through September period, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-141). Monthly mean flows under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to or greater than flows under the existing condition in 209 out of 210 months simulated (Technical Appendix A-358 to A-360). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-154.)

Overall, changes in flows under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply at Keswick or Freeport would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to long-term juvenile rearing success of over-summering steelhead. Therefore, flow-related impacts to juvenile rearing under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-154.)

**Temperature-Related Impacts to Steelhead Over-Summer Rearing (July Through September).** The long-term average water temperature under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply at Bend Bridge, Jelly’s Ferry, and Freeport would be within 0.1°F of long-term average water temperatures under the existing condition during July, August, and September (Template Output B-307, B-314, and B-321, respectively). Water temperatures at Bend Bridge would be essentially equivalent to those under the existing condition in 206 out of the 207
months simulated in this three-month period (Technical Appendix A-478 to A-480). At Jelly’s Ferry, Sacramento River water temperatures under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to those under the existing condition in 206 of the 207 months simulated for the July through September period (Technical Appendix A-466 to A-468). Monthly mean water temperatures at Freeport under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to those under the existing condition in 207 of 207 months simulated for the juvenile steelhead over-summer rearing period (Technical Appendix A-490 to A-492). The Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not result in additional occurrences of water temperatures exceeding 65°F during any month modeled for the July through September period at Bend Bridge, Jelly’s Ferry, or Freeport in the Sacramento River, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-478 to A-480, A-466 to A-468, and A-490 to A-492). (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-154 to 4.4-155.)

Overall, potential changes in water temperature that may occur under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be negligible, relative to the existing condition. Therefore, potential changes in water temperatures would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to juvenile steelhead over-summer rearing. Consequently, potential impacts to juvenile steelhead over summer rearing under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-155.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-155.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-45: The Specific Plan could cause impacts to late fall-run Chinook salmon in the Sacramento River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-155.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Flow-Related Impacts to Late Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Adult Immigration and Holding (October through April). The long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not differ by more than 0.1% from flows modeled under the existing condition, during all months of the adult immigration period (October through April) (Template Output B-141). In 484 of the 490 months simulated in this period, the flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam would be essentially
equivalent to flows under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-349 to A-355). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-155.)

The difference in Sacramento River flow below Keswick Dam and at Freeport that would occur under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to attraction of adult late fall-run Chinook salmon immigrating into the Sacramento River. Therefore, potential changes in flows under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in a less than significant impact to immigration of late fall-run Chinook salmon immigration and holding. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-155.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Late Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Adult Immigration and Holding (October through April). The long-term average water temperatures in the Sacramento River modeled for the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not differ from those under the existing condition at the Bend Bridge and Jelly’s Ferry during all months of the October through April adult immigration period (Template Output B-307 and B-314). Moreover, under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, water temperatures in the Sacramento River at Bend Bridge would remain essentially equivalent to those under the existing condition in all 483 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-469 to A-475). Water temperatures at Jelly’s Ferry under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would remain essentially equivalent to those simulated under the existing condition in all 483 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-457 to A-463). (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-155 to 4.4-156.)

Overall, changes in water temperatures in the Sacramento River under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to late-fall-run Chinook salmon adult immigration and holding. Therefore, impacts to late fall-run Chinook salmon adult immigration and holding under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-156.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Late Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (December through April). The long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be not differ by more than 0.1% from the flows under the existing condition during all months of the December through April period (Template Output B-141). In 345 out of 360 months simulated during this period, Sacramento River flow below Keswick Dam would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-351 to A-355). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-156.)

Overall, changes in flow in the Sacramento River would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse impacts to long-term initial year-class strength of Sacramento River late-fall-run Chinook salmon. Thus, potential impacts to late fall-run Chinook salmon in the Sacramento River under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-156.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Late Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (December through April). Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, long-term
average water temperatures would not differ from those under the existing condition during the December through April period at Bend Bridge and Jelly’s Ferry (Template Output B-307 and B-314). In fact, in 345 of the 345 months included in the analysis, the water temperatures at Bend Bridge and Jelly’s Ferry, respectively, would be essentially equivalent to water temperatures under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-471 to A-475 and A-459 to A-463). Further, there would not be any additional occurrences of water temperatures in the Sacramento River above 56°F under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition, at either Bend Bridge or Jelly’s Ferry (Technical Appendix A-471 to A-475 and A-459 to A-463). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-157.)

Based on these modeling results, potential water temperature changes in the Sacramento River resulting from the implementation of the Specific Plan initial surface water supply are not of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect late fall-run Chinook salmon spawning and incubation. Therefore, changes in Sacramento River water temperatures during December through April under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in a less than significant impact to spawning and incubation success of late fall-run Chinook salmon, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-157.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Late Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Juvenile Rearing and Emigration (April through October). Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average flow in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam would not differ by greater than 0.1% from flows modeled under the existing condition during the April through October period (Template Output B-141). In 487 out of 490 months simulated, the flow below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-349 to A-360). Flow exceedance curves during the April through October period for the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam indicate that flows below Keswick Dam under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be nearly identical to flows under the existing condition (Template Output B-138 to B-140). Therefore, flows modeled under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be likely to result in adverse effects to long-term juvenile late fall-run Chinook salmon rearing and emigration. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-157 to 4.4-158.)

Overall, flows in the Sacramento River below Keswick Dam and at Freeport would not differ substantially under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition. Potential flow decreases, which could result in a reduction in juvenile late-fall-run Chinook salmon spawning habitat, would not be greater than 0.1 percent during the April through October period under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply. Increases in simulated flows under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to juvenile late fall-run Chinook salmon emigration. Therefore, potential flow-related impacts to late fall-run Chinook salmon juvenile rearing and emigration under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-158.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Late Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Juvenile Rearing and Emigration (April through October). Modeling associated with the Specific Plan initial surface water supply indicates that the long-term average water temperature at Bend Bridge
would not change by greater than 0.1°F during any month of the April through October period, compared to the existing condition (Template Output B-307). Monthly mean water temperature in the Sacramento River at Bend Bridge would be essentially equivalent to those under to the existing condition in 482 of the 483 months of the April through October period (Technical Appendix A-469 to A-480). Further, the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not result in an increase in the frequency in which monthly mean water temperatures would exceed 65°F for each month of the April through October period (Technical Appendix A-469 to A-480). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-158.)

Overall, the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in negligible changes in Sacramento River water temperatures at Bend Bridge, Jelly’s Ferry, and Freeport throughout the April through October late fall-run Chinook salmon juvenile rearing and emigration period. Changes in water temperatures under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect late fall-run Chinook salmon juvenile rearing or emigration. Therefore, potential impacts to late fall-run Chinook salmon juvenile rearing and emigration under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-159.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-159.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-46:** The Specific Plan could cause impacts to splittail in the Sacramento River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-159.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average flow at Freeport during the period of February through May would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition (Template Output B-147). In 278 of the 280 months simulated for this period, flows would be essentially equivalent to flows under the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-389 to A-392). Therefore, flow reductions that could potential reduce the availability of inundated habitat for splittail spawning would be unlikely to occur under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-159.)
The number of years that monthly mean water temperatures at Freeport in May and June would be within the reported preferred range for American shad spawning of 60°F to 70°F would not differ under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix A-488 to A-489). Therefore, the frequency with which suitable temperatures for American shad spawning would occur would not change under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-160.)

Overall, changes in flows and water temperatures at Freeport in the lower Sacramento River would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to American shad
spawning. Therefore, impacts to American shad in the Sacramento River would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-160.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-160.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-48:** The Specific Plan could cause impacts to striped bass in the Sacramento River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-160.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The long-term average flow in the Sacramento River at Freeport would not differ substantially from long-term average flows under the existing condition in the March through June period (Template Output B-147). Similarly, monthly mean flows under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply during May through June would be essentially equivalent to those under the existing condition in all 140 months simulated for this period (Technical Appendix A-392 to A-393). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-160.)

The frequency that monthly mean water temperatures would be within the reported preferred range for striped bass spawning and initial rearing of 59°F to 68°F would not differ under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition, throughout the May through June period (Technical Appendix A-486 to A-489). Therefore, water temperatures in Sacramento River under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not adversely affect striped bass spawning and initial rearing, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-160.)

Overall, changes in flows and water temperatures at Freeport in the Sacramento River would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in adverse effects to striped bass spawning and initial rearing. Therefore, impacts to striped bass in the Sacramento River would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-160.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-160.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-49:** The Specific Plan could cause impacts to Oroville Reservoir’s warm water fisheries. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-161.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Hydrologic conditions under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in a minimal difference in the long-term average end-of-month water surface elevation in Oroville Reservoir during the March through September period (when warm water fish spawning and initial rearing occurs). The average end-of-month elevation would be the same in all months of the March through September period under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply and existing conditions (Technical Appendix A-585 to A-591). End-of-month water surface elevation at Oroville Reservoir would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition for 490 months of the 490 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-585 to A-591). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-161.)

Changes in water surface elevation in Oroville Reservoir during the March through September period would result in corresponding changes in the availability of reservoir littoral habitat containing inundated terrestrial vegetation (willows and button brush). Such shallow, nearshore waters containing physical structure are important to producing and maintaining strong year-classes of warm water fish annually. However, the frequency of reductions in water surface elevation under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to result in reductions in the long-term availability of littoral habitat. Further, the small and infrequent reduction in the water surface elevation that would occur under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient magnitude to substantially reduce the amount of available littoral habitat and long-term, average initial year-class strength of the warm water fish populations. Consequently, reductions in water surface elevation would constitute a less than significant impact to Oroville Reservoir warm water fish rearing. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-161.)

In addition, the Specific Plan initial surface water supply could alter the extent to which water surface elevations in Oroville Reservoir change during each month of the primary warm water fish-spawning period (March through July). Adverse effects to spawning from nest-dewatering are assumed to have the potential to occur when reservoir elevation decreases by more than nine feet within a given month. Modeling results indicate that the frequency with which potential nest-dewatering events could occur in Oroville Reservoir would not increase under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply, compared to the existing condition, during any month of the
March through July spawning period (Technical Appendix A-585 to A-589). As the frequency with which potential nest-dewatering events could occur in Oroville Reservoir would not change during any month of the March through July warm water fish-spawning period, effects to warm water fish nesting success under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-161.)

In summary, the Specific Plan initial surface water supply is not likely to result in changes in the availability of littoral habitat at Oroville Reservoir, and is not likely to result in an increase in the frequency of potential nest-dewatering events. Therefore, overall, impacts to Oroville Reservoir warm water fisheries would be considered less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-161.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-161.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-50:** The Specific Plan could cause impacts to Oroville Reservoir’s coldwater fisheries. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-162.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Long-term average end-of-month storage under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not decrease detectably, relative to the existing condition, during the April through November period, when the reservoir thermally stratifies (Technical Appendix A-121 to A-122 and A-127 to A-132). Oroville Reservoir monthly mean end-of-month storage under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition for 560 of the 560 months for the April through November period (Technical Appendix A-121 to A-122 and A-127 to A-132). On a monthly mean basis, the largest difference between end-of-month storage out of the 560 months simulated would be 4 TAF, a less than 0.2% difference (Technical Appendix A-121 to A-122 and A-127 to A-132). Anticipated reductions in reservoir storage that would occur under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient magnitude to adversely affect the reservoir's coldwater fisheries because coldwater habitat would remain available within the reservoir during all months of all years, physical habitat availability is not believed to be among the primary factors limiting coldwater fish populations, and anticipated seasonal reductions in storage would not be expected to adversely affect the primary prey species used by coldwater fish. Therefore,
potential impacts to Oroville Reservoir coldwater fisheries under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-162.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-162.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-51: The Specific Plan could cause impacts to Delta fish populations. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-162.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Delta outflow is considered to have a substantial effect on a number of fish species relying on Delta habitats for one or more of their lifestages. Reductions in the long-term average Delta outflow at a maximum of up to eight cfs for any given month could occur under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-413). Delta outflow during the period of February through June is believed to be of greatest concern for potential effects to spawning and rearing habitat and downstream transport flows for delta smelt, longfin smelt, splittail, striped bass, salmonids, and other aquatic species in the Delta. Throughout the entire 70-year period of record included in the analysis, Delta outflow reductions of more than 1.1% would not occur during any of the individual months (out of 350 months) under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-1 to A-12). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-162.)

Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, there would be no substantial shift in the long-term monthly average position of X2 in any given month, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-429). Furthermore, during the February through June period, considered important for providing appropriate spawning and rearing conditions and downstream transport flows for various fish species, the maximum upstream shift for any individual month of any year in the position of X2 would be 0.1 km for the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-13 to A-24). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-162.)

The model simulations conducted for the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply included conformance with X2 requirements set forth in the SWRCB Interim Water Quality Control Plan. Also, the Delta export-to-inflow ratios under the proposed Specific Plan initial
surface water supply would not exceed the maximum export ratio as set by the SWRCB *Interim Water Quality Control Plan*. In addition, the decreases in Delta outflow and the shifts in the position of X2 under the Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect Delta fish resources, relative to the existing condition. Overall, impacts to Delta fish populations would, therefore, be *less than significant*. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-162 to 4.4-163.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-163.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-52:** The Specific Plan could cause impacts to Folsom Reservoir’s warm water fisheries. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-163.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Hydrologic conditions under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in almost no difference in the long-term average end-of-month water surface elevation in Folsom Reservoir during the March through September period (when warm water fish spawning and initial rearing occurs) (Template Output B-485). End-of-month water surface elevation at Folsom Reservoir would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition for all months of the 490 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-198 to A-204). For the entire 70-year period of record, the largest single difference in end-of-month water surface elevation (out of 490 months) during the March through September season would be a one-foot decrease, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-198 to A-204). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-163.)

Changes in water surface elevation in Folsom Reservoir during the March through September period could result in measurable corresponding changes in the availability of reservoir littoral habitat containing inundated terrestrial vegetation (willows and button brush). Such shallow, near shore waters containing physical structure are important to producing and maintaining strong year-classes of warm water fish annually. However, the difference in the long-term monthly average amount of littoral habitat potentially available to warm water fish for spawning and/or rearing in Folsom Reservoir during the March through September period attributable to the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply is estimated to be 0.6% or less, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-493). Such reductions in littoral habitat availability would not be of sufficient magnitude to substantially reduce long-term, average initial year-class...
strength of the warm water fish populations. Consequently, seasonal reductions in littoral habitat availability would constitute a **less than significant impact** to Folsom Reservoir's warm water fisheries. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-163.)

In addition, the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply could alter the extent to which water surface elevations in Folsom Reservoir change during each month of the primary warm water fish-spawning period (March through July). As previously discussed, adverse impacts to spawning from nest-dewatering are assumed to have the potential to occur when reservoir elevation decreases by more than nine feet msl within a given month. Modeling results for the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply indicate that the frequency with which potential nest-dewatering events could occur in Folsom Reservoir would remain unchanged, relative to the existing condition, during the March through July spawning period (Template Output B-486). Consequently, impacts to Folsom Reservoir warm-water fisheries would be **less than significant**. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-163.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-164.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-53:** The Specific Plan could cause impacts to Folsom Reservoir's coldwater fisheries. This impact is considered **less than significant**.

(RDEIR, p. 4.4-164.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Folsom Reservoir end-of-month storage under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 554 of the 560 months included in the analysis (i.e., April through November, when the reservoir stratifies) (Technical Appendices A-109 to A-120). The proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition, would result in small changes in Folsom Reservoir end-of-month storage during some years of the simulation for the April through November period. Long-term average end-of-month storage would remain unchanged under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-480). For any given month, the largest difference between the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply and existing condition for long-term average end-of-month storage would be 13,000 TAF, a 4.0 difference. The largest reduction in Folsom Reservoir end-of-month storage would be 7,000 TAF, or 1.0 during April of the April through December period. Such anticipated reductions in
reservoir storage would not be expected to adversely affect the reservoir’s coldwater fisheries, since coldwater habitat would remain available within the reservoir during all months of all years. Physical habitat availability is not believed to be among the primary factors limiting coldwater fish populations, and anticipated seasonal reductions in storage would not be of sufficient magnitude to adversely affect the primary prey species used by coldwater fish. Therefore, changes in Folsom Reservoir storage under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply represent a less than significant impact on coldwater fish resources. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-164.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-164.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-54: The Specific Plan could cause impacts to the Nimbus Fish Hatchery. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-164.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

CVP operations of Folsom Dam and Reservoir associated with the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would have very little effect on the temperature of water entering the Nimbus Fish Hatchery from Lake Natoma during the May through September period, relative to the existing condition. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average temperature of water released from Nimbus Dam would not differ by more than a calculated 0.1°F, relative to the existing condition, during any month of the year, as shown in Table 4.4-14 (Template Output B-279). Furthermore, there would not be substantial differences in the frequency with which water temperatures exceed the water temperature indices of 60°F, 65°F and 68°F. Specifically, increases in the frequency of exceedance occur in one additional month and decreases in the frequency of exceedance would occur in one additional month during the May through September period, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-282). These small and infrequent differences in water temperature which could occur during the May through September period (when hatchery temperatures reach annual highs) would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to affect hatchery operations and resultant fish production. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would result in a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-164.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-165.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-55: The Specific Plan could cause impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead in the lower American River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-165.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Minimal potential differences in lower American River flows and water temperatures under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition, would not be expected to adversely affect fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead immigration, spawning and incubation, or juvenile rearing and emigration. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-165.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon/Steelhead Adult Immigration (September through March).

Even at current minimum flow requirements (i.e., 250 cfs under D-893), flow-related physical impediments to adult salmonid upstream passage are not known to occur. Therefore, flow-related impacts to Chinook salmon adult immigration would primarily be determined by flows at the mouth of the American River during the September through December period, when lower American River Chinook salmon adults immigrate through the Sacramento River in search of their natal stream to spawn. The same would be true for steelhead during the December through March period. Reduced flows at the mouth are of concern primarily due to the fact that less flow could result in insufficient olfactory cues for immigrating adult salmonids, thereby making it more difficult for them to “home” to the lower American River. Insufficient flow could result in higher rates of straying to other Central Valley rivers. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average flow at the mouth differs by a maximum of 0.1% to 0.7% for all the months of the year, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-135). These negligible differences in flows that could occur at the mouth, under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, would not be of sufficient magnitude to adversely affect the attraction of adults immigrating into the lower American River. Therefore, flow-related impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon/steelhead adult immigration are considered less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-165 to 4.4-166.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon/Steelhead Adult Immigration (September through March).

Reclamation's lower American River Temperature Model does not account for the influence of Sacramento River water intrusion on water temperatures at the
mouth. Therefore, the remaining temperature assessments are based on temperatures modeled at the lower American River mouth and at Freeport on the Sacramento River. The long-term average water temperatures modeled for the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be within 0.1°F to those under the existing condition at the American River mouth and at Freeport on the Sacramento River during all months of the September through March adult immigration period (Template Output B-325). Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, monthly mean water temperatures at the American River mouth would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 480 of the 483 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-433 to A-444). Monthly mean water temperatures at Freeport on the Sacramento River would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition for all months of the 483 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-481 to A-492). Therefore, changes in water temperature under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect the attraction of fall-run Chinook salmon/steelhead adults and represents a less than significant impact to fall-run Chinook salmon/steelhead adult immigration. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-166.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (October Through February). All flow-related impact assessments regarding fall-run Chinook salmon spawning and incubation were based on flows below Nimbus Dam and at Watt Avenue, with a greater emphasis placed on flows below Nimbus Dam. Aerial redd surveys conducted by CDFG in recent years have shown that 98% of all spawning occurs upstream of Watt Avenue, and 88% of spawning occurs upstream of RM 17 (located just upstream of Ancil Hoffman Park). Hence, the majority of spawning occurs upstream of RM 17. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-166.)

Exceedance curves for the American River release from Nimbus Dam for the October through February period for the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply demonstrate that flows under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be similar to those under the existing condition (Template Output B-114 and B-115). Differences in flows in the lower flow ranges are more crucial for salmon survival. Throughout the October through February period, the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not substantially reduce flows compared to the existing condition. These slight reductions in flow would not be expected to be of sufficient magnitude or occur with the necessary frequency to have a significant adverse effect on long-term initial year-class strength of lower American River fall-run Chinook salmon. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-167.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (October Through February). Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the long-term average water temperatures would be equivalent to those under the existing condition during October at Watt Avenue, and during the November through February period below Nimbus Dam. Watt Avenue is the location of concern in October since air temperatures tend to warm the river as it moves downstream. Conversely, water temperatures below Nimbus Dam are usually warmer than water temperatures at Watt Avenue in the winter season (Template Output B-328). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-167.)
Based on these modeling results, any small temperature changes in the lower American River resulting from the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply during the October through February period would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect spawning and incubation success of fall-run Chinook salmon. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-167.)

Flow- and Temperature-Related Impacts to Steelhead Spawning and Incubation (December through March). Monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam and at Watt Avenue associated with the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 261 of the 280 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-315 to A-318 and A-327 to A-330). In addition, monthly mean water temperatures below Nimbus Dam and at Watt Avenue would be similar to the existing condition in 275 of the 276 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-411 to A-414 and A-423 to A-426). Moreover, under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, water temperatures below Nimbus Dam would remain below 56°F for all months of the 69 years modeled for the spawning and incubation period for steelhead. December, January, and February water temperatures at Watt Avenue under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be below 56°F in all 69 years modeled (Technical Appendices A-411 to A-414 and A-423 to A-426). There would be no additional occurrences under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply in which water temperatures at Watt Avenue would be greater than 56°F, relative to the existing condition. Therefore, no significant flow- or temperature-related impacts to steelhead spawning or incubation would be expected to occur under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-168.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Juvenile Rearing (March Through June). The majority of juvenile salmonid rearing is believed to occur upstream of Watt Avenue. Moreover, depletions generally exceed tributary accretions to the river throughout the March through June period (generally resulting in lower flows at Watt Avenue than below Nimbus Dam). Accordingly, all flow-related impact assessments for fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead rearing are based on flows at Watt Avenue. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-168.)

Insignificant changes in monthly mean flows would be expected to occur at Watt Avenue under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition. Long-term average flows at Watt Avenue under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be within 0.3% of the flow under the existing condition for any given month during the March through June period (Template Output B-123). Flow exceedance curves for March through June at Watt Avenue indicate that slight decreases in flow would occur under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply during the March through June period, when flows under the existing condition are 2,000 cfs or less (Template Output B-121 to B-122). Such small differences in flow would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect long-term juvenile fall-run Chinook salmon or steelhead rearing success. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-168.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Juvenile Rearing (March Through June). Modeling of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water
supply indicates that the long-term average water temperature at Watt Avenue would not change during any month of the March through June period, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-286). Monthly mean water temperatures at Watt Avenue would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 275 of the 276 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-426 to A-429). Moreover, under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, there would not be any additional occurrences in which water temperatures would be above 65°F, relative to the existing condition, for the entire March through June period (Technical Appendices A-426 to A-429). Consequently, with no temperature increases at Watt Avenue during the March through June period, the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be expected to result in significant adverse affects to the success of juvenile salmon rearing. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-168 to 4.4-169.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Juvenile Emigration (February through June). The primary period of fall-run Chinook salmon juvenile emigration occurs from February to June, with the majority of juvenile steelhead emigration occurring during this same period. Generally little, if any, emigration occurs during July and August. Flow-related impacts to salmonid immigration discussed above addressed flow changes in February and March. As previously concluded for adult immigration, potential changes in flows under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply during February through March would not adversely affect juvenile fall-run Chinook salmon or steelhead rearing and, therefore, also would not adversely affect emigration. Hence, this discussion focuses primarily on the April through June period. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-169.)

Monthly mean flows expected to occur at the American River mouth associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent or greater than flows under the existing condition in 200 of the 210 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix A-367 to A-369). Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, the simulated long-term average flow at the mouth would decrease slightly (i.e., less than 0.5%) in the April through June period (Template Output B-135). Juvenile salmonid emigration surveys conducted by CDFG have shown no direct relationship between peak emigration of juvenile Chinook salmon and peak spring flows (Snider et al. 1997). Moreover, emigrating fish are more likely to be adversely affected by events when flows are high, then ramp down quickly (resulting in isolation and stranding). Adverse changes in flow ramping rates would not be expected to occur under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply. Consequently, although small flow reductions at the mouth (i.e., less than 0.5 percent) would occur in a few years during the April through June period, these flow reductions would not occur with sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect the success of juvenile salmonid emigration. In addition, the resultant flows would not be expected to adversely affect the success of juvenile salmonid emigration. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-169.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Juvenile Emigration (February through June). With the possible exception of a small percentage of fish that may rear near the mouth of the lower American River, impacts due to elevated water temperatures at the mouth to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead would, at worst, be limited
to the several days that it takes emigrants to pass through the lower portion of the river and into the Sacramento River en route to the Delta. Water temperatures near the mouth during the primary emigration period (February into June) are often largely affected by intrusion of Sacramento River water, which is not accounted for by Reclamation's lower American River Temperature Model. Consequently, actual temperatures near the mouth would likely be somewhere between temperatures modeled for the mouth and temperatures modeled for the Sacramento River at Freeport (RM 46), located 14 miles downstream of the lower American River's confluence. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-169.)

Changes in water temperatures under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect emigration during the February through June period, relative to the existing condition. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-170.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Steelhead Rearing (July through September). Monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to or greater than flows under the existing condition in 179 of the 210 months modeled (Technical Appendix A-322 to A-324). The long-term average flow below Nimbus Dam would decrease by less than 0.8% (17 cfs) compared to the existing condition for the July through September period. The difference in flow would be similar at Watt Avenue (Template Output B-117 and B-123). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-170.)

Based on these findings, flow reductions under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply are not expected to reduce juvenile steelhead rearing habitat. Further, steelhead populations in the lower American River are believed to be limited by instream temperature conditions during the July through September period, rather than by flows. Therefore, small and infrequent reductions in flow would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to adversely affect long-term rearing success of juvenile steelhead. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-170.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Steelhead Rearing (July through September). The long-term average water temperatures below Nimbus Dam, Watt Avenue, and the mouth would not substantially differ during July, August and September between the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply compared to the existing condition (Template Output B-279, B-286, and B-293). Monthly mean water temperatures below Nimbus Dam under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 203 of the 207 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-418 to A-420). Monthly mean water temperatures at Watt Avenue under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 204 of the 207 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-430 to A-432). Moreover, under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, there would be no increase in the number of occurrences in which water temperatures would be above 65°F during the July through September period at Watt Avenue, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-430 to A-432). Monthly mean water temperatures at the mouth of the American River under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 205 of the 207 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-
Therefore, such small and infrequent increases in water temperature that would occur under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would not be of sufficient frequency to adversely affect long-term rearing success of juvenile steelhead. This impact is therefore considered **less than significant**. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-170 to 4.4-171.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-171.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-56:** The Specific Plan could degrade habitat for splittail in the lower American River. This impact is considered **less than significant**. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-171.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Monthly mean flows at Watt Avenue during February through May under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to or greater than the existing condition in 270 of the 280 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-329 to A-332). The long-term average flow at Watt Avenue during the period February through May would range between zero and 0.2% less than under the existing condition (Template Output B-123). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-171.)

Monthly mean temperatures at Watt Avenue under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be essentially equivalent to the existing condition in 275 of the 276 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendices A-425 to A-428). Over the 69-year period of simulation, February through April mean monthly water temperatures at Watt Avenue under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply and existing condition would not exceed 68°F, the upper limit of the reported preferred range for splittail spawning, relative to the existing condition in any of the 69 years modeled (Technical Appendices A-425 to A-428). During May, there would be two occurrences under both the existing condition and proposed initial surface water supply that monthly mean water temperatures would exceed 68°F. Therefore, water temperature-related impacts to splittail spawning would be considered **less than significant**, since no sufficient change in the frequency of water temperature exceeding the reported preferred range for splittail spawning would occur under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply and this condition would occur with or without the project. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-172.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-172.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-57:** The Specific Plan could cause impacts to American shad in the lower American River. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-172.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The long-term average flow at the American River mouth would be reduced by 0.4% or less during May and June under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-135). Flow reductions in May and June under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply could potentially reduce the number of adult shad attracted into the river during a few years. However, American shad spawn opportunistically where suitable conditions are found, so that production of American shad within the Sacramento River system would likely remain unaffected. Any flow-related impacts to American shad are considered to be *less than significant.* In addition, analysis was performed to determine the probability that lower American River flows at the mouth in May and June would be greater than 3,000 cfs, the flow level defined by CDFG as that which would be sufficient to maintain the sport fishery for American shad. The simulations showed no difference in the number of years that the flow at the mouth would be below 3,000 cfs in May and June (Technical Appendices A-368 to A-369). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-172.)

The frequency with which monthly mean water temperatures in May and June below Nimbus Dam would be within the reported preferred range for American shad spawning of 60°F to 70°F would not change under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-416 to A-417). Monthly mean water temperatures in May and June at the mouth of the lower American River would be within the reported preferred range for American shad spawning in one fewer year under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-440 to A-441). The frequency with which suitable temperatures for American shad spawning would not substantially differ infers that temperature-related impacts to American shad would be considered *less than significant* relative to the existing condition. Overall, the impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-172.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-173.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-58: The Specific Plan could cause impacts to striped bass in the lower American River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-173.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The flow-related impact assessment conducted for fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead addresses potential flow-related impacts to striped bass juvenile rearing, which occurs during the months of May and June. In addition, an analysis was performed to determine the probability that lower American River flows at the mouth would be below 1,500 cfs, the flow level defined by CDFG as that which would be sufficient to maintain the sport fishery for striped bass. Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, monthly mean flows in the lower American River would be below the 1,500 cfs attraction flow index during May and June in 17 of the 140 years modeled (Technical Appendices A-368 to A-369). Moreover, flows at the mouth that are believed to be sufficient to maintain the striped bass fishery would be met or exceeded in most years during both May and June. Substantial changes in the strength of the striped bass fishery would not be expected to occur when May and/or June monthly mean flows fall below 1,500 cfs, and therefore, flow-related impacts to the striped bass fishery that could potentially occur under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-173.)

The number of years that monthly mean water temperatures would be within the reported preferred range for striped bass spawning of 59°F to 68°F would not change during June below Nimbus Dam and at the mouth during May and June (Technical Appendices A-416 to A-417 and A-440 to A-441). Thus, the frequency of suitable temperatures for juvenile striped bass rearing in the lower American River would remain essentially unchanged, and therefore, temperature-related impacts to juvenile striped bass rearing are considered to be less than significant relative to the existing condition. Overall, potential impacts to striped bass under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-173.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-173.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Cumulative Impacts

**Impact 4.4-59:** Cumulative development would contribute to the ongoing loss of natural undisturbed open space in the region, increase human intrusion and activity levels in proximity to habitat areas, and would remove potential habitat for federally and state listed and other special-status species. This is considered a *cumulatively considerable significant impact.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-173.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant cumulative environmental effect associated with the ongoing loss of regional open space, increasing human intrusion and activity near habitat areas, and removal of potential habitat for listed and other special-status species. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The undeveloped portion of western Placer County provides habitat for a wide range of plant and animal species, including those discussed throughout this section. Over recent decades, development in the Cities of Lincoln, Roseville and Rocklin, as well as the unincorporated area, has converted thousands of acres of open space and natural habitat to urban uses. Thousands of additional acres are approved or proposed for development in Placer, Sacramento and Sutter counties as shown in Figure 4.1-2, including the Elverta Specific Plan, South Sutter County Industrial/Commercial Reserve, Curry Creek Community Plan, the Regional University and Community, West Roseville Specific Plan, Placer Ranch, Lincoln Crossing, Sierra Vista Specific Plan, Creekview Specific Plan, Riolo Vineyards, Silver Creek, Lincoln 270, and Morgan Place. Such development would result in the loss, degradation, and fragmentation of functional wildlife habitat and the removal of native vegetation. Additionally, road construction, site grading, infrastructure installation, and construction of residential, commercial, and public facilities uses would result in the direct loss of wildlife habitat as well as special-status species and sensitive habitats. Most of the land that has been or is planned for development in western Placer County and the surrounding region is made up of habitat similar to the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area, including grasslands, agricultural land, vernal pools, other wetlands, oak woodlands, riparian areas and streams and drainages. As proposed, the Specific Plan would contribute considerably to the ongoing loss of natural, undisturbed open space in the region, resulting in a decline of biological resources and species diversity. Specific Plan development would also contribute considerably to cumulative increases in traffic and human disturbance in proximity to
habitat areas and wildlife habitat. For these reasons, this impact is considered a *cumulatively considerable significant* impact. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-173 to 4.4-174.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.4-59 **Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 as well as Mitigation Measures 4.4-2, 4.4-4, 4.4-6, 4.4-10a, 4.4-11b, 4.4-11c, 4.4-12b, 4.4-14, 4.4-15, 4.4-17, 4.4-18, 4.4-19, 4.4-21, 4.4-22, 4.4-23, 4.4-24, 4.4-25, 4.4-26, 4.4-29, and 4.4-30.**

*Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 would reduce the magnitude of the Specific Plan contribution to the cumulative loss of biological habitat by requiring the off-site preservation of 3,520 acres of open space, most of which is likely to provide a mosaic of habitats similar to the Specific Plan area. The other measures identified above would further protect special-status plant and wildlife from harm by requiring appropriate habitat and/or nesting surveys, avoidance of habitat and/or nests, and compensation for loss of habitat. While individual members of special-status species would be protected from harm, and required off-site open space would not be developed, there would still be a net loss in land available for plant and wildlife habitat as a result of the Specific Plan. Therefore, this mitigation would reduce, but would not fully offset, the project’s incremental contribution to the significant cumulative loss of biological habitat. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-174.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above measure would substantially lessen the severity of the Specific Plan contribution to the cumulative loss of open space, but not to a less than significant level. Therefore, the impact would remain *significant and unavoidable*, and the project’s incremental contribution to this impact would itself be *cumulatively considerable* (i.e., *significant*). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-174.)

**Impact 4.4-60:** Increased flows from Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (DCWWTP) and Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) could adversely affect riparian and aquatic resources in Dry Creek and the Sacramento River. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.4-174.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Merritt Smith Consulting has prepared a Technical Memorandum to evaluate cumulative impacts to water quality and aquatic biological resources in Dry Creek due to the prospect of treating and discharging greater amounts of wastewater from the DCWWTP. Water quality related impacts are addressed in Section 4.3.4 in the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-175.)
Merritt Smith found that increasing the flows in Dry Creek through the discharge of additional treated effluent will result in channel conveyance of higher flow volumes with associated higher water velocities which could cause additional bed scour and bank erosion. Bed scour and bank erosion, if it occurs as a result of the incremental flows, would increase water column turbidity and altering substrate composition downstream of the DCWWTP outfall. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-175.)

Appendix A of the technical memorandum (Appendix Q of the Revised Draft EIR) describes the effect of the proposed discharge on Dry Creek water surface elevation under typical dry season conditions. The impact is estimated to be less than 0.2 feet. The Dry Creek riparian zone is characterized by a bank that extends typically two to five feet above the low water elevation. Assuming groundwater elevation is directly affected by surface water elevation, the project would reduce the depth of the unsaturated zone depth by less than 10%. Since riparian vegetation is adapted to saturated soils in proximity to the root zone (and some species require saturated soil conditions), a change in the water surface elevation of 0.2 feet during the dry season is not expected to adversely affect Dry Creek riparian vegetation. Thus, the impact on riparian vegetation is considered less than significant. Changes that could affect aquatic resources are addressed in the water quality discussion contained in Impact 4.3.4-9, in Section 4.3.4 of the Revised Draft EIR and are found to be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-175.)

The Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant 2020 Master Plan EIR identifies the following impacts to aquatic biology in the Sacramento River from SRWTP effluent discharges and constituent loading: 1) Potential for thermal plume below the diffuser to block or substantially delay the upstream spawning migrations of fishes; 2) Thermal effects on fish and benthic macroinvertebrates exposed to the plume for short periods of time while moving downstream past the diffuser; and 3) Population- or community-level effects to fish or macroinvertebrates from the incremental increase in downstream water temperatures (Fully Mixed Condition). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-175.)

The Revised Draft EIR found all impacts to be less than significant to aquatic biology. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-175.)

Mitigation Measures:

No additional mitigation measures are required. See Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-9a, 4.3.4-9b, and 4.3.4-9c. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-175.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-61: The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on lower American River riparian vegetation and Special-Status Species dependent upon riparian and open water habitats. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-176.)
Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Changes in lower American River flows would result in more frequent reductions of flows below the indices for cottonwood growth and terrace inundation. Flows would be below that considered necessary for radial growth maintenance up to 7% more frequently and below the index required for some growth by up to approximately 6% more frequently than under the existing condition. Reduced flows under the cumulative condition would result in six to seven more occurrences of two or more consecutive months in which flows would be below the radial growth maintenance index at both Nimbus Dam and the H Street Bridge, respectively, and four to five additional occurrences of two or more consecutive months below the same growth index required for some growth at the H Street Bridge and Nimbus Dam, respectively. However, none of the consecutive flow reductions would occur during the critical growing period of April through July. Because these consecutive flow reductions would not occur during the critical growing period of April through July, and the minimal percent of time that the mean monthly flows fall below the growth thresholds, such flow reductions are not considered to be of sufficient magnitude and/or frequency to have long-term effects on the population and growth of cottonwoods/riparian vegetation, relative to the existing condition. Furthermore, given that flow reductions would not result in long-term adverse effects on cottonwoods or riparian vegetation, future impacts to special-status species that depend on lower American River riparian vegetation would also be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-176.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-176.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-62: The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on lower American River backwater ponds and Special-Status Species dependent on backwater pond/marsh habitats (including elderberry shrubs and VELB). This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR< p. 4.4-176.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

Modeling results indicate that recharge of lower American River backwater ponds would not be significantly altered under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition. Monthly long-term average reductions in the frequency of flows above 2,700 cfs, the minimum flow required for recharge of ponds closest to the river, would range from 1% to 14%. Reductions in long-term average flows above 4,000 cfs, the flow value required for recharge of off-river ponds, would range from 1% to 20%, relative to the existing condition. Adequate recharge of both adjacent and off-river ponds would still occur under the cumulative condition given the magnitude of future changes in flows. Consequently, such reductions were considered less than significant, relative to the existing condition. Furthermore, special-status species dependent upon recharge of backwater pond/marsh habitats, including elderberry shrubs and VELB, would not be adversely affected by future reductions in flow that would occur under the cumulative condition, and consequently, impacts to these special-status species would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-177.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-177.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-63: The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on Folsom, Trinity, and Shasta Reservoir vegetation. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-177.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Long-term average end-of-month water surface elevations for Folsom, Trinity, and Shasta reservoirs would be reduced, relative to the existing condition, with reductions ranging from 2 to 11 feet msl during growing season months of March through September. Weedy vegetation, rather than vegetation that would provide quality wildlife habitat, establishes in the drawdown zone under existing conditions, due to constant changes in reservoir elevation that result from reservoir drawdown patterns. Consequently, reductions in reservoir elevations that would occur under the cumulative condition would not affect areas of high and consistent habitat value that are available for species associated with the reservoir under the existing condition, and impacts would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-177.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-177.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-64:** The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on upper Sacramento River riparian vegetation. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-177.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Under the cumulative condition, upper Sacramento River long-term average flows during the March through October growing season would be reduced, relative to the existing condition. Such decreases would range from approximately 80 to 825 cfs, relative to the existing condition. However, such decreases would be small, considering the monthly mean flow range under the existing condition of over 5,000 to over 13,000 cfs. Thus, anticipated flow reductions that would occur under the cumulative condition would not be of sufficient magnitude and/or frequency to significantly alter upper Sacramento River riparian vegetation and related species, relative to the existing condition, and impacts would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-177.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-178.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-65:** The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on lower Sacramento River riparian vegetation. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-178.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

Modeled reductions in long-term average flows of the lower Sacramento River under the cumulative condition would range from 399 to 828 cfs during most months, with increases ranging from 36 to 466 cfs in early spring and mid-summer months, relative to the existing condition. However, the greatest reduction in long-term average flow under the cumulative condition would be less than 5% of existing flows for any month of the growing season, relative to the existing condition. Furthermore, the frequency and magnitude of flow reductions that would occur under the cumulative condition would be small, considering the existing monthly mean flow range of over 11,000 to over 33,000 cfs during the growing season months. Because the flow reductions that occur under the cumulative condition would not be of sufficient frequency or magnitude to significantly alter existing riparian habitats along the river, adverse effects to riparian habitats of the lower Sacramento River would not be expected under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition, and impacts would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-178.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-178.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-66:** The Specific Plan could contribute to a cumulative effect on Delta riparian vegetation and special-status species. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-178.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Long-term average reductions in lower Sacramento River flow would not be expected to alter the riparian habitat of the Delta. Potential shifts in the long-term average position of X2 of up to 0.7 km would occur under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition. Such shifts would be considered minor in the context of Delta riparian vegetation and would not adversely affect Delta vegetation (which is adapted to changes in salinity) or special-status species dependent upon Delta habitats. (RDEIR, p. 44.-178.)

In summary, there would be no potentially significant impact to terrestrial resources and vegetation associated with the implementation of future actions, including the proposed long-term surface water supply, under the cumulative condition relative to the existing condition. As no significant impacts are anticipated to terrestrial resources under the cumulative condition, the
proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to future impacts to riparian resources that occur under the cumulative condition, and therefore the impacts would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-178.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-178.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-67: The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on Folsom Reservoir warm water fisheries. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-179.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Under the cumulative condition, long-term average end-of-month water surface elevation would be reduced in Folsom Reservoir by up to eight feet msl, relative to the existing condition, during the March through September period, when warm water fish spawning and initial rearing occur. On a monthly basis, reservoir elevations would be reduced by 2 to 36 ft msl in 272 months of the 490 months included throughout the March through September period. Future changes in water surface elevation would result in a reduction in the long-term average amount of available littoral habitat of 5% to 31% (59 to 323 acres) during March through September, with reductions in individual months of up to 1,897 acres, relative to the existing condition. Such reductions in habitat availability could, in turn, lead to increased predation on young-of-the-year warm water fish, thereby reducing the long-term initial year-class strength of the population. Unless willows and other near-shore vegetation, in response to seasonal reductions in water levels, become established at lower reservoir elevations in the future, long-term year-class production of warm water fisheries could be reduced. Consequently, seasonal reductions in littoral habitat availability represent a potentially significant cumulative impact to Folsom Reservoir warm water fisheries. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-179 to 4.4-180)

Increases in the frequency of potential nest-dewatering events could occur in Folsom Reservoir under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition. Modeling results indicate that the greatest increase would occur in June, with 10 more nest-dewatering events, relative to the existing condition. The frequency with which potential nest-dewatering events could occur in Folsom Reservoir would increase in the months of the March through July warm water fish-spawning period, and consequently, may be a potentially significant cumulative impact to warm water fish nesting success. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-180.)
Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply. The proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would not contribute substantially to reductions in reservoir end of month elevation and acres of littoral habitat under the cumulative condition. The proposed long-term surface water supply would contribute 2 months of the 272 months with reductions in Folsom Reservoir elevation, or 0.7% of the total cumulative impact (Technical Appendix G-193 to G-204). Furthermore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contributions to reductions in the amount of Folsom Reservoir littoral habitat. During April through September, the proposed long-term surface water supply would contribute a minor benefit to the long-term average amount of littoral habitat, with increases of up to four acres (Template Output H-493). In individual months, the proposed long-term surface water supply would result in both increases and decreases in the amount of littoral habitat, with reductions up to 108 acres (Technical Appendix G-277 to G-288). Such reductions would not occur with sufficient frequency or magnitude to contribute to significant reductions in littoral habitat availability that would occur under the cumulative condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-180.)

The proposed long-term surface water supply also would not contribute substantially to increases in the frequency of potential nest-dewatering events in any month during March through July (Template Output H-486). During May, there would be one additional occurrence under the proposed long-term surface water supply, that monthly elevation would decrease more than nine feet. However, this additional occurrence would not be of sufficient magnitude or frequency to adversely affect the availability of warm water fish nests. Therefore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future adverse effects to warm water fish nests that occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. Impacts would therefore be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-180.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-180.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-68: The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative effects on lower American River fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-181)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

Flow-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (October Through February). All flow-related impact assessments regarding fall-run Chinook salmon spawning and incubation were based on flows below Nimbus Dam and at Watt Avenue, with a greater emphasis placed on flows below Nimbus Dam, as 98% of all spawning occurs upstream of Watt Avenue. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-181.)

The modeled long-term average flow below Nimbus Dam under the cumulative condition would be up to 13.6% less (292 cfs, October) than the flow under the existing condition during all months of the October through February fall-run Chinook salmon spawning and incubation period. Similarly, modeled changes in long-term average flows at Watt Avenue would be up to 14.3% less (300 cfs, October) during the October through February period (See Tables C-3.419 and –20 in the Cumulative Report for additional information). Differences in flows in the lower flow ranges are of particular concern. In October, November and December, when the existing condition flow would be 2,500 cfs or less, the cumulative condition would result in flow reductions of up to 750 cfs nearly 50% of the time, while effects on flow during January and February would be minor.

Such reductions in flows would reduce the amount of available Chinook salmon spawning habitat, which could result in increased redd superimposition during years when adult returns are high enough for spawning habitat to be limiting. These reductions in flow are of sufficient magnitude and occur with enough frequency to represent a potentially significant cumulative impact to long-term initial year-class strength of lower American River fall-run Chinook salmon. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-181.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply. The proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future lower American River flow reductions at either Nimbus Dam or Watt Avenue during October through February. The maximum simulated reduction in long-term average flow would be four cfs at either of the locations, or 1.3% to 1.4% of the total cumulative reduction in flows (Template Output H-117 and H-123). Furthermore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would contribute 6 months to the 185 and 186 months in which flows would reduce 1% or more under the cumulative condition below Nimbus and at Watt Avenue, respectively. Thus, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not provide a substantial contribution to reductions in lower American River flows that would occur under the cumulative condition. Consequently, the proposed long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to significant impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead spawning and incubation under the cumulative condition. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impact that occur under the cumulative condition. Impacts would therefore be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-181.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Juvenile Rearing (March through June). The majority of juvenile salmonid rearing is believed to occur
upstream of Watt Avenue. Furthermore, diversions generally exceed tributary accretions to the river throughout the March through June period, resulting in lower flows at Watt Avenue than below Nimbus Dam. Therefore, all flow-related impact assessments for fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead rearing are based on flows at Watt Avenue. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-181 to 4.4-182.)

Relatively small differences in long-term average flows would occur between the cumulative condition and the existing condition during the March through June juvenile fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead rearing period, with the largest reduction at Watt Avenue of 6.3%, relative to the existing condition (247 cfs, May). However, flows in individual months would be reduced from 3% to 71%, relative to the existing condition, in 174 of the 280 months included in the analyses throughout the March through June rearing period. These differences in flow may adversely affect long-term juvenile fall-run Chinook salmon or steelhead rearing habitat availability, and therefore represent a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-182.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply. The proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative lower American River flow reductions that would occur during the March through June rearing period. This long-term surface water supply would contribute up to four cfs (April), or 7%, to reductions in the long-term average flow at Watt Avenue, with no contribution to flow reductions in May, the month in which cumulative flow reductions would be greatest (Template Output H-123). Furthermore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would contribute six months, or 3%, to the 174 months in which flows would be reduced under the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix G-330 to G-333). Therefore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would contribute to the substantial reductions in lower American River flows that would occur under the cumulative condition, and consequently, would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future potentially significant flow-related impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead rearing on the lower American River. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. Impacts would therefore be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-182.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Fall-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Juvenile Rearing (March through June). Under the cumulative condition, there would be two more occurrences during the March through June period in which water temperatures at Watt Avenue would be above 65°F, relative to the existing condition, although long-term average water temperature at Watt Avenue would not change by more than 0.3°F during any month of the March through June period, relative to the existing condition. Under the cumulative condition, water temperature increases of greater than 0.3°F, relative to the existing condition, would occur during the March through June period in 50 of the 276 months modeled. Such frequent increases in water temperature represent a potentially significant cumulative impact to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead juvenile rearing. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-182.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply. The proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to
potentially significant impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead juvenile rearing. This long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the 50 occurrences of temperature increases of 0.3°F or more at Watt Avenue that would occur under the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix G-426 to G-429). Furthermore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the frequency in which temperatures would be above 65°F under the cumulative condition (Template Output H-289), and would not contribute to increases in the long-term average temperatures at Watt Avenue (Template Output H-286). Thus, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute significantly to increases in lower American River water temperatures at Watt Avenue that occur under the cumulative condition, and consequently, would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to potentially significant impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead juvenile rearing. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. Impacts would therefore be less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-182 to 4.4-183.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Steelhead Rearing (July through September). Under the cumulative condition, the long-term average monthly flow below Nimbus Dam would decrease by approximately 7% to 15% (up to 370 cfs) throughout the July through September period, relative to the existing condition. At Watt Avenue, the long-term average monthly flow would decrease by approximately 8% to 16% (up to 383 cfs), relative to the existing condition. In addition, flows below Nimbus Dam under the cumulative condition would be reduced by 1% to 73% in 142 months of the 210 individual months included in the analysis. For Watt Avenue, flows under the cumulative condition would be reduced by 1% to 79% in 147 months of the 210 individual months included in the analysis. The flow reductions that would occur under the cumulative condition are of sufficient magnitude and frequency to reduce juvenile steelhead summer rearing habitat, relative to the amount available under the existing condition. Consequently, reductions in flow associated with the cumulative condition may adversely affect long-term rearing success of juvenile steelhead, and therefore represent a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-183.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply. The proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the substantial flow reductions that would occur under the cumulative condition. For flows below Nimbus Dam, the proposed long-term surface water supply would contribute four months, or 3 percent of the total 142 months where reductions occur under the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix G-322 to G-324). Similarly, the proposed long-term surface water supply would contribute four months of reductions at Watt Avenue, or three percent of the total 147 months where reductions occur under the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix G-334 to G-336). The greatest flow reductions that the proposed long-term surface water supply would contribute to the cumulative condition during these four months at Nimbus Dam and Watt Avenue would be 5.7 percent and 7.5 percent, respectively. These flow reductions would occur during a critical water year, when existing flows would be relatively low. Flow reductions would not occur with sufficient magnitude or frequency to result in a significant contribution to changes in long-term average flows at either Nimbus Dam or Watt Avenue under the cumulative condition. Therefore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively
considerable contribution to potential impacts to steelhead rearing that would occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. Impacts would therefore be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-183.)

Temperature-Related Impacts to Steelhead Rearing (July through September). Temperature modeling indicates that the long-term average water temperature at Watt Avenue would increase slightly each month during July through September under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition, with no increases (but several decreases) in the frequency in which water temperatures at Watt Avenue would be above 65°F. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-184.)

During the July through September steelhead rearing period, water temperatures under the cumulative condition would be higher than those under the existing condition when water temperatures would already be relatively warm. In 41 months of the 207 months included in the analysis, water temperatures would increase by more than 0.3°F, relative to the existing condition, with increases up to 4.1°F when water temperatures under the existing condition are at 70°F or greater. Such water temperature increases represent a potentially significant cumulative impact to juvenile steelhead summer rearing. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-184.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply. The proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to substantial water temperature increases that would occur under the cumulative condition. This long-term surface water supply would not result in any substantial increases in the frequency in which water temperatures at Watt Avenue would be above 65°F in any month of the July through September period (i.e., one additional occurrence in September) (Template Output H-289). Furthermore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the long-term average water temperature increases that would occur under the cumulative condition, and would only contribute one month, or 2%, to the number of months in which water temperatures under the cumulative condition would increase by greater than 0.3°F (Template Output H-286 and Technical Appendix G-430 to G-432). Thus, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not result in substantial increases in lower American River water temperatures at Watt Avenue during July through September, and consequently, would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the potentially significant temperature-related impacts to steelhead rearing that would occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact would therefore be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-184.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-184.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-69:  
The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on lower American River splittail. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-184.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Under the cumulative condition, the modeled long-term average flow at Watt Avenue during February through May would decrease by 1.6% to 6.3%, relative to the existing condition. These flow reductions correspond to reductions in usable habitat of up to 3.9 acres, and in one year a 100% reduction, of the habitat available in individual years under the existing condition. While in many years, riparian vegetation would not be inundated throughout this period under either the cumulative or existing condition, reductions in inundated riparian habitat would occur virtually every month during the February through May period in those years when habitat would be inundated under the existing condition. However, relatively little splittail habitat is available under either the cumulative or existing condition. Given the uncertainty regarding the magnitude and extent of splittail spawning habitat in the lower American River, and the actual amount of potential spawning habitat available at specific flow rates throughout the river, the effects of flow reductions during the February through May period are also uncertain, and therefore, represent a potentially significant cumulative impact to this federally threatened species. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-184 to 4.4-185.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply. The proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to potential cumulative impacts to lower American River splittail. The proposed long-term surface water supply would not result in changes in the long-term average amount of habitat available under the existing condition. Specifically, the proposed long-term surface water supply would result in changes (one increase of 0.2 acres, one decrease of 0.3 acres) in the amount of habitat in 2 months of the 280 months included in the analysis throughout the February through May period (Technical Appendix G-558 to G-561). Thus, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute significantly to reductions in splittail habitat under the cumulative condition, and therefore, would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future potential impacts to lower American River splittail. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-185.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-185.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-70:** The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on Shasta Reservoir warm water fisheries. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-185.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Hydrologic conditions under the cumulative condition would result in a decline in the long-term average end-of-month water surface elevation in Shasta Reservoir during the March through September period when warm water fish spawning and initial rearing may be expected. In 275 months of the 490 months included in the analysis, the water surface elevation of Shasta Reservoir during the spawning and rearing period would be reduced by 2 to 54 feet msl, relative to the existing condition. Long-term average water surface elevation levels would be reduced up to 11 feet msl, relative to the existing condition. In addition, the long-term average amount of littoral habitat potentially available to warm water fish for spawning and/or rearing under the cumulative condition would decrease by approximately 6% to 23% over the March through September period, relative to the existing condition. Reductions in the availability of littoral habitat under the cumulative condition may be of sufficient magnitude to substantially reduce long-term average initial year-class strength of warm water fish populations. While the relative frequency of potential nest dewatering events under the cumulative condition would not change substantially, relative to the existing condition, overall potential impacts to Shasta Reservoir warm water fisheries due to reductions in reservoir water surface elevation and decreases in littoral habitat under the cumulative condition represent a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-185.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply.** The proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future impacts to Shasta Reservoir warm water fisheries. This long-term surface water supply would not contribute to reductions in long-term average water surface reservoir elevation, and would only contribute to elevation decreases in four months of the 490 months included in the analysis (Template Output H-487 and Technical Appendix G-186 to G-192). Furthermore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not result in future increases in the frequency of potential nest-dewatering events, and would result in reductions in littoral habitat of up to three acres, or up to 1.6% of the total cumulative reduction in habitat (Template Output H-488 and H-
Thus, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute to significant reductions in reservoir water surface elevation or available littoral habitat, or increases in potential nest-dewatering events under the cumulative condition. Consequently, the proposed long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future significant impacts to Shasta Reservoir warm water fisheries under the cumulative condition. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. Impacts would therefore be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-185 to 4.4-186.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-186.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.4-71: The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on upper Sacramento River fisheries (temperature-related). This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-186.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The cumulative condition would result in changes in long-term average water temperature (both increases and decreases) at Keswick Dam and Bend Bridge, relative to the existing condition. There would also be several additional months in the simulation in which water temperatures would exceed 56°F or 60°F at either Keswick Dam or Bend Bridge. For example, there would be 22 additional occurrences where the 56°F index would be exceeded, and eight more occurrences where the 60°F index would be exceeded at Keswick Dam, relative to the existing condition. At Bend Bridge, there would be 31 additional occurrences where the 56°F index would be exceeded and seven more occurrences where the 60°F index would be exceeded, relative to the existing condition. Thus, the cumulative condition would result in a significant increase in the frequency of exceedance of temperature criteria identified in the NOAA Biological Opinion for winter-run Chinook salmon. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-186.)

Early lifestage survival also was examined for winter-run, spring-run, fall-run and late fall-run Chinook salmon in the Sacramento River. Winter-run Chinook salmon long-term average early-lifestage survival would be 93.4% under the cumulative condition compared to 96% under the existing condition. Winter-run Chinook salmon, absolute long-term average early-lifestage survival would decrease more than 10% in 4 of the 69 years studied relative to the existing
condition. Winter-run Chinook salmon relative long-term average early lifestage survival would
decrease more than 10% in 5 of the 69 years studied. For fall-run Chinook salmon, long-term
average early-lifestage survival would be 86.2% under the cumulative condition compared to
89.6% under the existing condition. Absolute and relative long-term average early lifestage
survival of fall-run Chinook salmon would decrease more than 10% in 11 of the 69 years studied
compared to the existing conditions. Spring-run Chinook salmon long-term average early-
lifestage survival would be 81.7% under the cumulative condition compared to 87.5% under the
existing condition. Absolute long-term average early-lifestage survival for spring-run Chinook
salmon would decrease more than 10% in 8 of the 69 years studied. The long-term average
relative percent change in early lifestage survival for spring-run Chinook salmon would decrease
by approximately 6.2% compared to the existing condition. Relative long-term average early-
lifestage survival would decrease more than 10% in 10 of the 69 years studied. The long-term
average early-lifestage survival for late fall-run Chinook salmon would be 98.7% under the
cumulative condition compared to 99.1% under the existing conditions. No decreases of more
than 10% in absolute or relative long-term average early-lifestage survival are expected for late
fall-run Chinook salmon. (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-186 to 4.4-187.)

Based on the increased number of exceedances of the temperature criteria identified in the
NOAA Biological Opinion for winter-run Chinook salmon, and decreases in absolute and
relative long-term early lifestage survival of fall-run, winter-run and spring-run Chinook salmon,
water temperature-related impacts to upper Sacramento River fisheries under the cumulative
condition would represent a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-187.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply. The proposed Specific
Plan long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to
significant upper Sacramento River water temperature-related fisheries impacts that would occur
under the cumulative condition. For water temperatures below Keswick Dam and Bend Bridge,
the proposed long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable
contribution to increases in long-term average water temperatures under the cumulative
condition as shown in Tables 4.4-15 and 4.4-16 (Template Output H-300 and H-307). Similarly,
there would be no cumulatively considerable contribution to the increase in the frequency of
exceedance of the 56°F and 60°F temperature criteria at either Keswick Dam or Bend Bridge
(Template Output H-303 and H-310). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-187.)

In addition, there would not be substantial decreases in absolute or relative annual early-lifestage
survival of fall-run and late fall-run Chinook salmon in any individual year under the proposed
long-term surface water supply relative to the cumulative condition (Technical Appendices H-
566 to H-569). For winter-run Chinook salmon, the long-term average early-lifestage survival
would be 93.4% for both the proposed long-term surface water supply and the cumulative
conditions. There would not be substantial decreases in absolute annual early-lifestage survival
of winter-run Chinook salmon in any individual year of the 69-year period of record. The long-
term surface water supply would not result in a change in mean long-term average relative
percent in early-lifestage survival, relative to early-lifestage survival under the cumulative
condition. In 2 of the 69 years modeled, early-lifestage survival would decrease relative to the
cumulative condition. In these two years, winter-run Chinook salmon absolute and relative long-
term average early lifestage survival would not decrease by more than 10%. The largest relative
For spring-run Chinook salmon, the long-term average early-lifestage survival would be 81.7% under the proposed long-term surface water supply and 81.7% under the cumulative condition. There would be no substantial decreases in absolute annual early-lifestage survival of spring-run Chinook salmon in any individual year of the 69-year period of record. There would not be a change in mean long-term average relative percent in early-lifestage survival, relative to early-lifestage survival under the cumulative condition. In 4 of the 69 years modeled, early-lifestage survival would decrease relative to the cumulative condition. In these four years, spring-run Chinook salmon absolute and relative long-term early-lifestage survival would not decrease by more than 10%. The largest relative decrease that would occur would be 5.9%, though this individual year’s reduction in early-lifestage spring-run Chinook salmon survival would not change the mean long-term average survival. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-188.)

Therefore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the potentially significant temperature-related impacts to fisheries of the upper Sacramento River that would occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. Impacts would therefore be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-189.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-189.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-72:** The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on lower Sacramento River fisheries (temperature related). This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-189.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Under the cumulative condition, the long-term average water temperature at Freeport on the lower Sacramento River would not change more than 0.3°F during any month of the year, relative to the existing condition. However, the number of years that water temperatures at this
location would exceed 56°F, 60°F, and 70°F would be greater (i.e., 2 more occurrences for the 56°F index, 11 more occurrences for the 60°F index, and 9 more occurrences for the 70°F index), relative to the existing condition, during the March through November period. In addition, water temperature at Freeport would increase by 0.3°F or more, relative to the existing condition, in 178 of the 828 months included in the analysis. Based on these findings, potential temperature-related impacts to fish species within the lower Sacramento River represent a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-189.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply.** The proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the frequent water temperature increases that would occur under the cumulative condition. This long-term surface water supply would not contribute to increases in long-term average water temperatures at Freeport on the lower Sacramento River, and would not contribute to increases in the frequency of water temperature criteria exceedance that would occur under the cumulative condition, as shown in Tables 4.4-17 and 4.4-18 (Template Output H-321 and H-324). Furthermore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute to increases in water temperature of 0.3°F or more in any month of the 828 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix G-481 to G-492). Therefore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute to future significant water temperature increases on the lower Sacramento River, and consequently, would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to temperature-related impacts to lower Sacramento River fisheries that occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-189.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-190.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.4-73:** The Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative effects on Delta fish populations. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-190.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

Delta outflow during the period of February through June is believed to be of greatest concern for potential effects to spawning and rearing habitat and downstream transport flows for delta smelt, longfin smelt, splittail, striped bass, salmonids, and other aquatic species in the Delta. In 38 of the 350 months modeled throughout the February through June period, Delta outflow would decrease by 10% or more, relative to the existing condition, with the greatest long-term reduction in long-term average Delta outflow at 4.5% (June). (RDEIR, pp. 4.4-190 to 4.4-191.)

Under the cumulative condition, the long-term average position of X2 would move upstream less than one km, relative to the existing condition, in any given month of the year. However, during the February through June period considered important for providing appropriate spawning and rearing conditions and downstream transport flows for various fish species, the upstream shift in the position of X2 under the cumulative condition would change 12% of the time (for 42 of the 350 months included in the analysis), relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-191.)

The model simulations conducted for the cumulative condition included conformance with X2 requirements set forth in the SWRCB Interim Water Quality Control Plan. Furthermore, Delta export-to-inflow ratios under the cumulative condition would not exceed the maximum export ratio as set by the SWRCB Interim Water Quality Control Plan. Although the cumulative condition would not cause X2 or Delta outflow standards to be violated, there would be a decrease in long-term average outflow and an upstream shift in the position of X2, relative to the existing condition. Such changes to the Delta system would be considered to result in potentially significant cumulative impacts to Delta fisheries. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-191.)

Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply. The proposed Specific Plan long-term surface water supply would not result in a significant contribution to Delta fisheries impacts under the cumulative condition. The proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute to increases of Delta outflow of 10% or more; in fact, the greatest single reduction, at 357 cfs (May 1937), which would result in only a 1.9% decrease relative to the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix G-5 to G-9). (RDEIR, p. 4.4-191.)

Furthermore, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute to future shifts in the long-term average position of X2 (Template Output H-429). Based on the 350 months modeled throughout the February though June period, the proposed long-term surface water supply would result in shifts in the position of X2 of up to 0.2 km in 13 months (Technical Appendix G-17 to G-21). Thus, the proposed long-term surface water supply would not contribute significantly to future reductions in Delta outflow or shifts in the position of X2 that would occur under the cumulative condition, and consequently, would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to potentially significant impacts to Delta fish species that occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term surface water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-191.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.4-191.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

E. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Standards of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines provides examples of impacts that could be considered significant for geology and soils. Based on these examples, Placer County has determined that a project could result in a significant impact if it would:

- Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault,
  - Strong seismic ground shaking,
  - Seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction, or
  - Landslides.
- Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.
- Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse.
- Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code, creating substantial risks to life or property.
- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.
- Result in the loss of, or loss of access to, mineral resources identified in a Mineral Resource Zone by DMG.
- Result in inundation by seiche, tsunami or mudflow.
The following impact analysis is based on a review of geologic and soils data prepared by DMG, USGS, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (Unified Soil Classification System and tables summarizing the Engineering Properties and the Physical and Chemical Properties of mapped soils) that is pertinent to the Specific Plan area. Seismic hazard impacts were analyzed according to published and unpublished data, and conclusions formed from the scientific community’s current understanding of local and regional features. The analysis is also based on review of aerial photographs, consultation with local agency representatives, review of agency files, and site visits where surface features were generally observed and mapped. Site-specific geotechnical reports have not yet been prepared for Specific Plan area properties. Per Placer County General Plan policy 8.A.2, a preliminary soils report will be required to accompany each future tentative map submittal. As specified in the Specific Plan and in mitigation measures below, a complete geotechnical report will be required to be submitted and accepted by the Public Works Department prior to the approval of improvement plans. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-11.)

**Impact 4.5-1:** Construction on soils with low strength, high shrink-swell potential, and corrosive characteristics could result in damage to structures, foundations, and roadways. This impact is considered *potentially significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.5-12.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Expansive soils increase in volume when they absorb water and decrease in volume when they are dry. The location and thickness of expansive clay is predictable by visual observation of desiccation cracks and by performing laboratory tests. Structural limitations are imposed by the high shrink-swell potential and limited load-bearing strength of Alamo, Cometa, and Fiddyment soils as indicated in tables prepared by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service summarizing the Engineering Properties and the Physical and Chemical Properties of the mapped soils. These soils are found throughout the Specific Plan area and cover the majority of the project site. Development of structures or roadways on expansive soils could result in soil volume changes, cracking, and deterioration of structures and roadway pavement. Based on the above-mentioned standards of significance, this is considered a *potentially significant impact.* Corrosive characteristics for concrete and uncoated steel are also reported for some of the above described soils. This condition can result in a *potentially significant impact* to foundation strength due to long-term exposure to corrosive soils. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-11 to 4.5-12.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.5-1a New development within the Specific Plan area shall submit a geotechnical report prepared by a California Registered Civil or Geotechnical Engineer to the Department of Public Works for review prior to improvement plans approval. The report shall meet all relevant requirements of the most recently adopted version of the Uniform Building Code and make recommendations on the following:

- Road, pavement, and parking area design,
- Structural foundations, including retaining wall design (if applicable),
- Grading practices,
- Erosion/winterization,
- Special problems discovered on-site (i.e., groundwater, corrosiveness, expansive/unstable soils), and
- Slope stability.

If the geotechnical report indicates the presence of critically expansive or other soils problems which, if not corrected, would lead to structural defects, a certification of completion of the requirements of the report will be required for subdivisions and other entitlements, prior to issuance of building permits. The certification may be completed on a lot-by-lot basis, tract basis, or other defined project basis. This shall also be noted in the covenants, conditions and restrictions and on the information sheet filed with the final subdivision map(s). It shall be the responsibility of the developer to provide for engineering inspection and certification that earthwork has been performed in conformity with recommendations contained in the report. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-12.)

4.5-1b For non-pad graded lots, prior to approval of improvement plans, a soil investigation of each lot in the subdivision produced by a California Registered Civil or Geotechnical Engineer shall be submitted to the Department of Public Works for review and approval (Sections 17953-17955 of the California Government Code). For pad-graded lots, prior to final acceptance of project improvements or consideration of early building permits, and after completion of pad grading for all lots, a soil investigation of each lot produced by a California Registered Civil or Geotechnical Engineer shall be submitted to the Department of Public Works for review and approval (Sections 17953-17955 of the Government Code).

The soil investigations shall include recommended corrective action to prevent structural damage to each proposed dwelling. In addition, any soil problems encountered on each specific lot, as well as the recommended corrective actions, shall be included in a Development Notebook. (RDEIR, pp. 4.5-12 to 4.5-13.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measures would reduce these soil impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-13.)
**Impact 4.5-2:** Potential ground shaking could damage structures during strong earthquakes generated along faults in the region. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.5-13.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Strong earthquakes generated along a fault system generally create ground shaking, which lessens with distance from the fault. In general, the area affected by ground shaking will depend upon the characteristics and magnitude of the earthquake. As determined by the USGS National Seismic Hazard Mapping Project, the horizontal peak ground acceleration in the Specific Plan area is estimated as follows: schools and hospitals and other essential service facilities subject to CCR Title 24, the Upper Bounds Event (UBE), 5% probability of occurrence in 50 years) - 0.15g; for other residential and commercial development, the Maximum Probable Event (MPE), 10% probability in 50 years) is 0.12g. The California Health and Safety Code requires that buildings be designed to resist stresses developed by earthquakes. The Uniform Building Code (California Building Code) classifies the Specific Plan area as being within seismic Zone 3. Minimum ground accelerations of 0.3g are used for structure design within this region. Accepted seismic design criteria are presented in the Uniform Building Code, Chapter 16. Because existing regulations provide adequate mitigation of structurally-related groundshaking hazard, this impact is considered to be *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.5-13.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation is required. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-13.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.5-3** There is a potential for surface ground rupture to occur. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.5-13.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The active fault closest to the Specific Plan area is located approximately 42 miles (70 kilometers) to the north. No active fault traces or Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones are...
reported beneath the Specific Plan area. Therefore, the probability of surface ground rupture is negligible. Thus, no impact associated with the potential for surface rupture in the Specific Plan area would occur. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-13.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation is required. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-13.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.5-4:** Construction activities resulting in ground disturbance (topographic alteration) could create a moderate potential for ground instability and erosion. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-14.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Earthwork/grading for structure placement, transportation system development, and overall site improvements would be required during development within the Specific Plan area. In general, grading activities, such as those anticipated during development, can create the potential for ground instability and erosion. Some gentle slopes are present in the Specific Plan area. The anticipated construction activities will likely include shallow cut and fill slopes for site buildings, and associated trench excavation. Subsurface conditions could be somewhat variable, ranging from competent to weak. According to information developed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, weaker soils can be expected in some near-surface zones, within a few feet of the ground surface. The potential for differential settlement exists where structures may be constructed across boundaries between the in-place hardpan, rock formations or dense soil, and engineered fill. (RDEIR, pp. 4.5-13 to 4.5-14.)

Although no areas of suspected or potential ground instability were reported or noted during research, construction activities involving ground disturbance could result in a small potential for ground instability. Erosion is anticipated to occur in disturbed soil areas. Soil stockpiles could be susceptible to erosion and soil loss. These impacts are considered to be potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-14.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.5-4a New development within the Specific Plan area shall prepare and submit to the Department of Public Works a preliminary grading and erosion control
A Notice of Intent (NOI) and supporting documents shall be submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) shall be prepared for inclusion with the construction plans and for regulation of construction activities. The SWPPP shall include Best Management Practices (BMPs) which address source reduction and sediment capture and retention. BMPs shall be developed in accordance with the California Stormwater Quality Association Stormwater Best Management Practices Handbook for Construction and New Development/Redevelopment (or other similar source).

Uncemented silty soils are prone to erosion. According to requirements, as set forth in Section 402 (p) of the Clean Water Act as amended in 1987, and as administered by the SWRCB, erosion control measures (appropriate Best Management Practices) shall be implemented during construction which conform to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, Storm Drain Standards, and local standards, consistent with Best Management Practices contained in the California Stormwater Quality Association Stormwater Best Management Practices Handbook for Construction and New Development/Redevelopment (or other similar source). (RDEIR, p. 4.5-14.)

The applicant shall prepare and submit improvement plans, specifications and cost estimates (per the requirements of Section II of the Land Development Manual [LDM] that are in effect at the time of submittal) to the Department of Public Works for review and approval for each new development phase within the Specific Plan. The plans shall show all conditions for each phase, as well as pertinent topographical features both on- and off-site. All existing and proposed utilities and easements, on-site and adjacent to the project, that could be affected by planned construction, shall be shown in the plans. All landscaping and irrigation facilities within sight distance areas at intersections, shall be included in the improvement plans. The applicant shall pay plan check and inspection fees. The cost of the above-noted landscape and irrigation facilities shall be included in the estimates used to determine these fees. It shall be the applicant’s responsibility to obtain all required agency signatures on the plans and to secure department approvals. If the Design/Site Review process and/or Design Review Committee review is required as a condition of approval for the project, said review process shall be completed prior to submittal of improvement plans. Record drawings shall be prepared and signed by a California Registered Civil Engineer at the applicant’s expense and shall be submitted to the Department of Public Works prior to acceptance by the County of site improvements. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-15.)

All proposed grading, drainage improvements, and vegetation and tree removal shall be shown on the improvement plans and all work shall conform to provisions if the Placer County Grading Ordinance (Ref. Article 15.48, formerly Chapter 29, Placer County
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Code) that are in effect at the time of submittal. No grading, clearing, or tree disturbance shall occur until the improvement plans are approved and all temporary construction fencing has been installed and inspected by a member of the Design Review Committee. All cut/fill slopes shall be at 2:1 (horizontal:vertical) unless a soils report supports a steeper slope and the Department of Public Works concurs with said recommendation.

The applicant shall revegetate all disturbed areas. Revegetation undertaken from April 1 to October 1 shall include regular watering to ensure adequate growth. A winterization plan shall be provided with project improvement plans. It is the applicant’s responsibility to assure proper installation and maintenance of erosion control/winterization during project construction. Where soil stockpiling or borrow areas are to remain for more than one construction season, proper erosion control measures shall be applied as specified in the improvement plans/grading plans. Erosion control shall be provided where roadside drainage is off of the pavement, to the satisfaction of the Department of Public Works.

A letter of credit or cash deposit shall be submitted to the Department of Public Works in the amount of 110% of an approved engineer’s estimate for winterization and permanent erosion control work prior to improvement plan approval to guarantee protection against erosion and improper grading practices. Upon the County’s acceptance of improvements, and satisfactory completion of a one-year maintenance period, unused portions of said deposit shall be refunded to the project applicant or authorized agent.

If, at any time during construction, a field review by County personnel indicates a significant deviation from the proposed grading shown on the improvement plans, specifically with regard to slope heights, slope ratios, erosion control, winterization, tree disturbance, and/or pad elevations and configurations, the plans shall be reviewed by the Design Review Committee/Department of Public Works for a determination of substantial conformance to the project approvals prior to any further work proceeding. Failure of the Design Review Committee/Department of Public Works to make a determination of substantial conformance may serve as grounds for appropriate punitive action by the appropriate hearing body, including the revocation of a site-specific project approval in extreme circumstances. In determining what constitutes appropriate punitive action in this context, the hearing body shall be guided by the penalty options set forth in Article 15.48 and Article 17.62 of the Placer County Code. (RDEIR, pp. 4.5-15 to 4.5-16.)

4.5-4e Stockpiling and/or vehicle staging areas shall be identified prior to any discretionary entitlement and shown on improvement plans and located as far as practical from existing dwellings and protected resources in the area. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-16.)

4.5-4f New development with ground disturbance exceeding one acre that is subject to construction stormwater quality permit requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program shall obtain such permit from the State Regional Water Quality Control Board (SRWQCB) and shall provide to the Department of Public...
Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measures will reduce the magnitude of topographic alteration impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-14.)

Off-Site Infrastructure

Impact 4.5-5: Construction activities related to off-site infrastructure resulting in ground disturbance (topographic alteration) could create a potential for ground instability and soil erosion. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-16.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Impacts related to ground disturbance that could result from trench/pipeline construction within the off-site utility corridors, roadway widening, or expansion of wastewater treatment plant-related facilities are similar to those for proposed utility improvements and construction within the Specific Plan area. Those impacts include earthwork/grading or topographic alteration, and soil erosion, which are addressed under Impact 4.5-4 and Mitigation Measures 4.5-4a-f. Although some of the specific soils to be affected and the nature of construction are not yet known, Mitigation Measures 4.5-4a-f can reduce any potentially significant effects to a less than significant level. However, some of the project infrastructure would be located in another jurisdiction and not subject to Placer County oversight. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-16.)

Trenching and pipeline construction are temporary in nature. Once the utility is installed the surface is typically returned to its original condition. Most off-site utility lines will be placed in already disturbed roadway easements. Further, any construction will be subject to NPDES requirements, including submission of a SWPP, as administered by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). In addition, any construction will be under the oversight of another public agency, and ultimate owner of the improvements (e.g., the Sacramento Suburban Water District, Placer County Water Agency, City of Roseville, and Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District). Each of these agencies has similar construction protocols to those administered by Placer County, and similar responsibilities and obligations under NPDES, and other provisions of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Based on these regulatory and institutional safeguards, any potentially significant geology and soils-related impacts that could occur within other jurisdictions from utility line and roadway construction would be less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.5-16 to 4.5-17.)
Although expansion of wastewater treatment plant-related facilities is permanent, any geology and soils-related impacts pertaining to expansion of the DCWWTP will be the same as those analyzed and described in the Roseville Regional Wastewater Treatment Service Area Master Plan EIR. Relevant impacts that were identified include Soil Disturbance, Erosion and Sedimentation, Topographic Alteration, Soil Instability and Seismic Hazards. These impacts were found to be less than significant with proposed mitigation. Mitigation measures included “Restore ground surface and topography” (Mitigation Measure 5-1), “Require soil stockpiling and disposal standards” (Mitigation Measure 5-3), “Prepare erosion and sedimentation control plan” (Mitigation Measure 5-5), and “Implement recommendations of geotechnical report” (Mitigation Measure 5-6). Additionally, the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant 2020 Master Plan EIR identified exposure to hazards from abandoned natural gas well plugs from the former Freeport gas field as relevant to topographic alteration. The EIR identified “Consultation of Division of Oil and Gas records prior to excavation for excavation depths greater than five feet below the surface” as the appropriate mitigation to reduce the impact to a less than significant level (for additional discussion of the two wastewater treatment plants, see Section 4.1 of the Revised Draft EIR). (RDEIR, p. 4.5-17.)

Because geology and soils mitigation measures have already been adopted by the City of Roseville and the SRCSD for wastewater treatment facility construction, and because those measures are similar and equivalent to those identified by Placer County for the Specific Plan area, potentially-significant geology and soils impacts related to expansion of wastewater treatment plant-related facilities are less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-17.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.5-5a Restore ground surface and topography. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-17.)

4.5-5b Require soil stockpiling and disposal standards. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-17.)

4.5-5c Prepare erosion and sedimentation control plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-17.)

4.5-5d Implement recommendations of geotechnical report. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-17.)

4.5-5e For the SRWTP, consult Division of Oil and Gas records prior to excavation, for excavation depths greater than five feet below the surface. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-18.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.5-4a-f above, and compliance with the following mitigation measures described in the Roseville Regional Wastewater Treatment Service Area Master EIR and the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant 2020 Master Plan EIR will reduce impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-17.)
Cumulative Impacts

Impact 4.5-6: Cumulative impacts from soil erosion/loss and off-site sedimentation could occur from this project and surrounding projects involving earthwork activities or topographic alteration. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-18.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Geology and soils impacts are considered for the most part to be effects that the environment could have on proposed development within the Specific Plan area, exposing people or structures to substantial adverse effects. Compliance with the requirements of the Uniform Building Code, which are designed to make individual structures safe, avoids the creation of additive effects amongst various development projects occurring within the surrounding region. The exception to this consideration would be potential soil erosion/loss and off-site sedimentation impacts related to earthwork and development. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-18.)

Mitigation Measure 4.5-4a-f includes procedures and actions designed to reduce the impacts from earthwork or topographic alteration related to the project to less than significant levels. Many of the procedures and actions described in Mitigation Measure 4.5-4a-f are statewide in their application, including requirements for SWPPs and compliance with similar NPDES programs. These programs are applicable throughout the surrounding region. The application and effectiveness of these programs when combined with Mitigation Measure 4.5-4a-f for the Specific Plan area would result in a less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., less than significant) impact from soil erosion, loss, and off-site sedimentation. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-18.)

Mitigation Measures:

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.5-4a-f above will reduce cumulative impacts from soil erosion/loss and off-site sedimentation to a less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., less than significant) level. (RDEIR, p. 4.5-18.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than cumulatively considerable.

F. ARCHAEOLOGICAL/PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Standards of Significance
Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), historical resources are recognized as a part of the environment (Public Resources Code Sections 21001(b), 21083.2, 21084(e), 21084.1). A “historical resource” includes, but is not limited to, any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that is historically or archaeologically significant, or important in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military or cultural annals of California (Public Resources Code Section 5021.1). (RDEIR, pp. 4.6-65 to 4.6-66.)

In 1992, the Public Resources Code was amended as it affects historical resources. The amendments included creation of the California Register of Historical Resources (Public Resources Code Sections 5020.4, 5024.1 and 5024.6). While the amendments became effective in 1993, it was not until January 1, 1998, that the implementing regulations for the California Register were officially adopted (Public Resources Code Section 4850 et seq.). (RDEIR, p. 4.6-66.)

The California Register is an authoritative listing and guide for state and local agencies and private groups and citizens in identifying historical resources. This listing and guide indicates which resources should be protected from substantial adverse change. The California Register includes historical resources that are listed automatically by virtue of their appearance on or eligibility for certain other lists of important resources. The Register includes historical resources that have been nominated by application and listed after public hearing. Also included are historical resources listed as a result of an evaluation by specific criteria and procedures adopted by the State Historical Resource Commission. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-66.)

The criteria used for determining the eligibility of a cultural resource for the California Register are similar to those developed by the National Park Service for the National Register of Historic Places. However, criteria of eligibility for the California Register were reworded to better reflect California history. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-66.)

Any building, site, structure, object or historic district meeting one or more of the following criteria may be eligible for listing in the California Register:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;

2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history;

3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values; or

4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

(RDEIR, p. 4.6-66.)
Eligibility for the California Register also depends on the integrity, or the survival of characteristics of the resource that existed during its period of significance. Eligible historic resources must not only meet one of the above criteria, but also they must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to convey the reasons for their importance, or retain the potential to yield significant scientific or historical information or specific data. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-66.)

Like the process of evaluating historical resources for National Register eligibility, California Register evaluations include the consideration of seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The evaluation of integrity must be judged with reference to the particular criterion or criteria under which a resource may be eligible for the California Register. However, the implementing regulations specifically caution that alterations of a historic resource over time may themselves have historical, cultural or architectural significance. (RDEIR, pp. 4.6-66 to 4.6-67.)

Most often, historical resources eligible for the California Register will be 50 years old or older. However, the new implementing regulations stipulate that “a resource less than fifty years old may be considered for listing in the California Register if it can be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand its historical importance.” (RDEIR, p. 4.6-67.)

Under criteria based on the State CEQA Guidelines, the project would be considered to have a significant impact on cultural resources if it would result in any of the following:

- A substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource that is either listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, or a local register of historic resources;

- A substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resource;

- Disturbance or destruction of unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature; or

- Disturbance of any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

(RDEIR, p. 4.6-67.)

CEQA provides that a project may cause a significant environmental effect where the project “may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” (Pub. Resources Code, Section 21084.1 [emphasis added]). CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 defines a “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” to mean “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired” (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5, subd. (b)(1) [emphasis added]). (RDEIR, p. 4.6-67.)

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5, subdivision (b)(2), defines “materially impaired” for purposes of the definition of “substantial adverse change...” as follows:
The significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project:

(A) Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; or

(B) Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to Section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of Section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or

(C) Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA.

(CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.6, subd.(b)(2).) (RDEIR, pp. 4.6-67 to 4.6-68.)

Section 21083.2 of the Public Resources Code addresses unique archaeological resources. “Unique archaeological resource” is defined as “an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets the following criteria:

(1) Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.

(2) Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.

(3) Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person. [Public Resources Code Section 21083.2 (g)]”

(RDEIR, p. 4.6-68.)

If it can be demonstrated that a project will cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require reasonable efforts to be made to permit any or all of these resources to be preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state. Examples of that treatment are described in the code. To the extent that unique archaeological resources are not preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state, mitigation measures shall be required as provided in the code. The code
also places limitations on the extent, cost and timing of mitigation measures that can be required by the lead agency. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-68.)

According to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064.5 and 15126, a project is considered to have significant impacts if it will disrupt or adversely affect a prehistoric or historic archaeological site or a property of historic or cultural significance to a community or ethnic or social group or a paleontological site. Based on this guideline, the proposed Specific Plan was considered to have a significant impact if it resulted in:

- Damage or destruction of any significant prehistoric or historic properties;
- Neglect of a property resulting in its deterioration or destruction; or
- Damage or destruction of any unrecorded archaeological sites or features.

(RDEIR, p. 4.6-68.)

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act defines an important cultural resource as one that is associated with important persons or events, or that embodies high artistic or architectural values, or that has scientific value (36 CFR 60.6). Where a cultural resource has not been evaluated for its importance, it is treated as potentially important until an evaluation can be done. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-69.)

**Surface Water Supply Standards of Significance.** Recently, the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) has coordinated with the SHPO and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA as part of its continuing effort to implement long-term flood control at Folsom Dam. This coordination has resulted in the development of a research design to guide future inventory, evaluation and data recovery, and/or protection of archaeological resources that could be affected by reoperation at Folsom Dam. This research design could be carried out when the water level in the reservoir has been sufficiently reduced for purposes of flood control. The research design calls for an enhanced inventory, site evaluation, and data collection or preservation at selected sites. Where there are many sites of the same type, evaluation and/or data recovery may be done on a representative sample of the sites, rather than all. Accordingly, much of the research, inventory, and other mitigation for potential cultural resource impacts at Folsom Reservoir have already been identified and committed. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-69.)

The impact indicators and significance thresholds used to evaluate impacts to cultural resources by off-site infrastructure (water supply) are presented in Table 4.6-1 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-69.)

**Impact 4.6-1:** Development of the Specific Plan Area could destroy or alter known historic or unique archaeological resources. This impact is considered potentially significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, 4.6-74.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the possible destruction or alternation of known historic or unique archaeological resources. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Using CEQA Guidelines and advisories to determine the significance of historical resources, six known unique archaeological sites (CA-PLA-948, CA-PLA-46, CA-PLA-47, CA-PLA-80, CA-PLA-82 and DR-5), one historic archaeological site (segment of CA-PLA-946-H) and two extant houses (6. Straight Road and 7. Straight Road) are considered eligible or potentially eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources within the Specific Plan area. Destruction or alteration of these sites is a potentially significant and unavoidable impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-74.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.6-1 Prior to any ground-disturbing activity within five hundred feet of historical resources and unique archaeological resources, archaeological surface inspections shall be completed to determine if each respective site still exists and, if so, archaeological test excavations shall be conducted to the extent necessary to determine if further mitigation is necessary. A representative of the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria shall be invited to participate in such surface inspections and to monitor any excavations determined to be necessary based on the surface inspections. If determined to be necessary, a data recovery plan, which makes provision for adequately recovering the scientifically consequential information from and about the archaeological resources, shall be prepared by a qualified professional archaeologist and adopted by the County prior to any excavation. Prior to adopting any such plan that addresses disturbance to any Native American cultural place or places, the County shall seek comments on a draft of the plan from a representative of the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria. The data recovery plan shall be deposited with the California Historical Resources Regional Information Center. To the extent that the plan includes information pertaining to Native American cultural places, such information shall remain confidential and not be released to the general public. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-74; FEIR Errata, pp. 4-5.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce this impact to unique archaeological sites to a less than significant level. However, the measure would not reduce the impact to historical resources to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-74.)
Development of the Specific Plan Area could destroy or alter unknown historical and/or unique archaeological resources. This impact is considered potentially significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-75.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the possible destruction or alternation of unknown historical and/or unique archaeological resources. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

It is possible that cultural resources other than those described, including human remains, buried structures and other artifacts, exist within the Specific Plan area. Destruction or alteration of such resources is a potentially significant and unavoidable impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-75.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.6-2a In the event of the accidental discovery or recognition of any human remains, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains, until a representative of the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria has been notified and compliance with the provisions of Section 15064.5 (e)(1) and (2) of the CEQA Guidelines has occurred. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-75; FEIR Errata, p. 3.)

4.6-2b If any artifacts or other indications of cultural resources 45 years old or older are found once ground-disturbing activities are underway, the find shall be immediately evaluated by a qualified archaeologist, and a representative of the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria shall be immediately notified. If the find is determined to be an historical or unique archaeological resource, contingency funding and a time allotment to allow for implementation of avoidance measures or appropriate mitigation shall be made available, as provided in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. Work may continue on other parts of the project site while historical or unique archaeological resource mitigation takes place. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-75; FEIR Errata, pp. 3-4.)

4.6-2c Prior to approval of any small lot tentative subdivision map, Design/Site Review Agreement for new construction, or issuance of demolition permits, for properties that have not been previously inspected by an archaeologist or previously inspected by an architectural historian, a qualified archaeologist and/or architectural historian, and a representative of the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria as appropriate, shall be retained to identify and evaluate any cultural resources, and determine if further mitigation, may be necessary, and recommend any such potential
mitigation to the County for its consideration. The County will assess the feasibility of any proposed mitigation (e.g., avoidance of the historical resource) and impose the mitigation where feasible in light of Specific Plan policies and land use assumptions. The necessity of inspection by an architectural historian includes any buildings potentially eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources, but for which the identification and evaluation process (the filling out of Primary, Building and Location record forms distributed by the California Office of Historic Preservation) has not been completed. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-75; FEIR Errata, pp. 4.)

4.6-2d An orange construction fencing shall be placed around the California Register-eligible sites located in open space, if construction, including trail and firebreak building, is conducted within one hundred feet of the archaeological resource. Placement of the fencing must be done in consultation with an archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards in prehistoric archaeology. (RDEIR, pp. 4.6-75 to 4.6-76.)

4.6-2e An archaeologist and (if available) a representative of the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria shall participate in the preconstruction meeting(s) to inform the participants of the sensitivity and location of any California Register-eligible sites in the vicinity of grading or construction. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-76; FEIR Errata, p. 4.)

4.6-2f Any California Register-eligible site located in the open space that will be within one hundred feet or closer to public access (e.g., road, trail or firebreak), public facility or private residence shall be enclosed with permanent fencing designed to help prevent trespass. Each enclosure shall be constructed with a locked gate. A sign at each enclosure shall explain site values, interpret site history (or prehistory), identify prohibited uses and warn of penalties for violations. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-76.)

4.6-2g To help insure the long-term preservation of those California Register-eligible archaeological resources located in the open space, the CC&Rs shall include a clause that prohibits the collecting, digging or removal of any stone, artifact or other prehistoric or historic object from the open space. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-76.)

4.6-2h If human remains are discovered, all work shall stop in the immediate vicinity of the find and the County Coroner must be notified, according to Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. If the remains are Native American, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which in turn will inform a most likely descendant. The descendant will then recommend to the landowner appropriate disposition of the remains and any grave goods. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-76.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce this impact to unique archaeological sites to a less than significant level. However, the measure will not reduce the
impact to historical resources to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-75.)

**Impact 4.6-3:** Development of the Specific Plan Area could destroy or alter unknown paleontological resources. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-76.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

It is possible for macrovertebrate fossil remains to be present at isolated localities, particularly within the Riverbank Formation. Resources recovered from the Sacramento County sites were mainly associated with fine-grained basin-type materials, which likely were paleowatering holes for large animals, now extinct, such as the American horse, camel or possibly mastodon. This impact is potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-76.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.6-3a **Should paleontological resources be identified at a particular site, the project manager shall cease operation until a qualified professional can provide an evaluation. Mitigation shall be conducted as follows:**

1. Identify and evaluate paleontologic resource by intense field survey where impacts are considered high;
2. Assess effects on identified sites;
3. Consult with the institutional/academic paleontologists conducting research investigations within the geological formations that are slated to be impacted;
4. Obtain comments from the researchers;
5. Comply with researchers’ recommendations to address any significant adverse effects where determined by the County to be feasible pursuant to Mitigation Measure 4.6-3b.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.6-76 to 4.6-77.)

4.6-3b **In considering any suggested mitigation proposed by the consulting paleontologist, County Planning Department Staff shall determine whether avoidance is necessary and feasible in light of factors such as the nature of the find, project design, costs, Specific Plan policies and land use assumptions, and other considerations. If avoidance is unnecessary or infeasible, other appropriate measures (e.g., data recovery) shall be instituted. Work may proceed on other parts of the project site while mitigation for paleontological resources is carried out.** (RDEIR, p. 4.6-77.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce this impact to a *less than significant level*. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-76.)

Off-Site Infrastructure

**Impact 4.6-4:** Implementation of the Riego/Baseline Road intersection improvements could adversely affect the Reclamation District 1000 Rural Historic Landscape. This impact is considered *less than significant*. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-77.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

As noted above, Reclamation District 1000 is a recognized historic landscape. The addition of improvements that would significantly modify this historic landscape, or add new elements to the landscape could alter the historic landscape district. However, because of its large size, it is doubtful that any impact to Reclamation District 1000 from intersection improvement would diminish its eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. Therefore, this is a *less than significant impact*. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-77.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-77.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.6-5:** Implementation of the Baseline Road widening project could adversely affect the historic archaeological site of “Eagle House,” an early inn. This impact is considered *potentially significant and unavoidable*. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-77.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the implementation of the Baseline Road widening project which could adversely affect the historic archaeological site of “Eagle House.” No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.
Explanation:

This historical archaeological site has not been identified in the field; its approximate location has been estimated from historic maps. If it exists, destruction or alteration of this building site, an historical resource, is a potentially significant and unavoidable impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-77.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.6-5 Prior to any ground disturbing or demolition work for intersection improvements, road widenings and utilities construction, an on-the-ground inspection shall be conducted of the areas outside existing public rights-of-way by a qualified archaeologist and/or architectural historian, as appropriate. A representative of the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria shall be invited to participate in such inspections, which will, at a minimum, include a field inspection, the recording on forms distributed by the California Office of Historic Preservation of any cultural resources 45 years old or older, an assessment of eligibility for the California Register of Historical Resources and qualification as a “unique archaeological resource,” and a technical report that follows California Office of Historic Preservation guidelines for contents and format. In the event that the report addresses impacts to any Native American cultural place or places, a representative of the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria shall be invited to review a draft of the report and to offer comments and suggestions regarding how to mitigate impacts to any such Native American cultural places. The report shall contain any feasible mitigation measures to be implemented by the applicant. In some cases, an updated records search by the appropriate information center of the California Historical Resources Information System may be necessary if the proposed routes change or if there is more than a year delay between the present study (2005) and said field inspection(s). To the extent that the report includes information pertaining to Native American cultural places, such information shall remain confidential and not be released to the general public. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-78; FEIR Errata, pp. 4-5.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the mitigation measure above would ensure that any undiscovered historic resources are properly inspected and recorded, but would not reduce historical resource impacts, to a less than significant level due to the potential for their destruction or degradation under circumstances where their preservation or protection would defeat or frustrate implementation of Specific Plan policies. The impact is, therefore, considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-77.)

Impact 4.6-6: Implementation of the Watt Avenue widening project could destroy or alter two unique archaeological sites and a portion of one historic cemetery. This impact is considered potentially significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-78.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the implementation of the Watt Avenue widening project which could destroy or alter two unique archaeological sites and a portion of one historic cemetery. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Using CEQA guidelines and advisories to determine the significance of cultural resources, two unique archaeological sites (CA-PLA-47 and CA-PLA-69) and one historic cemetery (Union Cemetery) are eligible or potentially eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources. However, archaeological site, CA-PLA-47, has undergone data recovery and if all necessary field work is completed at this site and the scientifically consequential information has been gathered, then under CEQA statutes and guidelines, the site is no longer eligible for the California Register under criterion 4 (Information Potential). Destruction or alteration of unique archaeological sites is a potentially significant impact. Alteration of the Union Cemetery frontage is a potentially significant and unavoidable impact. In addition, road widening could affect burial sites located within the road widening area and reinterrment could be necessary. Because the Union Cemetery is still active, any affected burials could be relocated to another part of the Cemetery, or to other available sites owned by Roseville Public Cemetery District. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-78.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.6-6 Placer County shall coordinate with Roseville Public Cemetery District to facilitate the reinterrment of any burials affected by the Watt Avenue road widening prior to any physical disturbance of Cemetery frontage. Project applicants shall fully compensate the Cemetery and County for any costs incurred during the grave site testing and reinterrment process. (RDEIR, pp. 4.6-78 to 4.6-79.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce impacts to unique archaeological sites to a less than significant level. However, in light of the legal principles governing the assessment of effects on historical resources, as explained in the “Overview” portion of Section 4.6 of the Revised Draft EIR, the measure would not reduce the impact to historical resources (Union Cemetery) to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. The following mitigation measure is intended to address the reinterrment of burials within the proposed road widening. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-78.)

Impact 4.6-7: Implementation of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply line could alter or destroy portions of two historic sites and one historic district.
This impact is considered **potentially significant and unavoidable.**
(RDEIR, p. 4.6-79.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the implementation of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply line which could alter or destroy portions of two historic sites and one historic district. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

Using CEQA guidelines and advisories to determine the significance of historical resources, two historic sites [CA-SAC-567-H (the unpaved portion of Sorrento Road) and CA-SAC-463-H (the East Main Drainage Canal and Levee)] and one historic district (Reclamation District 1000 Rural Historic Landscape) are eligible for the California Register. Because of their large size, it is doubtful that any impact to Reclamation District 1000 and the East Main Drainage Canal and Levee would diminish their eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. However, the impact to the historic unpaved portion of Sorrento Road could affect the potential eligibility of that cultural resource for the California Register. Further, these resources are within the jurisdictions of Sacramento and Sutter counties and Placer County cannot compel the adoption of mitigation measures under such circumstances. Destruction or alteration of the Sorrento Road site is a **potentially significant and unavoidable impact.** (RDEIR, p. 4.6-79.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

Even if Placer County did have jurisdiction over the affected resource, implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would not reduce the impact to historical resources to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain **significant and unavoidable.** (RDEIR, p. 4.6-79.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

The impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

**Impact 4.6-8:**

Implementation of a sewer force main along Watt Avenue and PFE Road could alter or destroy portions of three unique archaeological sites and one historic cemetery. This impact is considered **potentially significant and unavoidable.** (RDIE, p. 4.6-79.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the implementation of a sewer force main along Watt Avenue and PFE Road which could alter or destroy portions of three unique archaeological sites and one historic cemetery. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Using CEQA guidelines and advisories to determine the significance of historical resources, three unique archaeological sites (CA-PLA-47, CA-PLA-69 and CA-PLA-67) and the historic Union Cemetery are potentially eligible for the California Register. All four of these sites may be affected by the sewer force main project. However, CA-PLA-47 has undergone data recovery and may no longer be eligible for the California Register. Destruction or alteration of these sites is a potentially significant and unavoidable impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-79.)

Mitigation Measures:

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce the impact to unique archaeological sites to a less than significant level. However, the measure will not reduce the impact to historical resources to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-79.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

Impact 4.6-9: Implementation of the alternative sewer force main along Cook-Riolo Road and Dry Creek could alter or destroy portions of four unique archaeological sites. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-79.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The following four unique archaeological sites may be damaged by the Alternative Force Main project: CA-PLA-42, CA-PLA-43, CA-PLA-71 and CA-PLA-72. Destruction or alteration of these sites is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-80.)
Mitigation Measures:

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce unique cultural resource impacts related to the alternative sewer force main to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-80.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant.

Impact 4.6-10: Implementation of Sewer Line (SRCSD) Alternative “A” could alter or destroy a portion of two historic sites. This impact is considered potentially significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-80.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the implementation of Sewer Line (SRCSD) Alternative “A” which could alter or destroy a portion of two historic sites. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Using CEQA guidelines and advisories to determine the significance of historical resources, two historic archaeological sites (CA-PLA-946-H, the Sacramento Northern Railroad grade along the west boundaries of the Specific Plan area between the south boundary of the Specific Plan area and one hundred feet south of Baseline Road, and CA-SAC-567-H, the unpaved historic portion of Sorrento Road) are potentially eligible for the California Register. Destruction or alteration of these sites is a potentially significant and unavoidable impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-80.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.6-10 If the Off-Site Gravity Sewer Alternative “A” is selected, then disturbance of the California Register-eligible segment of CA-PLA-946-H, the Sacramento Northern Railroad grade, shall be avoided by using jack and bore construction techniques under the railroad grade for placement of the sewer line. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-80.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measure in conjunction with Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce impacts to the Sacramento Northern Railroad grade to a less than significant level. In addition implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would assist in reducing impacts to Sorrento Road, however, it would not reduce Sorrento Road impacts to a less than significant level. Further, the resource is within the jurisdictions of Sacramento County and Placer County cannot compel the
adoption of mitigation measures under such circumstances. Therefore, the impact must remain
*significant and unavoidable.* (RDEIR, p. 4.6-80.)

**Impact 4.6-11:** Implementation of the Watt Avenue to DCWWTP sewer connection project could damage or destroy several unique archaeological sites. This impact is considered *potentially significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.6-80.)

**Finding:**
Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**
Using CEQA guidelines and advisories to determine the significance of cultural resources, the following unique archaeological sites are potentially eligible for the California Register: CA-PLA-47 (the excavations have been completed, but a report of the excavations has not yet been produced); CA-PLA-69; CA-PLA-76; CA-PLA-81; CA-PLA-77; CA-PLA-42; CA-PLA-43; CA-PLA-71; CA-PLA-72. Destruction or alteration of these sites is a *potentially significant impact.* (RDEIR, p. 4.6-80.)

**Mitigation Measures:**
Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce unique archaeological resource impacts associated with the proposed sewer connection project to a *less than significant level.* (RDEIR, p. 4.6-81.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**
Less than significant.

**Impact 4.6-12:** Implementation of the DCWWTP Off-Site Recycled Water Line project could damage or destroy portions of one unique archaeological site and the location of two isolated finds. This impact is considered *potentially significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.6-82.)

**Finding:**
Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**
Using CEQA guidelines and advisories to determine the significance of cultural resources, the following locations of two isolates, DR-5 and DR-6, and the unique archaeological site, CA-PLA-75 are potentially eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources. Destruction or alteration of the site and finds is a *potentially significant impact.* (RDEIR, p. 4.6-81.)
Mitigation Measures:

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce off-site cultural resource impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-81.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant.

Impact 4.6-13: Expansion of the DCWWTP and SRWTP may affect cultural resources. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-81.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

As yet undefined improvements may be necessary at one or both of the two wastewater treatment plants to accommodate future wastewater flows. Both sites are adequate in size and any improvements would be undertaken in conjunction with and adjacent to existing plant infrastructure. The Revised Draft EIR relies on information contained in the Roseville Regional Wastewater Treatment Service Area Master Plan Environmental Impact Report, which was certified by the City of Roseville City Council on November 16, 1996 (SCH #93092079) for plant site cultural resources information for DCWWTP. Analysis with regard to SRWTP facilities relies on the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant 2020 Master Plan Environmental Impact Report (SCH #2002052004). (RDEIR, p. 4.6-81.)

Records searches and field surveys were conducted for the Roseville Master Plan EIR, but no resources were reported as occurring within the DCWWTP plant site. Impacts to resources were found to be potentially significant, but capable of being mitigated to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-81.)

Records searches and field surveys were conducted for the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Master Plan EIR, but no resources were reported as occurring within the SRWTP plant site. Impacts to resources were found to be potentially significant, but capable of being mitigated to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-81.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.6-13a Halt work if cultural resources are discovered. If concentrations of prehistoric or historic period cultural materials are encountered, all work in the vicinity of the find(s)
should halt until a qualified archaeologist is retained, evaluates the material, and makes recommendations for further action. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-82.)

4.6-13b Halt work if human remains are encountered. If human remains are encountered, all work should stop in the vicinity of the bone and the County Coroner should be notified immediately. The procedures outlined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) should be followed, if human burials are judged to be Native American origin. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-82.)

4.6-13c Should any cultural resources, such as structural features, unusual amounts of bone, shell, artifacts, human remains, or architectural remains be encountered during any development activities, work shall be suspended and the Department of Environmental Review and Assessment (DERA) shall be immediately notified. At that time, DERA shall coordinate any necessary investigation of the find with appropriate specialists as needed. The SRCSD shall be required to implement any mitigation deemed necessary by DERA for the protection of cultural resources. In the event of discovery of human remains, all work is to stop and the County Coroner shall be immediately notified pursuant to Section 5097.97 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 70950.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. If the remains are determined to be Native American, guidelines of the Native American Heritage Commission shall be adhered to in the treatment and disposition of the remains. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-82.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Mitigation Measures 4.6-13a and 4.6-13b, appearing in the Roseville Regional Wastewater Treatment Service Area Master Plan Environmental Impact Report, have been adopted by the City of Roseville. Mitigation Measure 4.6-13c, appearing in the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant 2020 Master Plan Environmental Impact Report, has been adopted by Sacramento County. All three mitigation measures and are incorporated herein, and will reduce any impacts to cultural resources related to plant expansion to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, pp. 4.6-81 to 4.6-82.)

Impact 4.6-14: Impacts to undiscovered cultural resources may occur in unsurveyed areas. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-82.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the Project’s impacts to undiscovered cultural resources in unsurveyed areas. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.
Explanation:

Although a number of off-site infrastructure sites and corridors were surveyed for the Specific Plan project, not all areas were accessible to project proponents. Several of those properties have been described during discussion of the above impacts. In addition, certain off-site infrastructure has not yet been defined or precisely located, such as the PGWWTP recycled water line. Impacts to unique archaeological resources in areas where field surveys have not been performed are potentially significant. Impacts to historic resources are potentially significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-82.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.6-14 Prior to any ground disturbing or demolition work for intersection improvements, road widenings and utilities construction, an updated records search through the California Historical Resources Information System shall be performed and on-the-ground inspection will be conducted by a qualified archaeologist and/or architectural historian, as appropriate. Such inspections will at a minimum include a field inspection, the recording on forms distributed by the California Office of Historic Preservation of any cultural resources 45 years old or older, an assessment of eligibility for the California Register of Historical Resources and qualification as a “unique archaeological resource,” and a technical report that follows California Office of Historic Preservation guidelines for contents and format. The report shall contain any feasible mitigation measures to be implemented by the applicant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.6-82 to 4.6-83.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Potentially significant and unavoidable.

Impact 4.6-15: The off-site infrastructure areas could affect water surface elevations at Shasta and Trinity Reservoirs. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-83.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The modeling results indicate that under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, there would be no increase in maximum water surface elevations at Shasta or Trinity reservoirs during each month of the 70-year simulation period, relative to the existing condition. With regard to maximum drawdown, the minimum end-of-month water surface elevation would either remain unchanged, or be reduced by a maximum of up to one foot msl at either reservoir under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, relative to the existing condition (Template Output...
Thus, there would be no increase in exposure or inundation of cultural resources within the drawdown zone relative to the existing condition. Consequently, impacts to cultural resources at Shasta and Trinity reservoirs resulting from changes in maximum and minimum water levels would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-83.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-83.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant.

**Impact 4.6-16:** The off-site infrastructure areas could affect flows of the upper and lower Sacramento River/Delta. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-83.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, over the 70-year period, the average maximum and minimum monthly mean flows on the Sacramento River from Keswick Reservoir would remain unchanged, except for the months of September and June, when they would be reduced negligibly (i.e., by up to 0.3% and 0.1%, respectively) relative to the existing condition. Similarly, at Freeport, the average maximum and minimum monthly mean flows would be reduced negligibly (i.e., by up to 0.3% or 24 cfs) relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-80, B-81, B-84, and B-85). These flow results indicate that at these very small flow changes, no new areas of the riverbank would be inundated or exposed, relative to the existing condition. Therefore, impacts to cultural resources along the upper and lower Sacramento River from changes in river flows would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-83.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-84.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant.

**Impact 4.6-17:** The off-site infrastructure areas could affect water surface elevation at Folsom Reservoir. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-84.)
Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The modeling results indicate that, under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, there would be no increase in maximum elevations at Folsom Reservoir during each month of the 70-year simulation period, relative to the existing condition. With regard to maximum drawdown, the minimum end-of-month water surface elevation would be reduced or increased by up to one-foot msl under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-65). Such changes are immeasurable and considered negligible. Thus, since there would be no substantial change in minimum or maximum water surface elevation, impacts to cultural resources at Folsom Reservoir resulting from changes in maximum and minimum water levels would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-84.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-834)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant.

Impact 4.6-18: The off-site infrastructure areas could affect flows of the lower American River. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-88.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

For the lower American River, the maximum and minimum monthly mean flows over the 70-year simulation were compared between the existing condition and the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply. In order to estimate the magnitude and frequency of bank exposure and bank inundation along the lower American River, two locations were assessed: Nimbus Dam and the river mouth (confluence with the Sacramento River). (RDEIR, p. 4.6-84.)

A stage/discharge relationship has not been developed for the entire reach of the lower American River. For this reason, it is difficult to quantify precisely the potential for exposure of inundation of cultural resources along the banks of the lower American River. Intuitively, higher water levels would be less than significant.
surface elevation would occur under higher flows and lower water elevations under lower flows. A comparison of flows under the existing condition and the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply provides an estimate of relative changes in river stage that could result. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-84.)

No significant sites are expected to have survived within the riverbed itself near Nimbus Dam. Lower flows, therefore, would not expose previously submerged (and intact) cultural resources. It is possible that historic-era (post 1869) shipwrecks lie beneath the silty river bottom near the mouth, and that very low river flows could expose these resources. However, the magnitude of the changes predicted under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply is so small that such occurrences are highly unlikely (Template Output B-79). Also, known resources along the riverbanks (two historic levees, a portion of the Natomas East Main Drainage Canal and prehistoric mound CA-SAC-26) lie outside the present river channel, and decreases in river flows would have no impact on these resources. Therefore, lower flows are not a concern with regard to cultural resources. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-84.)

The proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in mean river flows downstream of Nimbus Dam at the mouth that would be virtually identical, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-78). Therefore, there would be no increase in inundation under higher flows, and, accordingly, no impacts to cultural resources along the American River from changes in river flows. Thus, impacts to cultural resources downstream of Nimbus Dam would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-85.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-85.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact 4.6-19: The proposed Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative impacts on historic or prehistoric resources. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-85.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the cumulative impacts on historic or prehistoric resources. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.
Explanation:

The project in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects would increase the density of development in the area and could further threaten significant cultural resources in the vicinity. Therefore, this cumulative impact is considered **potentially significant**. Professional archaeologists generally recognize that population growth increases the probability for vandalism and other purposeful as well as inadvertent acts that destroy significant archaeological resources. However, the degree of probability is unknown as such cumulative impacts, if any, would be difficult to measure. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-85.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.6-1, 4.6-2a-h, 4.6-3a-b, 4.6-4, and 4.6-10 would reduce impacts, but not to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact is **significant, unavoidable, and cumulatively considerable**. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-85.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

There is no feasible mitigation for the indirect cumulative impacts related to an increased population in Placer County. Such indirect cumulative impacts would be **significant and unavoidable** and the project’s contribution, based on the project’s size and the number of resources encountered, would be **cumulatively considerable**.

**Impact 4.6-20:** The off-site infrastructure areas could be affected by changes in flows in the lower American River, Sacramento River, and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and changes in water surface elevation at Shasta, Trinity and Folsom Reservoirs. This impact is considered **less than significant**. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-86.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The *American River Basin Cumulative Report* evaluated the potential for future impacts to cultural resources associated with the lower American River, Sacramento River, Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, and Folsom, Shasta and Trinity reservoirs. The results of this analysis indicated there would be **no potentially significant cumulative impacts** on lower American River flows, Folsom Reservoir elevation, Trinity Reservoir elevation, the upper and lower Sacramento River, and the Delta. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-86.)

The Cumulative Report, did, however, identify potentially significant cumulative impacts to cultural resources associated with Shasta Reservoir elevation. Under the cumulative condition, there would not be significant increases in maximum monthly water surface reservoir elevation,
relative to the existing condition, throughout the 70-year period of simulation. However, with regard to maximum drawdown, a comparison of the minimum end-of-month water surface elevations between the cumulative and existing conditions indicates that the minimum water surface elevation for each month would be from 8 to 45 feet msl lower, relative to the existing condition. This could result in increased exposure of cultural resources and represents a potentially significant cumulative impact to cultural resources at Shasta Reservoir. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-86.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Water Supply.** The proposed Specific Plan long-term water supply would not contribute to the reductions in minimum water surface reservoir elevation that would occur under the cumulative condition in any month of the year. In fact, under the proposed long-term water supply, there would be increases of up to one foot msl in the minimum and average end of the month elevation at Shasta Reservoir, relative to the cumulative condition (Template Output H-66). In 836 of the 840 months modeled, Shasta Reservoir end of the month elevation would remain equivalent to or greater than those elevations under the cumulative condition (Technical Appendix G-181 to G-192). Therefore, the proposed long-term water supply would not contribute significantly to increases in the exposure of cultural resources at Shasta Reservoir, and hence, would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future significant impacts to Shasta Reservoir cultural resources. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.6-86 to 4.6-87.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.6-87.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant.

**G. TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION**

**Standards of Significance**

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a project will have a significant effect on the environment if it will cause a substantial increase in traffic in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system. For this analysis, Levels of Service will be used as the basis for determining significant impacts. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-29.)

Potential significant impacts associated with traffic have been evaluated using the following specific criteria:

- In unincorporated Placer County outside of the Specific Plan area, the Specific Plan would increase congestion on County roadway segments and/or at County intersections to the extent
that one or more roadway or intersections would deteriorate from LOS “C” or better to levels below LOS “C,” or from LOS “D” within one-half mile of state highways to below LOS “D”, or would increase congestion by more than 5% on a roadway or at an intersection already operating at an unacceptable Level of Service.

- Within the Specific Plan area (including adjacent roadways and intersections), the Specific Plan would cause a roadway or intersection to operate at LOS “E” or “F”, or would increase congestion by more than 5% on a roadway or at an intersection already operating at LOS “E” or “F”.

- In Roseville, the Specific Plan would increase congestion to the extent that one or more signalized intersections previously identified in Roseville’s CIP as functioning at LOS “C” or better (volume-to-capacity [V/C] ratio of 0.81 or better) would deteriorate to LOS “D” or worse (V/C ratio of 0.82 or worse); or, at a signalized intersection previously identified in Roseville’s CIP as functioning at LOS “D” or “E” conditions, the increased congestion causes operations to deteriorate to a worse standard level. This criterion requires an analysis based on the City of Roseville’s buildout development forecasts.

- In Roseville, the Specific Plan would increase congestion to the extent that the number of signalized intersections operating at LOS “C” or better conditions would be reduced to less than 70% of the total number of signalized intersections in the city. This criterion requires an analysis based on the City of Roseville’s buildout development forecasts.

- In Sacramento County, the Specific Plan would increase congestion to the extent that one or more intersections would deteriorate from LOS “E” or better to LOS “F”. For facilities that are or will be (cumulative condition) operating at unacceptable Levels of Service without the project, an impact is considered significant if increased congestion due to the Specific Plan would:
  - Increase the average delay at one or more unsignalized intersections by more than five seconds, or
  - Increase the V/C ratio by 0.05 or more on a roadway or at one or more signalized intersections.

- In Sutter County, the Specific Plan would increase congestion to the extent that intersection operations would deteriorate to levels below Sutter County’s LOS “D” standard.

- The Specific Plan would increase congestion to the extent that operations on a state highway would deteriorate to levels below those identified in Caltrans’ Transportation Concept Report (TCR). The TCRs for Hwy 65, Hwy 70/99 and I-80 indicate that these state highways have a LOS “E” standard.

- Planned transit services do not meet the additional transit demand generated by the Specific Plan, which includes helping the County meet its Level of Service standard, transportation systems management standards and air quality goals.
• Planned bicycle facilities do not provide adequate capacity for the additional bicycle trips generated by the Specific Plan, and the policies and guidelines of Placer County’s *Bikeway Master Plan*. 

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-29 to 4.7-30.)

**Construction Impacts**

**Impact 4.7-1:** Construction of the proposed Specific Plan’s on-site infrastructure and buildings would increase traffic volumes in the vicinity of the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered *potentially significant*. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-34.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

The on-site construction within the Specific Plan area is expected to last for approximately 20 to 25 years, subject to economic conditions. The maximum number of construction workers in the Specific Plan area on any given day is estimated to be 500. During this peak construction period, there would be about 1,500 daily vehicle trips generated by construction workers, plus about 50 vehicles (mostly trucks) per day delivering materials to the Specific Plan area. Site access during construction could be from a variety of locations, including Watt Avenue and Baseline Road. In some cases, the concentration of construction traffic could cause temporary delays in traffic flow. This is considered a *potentially significant impact*. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-34.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.7-1 Prepare and implement construction traffic management plans for on-site and off-site construction activities for all development projects, including coordination with appropriate agencies, and implement a community relations program during construction period. The purpose of the construction traffic management plan is to minimize adverse Level of Service or neighborhood traffic impacts during the various phases of construction. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-35.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a *less than significant level*. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-35.)
**Impact 4.7-2:** The proposed Specific Plan would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in unincorporated Placer County. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-35.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

As discussed in the Revised Draft EIR, the analysis of Existing Plus Project conditions assumed that all the internal roadways to the proposed Specific Plan area would be fully implemented, including the widening of Baseline Road and Watt Avenue to six lanes. No other off-site improvements were assumed. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-35.)

It should be noted that the new roadways in the Specific Plan area would provide new travel routes for existing traffic and change some travel patterns. For example, the extension of Dyer Lane from Watt Avenue to the northeast to connect to Baseline Road would divert some existing traffic from Watt Avenue north of Dyer Lane and from Baseline Road east of Watt Avenue. The new roadways in the Specific Plan would also divert some existing traffic from portions of PFE Road and Walerga Road. These traffic diversions would offset some of the increase in traffic from the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-36.)

It should also be noted that the traffic volume forecasts are not based on a simple layering or adding of assumed project-generated traffic volumes onto existing traffic counts. Rather, the County’s Travel Demand Model is used to predict how travel patterns would change if the Specific Plan land uses are added to existing land uses. The model redistributes trips and can cause traffic to decrease at some locations fairly distant from the Specific Plan area. The travel model also accounts for traffic congestion and can divert some trips to less congested roadways based on travel times between origins and destinations. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-36.)

A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for the unincorporated Placer County roadways is presented in Revised Table 4.7-16. This analysis indicates that full development of the Specific Plan under existing conditions would cause impacts on the following Placer County roadway segment:

a. **Level of Service on the segment of Walerga Road from Baseline Road to PFE Road would remain LOS “D” but the proposed project would increase the traffic volume and volume-to-capacity ratio on this segment.**

   (RDEIR, p. 4.7-36; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-4.)

This is considered a **significant impact.** (RDEIR, p. 4.7-36.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.7-2a  Developers of property within the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area shall be responsible for the project’s fair share of all feasible physical improvements necessary and available to reduce the severity of the project’s significant transportation-related impacts, as identified in this traffic analysis, consistent with the policies and exceptions set forth in the Transportation and Circulation Element of the 1994 Placer County General Plan as amended. The project’s contribution toward such improvements, which the County recognizes will not be sufficient to mitigate all transportation-related impacts to less than significant levels, may take any, or some combination, of the following forms:

1. Construction of roads and related facilities within and adjacent to the boundaries of the Specific Plan area, which may be subject to fee credits and/or reimbursement, coordinated by the County, from other fee-paying development projects with respect to roads or other facilities that would also serve fee-paying development projects other than Placer Vineyards;

2. Construction of roads and/or road improvements or other transportation facilities outside the boundaries of the Specific Plan area but within unincorporated Placer County, subject in some instances to future reimbursement, coordinated by the County, from other fee-paying development projects where the roads or improvements at issue would also serve fee-paying development projects other than Placer Vineyards;

3. The payment of impact fees to Placer County in amounts that constitute the Specific Plan’s fair share contributions to the construction of transportation facilities to be built or improved within unincorporated Placer County, consistent with the County’s CIP;

4. The payment of impact fees to the South Placer Regional Transportation Authority (SPRTA) in amounts that constitute the Project’s fair share contribution to the construction of transportation facilities funded through fees collected by the SPRTA for Tier 1 and/or Tier 2 projects;

5. The payment of other adopted regional impact fees that would provide improvements to roadways, intersections and/or interchanges that are affected by multiple jurisdictions (e.g., Walerga/Fiddyment/Baseline);

6. The payment of impact fees to Placer County in amounts that constitute the Specific Plan’s fair share contributions to the construction of transportation facilities and/or improvements within the City of Roseville, Sacramento County and/or Sutter County needed in whole or in part because of the Specific Plan, to be made available to the City of Roseville, Sacramento County, and/or Sutter County, if and when those jurisdictions and Placer County enter into an enforceable agreement consistent with Placer County General Plan Policy.
3.A.15(c). At the time of issuance of building permits for individual development projects within the Specific Plan area, the County shall collect fair share fee payments for improvements or facilities addressed by its CIP as it exists at that time;

7. Developers of property within the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area shall pay impact fees to Placer County in amounts that constitute the Specific Plan’s fair share contributions to the construction of transportation facilities and/or improvements on federal or State highways or freeways needed in part because of the Specific Plan, to be made available to Caltrans if and when Caltrans and Placer County enter into an enforceable agreement consistent with State law and Placer County General Plan Policy 3.A.15; and

8. In pursuing a single agreement or multiple agreements with the City of Roseville, Sacramento County, Sutter County, and Caltrans, Placer County shall negotiate in good faith with these other jurisdictions to enter into fair and reasonable arrangements with the intention of achieving, within a reasonable time period after approval of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, commitments for the provision of adequate fair share mitigation payments from the Specific Plan for its out-of-jurisdiction traffic impacts and its impacts on federal and State freeways and highways.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-37 to 4.7-39; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-6 to 4.7-7.)

Consistent with the mitigation measures above, as part of Development Agreement negotiations, Placer County is currently in the process of working with the City of Roseville and the City of Lincoln to implement a program whereby new development projects within southwestern Placer County will each pay a traffic fee to fund certain major regional traffic infrastructure projects that provide relief for traffic congestion to Placer County. The applicant may satisfy part, or all, of its regional traffic mitigation obligations, set forth in the mitigation measures above, by paying its fair share fees into a comprehensive region-wide fee program. Since the adoption of such a region-wide fee program is beyond the authority of Placer County, there is no guarantee that such a program would be established.

4.7-2b Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the widening of Walerga Road to four lanes from Baseline Road to PFE Road to provide LOS “A” (V/C 0.43). (RDEIR, p. 4.7-39.)

As shown in Table 4.7-16 of the Revised Draft EIR, Walerga Road from Baseline Road to PFE Road currently operates at LOS “D”, which does not meet the County’s Level of Service standard. The proposed Specific Plan would exacerbate this condition. The widening of Walerga Road to four lanes would improve its capacity to acceptable levels under existing conditions. The County plans to construct this improvement in order to meet increased future traffic levels, and collects fees to fund this and other improvements identified in the County’s CIP, regardless of whether the project is constructed. Because this improvement is needed to address existing and future traffic conditions, regardless of whether the proposed project is
developed, the project would be required to fund only its fair share of the improvement, either through the fee programs described above, or by constructing the improvement and being reimbursed for the portion that exceeds the project’s fair share. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-39.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to a *less than significant* level. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-37.)

**Impact 4.7-3:** Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County. This impact is considered *significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-39.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

The proposed Specific Plan provides typical cross-sections for the roadways within the Specific Plan area. Additional right-of-way is typically provided near major intersections on arterial and collector roadways to accommodate additional turn lanes. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-39.)

A planning level signal warrant analysis was conducted for the conditions under Existing Plus Project conditions to define the locations where traffic signals should be assumed. This analysis indicates that the following intersections within the Specific Plan area should be signalized:

- Locust Road and Baseline Road
- Brewer Road and Baseline Road
- Palladay Road and Baseline Road
- 16th Street and Baseline Road
- 14th Street and Baseline Road
- 12th Street and Baseline Road
- 11th Street and Baseline Road
- Dyer Lane and Baseline Road
- Watt Avenue and A Street
- Watt Avenue and Town Center Drive
- Watt Avenue and Oak Street
- 16th Street and Dyer Lane
- Watt Avenue and Dyer Lane
- Watt Avenue and PFE Road

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-39 to 4.7-40.)
In addition to the above intersections, which would meet traffic signal warrants, the following intersections are proposed to be signalized in the Specific Plan:

- Dyer Lane and A Street (east and west)
- Dyer Lane and Palladay Road
- Dyer Lane and 11th Street
- Palladay Road and A Street
- 16th Street and A Street
- 14th Street and A Street
- 12th Street and A Street
- Dyer Lane and West Town Center Drive
- Dyer Lane and East Town Center Drive
- 18th Street and Dyer Lane
- Tanwood Avenue and Dyer Lane

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-40.)

These intersections were analyzed as stop-sign controlled intersections even though the Specific Plan calls for traffic signals, because traffic signals were not warranted under Existing Plus Project conditions. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-40.)

Figure 4.7-4 in the Revised Draft EIR shows the key study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County. Tables 4.7-17 and 4.7-17A present the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under Existing Plus Project conditions. The traffic volumes and existing lane geometry at each intersection in Table 4.7-17 are shown in Appendix I. This analysis indicates that development of the Specific Plan under existing conditions would cause impacts at the following intersections:

a. **Level of Service at the intersection of Baseline Road and Fiddyment Road/Walerga Road** would degrade from LOS “D” (observed LOS “F”) to LOS “F” in both the a.m. and p.m. peak hour.

b. **Level of Service at the intersection of Walerga Road and PFE Road** would operate at LOS “F” and the V/C would increase by more than 5% in the a.m. peak hour, and degrade from LOS “E” to LOS “F” in the p.m. peak hour.

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-40; SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-2.)

This is considered *a significant impact.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-41; SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-2.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.7-3a *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-42.)

4.7-3b *Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following improvements:*
i. Construct a second through lane on the southbound approach, a right turn lane to the eastbound approach and construct a second left turn lane on both the eastbound and westbound approaches to improve the intersection of Fiddyment Road and Baseline Road to LOS “C” (V/C 0.80) in the p.m. peak hour.

ii. Convert the southbound right turn lane into a free right turn lane, to improve the intersection of Fiddyment Road and Baseline Road to LOS “D” (V/C 0.87) in the a.m. peak hour.

iii. Construct a second through lane on both the northbound and southbound approaches, to improve the intersection of Walerga Road and PFE Road to LOS “B” (V/C 0.66) in the a.m. peak hour and LOS “D” (V/C 0.80) in the p.m. peak hour.

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-42; SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-3.)

As shown in Table 4.7-17 of the Revised Draft EIR and Table 4.7-17A of the SPRRDEIR, the above intersections operate at unacceptable Levels of Service under existing conditions, and the proposed project would increase congestion at these intersections. With the exception of “ii”, the improvements described above are identified in the County’s CIP, so they are planned to be constructed in the future, whether or not the project is developed. Therefore, the proposed project would be required to contribute its fair share to the above improvements, or to construct the improvements and be reimbursed for the costs beyond the project’s fair share. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-42.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level:

**Impact 4.7-4:** Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in the City of Roseville. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-43.)

Finding:

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Under Existing Plus Project conditions, no improvements to the City of Roseville intersections were assumed beyond existing conditions. Figure 4.7-11 shows the daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in the city of Roseville under Existing Plus Project conditions. Figure 4.7-5
shows the fourteen key study area intersections in the city of Roseville. Table 4.7-18 presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under the Existing Plus Project scenario. The traffic volumes and existing lane geometry at each intersection in Table 4.7-18 are shown in Appendix I. This analysis indicates that development of the Specific Plan under existing conditions would cause impacts on the following Roseville intersections within the study area:

a. **Level of Service at the intersection of Woodcreek Oaks Boulevard and Baseline Road would degrade from LOS “B” to LOS “D.”**

b. **Level of Service at the intersection of Foothills Boulevard and Baseline Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “E.”**

c. **Level of Service at the intersection of Woodcreek Oaks Boulevard and Pleasant Grove Boulevard would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “D.”**

d. **Level of Service at the intersection of Fiddyment Road and Baseline Road would degrade from LOS “E” to LOS “F.”**

e. **Level of Service at the intersection of Fiddyment Road and Baseline Road would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “F.”**

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-42 to 4.7-43.)

This is considered a **significant impact.** (RDEIR, p. 4.7-43.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.7-4a **Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a.** (RDEIR, p. 4.7-44.)

4.7-4b **Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute fees toward the following improvements, which are part of the City of Roseville’s 2020 CIP:**

- **A second through lane on the eastbound approach, to improve the intersection of Woodcreek Oaks Boulevard and Baseline Road to LOS “A” (V/C 0.57).**

- **A second left turn lane on both the northbound, southbound and westbound approaches, a third through lane to the northbound approach and fourth through lane to the southbound approach to improve the intersection of Foothills Boulevard and Baseline Road to LOS “C” (V/C 0.71).**

- **A second left turn lane on all of the approaches, a second through lane on both the northbound and southbound approaches, and a third through lane on the eastbound and westbound approaches to improve the intersection of Woodcreek Oaks Boulevard and Pleasant Grove Boulevard to LOS “A” (V/C 0.50).**
• A second left turn lane on the westbound approach, a third left turn lane on the southbound approach, and second through lane on both the northbound and southbound approaches, to improve the intersection of Foothills Boulevard and Cirby Way to LOS “B” (V/C 0.70).

• Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-3(b)(ii), which would result in LOS “C” (V/C 0.78) at the intersection of Fiddyment Road and Baseline Road using the Roseville methodology.

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-44.)

These mitigation measures reflect the ultimate improvement at each intersection that is included in the Roseville’s CIP and the City of Roseville has a funding mechanism to fully fund these improvements. At one or more of these intersections, the impact of the Existing Plus Project scenario might be mitigated by an improvement that is a portion of the ultimate improvement. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-44.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. While implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce this impact to a less than significant level, these improvements lie outside the jurisdiction of Placer County. The City of Roseville can and should implement the suggested or similar mitigation measures but may choose not to. If the identified improvements are not made, the roadway segments would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-43.)

Impact 4.7-5 Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sacramento County. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-44.)

Finding:

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Figure 4.7-12 shows the average daily traffic volumes on Sacramento County roadways within the study area under Existing Plus Project conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Table 4.7-19. This analysis indicates that development of the proposed Specific Plan under existing conditions would cause impacts on the following Sacramento County roadway segments:
a. Level of Service on the two- to four-lane segment of Watt Avenue from the Placer County line to Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “F.”

b. Level of Service on the segment of Watt Avenue from Elverta Road to Antelope Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F.”

c. Level of Service on the segment of Watt Avenue from Antelope Road to Elkhorn Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

d. Level of Service on the segment of Watt Avenue from Elkhorn Boulevard to Don Julio Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

e. Level of Service on the segment of Elkhorn Boulevard from Walerga Road to I-80 would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-44 to 4.7-45; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-7 to 4.7-8.)

The project proposes to widen Watt Avenue from the Placer County line to Elverta Road to six lanes but this improvement is outside the jurisdiction of Placer County. Therefore this roadway was analyzed with the existing (two-lane) conditions. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-45.)

This is considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-45.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.7-5a Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-45.)

4.7-5b Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following improvements in Sacramento County:

1. Widen Watt Avenue to six lanes from the Placer County line to Elverta Road to provide LOS “D” (0.87).

2. Widen Watt Avenue to six lanes from Elverta Road to Antelope Road to provide LOS “C” (0.71).

3. Widen Watt Avenue to six lanes from Antelope Road to Elkhorn Boulevard to provide LOS “D” (0.90).

4. Widen Watt Avenue to six lanes from Elkhorn Boulevard to Don Julio Boulevard to provide LOS “D” (0.87).
5. *Widen Elkhorn Boulevard to six lanes from Walerga Road to I-80 to provide LOS “E”* (0.96)

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-45; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-8 to 4.7-9.)

Under existing conditions, the proposed project would cause several segments of Watt Avenue in Sacramento County to operate at LOS “F” and increase congestion at other segments that operate at LOS “F” (see Revised Table 4.7-19). Under cumulative conditions, these segments would all operate at LOS “F” with or without project traffic (see Revised Table 4.7-35). Therefore, the proposed project would be responsible for only a portion of the improvements necessary to achieve acceptable service levels on these segments if and when an appropriate fee mechanism is adopted. The widening of Watt Avenue to six lanes between Don Julio Boulevard and Antelope Road is included in SACOG’s MTP. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-46; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-9.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce this impact to *a less than significant level.* While implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce this impact to a less than significant level, these improvements lie outside the jurisdiction of Placer County. Sacramento County can and should implement the suggested or similar mitigation measures but may choose not to. If the identified improvements are not made, the roadway segments would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered *significant and unavoidable.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-45.)

**Impact 4.7-6:** Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sacramento County. *This impact is considered significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-46.)

**Finding:**

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

**Explanation:**

Under Existing Plus Project conditions, no improvements were assumed for Sacramento County intersections in the study area beyond existing conditions. Figure 4.7-8 shows the key study area intersections in Sacramento County. Revised Tables 4.7-21 and 4.7-22 present the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the a.m. and p.m. peak hour under Existing Plus Project conditions. The traffic volumes and existing lane geometry at each intersection in Revised Tables 4.7-20 and 4.7-21 are shown in Appendix I. This analysis indicates that development of the proposed Specific Plan under existing conditions would cause impacts at the following intersections:
a. Level of Service at the intersection of Elwyn Avenue and Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “F” during the a.m. peak hour and from LOS “E” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

b. Level of Service at the intersection of 16th Street and Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “F” during the a.m. peak hour and from LOS “A” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

c. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Antelope Road would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

d. Level of Service at the intersection of Walerga Road and Elkhorn Boulevard would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

e. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Don Julio Boulevard would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

f. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Air Base Drive would degrade from LOS “B” to LOS “F” during the a.m. peak hour, and from LOS “E” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

g. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Roseville Road would degrade from LOS “E” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-46 to 4.7-47; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-10 to 4.7-11.)

This is considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-47.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.7-6a Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-48.)

4.7-6b Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following intersection improvements in Sacramento County:

1. Install a traffic signal to improve the intersection of Elwyn Avenue and Elverta Road to LOS “C” (V/C 0.74) in the a.m. peak hour and LOS “D” (V/C 0.82) in the p.m. peak hour.

2. Install a traffic signal to improve the intersection of 16th Street and Elverta Road to LOS “E” (V/C 0.90) in the a.m. peak hour and LOS “D” (V/C 0.87) in the p.m. peak hour.

3. Construct a second exclusive left turn lane on the southbound approach to improve the intersection of Watt Avenue and Antelope Road to LOS “E” (V/C 0.93) in the p.m. peak hour.
4. Construct a second exclusive right turn lane on the westbound approach to improve the intersection of Walerga Road and Elkhorn Boulevard to LOS “D” (V/C 0.87) in the p.m. peak hour.

5. Construct a third northbound through lane to improve the intersection of Watt Avenue and Don Julio Boulevard to LOS “D” (V/C 0.87) in the p.m. peak hour.

6. Construct a third northbound through lane to improve the intersection of Watt Avenue and Air Base Drive to LOS “C” (V/C 0.80) in the a.m. peak hour and LOS “D” (V/C 0.86) in the p.m. peak hour.

7. Construct a second westbound left turn lane to improve the intersection of Watt Avenue and Roseville Road to LOS “E” (V/C 0.92) in the p.m. peak hour.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-48 to 4.7-49; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-13.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. While implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level, the improvements lie outside the jurisdiction of Placer County. The County of Sacramento can and should implement the suggested or similar mitigation measures but may choose not to. If the identified improvements are not made, the intersections would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-48.)

Impact 4.7-7: Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sutter County. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-49.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Figure 4.7-12 shows the average daily traffic volumes on Sutter County roadways within the study area under Existing Plus Project conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 4.7-22. This analysis indicates that development of the proposed Specific Plan under existing conditions would not cause impacts on any Sutter County roadway. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-49; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-13.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-49.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.7-8:** Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sutter County. This impact is considered *significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-49.)

Finding:

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Under Existing Plus Project conditions, no improvements were assumed for Sutter County intersections in the study area beyond existing conditions. Figure 4.7-8 in the Revised Draft EIR shows the key study area intersections in Sutter County. Tables 4.7-23 and 4.7-23A present the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the a.m. and p.m. peak hours under Existing Plus Project conditions. The traffic volumes and existing lane geometry at each intersection in Table 4.7-23 are shown in Appendix I of the Revised Draft EIR. This analysis indicates that development of the Specific Plan under existing conditions would cause impacts at the following intersections:

a. Level of Service at the intersection of Riego Road and Natomas Road would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “F” in the a.m. and p.m. peak hours.

b. Level of Service at the intersection of Pleasant Grove Road (North) and Riego Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F” in the a.m. peak hour and LOS “C” to LOS “F” in the p.m. peak hour.

c. Level of Service at the intersection of Pleasant Grove Road (South) and Riego Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F” in the a.m. and p.m. peak hours.

d. Level of Service at the intersection of Highway 70/99 and Riego Road would operate at LOS “F” in the a.m. peak hour and would further degrade.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-49 to 4.7-50; SRRDEIR, p. 4.7-4.)

This is considered a *significant impact.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-50.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.7-8a  Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-50.)

4.7-8b  Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following improvements in Sutter County:

1. Install a signal at the intersection of Riego Road and Natomas Road to provide LOS “A” (V/C ratio 0.60) in the a.m. peak and LOS “B” (V/C 0.61) in the p.m. peak.

2. Install a signal at the intersection of Riego Road and Pleasant Grove Road (North) to provide LOS “C” (V/C 0.79) in the a.m. peak and LOS “B” (V/C 0.64) in the p.m. peak.

3. Install a signal at the intersection of Riego Road and Pleasant Grove Road (South) to provide LOS “C” (V/C ratio 0.77) in the a.m. peak and LOS “C” (V/C 0.74) in the p.m. peak.

4. At the intersection of Highway 99/70 and Riego Road, construct a third northbound and southbound through lanes (2,000 to 3,000 feet long) to provide LOS “D” (V/C ratio of 46.5 sections) in the a.m. peak

Or

Construct the Highway 99/70 interchange at Riego Road.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-50 to 4.7-51; SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-4 to 4.7-5.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. While implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level, the improvements lie outside the jurisdiction of Placer County. Sutter County can and should implement the suggested or similar mitigation measure but may choose not to. If the identified improvements are not made, the intersections would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-50.)

Impact 4.7-9: Buildout of the Specific Plan would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways and intersections that are part of the state highway system. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-51.)
Finding:

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Figure 4.7-12 shows the average daily traffic volumes on state highways within the study area under Existing Plus Project conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Table 4.7-24. This analysis indicates that full development of the Specific Plan under Existing Plus Project conditions would cause impacts on the following state highway segments:

a. **Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Hwy 65 from Blue Oaks Boulevard to Galleria Boulevard** would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

b. **Level of Service on the eight-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Antelope Road to Riverside Avenue** would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

c. **Level of Service on the six-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Riverside Avenue to Douglas Boulevard** would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

d. **Level of Service on the six-lane segment of Business 80 from Fulton Avenue to Watt Avenue** would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

e. **Level of Service on the twelve-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Auburn Boulevard to Madison Avenue** would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-51 to 4.7-52.)

The increase in congestion on freeway segments operating at LOS “F” is considered a **significant impact**. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-52.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.7-9a  Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a.  (RDEIR, p. 4.7-52.)

4.7-9b  Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following improvements:
1. *Widen Hwy 65 to six lanes from Blue Oak Boulevard to Galleria Boulevard.*

2. *Widen Interstate 80 to ten lanes from Antelope Road to Riverside Avenue.*

3. *Widen Interstate 80 to eight lanes from Riverside Avenue to Douglas Boulevard.*

4. *Widen Business 80 to eight lanes from Fulton Avenue to Watt Avenue.*

5. *Consider construction of additional lanes on Interstate 80 from Auburn Boulevard to Madison Avenue, or other improvements.*

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-52.)

As shown in Table 4.7-24 of the Revised Draft EIR, the above highway segments operate at unacceptable service levels under existing conditions, and the proposed project would increase congestion on these segments. Therefore, the proposed project would be responsible for only a portion of the improvements necessary to achieve acceptable service levels on these segments, if and when an appropriate fee mechanism has been adopted. Further, the segment of Interstate 80 from Auburn Boulevard to Madison Avenue already has twelve lanes, and it may not be feasible to add more lanes. (RDEIR, pp. 4.7-52 to 4.7-53.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a *less than significant level*. While implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level, the improvements lie outside the jurisdiction of Placer County. Caltrans can and should implement the suggested or similar mitigation measure but may choose not to. If the identified improvements are not made, this impact would remain *significant and unavoidable*. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-52.)

**Impact 4.7-10:** *Buildout of the Specific Plan area would generate a demand for transit services and may result in unmet transit needs. This impact is considered potentially significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-54.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

A variety of transit services are currently provided in Placer County. The proposed Specific Plan area is not currently served by transit because there is very little population, employment or retail activity in the area. The timing of the Specific Plan is outside the scope of the 5-Year Short Range Transit Plan. The closest transit services to the Plan area are Roseville Transit and Sacramento Regional Transit (RT). (RDEIR, p. 4.7-54.)
The 14,132 residential units and a substantial amount of non-residential uses in the Specific Plan area would generate a significant demand for new transit services. If significant transit services are not provided to the Specific Plan area, an unmet transit need would likely be identified prior to buildout of the Specific Plan. Such unmet transit needs are defined by Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA) and are reviewed on a regular basis. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-54.)

The proposed Specific Plan states that “the Plan Area will include systems and facilities to promote public transit use” and might include the following:

- Bus rapid transit lanes will be dedicated on Watt Avenue from Baseline Road to the project’s southern limits and a transit center at Watt Avenue and Town Center Drive.

- Dedication of rights-of-way for a future streetcar system will be provided along the northern side of Town Center Drive, extending from the transit center on Watt Avenue to the Town Center, ending at 16th Street.

- An internal transit system will be planned and implemented as the project is constructed that connects the Village Centers with the Town Center and other areas as deemed appropriate.

- An ADA dial-a-ride service will be provided.

- Commuter service will be provided to downtown Sacramento.

- Placer Vineyards will participate in regional service with connection to light rail transit on Watt Avenue in Sacramento County, Regional University, Galleria Mall and other Regional Centers.

- Park and ride lots will be constructed with a total of 193 parking spaces.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-54 to 4.7-55.)

The ongoing operating cost for such a transit system would be substantial and the amount of funding that would be available for transit operations with the proposed Specific Plan is uncertain. To meet a potential unmet transit need, Placer County would need to provide a reasonable amount of transit service to the Specific Plan area, comparable to transit service provided in nearby communities in Roseville and Sacramento County. Based on input from Placer County, these transit services and facilities should include the following:

- Two internal bus routes that would originate at the transit center on Town Center Drive, circulate through the Specific Plan area with frequent headways and connect to other commercial centers.
• A fixed bus route connecting the Specific Plan area to the City of Roseville. This would consist of regular route service all day, running at least hourly and connecting to the transit center at the Galleria Mall.

• A fixed bus route connecting the Specific Plan area to the Watt/I-80 Light Rail station. This would consist of regular route service all day, running at least hourly. The route would probably originate near Watt/Dyer Lane, with timed transfers with the Roseville route and direct service to the Watt/I-80 Light Rail station. This route could be established by contracting with Sacramento RT to extend their route from Watt/Elverta 1.5 miles north to connect to Watt/Dyer Lane.

• Commuter express bus service to downtown Sacramento. This service would originate at East Dyer Lane and Baseline Road and use Baseline Road and Riego Road to travel to downtown Sacramento via Hwy 70/99. The City of Roseville has future plans to operate a commuter bus route on Baseline Road. The most efficient option would be to contract with the City of Roseville to share this route.

• A general public dial-a-ride (demand-response) service within the Specific Plan area with potential service to important services outside the Specific Plan area (hospitals, etc.). This would serve as a feeder into the fixed routes.

• Bus stops/park and ride lots. It would be reasonable to plan for sheltered bus stops at one-half-mile intervals along the fixed routes. This would require approximately ten pairs of passenger shelters (twenty total). Park and ride lots should be provided at the commercial centers and at the Town Center, which should have the largest lot with a pull-through bus stop for quick access/egress for the commuter bus route.

• Bus storage/fueling. Transit service provided to the Specific Plan area could be contracted to other transit service providers (City of Roseville, Sacramento RT) or directly provided by Placer County. The City of Roseville corporation yard, which serves as their transit operation base, is located four miles from the Specific Plan area. At the outset of development, the County could explore basing transit services from this location. However, City services are expanding and will likely use all of the space at the corporation yard. Buses could also ultimately be stored and operated out of the Placer County corporation yard to be located in the Specific Plan area.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-55 to 4.7-56.)

Such services would be relatively costly due to the trip lengths involved. Placer County would receive some additional funding for transit services through its key existing funding source, Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds due to buildout of the Specific Plan area since these funds will be generated by sales tax revenue and returned to the County based on population. However, the additional TDA funds would only allow limited transit service to the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-56.)
As noted above, it is possible that economies of scale could be achieved by contracting with other providers for transit services. For example, Sacramento RT could be approached to extend either Route 19 or Route 84 1.5 miles north to the Specific Plan area. These routes currently provide a connection to the Watt/I-80 Light Rail station. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-56.)

In the General Plan, the County has designated some transit corridors where high capacity transit service may be possible. The designation of these transit corridors is intended to promote transit use through land use and design standards that enhance transit accessibility. In the vicinity of the proposed Specific Plan area, the County has designated Watt Avenue as an arterial transit corridor. Ongoing planning for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in West Placer County envisions a BRT route that continues north of Baseline Road. In Sacramento County, Watt Avenue has been designated as a BRT corridor in SACOG’s MTP. Due to these designations, adequate right-of-way should be provided along Watt Avenue through the Specific Plan area for a potential exclusive BRT facility. The Specific Plan provides right-of-way for exclusive 10- to 12-foot BRT lanes in each direction on Watt Avenue from Baseline Road to the Dyer Lane intersection just north of Dry Creek. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-56.)

The potential for inadequate funding for unmet transit needs is considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-56.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.7-10a A Community Service Area (CSA) shall be established to fund the cost of transit services listed in this section, and any related capital costs for buses, passenger amenities, and facilities. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-57.)

4.7-10b Bus shelters shall be placed along major roadways at one-half-mile intervals serving Medium-Density, High-Density, Commercial and Office land use designations. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-57.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above measures would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-56.)

Impact 4.7-11: Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase the demand for recreational and transportation related bicycle trips. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-57.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

The proposed Specific Plan, with its 14,132 residential units, would generate a substantial demand for safe and convenient bicycle facilities, especially for recreational experiences. The Specific Plan provides approximately 48 miles of Class I off-street bike trails located within open space and landscape corridors along thoroughfares and arterial streets. Class II on-street bike lanes are proposed within the right-of-way of arterial and collector roadways. There will be a need to connect these bike trails and lanes within the Specific Plan area to the bikeway systems in adjacent jurisdictions. This includes provision of bike lanes on Baseline Road between the Specific Plan area and the city of Roseville (at Fiddyment Road) and on Watt Avenue into Sacramento County. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-57.)

The proposed bikeway system in the Specific Plan area appears to meet the intent of the General Plan policies. This impact would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-57.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-57.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact 4.7-12: Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase daily traffic volumes on roadways in unincorporated Placer County. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-58.)

Finding:

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Figure 4.7-18 of the Revised Draft EIR shows the average daily traffic volumes on unincorporated Placer County roadways within the study area under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-58.)

It should be noted that the new roadways in the Specific Plan area would provide new travel routes for existing traffic and change some travel patterns. For example, the extension of Dyer Lane from Watt Avenue to the northeast to connect to Baseline Road would divert some existing traffic from Watt Avenue north of Dyer Lane and from Baseline Road east of Watt Avenue. The new roadways in the Specific Plan area would also divert some existing traffic from portions of
PFEO Road and Walerga Road. These traffic diversions would offset some of the increase in traffic from the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-58.)

A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 4.7-27. Under the Cumulative No Project Alternative, the four-lane segment of Baseline Road from the Sutter County line to Watt Avenue is predicted to operate at LOS “D” or “E” conditions. Under Cumulative Plus Project conditions, this segment of Baseline Road would be widened to six lanes and would operate at LOS “D”. Because this segment is adjacent to the Specific Plan area, LOS “D” is considered acceptable. Further, the operations would be better or equal to the Cumulative No Project Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-58; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-14 to 4.7-15.)

This analysis indicates that full development of the Specific Plan area under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase congestion at a number of locations throughout the study area. The following segments are projected to degrade from acceptable to unacceptable levels with the project and/or are new segments that would operate at unacceptable levels.

a. Level of Service on the segment of Baseline Road from East Dyer Lane to Fiddyment Road would degrade from LOS “B” to LOS “E.”

b. Level of Service on the segment of Locust Road north of the county line would degrade from LOS “B” to LOS “E.”

c. Level of Service on the segment of Palladay Road north of the county line would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “E.”

d. Level of Service on the new segment of Dyer Lane (East) from Baseline Road to A Street would operate at LOS “E.”

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-59; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-15.)

Because one or more segments would degrade from acceptable to unacceptable levels, the increase in traffic congestion is considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-59.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.7-12: Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-60.)

A number of transportation improvements have been identified that, in various combinations, could reduce anticipated congestion levels on major roadways within or near the Specific Plan area. Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a would provide the proposed project’s fair share contribution toward the combination of improvements ultimately selected by the County and other affected jurisdictions as best able to provide a County roadway network that serves existing and new development at Levels of Service consistent with the County’s General Plan. In order to determine the extent to which a set of identified improvements could reduce cumulative traffic congestion, a Mitigated Transportation Network was modeled. This Mitigated Transportation
Network is just one of a number of possible roadway improvements that could be implemented. General evaluation of these improvements was conducted to determine their acceptability and feasibility and whether they should be included in a Mitigated Transportation Network. The roadway lanes in the Mitigated Transportation Network are shown in Figure 4.7-19. These potential improvements are summarized below (RDEIR, pp. 4.7-60):

1. Widening Baseline Road to eight lanes from Brewer Road to Fiddyment Road.

   This widening would improve the Level of Service along this section of Baseline Road. The widening could also have some undesirable effects including:

   - Such a widening may not promote pedestrian and bicycle circulation since wide roadways can be barriers for walking and cycling. The widening could discourage walking near Baseline Road by lengthening the distance for pedestrians and bicycle to cross Baseline Road to an unacceptable level.

   - Such a widening would not be consistent with the County’s General Plan roadway standards that call for a maximum of six lanes on arterials and thoroughfares.

   - The widening would further increase traffic volumes on roadways in western Roseville, some of which are projected to operate at LOS “D”, “E” or “F” conditions under Cumulative Plus Project conditions and cannot be further mitigated.

   - There may be concerns about visual aesthetics of an eight-lane roadway and its impact on community character.

For these reasons, and because Placer Parkway (discussed below) would also provide substantial east-west traffic capacity, the widening of Baseline Road to eight lanes was not included in the Mitigated Transportation Network. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-61.)

2. Constructing Placer Parkway.

   The Concept Report for Placer Parkway calls for a new controlled-access highway that would connect Hwy 65 to Hwy 70/99. This new facility would decrease traffic volumes on a number of existing and planned roadways in western Placer County, including Baseline Road, and numerous roadways in the city of Roseville. This regional facility would help mitigate traffic impacts of not only the proposed Placer Vineyards project but the traffic impacts from other proposed developments in western Placer County as well, and thus was considered a key improvement in the Mitigated Transportation Network. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-61.)

3. Extending Watt Avenue from the proposed Regional University development north to Blue Oaks Boulevard.
This extension would divert some traffic from Fiddyment Road and Baseline Road east of Watt Avenue and was considered a key improvement in the Mitigated Transportation Network. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-61.)

4. Widening the Watt Avenue Extension from Baseline Road to Pleasant Grove Boulevard to six lanes.

This extension was assumed to have four lanes in the Cumulative No Project scenario but would need six lanes to have an acceptable Level of Service. Therefore, six lanes were assumed in the Mitigated Transportation Network. (RDEIR, pp. 4.7-61 to 4.7-62.)

5. Constructing a new north-south roadway from the proposed Regional University to Baseline Road at 12th Street.

This improvement would run parallel to, and west of, the Watt Avenue Extension and connect to Baseline Road at 12th Street, which is a new roadway in the proposed Placer Vineyards Specific Plan. Coupled with a new east-west roadway (discussed in #6 below) and the extension of Watt Avenue to Blue Oaks Boulevard, this new roadway would allow some traffic to divert around the intersection of Watt Avenue and Baseline Road. However, it would extend into vacant land north of Blue Oaks Boulevard and west of Watt Avenue that was not considered developed under Cumulative (2025) conditions and thus it was not included in the Mitigated Transportation Network. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-62.)

6. Constructing a new east-west arterial roadway north of Baseline Road from Watt Avenue to the new north-south roadway described in #4 above. Coupled with that new north-south roadway and the extension of Watt Avenue to Blue Oaks Boulevard, this new roadway would allow some traffic to divert around the intersection of Watt Avenue and Baseline Road. However, it would extend into vacant land north of Blue Oaks Boulevard west of Watt Avenue that was not considered developed under Cumulative (2025) conditions and thus was not included in the Mitigated Transportation Network. (RDEIR, p. 4.62.)

7. Widening PFE Road to four lanes between Watt Avenue and Walerga Road. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-62.)

This widening would help divert traffic from Baseline Road between Watt Avenue and Walerga Road and was considered a key improvement in the Mitigated Transportation Network. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-62.)

8. Widening Walerga Road to six lanes from south of Baseline Road to the Sacramento County line.

This widening would increase the capacity of this segment of Walerga Road but it would also increase traffic volumes on this segment, as well as on portions of Walerga Road in Sacramento County. Since widening Walerga Road in Sacramento County to six lanes may not be feasible, the widening of Walerga Road to six lanes in Placer County was not included.
in the Mitigated Transportation Network except near its intersections with Baseline Road and PFE Road. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-62.)

9. Widening Dyer Lane to six lanes from 16th Street east to Baseline Road.

While the segment-based Level of Service analysis indicates that widening this entire segment may be needed, the analysis of peak hour operations at intersections along Dyer Lane indicates that six through lanes are only required near its intersection with Watt Avenue and its eastern intersection with Baseline Road. The widening to six lanes near these intersections was included as part of proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, pp. 4.7-62 to 4.7-63.)

10. Construct triple lefts and/or fourth through lanes

The project includes extensive improvements to intersections. At some locations, these improvements include what is termed maximum conventional intersections. This term is defined as an intersection consisting of three through lanes, double left turn lanes, and free right turn lanes on all approaches. An example of this type of intersection is the one located in Roseville near the Galleria Mall at Galleria Boulevard and Roseville Parkway. The resulting roadway includes 10 lanes, and with shoulders is 140 feet wide.

Despite utilizing the maximum conventional intersection configuration, several intersections are projected to operate at LOS “F”. These intersections include 1) Baseline Road and Watt Avenue, 2) Baseline Road and Fiddyment/Walerga Road, 3) Cook Riolo Road and PFE Road, and 4) Watt Avenue and Dyer Lane. One alternative would be to add additional lanes such as triple left turn lanes or four through lanes. The addition of triple left turn lanes and/or four through lanes (in various combinations) at these intersections could improve to LOS “E”. These additional lanes, while technically improving the level of service at an intersection tend to create other problems including:

- Such roadways can become barriers to pedestrians and bicyclists, who may be discouraged from trying to cross such facilities. For some pedestrians, it is difficult to cross such a wide street.

- The long time devoted to pedestrian crossing movements can also adversely affect traffic signal coordination efforts, frustrating efforts to facilitate the smooth flow of traffic.

- The additional capacity added with each new lane is reduced due to inefficiencies in lane utilization. As an example, triple left turn lanes do not provide 50% more capacity as compared to double left turn lanes.

- There are traffic safety implications to such a wide facility. Motorists may have difficulty staying within lanes with a triple left turn configuration. In the case of four through lanes it can be difficult to cross so many lanes to reach the left turn lanes.

- Very large intersections tend to divide neighborhoods, so that communities on one side of such intersections feel little or any connection to the neighborhoods on the other side.
discouraging pedestrians and bikes it contributes to more vehicle trips and poor air quality. This result is at cross purposes to the goals of the Specific Plan to encourage walkable communities.

- Before such large intersections are considered, other mitigations should be explored including interchanges, reduced land use near the intersections and parallel roadways. In addition, the overall corridor Level of Service should be evaluated. Under this procedure a series of intersections are examined; in some cases one intersection has high delay but the delay in the overall corridor is acceptable.

- The Level of Service at intersections is based upon traffic during the peak hour. The additional lanes would be unnecessary and underutilized the remainder of the day with all the negatives described above.

Periods of LOS “F” at a few intersections during peak hour tends to encourage alternate forms of transportation, ride-sharing and transit usage. In addition residents are encouraged to work and shop closer to home with resulting benefits to air quality. For the above reasons, County staff believes that this mitigation measure, at these three intersections, is not feasible and is at odds with the goals of the Specific Plan. Overall, the negatives, in staff’s judgment, outweigh the benefits of a small reduction in travel delay. Some of the negative effects on pedestrian and bicycle circulation could be addressed by construction of connecting facilities, such as grade separated crossings for bicycle and pedestrian paths. (RDEIR, pp. 4.7-63 to 4.7-64.)

11. A substantial increase in the transit system serving the project site.

A robust transit service plan for the Specific Plan could help reduce traffic volumes on the roadway system serving the project site. The proposed Specific Plan states that “the Plan Area will include systems and facilities to promote public transit use” and would include the following:

- Bus rapid transit lanes will be dedicated on Watt Avenue from Baseline Road to the Specific Plan’s southern limits and a transit center at Watt Avenue and Town Center Drive.

- Rights-of-way for a future streetcar system will be provided along the northern side of Town Center Drive, extending from the transit center on Watt Avenue to the Town Center, ending at 16th Street.

- An internal transit system will be planned and implemented as the project is constructed that connects the Village Centers with the Town Center and other areas as deemed appropriate.

- An ADA dial-a-ride service will be provided.

- Commuter service will be provided to downtown Sacramento.
• Placer Vineyards will participate in regional service with connection to light rail transit on Watt Avenue in Sacramento County, Regional University, Galleria Mall and other Regional Centers.

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-64.)

A detailed discussion of these services occurs under Impact 4.7-10. The ongoing operating cost for such a transit system would be substantial and the amount of funding that would be available for transit operations is uncertain. Placer County would receive some additional funding for transit services through its key existing funding source, Transportation Development Act (TDA), due to buildout of the Specific Plan area since these funds are based on population. However, additional TDA funds would only allow limited transit service to the Specific Plan area.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-64 to 4.7-65.)

Due the uncertainty about transit operating fund, the Cumulative Plus Project scenario assumed that the Specific Plan area would have limited transit services. Additional transit services are identified under Impact 4.7-9. Those additional transit services are considered part of the Mitigated Transportation Network. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-65.)

Based on the evaluation summarized above, a Cumulative Plus Project with Mitigated Transportation Network scenario was defined to include the following:

• Construction of Placer Parkway
• Extending Watt Avenue from the proposed Regional University development north to Blue Oaks Boulevard
• Widening of the Watt Avenue Extension to six lanes from Baseline Road to Pleasant Grove Boulevard
• Widening PFE Road to four lanes between Watt Avenue and Walerga Road
• Widening Dyer Lane to six lanes near its intersection with Watt Avenue and its eastern intersection with Baseline Road
• Widening Locust Road south of 18th Street and Palladay Road south of Dyer Lane to four lanes.
• Additional transit services serving the project site, as discussed under Impact 4.7-9

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-65; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-22)

A Project Study Report (PSR) for Placer Parkway was adopted by SACOG and the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA) in 2001. An ongoing environmental review process (Tier 1 EIS/EIR) will evaluate a range of alternative alignments and will select a corridor so that right-of-way can be preserved. In the 8- to 10-mile area between Fiddyment Road and Pleasant Grove Road, the adopted Conceptual Plan for the Placer Parkway calls for no access to this facility except for a possible interchange at an extension of Watt Avenue. The Cumulative Plus Project with Mitigated Transportation Network scenario assumes that (1) Placer Parkway would be implemented along one of the five alignments under consideration in the ongoing PCTPA Tier 1 EIS/EIR process as shown on Figure 4.7-19 in the Partially Recirculated Revised
Draft EIR and (2) there is an interchange on Placer Parkway near the intersection of the Watt Avenue Extension and Blue Oaks Boulevard. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-65; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-22.)

The Placer County Travel Demand Model was used to estimate and distribute traffic volumes under the Cumulative Plus Project with Mitigated Transportation Network scenario. Figure 4.7-20 shows the average daily traffic volumes on unincorporated Placer County roadways within the study area under this scenario. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-65.)

A roadway segment Level of Service analysis based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 4.7-28. The new and improved roadways parallel to Baseline Road, particularly Placer Parkway, would decrease the traffic volume on Baseline Road from the Sutter County line to Fiddyment Road. The Mitigated Transportation Network would improve the Level of Service on all segments of Baseline Road under the Cumulative Plus Project conditions. With the Mitigated Transportation Network, only the following two segments of Baseline Road would operate at LOS “D” conditions and thus would not meet the County’s General Plan standard but do meet the Specific Plan standards and are therefore considered acceptable:

- Baseline Road between 12th Street and Watt Avenue
- Baseline Road between Dyer Lane East and Walerga Road

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-65 to 4.7-66; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-23.)

The Mitigated Transportation Network would decrease volumes on Walerga Road between Baseline Road and PFE Road, but this segment would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions. The Mitigated Transportation Network would increase volumes on Watt Avenue between Baseline Road and PFE Road and continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions south of Dyer Lane. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-66.)

This analysis indicates that the improvements included in the Mitigated Transportation Network would reduce traffic congestion on Placer County roadway segments under the Cumulative Plus Project scenario to the extent that roadway segments would operate at an acceptable level, and/or better than under Cumulative No Project conditions. As shown in Revised Table 4.7-28, the number of segments that would operate at LOS “D” or worse under the Mitigated Transportation Network would be substantially fewer than would occur under the No Project condition. Another combination of improvements that provided similar increases in east-west capacity (e.g., combinations that include widening Baseline Road to eight lanes) would have similar effects, although increases and decreases on specific segments would differ. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-66; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-23.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a would reduce the project contribution to cumulative traffic congestion by providing funding for improvements to the County transportation network. A combination of improvements would be needed to mitigate cumulative traffic impacts, and not all of these improvements are within the jurisdiction of Placer County (e.g., Placer Parkway). In addition, the best combination of improvements depends on
the size, nature and timing of development and transportation improvements in Placer County, City of Roseville, Sacramento County and other jurisdictions. The County will continue to coordinate with these jurisdictions, but the specific set of improvements that will ultimately be constructed cannot be identified at this time. For these reasons, this impact would remain **significant and unavoidable.** (RDEIR, p. 4.7-60.)

**Impact 4.7-13:** Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County. This impact is considered **significant.** (RDEIR, p. 4.7-69.)

**Finding:**

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

**Explanation:**

The proposed Specific Plan provides typical cross-sections for the roadways within the Specific Plan area. Additional right-of-way is typically provided near major intersections on arterial and collector roadways to accommodate additional turn lanes. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-69.)

A planning level signal warrant analysis was conducted under the Cumulative Plus Project conditions to define the locations where traffic signals should be assumed. This analysis indicates the following intersections should be signalized by 2025:

- Locust Road and Baseline Road
- Brewer Road and Baseline Road
- Palladay Road and Baseline Road
- 16th Street and Baseline Road
- 14th Street and Baseline Road
- 12th Street and Baseline Road
- 11th Street and Baseline Road
- Dyer Lane and Baseline Road
- 9th Street and Baseline Road
- West Dyer Lane and A Street
- 12th Street and A Street
- Watt Avenue and A Street
- West Dyer Lane and Town Center Drive
- Watt Avenue and Town Center Drive
- East Dyer Lane and Town Center Drive
- Walerga Road and Town Center Drive
- Watt Avenue and Oak Street
- 18th Street and Dyer Lane
• 16th Street and Dyer Lane
• Tanwood Avenue and Dyer Lane
• Watt Avenue and Dyer Lane
• Cook Riolo Road and PFE Road

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-69; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-27.)

The intersections of Palladay Road with A Street, 16th Street with A Street, and 14th Street with A Street are analyzed as stop-sign controlled intersections even though the Specific Plan calls for traffic signals because traffic signals were not warranted under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-69.)

Figure 4.7-4 shows the key study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County. Revised Table 4.7-29 presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. Table 4.7-30A shows the Level of Service at intersections in the a.m. peak hour. The traffic volumes and lane geometry at each intersection in Revised Table 4.7-29 are shown in Appendix I. This analysis indicates that development of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase congestion at a number of locations throughout the study area. The following segments are projected to degrade from acceptable to unacceptable levels with the project and/or are new segments that would operate at unacceptable levels.

a. **Level of Service at the intersection of Walerga Road and PFE Road would remain LOS “F” and would become worse.**

b. **Level of Service at the intersection of Dyer Lane and Baseline Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F” in both the a.m. and p.m. peak hour under the assumed geometry.**

c. **The new intersection of Watt Avenue and Dyer Lane would operate at LOS “F” conditions in both the a.m. and p.m. peak hour under the assumed geometry.**

d. **The new intersection of Walerga Road and East Town Center Drive would operate at LOS “F” in both the a.m. and p.m. peak hour conditions under the assumed geometry.**

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-69 to 4.7-70; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-27 to 4.7-28; SRRDEIR, p. 4.7-6.)

Because one or more intersections would degrade from acceptable to unacceptable levels, the increase in traffic congestion is considered a **significant impact.** (RDEIR, p. 4.7-70.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.7-13a *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-71.)

4.7-13b *Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following improvements:*
i. A third northbound and southbound through lane, a second eastbound and westbound through lane, a second northbound, an eastbound and westbound left turn lane and a free eastbound right turn lane to improve the intersection of Walerga Road and PFE Road to LOS “F” (V/C 1.19) in the p.m. peak hour.

ii. A third northbound and southbound through lane to improve the intersection of Walerga Road and Town Center Drive to LOS “B” (V/C ratio 0.61) in the a.m. peak hour and LOS “C” (V/C 0.73) in the p.m. peak hour.

iii. Conversion of the northbound right turn lane into a free right turn lane to improve the intersection of Watt Avenue and Dyer Lane to LOS “E” (V/C 0.94) in the a.m. peak hour and LOS “F” (V/C 1.03) in the p.m. peak hour.

iv. Conversion of the northbound right turn lane into a free right turn lane to improve the intersection of East Dyer Lane and Baseline Road to LOS “E” (V/C 0.92) in the a.m. peak hour.

Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a requires that the proposed project contribute its fair share toward roadway improvements in Placer County by constructing the improvements (and being reimbursed for costs beyond the project share) or paying fees collected for improvements in Placer County. In order to evaluate the potential for such improvements to reduce traffic congestion in the study area, a Mitigated Transportation Network (shown in Figure 4.7-19) was identified and modeled. The Mitigated Transportation Network includes construction of Placer Parkway, widening of some existing or planned roadways and intersections and improvements to transit service. As Revised Table 4.7-30 shows, the Mitigated Transportation Network would reduce the number of intersections that would operate at unacceptable levels, and would reduce the severity of the impacts at other locations. In some cases, congestion at an intersection would increase. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-72; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-30.)

As indicated below, four intersections would continue to operate at unacceptable levels under the Cumulative Plus Project with Mitigated Transportation Network scenario. However, with the exception of the intersection of Walerga Road and PFE Road, operations would improve as a result of the enhanced roadway network.

a. Level of Service at the intersection of Walerga Road and PFE Road would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.42) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.63).

b. Level of Service at the intersection of Dyer Lane and Baseline Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F” in the a.m. peak and LOS “D” to LOS “E” in the p.m. peak under the assumed geometry.
c. The new intersection of Walerga Road and Town Center Drive would operate at LOS “E” in the a.m. peak and LOS “F” conditions in the p.m. peak under the assumed geometry.

d. The new intersection of Watt Avenue and Dyer Lane would operate at LOS “F” in both the a.m. and p.m. peaks under the assumed geometry.

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-72; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-30; SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-8.)

Implementation of the improvements identified in Mitigation Measure 4.7-13b would improve operations at two of these intersections. These improvements would likely be necessary regardless of which combination of improvements is funded and/or constructed by the proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-72; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-30.)

As discussed under Mitigation Measure 4.7-12, additional improvements, such as third left turn lanes and four through lanes, could be constructed at intersections that would operate at LOS “F” even with the Mitigated Transportation Network. In some cases this could improve LOS to “E”. County staff does not recommend that these extraordinary improvements be included in the package of feasible mitigations, for the reasons discussed under Mitigation Measure 4.7-12. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-72.)

An alternative would be to retain the flexibility to consider such super-intersections in the future. A condition could be set requiring the project to reserve future rights-of-way for the additional width that would be needed to accommodate additional lanes. Such right-of-way could be used for landscaping until such time, if ever, it is needed for pavement. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-72.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce the project contribution to cumulative traffic congestion by providing funding for improvements to the County transportation network. A combination of improvements would be needed to mitigate cumulative traffic impacts, and not all of these improvements are within the jurisdiction of Placer County (e.g., Placer Parkway). Furthermore, there may not be feasible improvements for some intersections. In addition, the best combination of improvements depends on the size, nature and timing of development and transportation improvements in Placer County, City of Roseville, Sacramento County and other jurisdictions. The County will continue to coordinate with these jurisdictions, but the specific set of improvements that will ultimately be constructed cannot be identified at this time. For these reasons, this impact would remain **significant and unavoidable**. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-71.)

**Impact 4.7-14:** Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in the City of Roseville. This impact is considered **significant**. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-73.)
Finding:

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment, specifically the intersection of Fiddyment Road and Baseline Road, are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

However, changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the remaining six intersections. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The City of Roseville has requested that the analysis of the traffic impacts related to the proposed Specific Plan on Roseville’s roadway system be based on the same assumptions used by the City of Roseville for their CIP. Like the cumulative analysis of the project-related traffic impacts in Placer, Sutter and Sacramento counties, Roseville’s CIP analysis is based on the Placer County Travel Demand Model, but its land use assumptions differ as follows:

- The Roseville CIP assumes the same level of development within the City of Roseville as the cumulative analysis of the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan; that is, buildout of all entitled land under its General Plan while on roadways in Placer, Sutter and Sacramento counties assumes an estimated of 2025 market level development in Roseville.

- For areas of Placer County outside of Roseville, the Roseville CIP assumes 2020 development levels, but only for entitled land uses under current General Plans. The cumulative impact analysis of the proposed Specific Plan assumes 2025 market levels of development in Placer County and includes proposed development projects in Placer, south Sutter and northern Sacramento counties.

- The Roseville CIP assumes about 18,500 industrial jobs in south Sutter County. The cumulative impact analysis of the proposed Specific Plan on roadways in Placer, Sutter and Sacramento counties assumes 8,750 dwelling units in the South Sutter County Specific Plan area plus retail, office and industrial uses.

- The Roseville CIP assumes SACOG’s 2020 development estimates for Sacramento County. The cumulative impact analysis of the proposed Specific Plan on roadways in Placer, Sutter and Sacramento counties assumes SACOG’s 2025 development estimates for Sacramento County except in Elverta, where it assumes full buildout of the proposed Elverta Specific Plan.

- The Roseville CIP assumes approximately 7,800 dwelling units and some non-residential development in the Specific Plan.

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-73.)
The scenarios used to evaluate the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan on the City of Roseville’s roadway system under cumulative conditions are as follows:

- Cumulative No Project (based on City of Roseville’s 2020 development assumptions)
- Cumulative Plus Project (2020 development plus buildout of Placer Vineyards Specific Plan)

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-73.)

Roseville’s Travel Demand Model was used to estimate future traffic volumes with and without the proposed Specific Plan. The City of Roseville Level of Service policy calls for maintenance of a LOS “C” standard at 70% of all signalized intersections in the city during the p.m. peak hour. For the Revised Draft EIR, Levels of Service were evaluated at all of the 159 existing and planned signalized intersections throughout the city of Roseville. The addition of the Specific Plan was not assumed to add any signals to the city of Roseville. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-76.)

Figure 4.7-21 in the Revised Draft EIR shows the daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in the city of Roseville under the Cumulative Plus Project conditions. It should be noted that the traffic volume forecasts are not based on a simple layering/adding of assumed project-generated traffic volumes onto cumulative conditions without the proposed project. Rather, the City’s Travel Demand Model is used to predict how travel patterns would change if the project land uses are added to cumulative land uses. The model redistributes trips and can cause traffic on some roadways to decrease and cause changes in critical traffic movements at intersections, sometimes at intersections some distance from the proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-76.)

Table 4.7-31 (page 4.7-77 of the Revised Draft EIR) shows the seven intersections that would experience a significant Level of Service impact with the addition of the proposed Specific Plan. Four intersections that would operate at LOS “C” or better would degrade to LOS “D” or worse with the addition of the proposed project. Three of these intersections would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “D” and one would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “E.” Three intersections that would already operate at LOS “D” or worse under Cumulative No Project conditions would degrade to a worse Level of Service with the addition of the proposed project. Two of these would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “E,” one would degrade from LOS “E” to LOS “F.”

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-76.)

This is considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-76.)

It should be noted that the City of Roseville’s CIP assumes development of about 7,800 dwelling units in the proposed Specific Plan. Therefore, at some intersections, the LOS “D,” “E” and “F” conditions under the Cumulative Plus Project conditions are the same conditions as the City of Roseville’s CIP. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-76.)

Table 4.7-32 shows the number and percentage of intersections that would operate at LOS “C” or better under both Cumulative No Project and Cumulative Plus Project conditions, assuming no additional roadway improvements beyond the current City of Roseville CIP. Under No Project conditions, 120 of the 159 total intersections would operate at LOS “C” or better. This
represents 75.5% of the total signalized intersections city-wide. Addition of the Specific Plan would result in 116 (or 73.4%) of the total signalized intersections operating at LOS “C” or better. Therefore, the City’s policy of maintaining a LOS “C” standard at 70% of all signalized intersections would be met even with full development of Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-76.)

The City of Roseville is developing a management and technology plan to address traffic congestion and mobility within the City of Roseville. The plan includes Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) components as well as Transportation Demand Management (TDM). The City is proposing that the new western Placer County land development projects participate in this effort, including a contribution to the financing of the program. While this approach will not fully mitigate all traffic impacts from the project, it will reduce congestion and overall delay to the traveling public. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-78.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.7-14a  Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a.  (RDEIR, p. 4.7-77.)

4.7-14b  Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward construction of a third southbound and northbound through lanes to the intersection of Fiddyment Road and Baseline Road to improve operations from LOS “E” to LOS “D.” (RDEIR, pp. 4.7-77 to 4.7-78.)

4.7-14c  Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, participate in the City of Roseville ITS/TDM program on a fair share basis as determined by the County in consultation with the City of Roseville. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-78.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above measure would reduce the project contribution to cumulative traffic congestion by providing funding for improvements at the intersection of Fiddyment Road and Baseline Road. The individual legs of this intersection are in the city of Roseville and Placer County. The County can collect the fees identified in Mitigation Measure 4.7-14, but cannot compel the City of Roseville to collect funds for and/or construct the improvement identified in their jurisdiction, including the improvements identified below. Furthermore, no improvements were identified for the remaining six intersections. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-77.)

**Impact 4.7-15:**  Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sacramento County. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-78.)
Finding:

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Figure 4.7-22 shows the average daily traffic volumes on Sacramento County roadways within the study area under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 4.7-34. This analysis indicates that full development of the Specific Plan area under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase congestion on the following Sacramento County roadway segments that would already operate at LOS “F” and/or cause the segment to operate at LOS “F”:

a. Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Watt Avenue from the Placer County line to Antelope Road would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

b. Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Watt Avenue from the Antelope Road to Elkhorn Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

c. Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Walerga Road from the Placer County line to Elverta Road would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

d. Level of Service on the 2-lane segment of Sorento Road from the Placer County line to Elverta Road would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

e. Level of Service on the two-lane segment of Elwyn Avenue from the Placer County line to Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “E” to LOS “F.”

f. Level of Service on the two-lane segment of 16th Street from the Placer County line to Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “F.”

g. Level of Service on the two-lane segment of Dry Creek Road from U Street to Ascot Avenue would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-78 to 4.7-79; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-33 to 4.7-34.)

Sacramento County has recognized that traffic congestion will increase on Watt Avenue and it was one the corridors they evaluated in the Mobility Strategies for County Corridors (September,
A number of possible strategies were considered for Watt Avenue south of Antelope Road, including widening Watt Avenue to eight lanes (three SOV and one HOV/BRT lanes in each direction) or creation of a one-way couplet. There is insufficient right-of-way along Walerga Road south of the Sacramento County line to widen it to six lanes, so no mitigation is proposed for that segment. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-80.)

This is considered a **significant impact.** (RDEIR, p. 4.7-79.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.7-15a  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-79.)

4.7-15b  *Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following improvements in Sacramento County:*

1. *Widen Watt Avenue to six lanes from the Placer County line to Antelope Road, to reduce the V/C from 1.75 to 1.17 (LOS “F”).*
2. *Widen Watt Avenue to eight lanes from Antelope Road to Elkhorn Blvd, to provide LOS “E”.*
3. *Widen Sorento Road to four lanes from the Placer County line to Elverta Road, to provide LOS “A”.*
4. *Widen Elwyn Avenue to four lanes from the Placer County line to Elverta Road, to provide LOS “A”.*
5. *Widen 16th Street to four lanes from the Placer County line to Elverta Road, to provide LOS “B”.*
6. *Widen Dry Creek Road to four lanes from the U Street to Ascot Avenue, to provide LOS “C”.*

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-79 to 4.7-80; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-35 to 4.7-36.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce the project contribution to cumulative traffic in Sacramento County to a *less than significant level* by providing funding for improvements on the identified segments. Placer County can collect the fees identified in Mitigation Measure 4.7-15, but cannot compel Sacramento County to collect funds and/or construct the improvements identified in its jurisdiction. If the identified improvements are not made, this impact would remain *significant and unavoidable.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-79.)

**Impact 4.7-16:** Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area.
intersections in Sacramento County. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-80.)

Finding:

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Figure 4.7-8 in the Revised Draft EIR shows the key study area intersections in Sacramento County. Revised Tables 4.7-35 and 4.7-36 present the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the a.m. and p.m. peak hours under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. The traffic volumes and lane geometry at each intersection in Revised Tables 4.7-35 and 4.7-36 are shown in Appendix I. This analysis indicates that development of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase congestion at the study area intersections in Sacramento County to the extent that the following intersections would operate at an unacceptable Level of Service and/or already operate at an unacceptable level and would become more congested. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-80; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-36.)

a. Level of Service at the intersection of Sorento Road and Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.13) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.26) during the a.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

b. Level of Service at the intersection of Elwyn Avenue and Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.01) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.16) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

c. Level of Service at the intersection of Palladay Road and Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.16) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.34) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

d. Level of Service at the intersection of 16th Street and Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “B” to LOS “F” during the a.m. peak hour and LOS “D” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

e. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.11) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.28) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

f. Level of Service at the intersection of Walerga Road and Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.33) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.38) during the a.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.
g. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Antelope Road would degrade from LOS “E” (V/C 0.95) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.00) during the p.m. peak hour.

h. Level of Service at the intersection of Dry Creek Road and Elkhorn Boulevard would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.25) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.37) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

i. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Elkhorn Boulevard would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.02) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.07) during the a.m. peak hour and from LOS “F” (V/C 1.22) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.28) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

j. Level of Service at the intersection of Walerga Road and Elkhorn Boulevard would degrade from LOS “E” (V/C 0.94) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.02) during the p.m. peak hour.

k. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Air Base Drive would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.31) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.36) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

l. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Roseville Road would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.34) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.55) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-80 to 4.7-81; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-36 to 4.7-37.)

This is considered a **significant impact.** (RDEIR, p. 4.7-81.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.7-16a *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-82.)

4.7-16b *Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following improvements in Sacramento County:*

1. *Construct a second left turn lane on the eastbound approach to improve the intersection of Sorento Road and Elverta Road to LOS “F” conditions (V/C 1.11) during the a.m. peak hour.*

2. *Construct a second left turn lane on the eastbound approach to improve the intersection of Elwyn Avenue and Elverta Road to LOS “E” conditions (V/C 0.94) during the p.m. peak hour.*

3. *Construct a second left turn lane on the eastbound approach to improve the intersection of Palladay Road and Elverta Road to LOS “F” conditions (V/C 1.07) during the p.m. peak hour.*
4. Construct a second through lane on the northbound and southbound approaches, and a right turn lane on the eastbound and westbound approaches to improve the intersection of 16th Street and Elverta Road to LOS “B” conditions (V/C 0.66) during the a.m. peak hour and to LOS “C” conditions (V/C 0.77) during the p.m. peak hour.

5. Construct a third through lane on the eastbound and westbound approaches at the Watt Avenue and Elverta Road intersection to provide LOS “F” conditions (V/C 1.11) during the p.m. peak hour.

6. Construct a third through lane on the northbound and southbound approaches at the Walerga Road and Elverta Road intersection to provide LOS “F” conditions (V/C 1.16) during the a.m. peak hour.

7. Construct a third through lane on the northbound and southbound approaches, and second left turn lane on the westbound approach at the Watt Avenue and Antelope Road intersection to provide LOS “C” (V/C 0.80) conditions during the p.m. peak hour.

8. Construct a second through lane on the northbound approach at the Dry Creek Road and Elkhorn Boulevard intersection to provide LOS “E” conditions (V/C 0.99) during the p.m. peak hour.

9. Construct a fourth through lane on the northbound and southbound approaches at the Watt Avenue and Elkhorn Boulevard intersection to provide LOS “E” (V/C 0.94) in the a.m. peak hour and LOS “F” conditions (V/C 1.14) during the p.m. peak hour.

10. Construct a second left turn lane and a second right turn lane on the westbound approach at the Walerga Road and Elkhorn Boulevard intersection to provide LOS “E” conditions (V/C 0.94) during the p.m. peak hour.

11. Construct a third through lane on the northbound approach and a second westbound right turn lane at the Watt Avenue and Air Base Drive intersection to provide LOS “E” conditions (V/C 0.91) during the p.m. peak hour.

12. Construct a second left turn lane on the westbound approach at the Watt Avenue and Roseville Road intersection to provide LOS “F” conditions (V/C 1.24) during the p.m. peak hour.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-82 to 4.7-83; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-39 to 4.7-40.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce the project contribution to cumulative traffic at Sacramento County intersections to a less than significant level. Placer
County can collect the fees identified in Mitigation Measure 4.7-16, but cannot compel the Sacramento County to collect funds and/or construct the improvements identified in this measure. If the identified improvements are not made, the intersections would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered *significant and unavoidable.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-82.)

**Impact 4.7-17:** **Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sutter County. This impact is considered significant.**

*(RDEIR, p. 4.7-83; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-40.)*

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sutter County. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

Under Cumulative No Project conditions, about half of the potential 17,500 dwelling units that could be constructed in the South Sutter County Specific Plan area under the County’s recently passed Measure M were assumed. That level of development would require improvements to local roadways, including Riego Road. Under Cumulative No Project conditions, those improvements contained in SACOG’s MTP were assumed, including an interchange at Riego Road and Hwy 70/99, and the widening of Riego Road from two lanes to six lanes from Hwy 70/99 to the Placer County line. Federal and State regulations require that the MTP be financially constrained and contain a set of transportation improvements that have realistic funding sources. The MTP assumed that improvements to Riego Road and other roadways in south Sutter County would be funded primarily by development in that area. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-83.)

Figure 4.7-22 shows the average daily traffic volumes on Sutter County roadways within the study area under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 4.7-37. This analysis indicates that full development of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase congestion at the roadway segments in Sutter County shown in Revised Table 4.7-37. Because Pleasant Grove Road would operate at an acceptable LOS “F”, this impact is considered a *significant impact.* (RDEIR, pp. 4.7-83 to 4.7-84; PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-41.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.7-17a  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a.* (PRRDEIR, p. 4.7-41.)
4.7-17b Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following improvements in Sutter County:

1. Widen Pleasant Grove Road to four lanes from Riego Road to the Sacramento County line.

(PRREDIR, p. 4.7-41.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce the project contribution to the identified roadway segment to a less than significant level. Placer County can collect the fees identified in Mitigation Measure 4.7-17, but cannot compel Sutter County to collect funds and/or construct the improvements identified in this measure. If the identified improvements are not made, the roadway segment would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (PRREDIR, p. 4.7-41.)

Impact 4.7-18: Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sutter County. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-84.)

Finding:

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Figure 4.7-8 of the Revised Draft EIR shows the key study area intersections in Sutter County. Table 4.7-38 presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-84.)

There will be several new signals along Riego Road between Hwy 70/99 and Pleasant Grove Road (North) as part of the South Sutter Specific Plan. However, there are no details on how many signalized intersections there will be or the proposed lane geometry. Therefore a detailed intersection analysis was not conducted for intersections in that segment of Riego Road. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-84.)

The traffic volumes and existing lane geometry at each intersection in Table 4.7-38 are shown in Appendix I. This analysis indicates that development of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase congestion at the following study area intersections that already operate at unacceptable levels:
a. Level of Service at the intersection of Pleasant Grove Road (North) and Riego Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “E” in the a.m. peak and LOS “E” to LOS “F” in the p.m. peak.

b. Level of Service at the intersection of Pleasant Grove Road (South) and Riego Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F” in the a.m. peak and LOS “E” to LOS “F” in the p.m. peak.

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-84; SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-9.)

This is considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-84.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.7-18a Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-85.)

4.7-18b Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following improvements in Sutter County:

i. Construct a second left turn lane on the southbound approach, to improve the intersection of Pleasant Grove Road (North) and Riego Road to LOS “D” conditions (V/C ratio 0.83) in the a.m. peak and LOS “D” conditions (V/C 0.87) in the p.m. peak.

ii. Construct a second left turn lane on the northbound and westbound approaches, to improve the intersection of Pleasant Grove Road (South) and Riego Road to LOS “C” (V/C ratio 0.78) in the a.m. peak and LOS “D” conditions (V/C 0.87) in the p.m. peak.

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-85; SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-9.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce project contribution to increased congestion at Sutter County intersections to a less than significant level. Placer County can collect fees toward the improvements identified below, but cannot compel Sutter County to construct the improvements. If the identified improvements are not made, the intersection would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-85.)

Impact 4.7-19: Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways that are part of the state highway system. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-85.)
Finding:

Those changes or alterations required to mitigate or avoid the project’s significant effects on the environment are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

Explanation:

Figure 4.7-22 shows the average daily traffic volumes on Caltrans freeways within the study area under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 4.7-39. This analysis indicates that full development of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase congestion on the following state highway segments that would operate at LOS “F” without the project:

a. Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Hwy 70/99 from Riego Road to Elkhorn Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

b. Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Hwy 65 from Blue Oaks Boulevard to Galleria Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

c. Level of Service on the ten-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Longview Drive to Watt Avenue would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

d. Level of Service on the eight-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Antelope Road to Douglas Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

e. Level of Service on the twelve-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Auburn Boulevard to Madison Avenue would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.7-85 to 4.7-86; PRRDEIr, p. 4.7-42.)

Because the proposed project would increase congestion on freeways already operating at LOS “F”, this is considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-86.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.7-19a Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-87.)

4.7-19b Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, the proposed project shall contribute its fair share toward the following improvements on State highway.
1. *Widen Hwy 70/99 to six lanes from Riego Road to Interstate 5.*

2. *Widen Hwy 65 to six lanes from Blue Oak Boulevard to Galleria Boulevard.*

3. *Widen Interstate 80 to twelve lanes from Longview Drive to Watt Avenue.*

4. *Widen Interstate 80 to ten lanes from Antelope Road to Douglas Boulevard.*

5. *Consider construction of additional lanes on Interstate 80 from Auburn Boulevard to Madison Avenue, or other improvements.*

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-87; PRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-43 to 4.7-44; FEIR, Response 38I..)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce the project contribution to traffic congestion on the state highway system to a *less than significant level.* Placer County can collect fees for the improvements below, but cannot compel Caltrans to construct the improvements. If the identified improvements are not made, this impact would remain *significant and unavoidable.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-87.)

**Impact 4.7-20:** Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections that are part of the state highway system. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-88.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Table 4.7-41 in the Revised Draft EIR presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at the key study area intersections under Caltrans jurisdiction for the p.m. peak hour under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. The proposed project would reduce delay at the only intersection that would operate at unacceptable levels. Therefore, this impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.7-88.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-88.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Super-Cumulative Plus Project Impacts

**Impact 4.7-21:** Mitigation measures implemented to reduce traffic impacts could adversely affect traffic in other jurisdictions. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-98.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with traffic in other jurisdictions. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The roadway improvements identified in the mitigation measures throughout this section would improve traffic impacts by increasing roadway and intersection capacity in some locations. Such improvements would also redistribute traffic in the Specific Plan area and throughout the region. For example, Placer Parkway, one of a number of possible improvements identified in Mitigation Measure 4.7-14 and included in the Mitigated Transportation Network, would provide additional east-west roadway capacity and thereby decrease volumes on numerous roadways in Roseville and western Placer County, but would increase traffic on portions of Hwy 70/99 in Sutter County. The widening of Baseline Road to eight lanes, another improvement identified in Mitigation Measure 4.7-14 but not included in the Mitigated Transportation Network, would improve operations on Baseline Road but would increase traffic volumes on roadways in western Roseville, some of which cannot be improved. Likewise the widening of Walerga Road, another improvement identified in Mitigation Measure 4.7-14 but not included in the Mitigated Transportation Network, would improve operations on Walerga Road but would increase traffic volumes on roadways in Sacramento County, some of which cannot be improved. (RDEIR, pp. 4.7-98 to 4.7-99.)

The effects of mitigation on future roadway and intersection operations will depend on which improvements are constructed, the timing of such improvements, and development patterns in the region. As the improvements are designed and funded, they will be subject to review and analysis, including traffic studies. For example, an EIS/EIR being prepared for Placer Parkway will identify the impacts of that improvement on regional roads. In some cases, segments or intersections could operate at unacceptable levels as the result of one or more mitigation measures being implemented. This is considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-99.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.7-21 Placer County shall coordinate with the City of Roseville, Sacramento County, Sutter County and Caltrans to ensure that roadway improvements implemented in whole or in part as mitigation for the proposed project are designed to minimize impacts on existing and future roadways and intersections. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-99.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measure would reduce the above impact. However, it is not known at this time if feasible improvements would be available to achieve acceptable service levels on all affected roadways. Furthermore, the mitigation measure requires action by jurisdictions other than Placer County. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-99.)

Impact 4.7-22: Mitigation measures implemented to reduce traffic impacts could adversely affect the environment. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-99.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the traffic mitigation measures. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

The roadway improvements identified in mitigation measures throughout this section would have physical effects on the environment, primarily during construction. The exact nature of such effects will not be known until the design phase of each improvement. However, impacts that are typical of roadway improvements can be identified and discussed. The nature of these effects will be refined when the various improvements are under design and environmental review. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-99.)

Depending on their location, roadway widenings could require the acquisition of right-of-way, which may contain buildings, including homes. Such acquisition would be done in compliance with State law requiring that property owners be compensated for any property acquired for public works. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-99.)

If roadway widening exceeds existing rights-of-way in agricultural areas, some farmland could be lost. Because the loss would be a relatively narrow strip of land, it would not typically result in the loss of entire agricultural parcels. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-100.)

Roadway widenings would not substantially alter the visual character of existing roadways. However, new roads through rural areas, such as Placer Parkway, would alter views. Depending
on the viewshed and surrounding uses, such changes in visual character could be significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-100.)

Roadways and related infrastructure can increase impervious surface and/or interfere with stormwater drainage, increasing the potential for flooding. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-100.)

Roadway construction could occur in areas supporting biological resources, such as wetlands, trees, riparian habitat and grasslands. Wildlife and plants using these habitats could be disturbed or destroyed by construction activities, resulting in the loss of open space; special-status plant species; habitat for special-status animals, including vernal pool crustaceans, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, western pond turtle, tricolored blackbird, California horned lizard, bats, nesting burrowing owls and other raptors; foraging habitat for raptors; and oak woodlands and heritage trees. For the most part, the loss of raptor foraging habitat would include a narrow band of land that would leave the adjacent habitat intact. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-100.)

Excavation and grading for roadway improvements could damage or destroy subsurface historic or prehistoric resources. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-100.)

Construction activities would generate air emissions, including particulate matter and ozone, contributing to regional air pollution. If homes or schools are located near the construction area, they could be disturbed by dust. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-100.)

Construction activities would also generate substantial noise. If residents or other sensitive receptors are located near construction areas, they could be disturbed by noise. Once roadway improvements are complete, the construction noise would cease. However, traffic noise could increase, and depending on the location of the road and nearby sensitive receptors, adopted noise standards could be exceeded. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-100.)

Roadways could be widened or constructed in areas that had been used for agricultural or industrial operations. In such areas, hazardous materials may be present. If undiscovered, construction workers could be exposed to contaminated soils or groundwater. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-100.)

The above impacts would be considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-100.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.7-22 Implement the following or similar Mitigation Measures:

- 4.3.2-2a and b, which require site-specific drainage studies and measures to ensure that project flows can be accommodated by storm drainage infrastructure;

- 4.3.2-3e, which requires that new development demonstrate that there will be no increase in the water surface elevation of the 100-year flood plain;
• 4.4-15, -16, -17, -18, -20, -21, -22, -23, -24, -25, and -26, which require surveys for special status species and their habitat, habitat avoidance and compensation where needed, and protection of nesting raptors;

• 4.6-2a-h, requiring archaeological surveys and appropriate treatment of cultural resources encountered during construction;

• 4.9-3, which limits the hours during which noisy equipment can be used and requires effective mufflers;

• 4.9-4, which requires site-specific acoustical analyses during roadway design and noise attenuation features as needed; and

• 4.12-21a-f, which require Phase 1 Site Assessments to identify potential contamination, and specify how to handle potential hazards to minimize the risk of exposure.

(RDEIR, p. 4.7-101.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The mitigation measures above would reduce the impacts from traffic mitigation. However, because the mitigation improvements have not been sited and/or designed, it cannot be determined at this time whether all of these impacts could be reduced to a less than significant level. Furthermore, some of the measures would be outside of Placer County’s jurisdiction. The County cannot compel other jurisdictions to implement these or equivalent measures. For these reasons, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, pp. 4.7-100 to 4.7-101.)

Impact 4.7-23: The proposed project would increase vehicular traffic at the Riego Road crossing of the UPRR rail line. This impact is considered less than significant. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-26.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

There are no active rail lines within the Plan area. The nearest active rail line is the Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) line in Sutter County. This rail line runs north-south less than one-half mile west of the Specific Plan area. The area surrounding the rail line in this area is rural in character, composed primarily of agricultural land. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-25.)
The only crossing of the rail line in proximity to the Specific Plan area is on Riego Road. Traffic controls at this crossing include warning lights and crossing arms. There is no evidence of a safety problem at this crossing. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-25.)

At present, approximately 18 freight trains and two passenger trains (Amtrak) use the UPRR line on a daily basis. Maximum speed is 70 miles per hour. The number of trains that could use the rail line in the future is unknown at this time. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-25.)

Rail crossings are regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission under Public Utilities Code Sections 1201 through 1220. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-25.)

In order to determine whether the proposed project would substantially alter conditions at the Riego Road rail line crossing, increases in traffic due to the proposed project were reviewed. Because the rail line is not located near the project site, and there are no schools, parks or similar facilities west of the rail line, few or no pedestrians and bicyclists from Placer Vineyards are expected to travel across the rail line on Riego Road. Therefore, there would be no impact associated with pedestrian and bicycle traffic. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-25.)

The proposed project would increase traffic on Riego Road, including the segment that crosses the UPRR rail line. As a result, the potential for conflicts between vehicles and trains would increase. At present, there are approximately 9,900 vehicle trips per day on Riego Road. The proposed project would increase traffic on this segment to 14,000 vehicles per day (see Table 4.7-22). Even with the project-related traffic increase, traffic levels on Riego Road would be within the capacity of a two-lane road. The rail crossing has warning lights and crossing gates, so vehicles could continue to cross the rail safely. Therefore, the impact on the rail line would be less than significant. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-26.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-26.)

**Significance after Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-26.)

**Impact 4.7-24:** The proposed project would contribute to cumulative increases in vehicular traffic at the Riego Road crossing of the UPRR rail line. This impact is considered less than significant. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-26.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

Under cumulative conditions, an average of 36,500 vehicles are expected to use Riego Road daily, which would be expanded to six lanes. The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) will need to issue a permit for any roadway expansion across the rail line, and could require that a grade separation be constructed as part of the roadway widening. The need and design of the crossing would be determined during planning for the roadway widening. According to PUC staff, a variety of funding sources are available for construction of grade separations. One concern is that adequate land be reserved to provide the right-of-way for the separation. Because the rail line is located outside of the Plan area and in Sutter County, neither the proposed project nor Placer County can ensure that adequate land is reserved. Sutter County would have jurisdiction over the roadway widening, including the right-of-way for the rail crossing. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-26.)

Under cumulative conditions, the proposed project is projected to increase traffic on Riego Road to an average of 44,800 vehicles per day (see Table 4.7-37). A six-lane roadway would be able to accommodate this level of traffic, so the proposed project would not result in the need for additional widening over the rail line. Nonetheless, as required by Mitigation Measure 4.7-2, the proposed project would pay its fair share toward the roadway widening, including a grade separation if needed, if and when Placer County and Sutter County enter into an enforceable agreement regarding funding of transportation improvements. Because the proposed project’s contribution to cumulative traffic would not trigger the need for additional widening over the rail line, this impact is considered less than significant. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.7-26 to 4.7-27.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-27.)

Significance after Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-27.)

Potential Closure of Locust Road

During the June 26, 2007, Board of Supervisors workshop for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, as well as in prior correspondence and testimony, several residents of the Special Planning Area (SPA) voiced concerns about potentially significant traffic impacts as a result of increased vehicle trips on Locust Road generated by the proposed project. The SPA residents expressed support for the eventual closure of Locust Road to through-traffic as a means of reducing those impacts. One resident suggested that the EIR was deficient for its failure to address “substantial adverse effects on human beings,” namely, the effects of the increased traffic on himself and his neighbors, who would have to endure a lower quality of life due to increased vehicle activity in their neighborhood.

The Board finds that the EIR fully discloses, analyzes and mitigates all potentially significant
traffic impacts of the proposed project, including those to Locust Road. Although that roadway, like many others, would experience increased traffic, the amount of traffic in question would not cause any significant effects on Locust Road. The Board disagrees, moreover, that the EIR fails to properly address “substantial adverse effects on human beings.” Although the gentlemen who made this claim during the June 26th workshop did not cite the provision of CEQA from which he was reading, the Board assumes that it was CEQA Guidelines section 15065, subdivision (a)(4), which requires a lead agency to make a “mandatory finding of significance” where “the environmental effects of a project will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.” (See also Pub. Resources Code, § 21083, subd. (b)(3).) The courts have not construed this “mandatory finding” to apply where the alleged “substantial adverse effects on human beings” at issue were the perceived reduction in quality of life due to increased traffic near one’s home. Although there do not appear to be any published CEQA court cases definitively interpreting the phrase “substantial adverse effects on human beings,” the Board concludes that it does not apply in this context. Notably, CEQA does not apply to purely “social” or “economic” effects. (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15064, subd. (e), 15131.) For this reason, as well as others, the Board assumes that the kind of “substantial adverse effects on human beings” of concern to the Legislature are probably health-related effects, not the kind of effects of concern to the gentleman.

The Board notes, however, that both the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan and the Development Agreement for the Project commit the County, after Specific Plan approval, to preparing a study of the feasibility of the closure of Locust Road. Such a study would assess the environmental consequences of such a closure, as well as the question of whether Locust Road, which extends southward into Sacramento County, is “needed for vehicle traffic.” Such an inquiry is necessary under Vehicle Code section 21101, subdivision (a)(1), which generally prohibits local governments from closing a “highway” except where the highway is “[n]o longer needed for vehicular traffic.” (“Highway” is defined in California Vehicle Code section 360 as “a way or place of whatever nature, publicly maintained and open to the use of the public for purposes of vehicular travel. Highway includes street.”)

H. AIR QUALITY

Standards of Significance

Per Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a project could have a significant adverse air quality impact if project-generated pollutant emissions would:

- Cause a violation of an ambient air quality standard or worsen an existing violation.
- Contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation.
- Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- Conflict with adopted environmental plans, policies, or regulations for air pollutants.
- Expose sensitive receptors to objectionable odors.

(RDEIR, p. 4.8-29.)
In practice, the PCAPCD recommends use of a combination of quantitative and qualitative criteria described below. For the purposes of the Revised Draft EIR, impacts are considered significant if the Specific Plan would:

- Cause emissions from all project-related sources (including mobile sources) to exceed the PCAPCD’s New Source Review Rule, which includes the following thresholds:
  - ROG 82 lb/day
  - NOx 82 lb/day
  - CO 550 lb/day
  - PM$_{10}$ 82 lb/day

- Cause or contribute to local CO concentrations exceeding 20 parts per million (ppm) over a one-hour averaging period or 9 ppm over an eight-hour averaging period;

- Expose sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants that would adversely impact their health and well being; or

- Conflict with or obstruct implementation of any applicable air quality plans.

(RDEIR, p. 4.80-29.)

**Construction Impacts**

**Impact 4.8-1:** Exhaust and fugitive dust emissions will be generated by construction activities in the Specific Plan area, such as excavation and grading, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth. This impact is considered **significant and unavoidable.** (RDEIR, 4.8-30.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the exhaust and fugitive dust emissions generated by construction activities in the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

Emissions associated with proposed construction in the Specific Plan area would be generated by wind blowing over exposed earth caused by earthmoving activities, construction workers traveling to and from the construction sites, heavy-duty construction equipment operation, and application of architectural coatings. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-30.)
Dust from construction activities can cause impacts both locally and regionally. The dry climate of the area during the summer months, combined with the fine, silty soils of the region, create a high potential for dust generation. Increased dustfall and locally elevated levels of PM$_{10}$ near the construction activity are expected. Depending on the weather, soil conditions, the amount of activity taking place at any one time, and the nature of dust control efforts, these impacts could significantly affect existing land uses near the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-30.)

Daily emissions generated during Specific Plan area construction would vary depending on the type and intensity of construction activity. The highest level of construction activity would occur during a combination of activities associated with mass grading, road construction, and vertical construction, including the period during which architectural coatings are applied. Emissions from construction activity are traditionally separated from the operational emissions because the activities normally occur at different times. However, with a project this large, the operational and construction activities would most likely overlap. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-30.)

In 1998 the California Air Resources Board identified particulate matter from diesel-fueled engines as a toxic air contaminant (TAC). Health risks from Toxic Air Contaminants are a function of both concentration and duration of exposure. Construction diesel emissions are, however, temporary, affecting an area for a period of days or perhaps weeks. Additionally, construction related sources are mobile and transient in nature, and the bulk of the emission occurs within the project site at a substantial distance from nearby receptors. Health risks from diesel emissions also require exposure over an extended period of time. Concentration and duration of exposure during construction projects, such as those proposed in the Specific Plan area, would not normally pose unacceptable health risks to nearby residents, citizens, and sensitive receptors. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-30.)

The proposed Specific Plan contains Policy 4.41 requiring that construction comply with PCAPCD rules. However, the policy does not indicate what measures would be taken to reduce dust and air emissions. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-30.)

Average daily construction emissions were estimated for the maximum activity phase of Specific Plan area construction. Table 4.8-7 presents estimated emissions for maximum construction activity level in the Specific Plan area. Maximum project construction emissions would exceed the PCAPCD thresholds of significance for ROG, NO$_x$, CO and PM$_{10}$. (RDEIR, pp. 4.8-30 to 4.8-31.)

The direct air quality impacts of construction in the Specific Plan area are significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-30.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.8-1a Construction contractors shall be required to submit a construction emission/dust control plan for approval by the PCAPCD prior to any ground disturbance. At a minimum, this plan shall include the following measures:
• Water exposed earth surfaces as necessary to eliminate visible dust emissions (at least one water truck will be available for every three pieces of earthmoving equipment);

• Suspend grading operations when wind is sufficient to generate visible dust clouds;

• Pave, use gravel cover or spray a dust control agent on all haul roads;

• Wash down all earthmoving construction equipment daily, and wash down all haul trucks leaving the site;

• Cover all trucks delivering or exporting soil, sand, and other loose materials to ensure that all trucks hauling such materials maintain at least two feet of freeboard;

• Institute measures to reduce wind erosion when site preparation is completed;

• Install sandbags or other erosion control measures to prevent silt runoff onto public roadways;

• Provide graveled, paved or grass-covered areas for construction employee vehicle parking; and

• The site contractor shall retain a CARB certified individual to routinely perform Visible Emissions Evaluations (VEE) to ensure compliance with Rule 228, Fugitive Dust. Fugitive dust shall not exceed 40% opacity and shall not go beyond property boundaries at any time. The designee’s duties shall include holiday and weekend periods when work may not be in progress.

Immediately following any mass grading phase, the following dust control measures shall be implemented:

• Apply soil stabilizers or commence reestablishing ground cover to construction areas within 96 hours of completing grading activities;

• Develop and implement a wind erosion monitoring program for areas which will remain inactive for extended periods; this program should at a minimum provide for weekly monitoring of inactive sites to assess the effectiveness of wind erosion controls.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.8-31 to 4.8-32.)

4.8-1b Contractors shall be required to reduce NOx and ROG emissions by complying with the construction vehicle air pollutant control strategies developed by the PCAPCD. Contractors shall include in the construction contracts the following requirements or measures shown to equally effective:
• Construction equipment operators shall shut off equipment when not in use to avoid unnecessary idling. Generally, vehicle idling should be kept below 10 minutes.

• Contractor’s construction equipment shall be properly maintained and in good working condition.

• The site contractor shall retain a CARB certified individual to routinely evaluate project related off-road and heavy duty on-road equipment emissions for compliance with Rule 202, Visible Emissions.

• The prime contractor shall ensure that emissions from all off-road diesel powered equipment used in the Specific Plan area do not exceed 40% opacity for more than three minutes in any one hour. Any equipment found to exceed the 40% opacity shall be repaired immediately, and the County of Placer and the PCAPCD shall be notified within 48 hours of identification of non-compliant equipment. A visual survey of all in-operation equipment shall be made at least weekly, and a monthly summary of the visual results shall be submitted to the County of Placer and the PCAPCD throughout the duration of construction in the Specific Plan area, except that a monthly summary shall not be required for any 30-day period in which no construction activity occurs. The monthly summary shall include the quantity and type of vehicles surveyed as well as the dates of each survey. The PCAPCD and/or other officials may conduct periodic site inspections to determine compliance. Nothing in this section shall supersede other PCAPCD or state rules or regulations.

• The prime contractor shall submit to the PCAPCD a comprehensive inventory (i.e. make, model, year, emission rating) of all heavy-duty off-road equipment (50 horsepower or greater) that will be used an aggregate of 40 hours or more for the construction project. PCAPCD personnel, with assistance from the California Air Resources Board, will conduct initial Visible Emissions Evaluations of all heavy-duty equipment on the inventory list.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.8-32 to 4.8-33.)

4.8-1c The project shall provide a plan, for approval by the Placer County Air Pollution Control District, demonstrating that the heavy-duty (>50 horsepower) off-road vehicles to be used for any construction projects undertaken within the Specific Plan area over its planning lifetime, including owned, leased and subcontractor vehicles, will achieve a project-wide fleet-averaged 20% NOx reduction and 45% particulate reduction compared to the most recent annual CARB off-road construction fleet average for western Placer County. Acceptable options for reducing emissions may include use of late model engines, low-emission diesel products, alternative fuels, engine retrofit technology, after-treatment products, and/or other options as they become available. Contractors can access the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District’s web site to determine if their off-road fleet meets the requirements listed in this measure.
Construction contractors shall be required to use low-VOC architectural coatings and asphalt in compliance with District Rules and Regulations. Contractors shall also be required to fuel stationary construction equipment with low-sulfur fuels, and use existing power sources (e.g., power poles) or clean fuel generators in place of temporary diesel power generators whenever feasible. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-33.)

4.8-1e Construction contractors shall be required to provide management of construction traffic. Contractors shall include in the construction contracts the following requirements:

- Contractors shall provide temporary traffic control during all phases of construction activities to improve traffic flow (i.e., flag person);
- Contractors shall configure construction parking to minimize traffic interference;
- Contractors shall endeavor to schedule construction activities that affect traffic flow to off-peak hours (e.g., between 7:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. and between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.);
- Contractors shall reroute construction traffic off congested streets; and
- Contractors shall provide dedicated turn lanes for movement of construction equipment on- and off-site.

(RDEIR, p. 4.8-33.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures will substantially reduce construction-related air quality impacts, but not to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-31.)

Off-Site Infrastructure Impacts

Impact 4.8-2: Exhaust and fugitive dust emissions will be generated by construction activities in off-site infrastructure areas, such as excavation and grading, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth. This impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-34.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the
exhaust and fugitive dust emissions generated by construction activities in off-site infrastructure areas. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

Emissions associated with proposed construction of off-site infrastructure would be generated by wind blowing over exposed earth caused by earthmoving activities, construction workers traveling to and from the construction sites, heavy-duty construction equipment operation, and application of architectural coatings. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-34.)

Dust from construction activities can cause impacts both locally and regionally. The dry climate of the area during the summer months, combined with the fine, silty soils of the region, create a high potential for dust generation. Increased dustfall and locally elevated levels of PM10 near the construction activity are expected. Depending on the weather, soil conditions, the amount of activity taking place at any one time, and the nature of dust control efforts, these impacts could significantly affect existing land uses near the off-site utility infrastructure. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-34.)

The degree of activity is unknown at this time, so average daily construction emissions were not estimated for off-site infrastructure construction activity. During maximum construction activity, the primary emissions would be dust from earthmoving activities, and NOx from construction vehicle exhaust. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-34.)

The direct air quality impacts of construction of off-site infrastructure are **significant and unavoidable**. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-34.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

See Mitigation Measures 4.8-1a through 4.8-1e, *supra*.

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the Mitigation Measures 4.8-1a-e will substantially lessen construction-related air quality impacts, *but not to a level that is less than significant*. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-34.)

**Impact 4.8-3:** Activity within the Specific Plan area would result in the generation of both mobile and stationary source air pollutants, increasing total air pollution emissions. This impact is considered **significant and unavoidable**. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-34.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the activity within the Specific Plan area resulting in the generation of both mobile and stationary source air pollutants, thereby increasing total air pollution emissions. No mitigation is available.
to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

Ongoing activity within the Specific Plan area would introduce stationary, area, and mobile sources of criteria air pollutant emissions to the study area. As shown in Table 4.8-7, the primary area and stationary sources would include residential gas heaters, residential fireplaces, residential landscaping equipment, and commercial landscape maintenance equipment. Other area source emissions would include those from residential barbecues and consumer product use; however, emissions from these sources would be small. The proposed Specific Plan contains policies that require the installation of outdoor electrical outlets at residences to encourage the use of electrical landscape maintenance equipment and require the use of natural gas fire places. Other policies designed to reduce air emissions, include requirements for natural gas outlets in backyards, use of low NOx hot water heaters, incorporation of solar heaters where feasible, use of energy efficient window glazings, wall insulation and ventilation methods, use of low VOC paints, and energy efficient building orientation. These measures would partially offset the project impact. For example, electrical landscaping equipment produces fewer emissions than gas-powered equipment, and wood-burning fire places are a large source of air emissions. Energy efficiency in construction reduces the use of electricity and other forms of energy, which reduces regional emissions. Where the Specific Plan clearly provides for self mitigation, those measures are not repeated below. (RDEIR, pp. 4.8-34 to 4.8-35.)

Mobile sources would include exhaust emissions from motor vehicles, and re-entrained dust emissions from motor vehicle travel on paved roads. As discussed above, the proposed Specific Plan provides a network of bicycle trails and lanes and transit facilities that would reduce reliance on vehicular travel. However, motor vehicles would continue to be the primary means of travel. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-35.)

In addition to these direct emission sources, a collection of residential, commercial, and industrial buildings of the magnitude of this project will also affect the ozone production in the area by substantial energy usage from off-site power sources and a distinct potential for creating a “heat island” effect. This is the observed phenomenon that temperatures in urban areas are generally higher than those in the suburbs or in the surrounding vegetation (Akbari, Rosenfeld, and Taha, 1989). One of the causes of this effect is the absorption of sunlight by dark surfaces such as buildings, roofs, and pavement. Heat islands compromise air quality through two mechanisms. First, power plants have to generate the additional electricity to meet the load. Second, the higher air temperatures enhance the formation of smog. The production of ozone requires precursors (NOx and ROG) and, to drive the reaction, sunlight and heat. The ozone reaction occurs more rapidly as the temperature is increased. In Los Angeles, the concentration of ozone appears to increase by approximately 0.75 parts per hundred million per degree Centigrade increase in maximum air temperature (Sailor, 1993). Reducing localized temperatures on and around buildings can mitigate ozone production. In partial response to the “heat island” effect, the Specific Plan has proposed Policy 6.25 that would set parking lot shading standards. However, impacts will remain **significant and unavoidable.** (RDEIR, p. 4.8-35.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.8-3a The following guidelines shall be used by the County during review of future project-specific submittals for non-residential development within the Specific Plan area in order to reduce generation of air pollutants with intent that specified measures be required where feasible and appropriate:

- Include in all new parking lots tree plantings designed to result in 50% shading of parking lot surface areas within 15 years. Incorporated by reference in this measure are the City of Sacramento Parking Lot Tree Shading Design and Maintenance Guidelines dated June 17, 2003 (see EIR Appendix U). Also, see Specific Plan Policy 6.25;

- Equip HVAC units with a PremAir or similar catalyst system, if reasonably available and economically feasible at the time building permits are issued. Catalyst systems are considered feasible if the additional cost is less than 10% of the base HVAC unit cost;

- Install two 110/208 volt power outlets for every two loading docks;

- Promote passive solar building design and landscaping conducive to passive solar energy use (i.e., building orientation in a south to southwest direction where feasible, encouraging planting of deciduous trees on western sides of structures, landscaping with drought-resistant species, and including groundcovers rather than pavement to reduce heat reflection). Landscaping plans shall prohibit the use of liquidambar and eucalyptus trees that produce smog-forming compounds (high emission factors for isoprenes); and

- Implement the following, or equivalent measures, as determined by the County in consultation with the APCD:
  - Establish building guidelines that encourage the use of low-absorptive coatings on all building surfaces and Energy Star roofing products on all roofs, if reasonably available and economically feasible, at the time building permits are issued;
  - Establish paving guidelines that require businesses, if feasible, to pave all privately-owned parking areas with a substance with reflective attributes (albedo = 0.30 or better) similar to cement concrete. The use of a paving substance with reflective attributes similar to concrete is considered feasible under this measure if the additional cost is less than 10% of the cost of applying a standard asphalt product; and
  - Power all off-road equipment used at office, industrial, and commercial uses by the lowest-emission technology reasonably available at the time building permits are issued.
The following measures shall be used singularly or in combination to accomplish an overall reduction of 10 to 20% in residential energy consumption relative to the requirements of State of California Title 24:

- Use of air conditioning systems that are more efficient than Title 24 requirements;

- Use of high-efficiency heating and other appliances, such as water heaters, cooking equipment, refrigerators, and furnaces;

- Installation of photovoltaic rooftop energy systems;

- Use of energy saving compact fluorescent light bulbs;

- Establishment of tree-planting guidelines that require residents to plant trees to shade buildings primarily on the west and south sides of the buildings. Use of deciduous trees (to allow solar gain during the winter) and direct shading of air conditioning systems shall be included in the guidelines; and

- Other new effective technologies and strategies that become available during project development.

Promote a reduction in residential emissions through implementation of the following measure:

- Prohibit any wood-burning fireplaces, woodstoves, or similar wood-burning devices. Homes may be fitted with UL rated natural gas burning appliances if desired. This prohibition shall be included in any CC&Rs that are established.

For all projects, use the lowest-emitting architectural coatings during construction. When zero-VOC coatings are commercially available, they should be used. When only low-VOC coatings are available, they shall be used in lieu of higher-emitting formulations. Design review submittals shall include information concerning the coatings products proposed for use in the project.

Bicycle usage shall be promoted by requiring the following:

- All non-residential projects shall provide bicycle lockers and/or racks;
• All apartment complexes or condominiums without garages shall provide at least two Class I bicycle storage spaces per unit;

• Require residential neighborhoods to be interconnected, with easy access to commercial and recreational land uses. All neighborhoods shall have access to the Class I bicycle trails without having to travel on an arterial street. All schools and public parks (except neighborhood tot lots) shall be connected with a Class I bicycle trail through the open space and greenbelts;

• A pedestrian/bikeway (P/B) Master Plan shall be developed for the entire Specific Plan area. This master plan shall be consistent with the guidelines established in the Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan and in the Specific Plan; and

• As each residential phase is constructed, each subdivision shall install its share of the overall P/B network, and ensure that the layout of each residential phase does not interfere with completion of the overall P/B network. Residential areas adjacent to open space corridors shall provide reasonable access to the Class I P/B trails located in the corridors. These Class I corridors shall provide linkages with the comprehensive network of other trails throughout the Specific Plan area. The P/B Master Plan shall provide linkages from all residential neighborhoods to all commercial areas. Non-vehicular access shall consist of a network of convenient linkages of Class I, II and III trails.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.8-37 to 4.8-38.)

4.8-3f Transit usage and ride sharing shall be promoted by requiring participation in the development of a regional transit system at such time as a system is established and set-asides of land for park-and ride facilities. Fair share participation may consist of dedication of right-of-way, easements, capital improvements, and/or other methods of participation deemed appropriate. In addition, future project design shall ensure that an adequate number of developers in the Specific Plan area provide reservations for future installations of bus turnouts and passenger benches and shelters, to be installed at such time as transit service is established and as demand and service routes warrant. The two transit centers shall be connected with the Class I bicycle trail. The Specific Plan shall provide for set-asides of land for two separate park-and-ride facilities. Construction of the park-and-ride facilities shall be phased over the buildout period of the project, with the first 50 spaces in place prior to issuance of the 3,000th residential building permit. Prior to issuance of the 6,000th residential building permit another 50 spaces shall be provided, followed by 50 more prior to the 9,000th residential building permit. Forty-three more spaces shall be provided prior to issuance of the 12,000 residential building permit for a total of 193 spaces to be constructed (equal to 0.1% of the anticipated daily trip generation of the project). A public transit development fee shall be required for all development projects. The amount of this fee shall be based upon the traffic generation potential of each project. A dial-a-ride transportation system shall be established to reduce individual vehicle trips and establish data for the eventual formation of a transit system within the Specific Plan area.
An Air Quality and Transportation System Management (TSM) Plan shall be prepared for the Specific Plan to implement all feasible means of reducing Specific Plan area emissions. This plan shall provide for eventual public transit and implementation of trip reduction strategies that coordinate with surrounding areas. A Transportation Management Association (TMA) shall be established that shall be funded by the developer and all businesses located within the Specific Plan area. The TSM plan shall be updated annually by TMA staff to demonstrate compliance with all air quality requirements, and to incorporate the latest state-of-the-art techniques and strategies to reduce emissions. Initially, the TMA shall provide each home and business with an information packet that will contain, at a minimum, the following information:

- Commute options: to inform Specific Plan area occupants of the alternative travel amenities provided, including ridesharing and public transit availability/schedules;
- Maps showing Specific Plan area pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian paths to community centers, shopping areas, employment areas, schools, parks, and recreation areas;
- Instructions on how to use TMA services that will facilitate trip reduction opportunities; and
- Information regarding PCAPCD programs to reduce county-wide emissions.

(RDEIR, p. 4.8-38 to 4.8-39.)

4.8-3g All projects requiring issuance of residential and non-residential building permits shall participate in an off-site mitigation program coordinated through the PCAPCD to offset NOx and ROG emissions not mitigated through on-site measures.

The PCAPCD, on behalf of Placer County, will determine air quality mitigation fees using calculation methodology established in practice and routinely applied to other, similar, contemporaneous land use development projects. The off-site mitigation program, coordinated through the PCAPCD, is designed to offset the project’s long-term ozone precursor emissions. Monetary incentives shall be provided to sources of air pollutant emissions within the project’s general vicinity that are not required by law to reduce their emissions. Therefore, the reductions are real, quantifiable and implement provisions of the 1994 State Implementation Plan. The off-site mitigation program reduces emissions within the region that would not otherwise be eliminated and thereby “offsets” the project’s increase to regional emissions. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-39.)

4.8-3h School districts shall be encouraged to incorporate the following measures into the design, construction, and operation of elementary, middle and high school buildings and facilities:

- Install bicycle lockers and racks at all appropriate locations;
• Post signage prohibiting the idling of diesel vehicles for longer than five minutes;

• Construct at least one bus stop at a convenient location to be used for either fixed route service within the Specific Plan area or commuter service;

• Provide a community notice board and information kiosk with information about community events, ride-sharing, and commute alternatives;

• Provide preferential parking for carpool and hybrid vehicles (vehicles with self-charging electric engines); and

• Incorporate solar water heating systems and HVAC PremAir or similar catalyst systems in building design.

(RDEIR, p. 4.8-39.)

4.8-3i The following measures shall be incorporated into the design, construction, and operation of public park areas:

• The pedestrian/bikeway (P/B) master plan shall provide at least one Class I linkage to all school sites;

• Additional Class I and II linkages shall be provided so as to provide convenient access to/from the park sites;

• Install bicycle lockers and racks at all appropriate locations;

• Provide a community notice board and information kiosk with information about community events, ride-sharing, and commute alternatives;

(RDEIR, pp. 4.8-39 to 4.8-40.)

4.8-3j Prohibit open burning throughout the Specific Plan area. Include this prohibition in any project CC&Rs that are established. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-40.)

4.8-3k The County may substitute different air pollution control measures for individual projects, that are equally effective or superior to those proposed herein, as new technology and/or other feasible measures become available in the course of buildout of the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-40.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the mitigation measures above will substantially reduce air quality impacts related to human activity within the Specific Plan area, but not to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-35.)
Impact 4.8-4: In addition to Specific Plan-related vehicular emissions impacts, the additional vehicles on the local roadway systems would add a localized CO pollution increment at local intersections. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-40.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The microscale impacts that may occur from Specific Plan implementation were calculated using a screening form of the air quality model CALINE-4 (Caltrans, 1989). CALINE-4 is a dispersion model that predicts CO impacts near roadways. Its purpose is to help planners protect public health from the adverse effects of excessive CO exposure. CO emissions are typically highest near intersections, where vehicles are frequently idling and accelerating and are closely related to the Level of Service (LOS). The worst-case CO concentrations were calculated for five intersections, chosen as worst-case locations based on total traffic and congestion levels. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-40.)

Under existing conditions, two of the five intersections are shown to exceed the State/federal ambient eight-hour standards. Since the project area is an attainment area for carbon monoxide, this result is probably due to the conservative nature of the CALINE-4 screening model, and would only apply to locations very near the intersections in question. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-41.)

Predicted concentrations in 2015 with the addition of project traffic are below current concentrations, despite increased traffic, due to the overall reduction in vehicle emission rates in the future. The results show that the Specific Plan will have a negligible effect on CO concentrations in the project area and would not cause or substantially contribute to projected violations of the State/federal ambient air quality standards. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-41.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-41.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.8-5: Sewer lift station operations within the Specific Plan area could cause odors and the potential for odor complaints. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-42.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

In the event wastewater from service Shed A is directed to the Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (DCWWTP) a major lift station will be necessary in the western portion of the Specific Plan area in the vicinity of 20th Street (Figure 3-17A). Land uses on two sides of the lift station would be in open space and parks; however, to the north and east, the site would be proximate to residential uses. Odors could be experienced in proximity to the lift station due to wastewater pumping. Potential odor objections could come from general cleaning activities, anaerobic conditions in sewer lines, or the use of solvents. Odorous gases resulting from raw sewage commonly include hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, and certain organic compounds. (RDEIR, pp. 4.8-41 to 4.8-42.)

PCAPCD Rule 205 regulates odors according to their potential to result in a nuisance. No quantitative thresholds are provided. Because sensitive receptors (residential uses) are proximate to the proposed lift station, the potential for odor complaints is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-42.)

Mitigation Measure:

4.8.5 Notice shall be provided in the recorded Covenants, Codes and Restrictions of all lots created within 500 feet of the proposed lift station that there is the potential for odors to result from lift station operations and maintenance. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-42.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Exposure to wastewater odors is typically not a public health concern. In addition, proper operation and maintenance of lift station components will reduce the potential for odors to relatively rare occasions. Response to odors is a subjective matter and difficult to predict. Awareness of the potential for odor to result by persons purchasing property near the lift station would, however, assist in reducing this impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-42.)

Off-Site Infrastructure Impact

Impact 4.8-6: Increased volumes of wastewater requiring treatment could cause odors and air quality degradation due to pump station and wastewater treatment plant operations. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-42.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the air quality impacts related to additional wastewater activities at the two wastewater treatment plants. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect related to odors from lift station operations as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

With the construction of multiple uses within the Specific Plan area, wastewater treatment plant expansions may occur at both the Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (DCWWTP) and Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP). These plant expansions could potentially cause odor and air quality concerns. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-42.)

An increase in treatment capacity at both WWTPs would likely result in an increase in stationary and mobile source emissions of criteria pollutants. In addition, increased wastewater processing rates may result in a raise in stationary source emissions of air toxics, warranting the need of a health risk assessment. Air contaminants would potentially be generated from the vaporization of volatile liquids present in wastewater and solids, and the flaring of digester gas. With an increase in treatment capacity, there is also a potential for increases in operations-related ROG, NOx, and PM10 emissions in all stages associated with wastewater treatment activities. Reducing the total stationary and mobile source emissions and making sure they do not exceed any of the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District’s significance thresholds can help mitigate air pollution amounts; however, these impacts would still be considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.8-42 to 4.8-43.)

Odor impacts would likely occur at both WWTPs due to increased capacity. Odors could also occur in proximity to the two proposed lift stations to be constructed and operated between the project and the DCWWTP (Figure 3-6). Although both lift stations are off-site and in an open space area, they will eventually be proximate to sensitive receptors in the Riolo Vineyards and Silver Creek developments (Figure 4.1-2 in the Revised Draft EIR). (RDEIR, p. 4.8-43.)

Odors typically occur in fresh or incompletely treated wastewater and liquid process side-stream, or raw sludge, screenings, grit, and skimmings containing malodorous matter, and emissions from treatment and pumping processes. In addition, major sources of odors at wastewater treatment plants typically include the headworks, flow equalization basin, digesters, and sludge dewatering facilities. Other potential objectionable odors would be from general cleaning activities, anaerobic conditions in treatment units, lift stations, or sewer lines, or the use of solvents. Existing and future odorous gases resulting from raw and partially treated wastewater in the DCWWTP, SRWTP, and lift stations commonly include hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, and certain organic compounds. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-43.)
The SRWTP treatment facilities currently occupy approximately 900 acres near the center of a 3,500-acre site. Permanent bufferlands surround the existing treatment facilities and planned expansion areas of the SRWTP site to reduce the potential for odor complaints and to protect against urban encroachment. SRCSD has established a 1,000- to 3,000-foot-wide residential incompatibility zone within the northern, eastern, and southeastern boundaries of the SRWTP property. The SRWTP bufferlands are undeveloped and consist primarily of cultivated and undisturbed grassland. Future uses of this land are limited by SRCSD to natural habitat improvements, agricultural production, and other uses that enhance the land’s buffering function. Although DCWWTP is situated on a smaller site, 104 acres, surrounding land uses are predominantly non-residential, although there are scattered rural residential uses north and east of the plant site. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-43.)

PCAPCD Rule 205 regulates odors according to their potential to result in a nuisance. No quantitative thresholds are provided. Although there has been a positive history of infrequent odor complaints from both WWTPs, the project still has the potential to create additional odors. In addition, the two wastewater treatment facilities are not within the jurisdiction of Placer County and the County cannot compel other jurisdictions to adopt the recommended mitigation. This impact is therefore considered potentially significant and unavoidable as to the wastewater treatment plants; however, the two proposed lift stations are within the jurisdiction of Placer County. Impacts related to the two proposed lift stations are potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-43.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.8-6a The operators shall obtain an Authority to Construct/NSR permit and a Permit to Operate from the air district with jurisdiction prior to addition and operation of new facilities. (RDDEIR, p. 4.8-44.)

4.8-6b Potential odor effects shall be mitigated by installing or maintaining existing odor control systems, including odor scrubbers or chemical addition, for all screening facilities and grit/primary sedimentation facilities. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-44.)

4.8.6c The County shall ensure that notice is provided in the recorded Covenants, Codes and Restrictions of all lots created within 500 feet of the proposed lift stations that there is the potential for odors to result from lift station operations and maintenance. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-44.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the Mitigation Measures 4.8-6a and 4.8-6b will substantially reduce air quality impacts related to additional wastewater activities at the two wastewater treatment plants, but not to a level that is less than significant.

Response to odors is a subjective matter and thus is difficult to predict. Awareness of the potential for odors to result from lift station operations and maintenance by persons purchasing
property in proximity to lift stations as required under Mitigation Measure 4.8-6c would, however, assist in reducing this impact to a *less than significant level*.

**Cumulative Impacts**

**Impact 4.8-7:** Cumulative air quality impacts would result from Specific Plan development. This impact is considered *significant and unavoidable*. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-44.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the cumulative air quality impacts resulting from Specific Plan development. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

As growth continues in the Sacramento Valley, attainment of air quality standards will become more difficult. Proposed cumulative development planned in Placer and South Sutter counties by 2025 exceeds 160,000 new homes, 27 million square feet of retail space, 30 million square feet of office space an 42 million square feet of industrial space (See Table 4.7-13). Some of this cumulative development was not anticipated in the 1994 State Implementation Plan, the federal regional air quality plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-44.)

The proposed Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative air emissions by allowing for substantially greater development in the Specific Plan area than currently exists. The amount of mobile and stationary emissions would be substantially greater than what would be generated under existing conditions, or future conditions if the Specific Plan area were to remain rural. The Placer County APCD has adopted a cumulative threshold of significance of 10 pounds per day for ozone precursors (ROG and NOx). Project emissions of these two pollutants, after mitigation, would exceed this threshold by a substantial amount. Consequently, the proposed Specific Plan would contribute considerably to air quality degradation, and impede the region’s ability to attain air quality standards. The cumulative impacts of the project, together with other foreseeable regional development, would be *significant and unavoidable*, and the project’s contribution would be *cumulatively considerable*. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-44.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

See Mitigation Measures 4.8-1a-e, 4.8-3a-k, 4.8-6a-c, *supra*. 
Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would substantially lessen the project’s incremental contribution to significant cumulative impacts, but not to a level that is less than cumulatively considerable. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-45.)

**Impact 4.8-8:** Proposed Specific Plan traffic would contribute to cumulative localized CO pollution increment at local intersections. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-45.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Cumulative hourly CO concentrations in parts per million (ppm) were calculated based on traffic volumes presented in Section 4.7 of the Revised Draft EIR. Table 4.8-8 shows the input data and assumptions used for the CALINE-4 runs. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-45.)

Two cumulative runs (with and without the project) were conducted assuming project and cumulative traffic increases occurred by the year 2025. Results of the model runs for all scenarios are shown in Table 4.8-9 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-45.)

Predicted concentrations in 2025 with the addition of project traffic are below current concentrations and existing plus project, despite increased traffic, due to the overall reduction in vehicle emission rates in the future. The results show that the Specific Plan will have a negligible cumulative effect on CO concentrations and would not cause or substantially contribute to projected violations of the State/federal ambient air quality standards. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-45.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.8-45.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

I. NOISE

Standards of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that significant noise impacts could occur when:
• A project exposes people to noise levels in excess of standards established in local noise ordinances or general plan noise elements,

• A project causes a substantial permanent or temporary increase in noise levels above levels existing without the project.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.9-12 to 4.9-13.)

Following is a discussion of local noise level criteria; the concept of substantial noise increases; and the standard of significance for construction noise, existing industrial/commercial noise that may affect the project, on-site traffic noise, off-site traffic noise and aircraft noise. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-13.)

LOCAL NOISE LEVEL CRITERIA

• For transportation-related noise sources (e.g., traffic) the standard of significance is 60 dB DNL at noise-sensitive receptors. This criterion is used by Placer, Sutter and Sacramento Counties and the City of Roseville. Traffic noise impacts due to the project could potentially extend into these jurisdictions. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-13.)

• Non-transportation-related noise sources (e.g., industry) that could potentially cause significant noise impacts would only be present within the Specific Plan area. Therefore, the 60 dB DNL criterion applied by Placer County is the standard of significance for non-transportation-related noise sources affecting noise-sensitive receptors. The Placer County General Plan, Noise Element standards for non-transportation-related sources and transportation-related sources are presented in Tables 9-1 and 9-3, respectively, of the Noise Element. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-13.)

Construction Noise

The Placer County Environmental Health Services “Standard Construction Noise Conditions of Approval” (EH-15) are:

Construction noise emanating from any construction activities for which a Grading or Building Permit is required is prohibited on Sundays and Federal Holidays, and shall only occur:

a. Monday through Friday, 6:00 am to 8:00 pm (during daylight savings)
b. Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 8:00 pm (during standard time)
c. Saturdays, 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.

(RDEIR, p. 4.9-13.)
Existing Industrial/Commercial Noise

The 60 dB DNL exterior and 45 dB DNL interior criteria apply to existing industrial/commercial facilities that may affect residential uses in the proposed Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-13.)

Aircraft Noise

The 60 dB DNL exterior and 45 dB DNL interior criteria apply to aircraft noise that may affect residential uses in the proposed Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-13.)

On-Site Traffic Noise

The 60 dB DNL exterior and 45 dB DNL interior criteria apply to new noise-sensitive land uses in the proposed Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-13.)

Off-Site Traffic Noise

The 60 dB DNL exterior and 45 dB DNL interior criteria apply to existing noise-sensitive uses outside the Specific Plan area that may be affected by increased traffic attributable to the Specific Plan. Also, substantial increases in traffic noise levels attributable to the Specific Plan are significant impacts. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-14.)

Substantial Noise Increases

Transportation-Related Noise Sources. CEQA does not define the word “substantial” as used in the Guidelines. Some guidance to the concept of substantial noise increases was provided in 1992 by the Federal Interagency Committee on Noise (FICON), which addressed changes in noise levels resulting from aircraft operations. Their recommendations are based upon studies that relate aircraft and traffic noise levels to the percentage of persons highly annoyed by the noise. The rationale for the FICON recommendations is that it is possible to consistently describe the annoyance of people exposed to transportation noise in terms of the DNL and CNEL. Annoyance is a summary measure of the general adverse reaction of people to noise that generates speech interference, sleep disturbance, or interference with the desire for a tranquil environment. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-14.)

Although the FICON recommendations were specifically developed to address aircraft noise impacts, they are used in this analysis for all transportation noise sources that are described in terms of cumulative noise exposure descriptors such as the DNL and CNEL. These descriptors define noise exposure in terms of average noise exposure during a 24-hour period with penalties added to noise that occurs during the nighttime or evening Table 4.9-3 of the Revised Draft EIR summarizes the FICON recommendations. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-14.)

Non-Transportation-Related Noise Sources. For these types of noise sources, it is common to assume that a minimum 3 dB DNL increase in noise levels represents a substantial increase in ambient noise levels. This is based on laboratory tests that indicated a 3 dB DNL increase in the minimum change perceptible to most people. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-14.)
**Impact 4.9-1:** Aircraft noise levels will not exceed adopted noise standards within the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.9-15.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The analysis of aircraft noise impacts for McClellan Park is based on information in the Final Supplemental EIR for the McClellan Air Force Base Draft Final Reuse Plan (SEIR) (County of Sacramento/EDAW, November 2002). In that EIR, aircraft noise exposure in the airport environs was analyzed for future conditions in accordance with the methodology for preparing aircraft noise exposure maps contained in FAA Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 150. The FAA’s Integrated Noise Model (INM), Version 6.0, was used to evaluate potential aircraft noise impacts. A detailed breakdown of projected aircraft operations based on an estimated fleet mix and the timing of operations was used as input to the noise modeling program that evaluated overall noise impacts at the McClellan Park Airport. Noise modeling takes into account the time of day when noise is generated, as well as the level of noise generated. Noise generated during evening hours is weighted more heavily than daytime noise, and nighttime noise is weighted more heavily still. Thus, the noise levels calculated for the McClellan Park Airport take into account the greater disturbance that would result from nighttime operations. The SEIR concluded that at buildout of McClellan Park, the total area within the 65 dBA CNEL contour would decrease from approximately 10,000 acres to 1,000 acres, and the residential area would decrease from approximately 2,400 acres to 23 acres. (RDEIR, pp. 4.9-14 to 4.9-15.)

A comparison of projected operations with baseline information in the SEIR shows that the percentage of evening operations would be reduced from 16.5% of total operations to approximately 8% in 2009, and 9% in 2022. Because total operations under both interim and buildout conditions would be reduced from baseline conditions, however, the actual number of operations during all periods except nighttime operations would be reduced. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-15.)

Figures 4.9-4 and 4.9-5 in the Revised Draft EIR show the noise contours for McClellan Park noise exposure for 2009 and 2022, respectively. Both figures show that the Specific Plan area will be outside the 60 dB CNEL contour in 2009 and 2022. Since the standard of significance is 60 dB DNL (as previously noted, DNL and CNEL are virtually identical noise descriptors for most situations), aircraft noise impacts due to possible future McClellan Park activities will be *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.9-15.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-15.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.9-2:** Commercial uses, business parks, schools, public parks, fire stations, wastewater treatment plants, lift stations, the proposed County corporation yard and other stationary sources could result in increased noise levels and exceed adopted noise standards. This impact is considered *potentially significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.9-15.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Noise sources commonly associated with commercial/business park property and other stationary activity include air conditioning units, trash compactors, fans, compressors, heavy equipment operation, and truck deliveries. In addition, schools and public parks can cause excessive noise generated by the presence of playgrounds, public gatherings, alarms, and bells. Fire stations can also generate excess noise related to alarms, sirens, and equipment use. Depending on the specific noise sources associated with the use and their proximity to noise-sensitive uses, impacts are *potentially significant.*  (RDEIR, p. 4.9-15.)

Wastewater treatment plants and sewer lift stations generate some noise during operations, typically from fans, pumps and odor scrubbers. Although the location of equipment to be added to the DCWWTP site is unknown, Roseville Regional Wastewater Treatment Service Area Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report that the nearest sensitive receptor to noise generating equipment was approximately 500 feet. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-15.)

With the type of equipment used at the DCWWTP, the effect was found to be *less than significant* (noise would be about 44 dB DNL at the nearest sensitive receptor with a threshold of 60 dB DNL). At the SRWTP, as reported in the discussion of Impact 4.1-11 in Section 4.1 of the Revised Draft EIR, permanent bufferlands surround the existing treatment facilities and planned expansion areas of the SRWTP site to reduce the potential for noise complaints to a *less than significant level*  (RDEIR, p. 4.9-16.)

In the event wastewater from service Shed A is directed to the DCWWTP, a major lift station will be necessary in the western portion of the Specific Plan area in the vicinity of 20th Street (Figure 3-17A). Land uses on two sides of the lift station would be in open space and parks; however, to the north and east, the site would be proximate to residential uses. Noise impacts could also occur in proximity to the two proposed lift stations to be constructed and operated between the project and the DCWWTP (Figure 3-6). Although both lift stations are off-site and in an open space area, they will eventually be proximate to sensitive receptors in the Riolo
Vineyards and Silver Creek developments (Figure 4.1-2). Noise impacts from sewer lift stations in proximity to sensitive receptors are potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-16.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.9-2 When specific uses are proposed, they shall be reviewed for their potential to produce significant noise impacts and, as required, noise studies shall be conducted to determine the most effective and practical mitigation measures. Mitigation measures shall be applied to assure that new stationary sources do not exceed adopted noise standards. Mitigation measures shall be consistent with the Noise Element of the Placer County General Plan, including use of setbacks, barriers, and other standard noise mitigation measures. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-16.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Commercial uses, business parks, schools, public parks, fire stations, lift stations, the County corporation yard and other stationary source noise impacts can be reduced to a less than significant level by implementing the above mitigation measure. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-16.)

Impact 4.9-3: Noise from construction-related activities in the Specific Plan area and in off-site infrastructure areas may exceed adopted noise standards. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-16.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

During the construction of the project, noise from construction activities within the Specific Plan area and from off-site roads, water and sewer lines and related infrastructure would potentially affect noise-sensitive land uses in the immediate area. Activities involved in construction would generate noise levels at 50 feet as indicated by Table 4.9-4. Construction activities would potentially affect noise-sensitive land uses in the immediate area. Construction activities would be temporary in nature and would most likely occur only during the daytime hours. Construction noise could result in annoyance or sleep disruption for nearby residents if nighttime operations were to occur, or if equipment is not properly muffled or maintained. These impacts are potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-16.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.9-3a The hours of operation of noise-producing equipment shall comply with Placer County’s “Standard Construction Noise Condition of Approval.” Effective mufflers shall be fitted
to gas- and diesel-powered equipment to reduce noise levels as much as possible. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-17.)

4.9-3b As part of the project plans and specifications, the construction contractor shall prepare and implement a blasting plan. Primary components of the plan shall consist of the following applicable items:

- Identification of blast officer.
- Limits on blasting activities. Blasting activities will be limited to Monday through Friday.
- Scaled drawings of blast locations, and neighboring buildings, streets, or other locations that could be inhabited.
- Blasting notification procedures, lead times, and list of those notified. Public notification to potential affected vibration receptors describing the expected extent and duration of the blasting.
- Description of means for transportation and on-site storage and security of explosives in accordance with local, State, and federal regulations.
- Minimum acceptable weather conditions for blasting and safety provisions for potential stray current (if electric detonation).
- Traffic control standards and traffic safety measures (if applicable).
- Requirement for provision and use of personal protective equipment.
- Minimum standoff distances and description of blast impact zones and procedures for clearing and controlling access to blast danger.
- Procedures for handing, setting, wiring, and firing explosives. Also, the plan should include procedures for handling misfires per Federal code.
- Type and quantity of explosives and description of detonation device. Sequence and schedule of blasting rounds, including general method of excavation, lift heights, etc.
- Methods of matting or covering of blast area to prevent flyrock and excessive air blast pressure.
- Description of blast vibration and air blast monitoring program.
- Dust control measures in compliance with applicable air pollution control regulation (to interface with general construction dust control plan).
• **Emergency Action Plan** to provide emergency telephone numbers and directions to medical facilities. Procedures for action in the event of injury.

• **Material Safety Data Sheets** for each explosive or other hazardous materials to be used.

• **Evidence of licensing, experience, and qualification of blasters.**

• **Description of insurance for the blasting work.**

The blasting plan shall also include the following applicable noise reducing measures:

• **The blasting plan shall establish vibration limits in order to protect structures from blasting activities and identify specific monitoring points.** At a minimum, a pre-blast survey will be conducted at any potentially affected structures and underground utilities within 500 feet of a blast area, as well as the nearest commercial or residential structure, prior to blasting.

• **The blasting plan shall include visual inspection of the structures that could be affected, documentation of structures by photographs, video, and a level survey of the ground floor of structures or the crown of major and critical utility lines.** This document shall be reviewed with the individual owners prior to any blasting operations. PCWA and affected property owners shall be notified at least 48 hours prior to the visual inspections.

• **Vibration and settlement threshold criteria** (for example peak particle velocity of 0.5 inches per second) shall be submitted by the blaster to the County for review and approval during the design process. If the settlement or vibration criteria are exceeded at any time or if damage is observed at any of the structures or utilities, then blasting will immediately cease and the County immediately notified. The stability of segmental retaining walls, existing slopes, creek canals, etc. will be monitored and any evidence of instability due to blasting will result in immediate termination of blasting. The blaster will modify the blasting procedures or use alternative means of excavating in order to reduce the vibrations to below the threshold values, prevent further settlement, slope instability, and prevent further damage.

• **Air blast overpressure limits** will be set and monitoring shall be conducted at the property line closest to the blast and at other above-ground structures identified in the blasting plan for vibration monitoring. Air blast overpressure limits shall be in accordance with applicable laws and shall be established to prevent damage to adjacent properties, new construction, and to prevent injuries to persons on-site and off-site.

• **Prior to full-scale production blasting,** the blaster shall conduct a series of test blasts at the sites where blasting is to occur. The tests will start with reduced
charge weights and will increase incrementally to that of a full-scale production round. Monitoring shall be conducted as described in the blasting plan.

- Post-construction monitoring of structures shall be performed to identify (and repair if necessary) all damage, if any, from blasting vibrations. Any damage will be documented by photograph, video, etc. This documentation shall be reviewed with the individual property owners.

- Reports of the results of the blast monitoring shall be provided to the County, the local fire department, and owners of any buried utilities on or adjacent to the site within 24 hours following blasting. Reports documenting damage, excessive vibrations, etc. shall be provided to the County, PCWA and affected property owners.

(SPPRDEIR, pp. 6.3-13 to 6.3-15.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Construction-related noise impacts can be reduced to a less than significant level by implementing the above mitigation measure. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-17.)

**Impact 4.9-4:** Noise levels within Specific Plan area due to project-generated traffic will exceed adopted noise standards. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-17.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Table 4.9-5 in the Revised Draft EIR shows traffic noise levels at 75 feet from road centers and distances to noise contours within Specific Plan area for Existing Plus Project development conditions. The 75-foot distance represents the nearest possible location of a noise-sensitive receptor to the road, and therefore represents worst-case potential noise exposure (Note: DNL values shown are rounded to 1 dB. Contour distances are calculated based DNL values calculated to 0.1 dB). Appendix K of the Revised Draft EIR contains calculation sheets for determining noise contours. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-17.)

Table 4.9-5 shows that worst-case traffic noise levels within the Specific Plan area will exceed 60 dB DNL along all study roads. Most of these roadway segments would be fronted by non-residential uses, which would be subject to noise levels in excess of the Specific Plan standard for such uses (70 dB DNL). Residential uses are planned along the easternmost segment of Baseline, and along Walerga and Watt Avenue. Noise levels in these areas would exceed the County (and Specific Plan) standard by 3 to 11 dB. The proposed Specific Plan requires noise studies in areas that would be subjected to noise levels above County or Specific Plan standards.
The Specific Plan also requires appropriate design and construction techniques to achieve the interior noise standards for residential uses. Furthermore, the Specific Plan requires the submission of site-specific noise studies as part of the Subsequent Conformity Review process described in Chapter Two of this EIR. This is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, pp. 4.9-17 to 4.9-18.)

On-site traffic noise impacts could be reduced by construction of noise barriers where sensitive land uses abut roads producing significant noise levels. In some locations, this could require sound attenuating barriers in excess of 10 feet in height, depending on lot design and final grading. However, the policies of the Placer County General Plan discourage the use of sound walls. The General Plan encourages the use of setbacks, building orientation, noise barriers, and the standard noise mitigations contained in the Placer County Acoustical Design Manual. The General Plan (Policy 9.A.12) further provides that where noise mitigation measures are required to achieve adopted standards, the emphasis shall be placed upon site planning and project design. The use of noise barriers shall be considered only after all other practical design-related noise mitigation measures have been integrated into the project. In response to the General Plan, the Specific Plan proposes to limit use of sound walls for noise mitigation purposes and encourages the use of a combination of noise barriers, including berms and landscaping in combination with lower height walls. All future noise attenuating barriers would be required to comply with the Specific Plan, including the size of landscape lots (setbacks) along major roadways. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-18.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.9-4a Site-specific acoustical analyses shall be conducted when actual roadway design and tentative subdivision map design are proposed and grading is established to determine setbacks and any other measures (e.g. berms, site design, location of structures, noise walls/barriers) required to reduce traffic noise to level that meet County and Specific Plan noise standards, and Specific Plan design standards. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-18.)

4.9-4b Noise-reducing paving material (such as rubberized asphalt) shall be used during the reconstruction/widening of Baseline Road along the full frontage of the SPA to further reduce traffic-related noise. Various studies have shown that rubberized asphalt can reduce roadway noise by 3dB or more as compared to conventional asphalt paving material. (Supplement to the FEIR, Response to Comment 51C.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures will reduce on-site traffic noise impacts to a less than significant level by ensuring that interior and exterior noise standards are achieved. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-18.)

Impact 4.9-5: Off-site noise levels due to traffic generated by development of the Specific Plan area could be substantial resulting in noise levels that adversely affect sensitive receptors at one or more locations. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-18.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the off-site traffic noise levels generated by development of the Specific Plan area. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Table 4.9-6 shows off-site traffic noise levels for Existing Plus Specific Plan area development conditions along some of the major roadways in proximity to the project. This condition assumes that the full effects of development will occur instantaneously, and therefore presents an unrealistic assessment of noise impacts. As shown in Table 4.9-2, noise levels along the roadways identified would increase by 0 to 15 dB. The largest increase, on 16th Street, would be 15 dB, which is substantial. In addition, it is possible that other roadways more distant from the project area and outside the jurisdiction of Placer County may also experience increases in noise levels that could affect sensitive receptors. This is considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-18.)

Mitigation Measures:

Alternatives for mitigating traffic noise at existing off-site sensitive receptor locations are construction of sound walls/barriers, relocation or demolition of adversely affected residences, and sound insulation of adversely affected residences. Usually, construction of sound walls is the most practical and cost-effective way to reduce traffic noise levels where such walls are feasible. However, some of the roadways that would be subject to traffic noise increases due to the proposed project already have sound walls in place. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-19.)

The scattered residences located along 16th Street north of Elverta Road have access to Elverta Road. A sound wall would block their access and therefore would not be feasible. This condition could also exist along other roadways outside the immediate project area. Other means of mitigation (e.g., demolition or sound insulation) for this type of off-site noise impact are usually considered undesirable. In some locations it may be feasible to install sound walls where none exist; however, in-depth discussions would be required with affected landowners to determine the desirability of such modifications. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-19.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Some of the affected residences along 16th Street and others more distant from the project would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. However, no feasible mitigation measures have been identified. Therefore, the potential noise impacts due to off-site traffic increases are considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-19.)
Cumulative Impacts

Impact 4.9-6: The proposed Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative noise increases in the Specific Plan area due to the increase in traffic. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 49-20.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Table 4.9-7 in the Revised Draft EIR shows traffic noise levels at 75 feet from road centers and distances to noise contours for the year 2025 Plus Project conditions within the Specific Plan area. With one exception, noise levels are projected to exceed 70 dB DNL along the study segments. Consequently, residential and non-residential development along these roadways could be exposed to unacceptable noise levels. This is a significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-20.)

Mitigation Measures:

See Mitigation Measure 4.9-4, supra.

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.9-4 would reduce on-site traffic noise impacts to a less than cumulatively considerable (i.e. less than significant) level. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-20.)

Impact 4.9-7: The proposed Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative increases in off-site noise levels due to traffic. This impact is considered significant. (RDIER, p. 4.9-20.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with cumulative increases in off-site noise levels due to traffic. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Explanation:

Table 4.9-8 shows off-site traffic noise levels for 2025 Plus Specific Plan area development conditions along some of the major roadways in proximity to the project. A comparison of
Tables 4.9-6 and 4.9-8 shows that even without the proposed Specific Plan, noise levels on study roadways would increase by 1 to 15 dB, which would be a significant cumulative impact. The proposed Specific Plan would not have a measurable effect on noise along most of the study roadways, but would increase noise levels by 1 to 3 dB on several segments, including 16th Street, which is projected to experience an increase from 49 dB DNL under existing conditions to 67 dB DNL under cumulative plus Specific Plan conditions. In addition, it is possible that other roadways more distant from the project area and outside the jurisdiction of Placer County may also experience an increase in noise level that could affect sensitive receptors. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would contribute substantially to cumulative noise increases, and this cumulative impact would be significant, and the project’s contribution would be cumulatively considerable. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-20.)

Mitigation Measures:

As discussed above, the scattered residences located along 16th Street north of Elverta Road have access to Elverta Road. A sound wall would block their access and therefore would not be feasible. In some locations it may be feasible to install sound walls where none exist; however, in-depth discussions would be required with affected landowners to determine the desirability of such modifications. Other means of mitigation (e.g., demolition or sound insulation) for this type of off-site noise impact are usually considered undesirable. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-21.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Some of the affected residences along 16th Street and others more distant from the project would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Moreover, no feasible mitigation measures have been identified. Therefore, off-site cumulative noise impacts from off-site traffic increases are significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.9-21.)

J. POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING

4.10.2 Population

Standards of Significance:

A project is generally viewed as having an adverse impact on population if it has the potential to substantially alter the location, distribution, density or growth rate of the population of an area, thus increasing the likelihood of adverse environmental impacts. For the purposes of the Revised Draft EIR, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact would occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

• Exceed the regional population projections.

• Create substantial unplanned growth or concentration of people.
**Impact 4.10-1:** Development of the proposed Specific Plan area would increase the population of western Placer County. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-7.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted the current *Placer County General Plan* on August 14, 1994 (Resolution No. 94-237). The Board also adopted a Resolution amending the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* to include the West Placer Specific Plan area (Resolution No. 94-238). As part of the latter resolution, the Board found that the General Plan Environmental Impact Report had adequately addressed the amendment to the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan*. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-7.)

As discussed in Exhibit 1 to Resolution No. 94-238 (included as Appendix D of the Revised Draft EIR), the proposed Specific Plan area was envisioned to be a mixed-use community including residential, retail commercial, and business/professional uses, as well as public facilities such as parks, schools, and open space. The resolution and exhibit indicated development in the Specific Plan area would accommodate a maximum of 14,132 dwelling units “… although this number may not be realized due to site constraints, inclusion of buffers, and other factors that may limit developable land.” (RDEIR, p. 4.10-7.)

The 1994 *Placer County General Plan EIR* did not attempt to estimate the additional population attributable to the additional housing units in the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan*. The Background Report for Housing, however, indicated that the number of persons per household varied in the unincorporated areas of the county based on type of housing, and whether the housing was renter-occupied. Based on an anticipated decrease in the number of persons per household, the Background Report used 2.5 persons per household for the growth scenarios in the General Plan (*Placer County General Plan Background Report*, Volume I, page 2-7 and Table 2-7). Given the Specific Plan’s proposal of 14,132 dwelling units at full buildout, an approximate population increase of 35,000 persons would result if it is assumed, consistent with the 1994 Background Report, that 2.5 persons reside in each household. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-7.)

The *Placer Vineyards Specific Plan* proposes to construct 14,132 residential units, which is the maximum identified in the referenced General Plan resolution for the Specific Plan area. As noted in Table 4.10-2 of the Revised Draft EIR, the projected increase in population in the Specific Plan area based on the Specific Plan projections is 34,762. This calculation appears reasonable based on the form and type of development proposed. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-8.)
This increase is consistent with the *Placer County General Plan* when considered in light of the planned increases in population projected for the Specific Plan area at the time the General Plan was adopted. The EIR for the *Placer County General Plan* assumed a population of approximately 35,000 for the Specific Plan area, and a population forecast for the total unincorporated area of 142,235 by 2010, which would be an increase of 37,546 above the County’s 2005 unincorporated area population. The General Plan does not include population projections beyond 2010. However, SACOG projections (noted above) estimate that total County unincorporated population will increase by 23,200 between 2010 and 2020. The period beginning in 2008 and continuing until about 2025 is the likely period of buildout of the Specific Plan area. Thus, current projections would suggest that the projected buildout population for the Specific Plan area is accommodated within the General Plan and SACOG projections through 2020. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-8.)

The 1994 *Placer County General Plan EIR* acknowledged that an increase in population would not, by itself, directly result in adverse environmental impacts. The General Plan EIR pointed to policies and standards in the General Plan that would help to minimize potential population-related impacts by providing a comprehensive framework for the preparation of individual specific plans, as considered here. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-8.)

As noted earlier, CEQA does not identify a population increase as a significant environmental impact in and of itself. The additional number of residents in the Specific Plan area resulting from the development of the Specific Plan could, however, contribute to other environmental effects such as increased traffic, air quality degradation, and additional demands for public services and infrastructure. Impacts indirectly attributable to population growth, including air quality, traffic, public services and other issues are addressed in individual sections of Chapter Four of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-8.)

The increase in population that would result from full buildout of the Specific Plan area has been planned, and would not be significant when viewed in the context of other development planned in Placer County, and the time period within which the Specific Plan is likely to be built out. The population increases that would result from development pursuant to the Specific Plan are consistent with regional growth projections, and would not result in unplanned or concentrated growth. The increase in population resulting from development of the Specific Plan is, therefore, considered *less than significant*. (RDEIR, pp. 4.10-8 to 4.10-9.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-9.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.
Cumulative Impacts

Impact 4.10-2: The Placer Vineyards Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative increases in population in Placer, Sutter, and Sacramento counties. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-9.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

According to SACOG projections, 535,020 additional persons are projected to reside in the Placer, Sutter, and Sacramento region by 2025, of which approximately 6.5% (of the projected regional growth) would reside in the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-9.)

CEQA does not identify a population increase in and of itself as a significant environmental impact. The population increase is planned and is consistent with regional population projections. Impacts directly attributable to population growth, including air quality, traffic, public services and other issues are addressed in individual sections of Chapter Four of the Revised Draft EIR. Therefore, the cumulative impact of population increases resulting from this and other developments are considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-9.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-9.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

4.10.3 Employment and Housing

Standards of Significance:

For the purposes of the Revised Draft EIR, a significant environmental impact for employment and housing would occur if the proposed project would:

- Not conform with the jobs/housing policy of the Placer County General Plan, resulting in physical impact(s) on the environment (e.g., impacts on traffic and air quality resulting from people commuting between home and work). This could occur if the jobs/housing ratio fell significantly below the historic ratio of approximately 1.25 jobs per household.

- Substantially affect the housing supply or create a substantial demand for additional housing by not providing a variety of housing types and opportunities, resulting in physical impact(s)
on the environment (e.g., impacts on traffic and air quality resulting from people commuting between home and work, overcrowded housing conditions). This could occur should a project not be in compliance with the adopted Regional Housing Needs Plan, which calls for 20.38% of the new housing in Placer County to be very low income, and 15.77% to be low income.

(RDEIR, p. 4.10-24.)

**Impact 4.10-3:** Buildout of the proposed Specific Plan could promote an imbalance of jobs and housing in both the regional and project level context. This impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-26.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the buildout of the proposed Specific Plan area which could promote a regional and project level imbalance of jobs and housing. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

An adequate jobs/housing balance is desirable because a lack of affordable housing close to urban job centers tends to encourage traffic congestion and environmental pollution. Locating affordable residential development long distances from job centers results in greater commuting time, and could eventually promote development that encroaches on open space and agricultural land. As discussed above, the jobs/housing balance is an objective that promotes development that locates housing and employment opportunities in reasonable proximity to each other. Because economic factors, personal choice and other factors are involved, the effort is by nature imprecise. (RDEIR, pp. 4.10-24 to 4.10-25.)

It is typical for residential areas to be built in significant numbers prior to construction of employment-generating uses (e.g., commercial, industrial). Until the employment-generating uses are constructed and operating, the lack of jobs/housing balance would result in physical impacts on the environment, including traffic and air quality impacts. In the case of Placer Vineyards, housing is being created early in the process, and will become more balanced over time as commercial and office uses are developed. By Specific Plan buildout, it is projected that the Specific Plan would result in production of 14,132 dwelling units, but approximately 7,594 jobs would also be created; therefore, at full buildout the ratio of jobs to housing will be approximately 0.54 jobs per dwelling unit. Job generation in the Specific Plan area is summarized in Table 4.10-14 in the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-25.)

Because the data indicate that dwellings usually house more than one worker, there would be a substantially higher number of dwellings built than will be needed to respond to the housing demand created by new employment within the Specific Plan area. However, the Plan area is located near other growing employment centers such as McClellan Park and the City of
Roseville which could help to offset this imbalance. For example, the redevelopment plan for McClellan Park anticipates the generation of approximately 35,000 new jobs at full buildout. The jobs/housing balance inquiry is useful in assessing the need for housing in a community, the source of the housing demand, and the possible impact of creation of new jobs on the housing market. The analysis is affected by many complex economic factors, including the economic characteristics of surrounding communities, the health of the local and national economies, and the changing desires and attitudes of individuals in the marketplace. According to U.S. Census 2004 estimates, there are approximately 1.24 wage earners per household in Placer County (145,865 employed individuals/117,350 households). This would indicate that the number of jobs to be generated on-site will be insufficient to maintain a healthy jobs/housing balance. However, given the nature of the inquiry and the context (a project adjacent to significant existing and proposed employment centers in three counties), the long-term impact of the proposed Specific Plan on the jobs/housing balance is not so substantial that it would clearly affect the physical environment by generating new and substantial demand for jobs that are not otherwise planned. As noted above, at the regional level, SACOG has suggested during its Blueprint planning process that the Placer Vineyards Specific plan area be planned so as to supply housing for those employed beyond the Specific Plan area boundaries. The SACOG recommended jobs/housing ratio is 0.49 for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area.

The long-term impact would be less than significant. However, the short-term impact would be significant and unavoidable, because it could lead to more and longer commutes to work in the near-term, contributing to air, noise, traffic, and public services (roadway maintenance) impacts. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-26.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are available. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-26.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The long-term impact would be less than significant; the short-term impact would be significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-26.)

Impact 4.10-4: Development of the Specific Plan area will create a demand for affordable housing. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-26.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Although CEQA case law has held that a project’s tendency to increase the demand for affordable housing in not an environmental effect, but rather is an economic or social effect
outside the purview of CEQA (see San Franciscans for Reasonable Growth v. City and County of San Francisco [1988] 209 Cal.App.3d 1502, 1521-1522, fn. 13), the following discussion is nevertheless included herein, though outside the scope of CEQA, in order to provide the public and County decision-makers with information relevant to consideration of the proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-26.)

Placer County’s General Plan Housing Element includes Goal 2.A, calling for a continuing supply of affordable housing to meet the needs of residents of all income categories. Policy 2.A.11 provides that housing projects of one hundred or more units that are developed through a specific plan process shall be required to provide at least 10% of the units to be affordable to low income households. The General Plan provides for construction of such units on the project site or, where that is deemed impractical by the County, dedication of land elsewhere or payment of an in-lieu fee. The Specific Plan is proposed to provide a total of 14,132 housing units at full buildout. A breakdown of the affordable housing units required by the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan according to affordability category is presented in Table 4.10-15 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-26.)

SACOG adopted the Final Regional Housing Needs Plan on September 20, 2001. The basis for the Plan is the obligation of every city and county in the region to address not only local housing needs, but also the housing needs of the entire region. This is based on the expansion of jobs into suburban areas, two-career households, changing commute patterns, and the interdependent economy and society of the region. Placer County’s “fair share,” as established by SACOG, calls for 2,020 units of very-low income and 1,886 units of low-income housing for Placer County by 2007. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-27.)

The Final Regional Housing Needs Plan makes it clear that the housing unit allocations contained in the Plan are goals, rather than housing unit quotas. The emphasis is on ensuring that local agencies undertake efforts to assure that adequate sites and zoning are available to accommodate at least the number of units allocated. The Plan applies to the entire unincorporated area of Placer County over the timeframe 2000 to 2007 (which is shorter than the General Plan planning period). (RDEIR, p. 4.10-27.)

Specific Plan proponents have designed a housing program to provide for a full range of housing opportunities for all income levels for the Specific Plan area. As shown in Table 4.10-15 of the Revised Draft EIR, Specific Plan developers propose to provide 1,413 units of affordable housing as shown in Table 4.10-15 above in order to fulfill the requirement set forth in the County’s Affordable Housing Guidelines for Specific Plans, as described above. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-27.)

Housing Element Policy A.9 states: “Housing for low-income households that is required in a new residential project shall be dispersed throughout the project, to the extent practical, given the size of the project and other site constraints”. According to Specific Plan Policy 3.27, affordable housing units shall be focused on High-Density Residential (HDR) and Commercial/Mixed-Use (C/MU) parcels. However, affordable housing may also be provided in other residential land use areas. The HDR sites represent 20.1% (2,844) of the total number of units. The HDR sites are
generally located adjacent to commercial nodes to allow access to services and employment. The C/MU sites represent 6% (844) of the total number of units. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-27.)

The Board of Supervisors will determine whether the Specific Plan provisions satisfy the goals and policies of the current General Plan as they relate to the minimum provision for affordable housing in the Specific Plan, including the number and affordability of such units, as well as the location and general design of the units. The Specific Plan proposes to construct an adequate number of affordable housing units in compliance with the County’s Affordable Housing Guidelines and in accordance with the income limits established by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.10-27 to 4.10-28.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-28.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.10-5: Existing housing units could be lost due to Specific Plan development. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-28.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

No housing units within the Riego community area would be lost due to project implementation; however, there are some scattered farmsteads/rural residences in the balance of the project area that could ultimately be removed as the project builds out, including those affected by widening of roads. It is estimated that fewer than ten residences would require removal. The project proposes to add more than 14,000 housing units, a portion of which will be constructed in compliance with Placer County affordable housing goals. This is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-28.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-28.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.
**Cumulative Impact**

**Impact 4.10-6:** The proposed Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative imbalance of jobs and housing in the regional \( [sic] \). This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-28.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Cumulative development in the vicinity of the Specific Plan area includes the following major projects (detailed descriptions of the projects may be found in the Revised Draft EIR, pages 4.10-28 through 4.10-31): (note: “maximum site coverage” percentages have been assumed from the Placer County Zoning Ordinance for “planned development commercial” at 50% and “industrial” at 60%):

- West Roseville Specific Plan.
- Elverta Specific Plan.
- South Sutter County Specific Plan.
- Regional University and Community.
- Curry Creek Community Plan.
- Placer Ranch.
- Lincoln Crossing.
- Riolo Vineyards.
- Creekview Specific Plan.
- Sierra Vista Specific Plan.
- Lincoln 270.
- Morgan Place.
- Silver Creek.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.10-28 to 4.10-31.)

Table 4.10-16 in the Revised Draft EIR contains a summary of employment potential under cumulative conditions. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-31.)

Based on rates of 25 jobs per commercial acre, 40 jobs per office acre, 15 jobs per industrial acre and 0.18 jobs per university student, additional jobs in the vicinity of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area could total approximately 110,336. Total jobs in the area, including the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, which is projected to generate approximately 7,594 jobs, would be approximately 117,931. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-32.)

When considering the total number of dwelling units projected for the above-described projects and the proposed *Placer Vineyards Specific Plan*, the approximate number of jobs per household...
ratio is 1.32 (117,931 jobs/89,027 total dwelling units). This ratio would imply that there will be a significantly greater number of jobs per household in the region than the current County average of 1.24. However, this is an incomplete and artificial picture that does not provide for all potential future housing within the region. Although the Specific Plan area alone may not generate a sufficient number of jobs to assure a balance of houses and jobs, it is clear that the region will generate more than sufficient jobs when taken as a whole. Therefore, the cumulative impact of the long-term ratio of jobs to housing is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-32.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-32.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

K. PUBLIC SERVICES/INFRASTRUCTURE

4.11.2 Fire Protection

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection facilities;

- Result in the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives;

- Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands;

- Be inconsistent with the goals and policies in the Placer County General Plan.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.11-7 to 4.11-8.)

Placer County has adopted required average response time standards through its General Plan policies, maintenance of ISO ratings, and compliance with fire safety standards, the Uniform Building Code and applicable portions of the Uniform Fire Code through local ordinance. Additionally, the County has developed required staffing ratios for both firefighters and support staff. The County requires one firefighter per 900 to 1,150 people and 2 support or planning staff per 10,000 to 25,000 people. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-8.)
**Impact 4.11.2-1:** Development of the proposed Specific Plan area would require additional personnel to serve new fire stations. This impact is considered *potentially significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-8.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

The proposed Specific Plan, at full buildout, includes 14,132 dwelling units and 3,619,618 square feet of new commercial space. This development would convert the Specific Plan area from existing large lot rural residential/agriculture to urban uses over the next 20 to 30 years. Development pursuant to the Specific Plan will result in the need for additional personnel to provide fire protection and emergency medical services to serve the Specific Plan area. Table 4.11-1 in the Revised Draft EIR describes County staffing ratios for fire protection personnel needed to serve the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-8.)

Staffing of the proposed fire stations in the Specific Plan area may not meet Placer County level of service standards; therefore, this impact is *potentially significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-8.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.11.2-1 *The staffing ratios contained in Table 4.11-1 shall be maintained for the Specific Plan area during all phases of development concurrent with demand. The applicants shall be required to establish a special benefit assessment district or other funding mechanism to assure adequate funding for the ongoing maintenance and operation of fire protection and related services, with funding responsibilities imposed on residential and commercial properties within the Specific Plan area, including the costs for services required to satisfy Placer County Fire Department staffing requirements set forth above. The funding mechanism shall be subject to the prior review and approval of Placer County, and shall be approved by the affected landowners prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map. It shall be maintained until such time as the County determines that property tax revenues are adequate to maintain the required staffing.* (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-8 to 4.11-9.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce the impact of increased demand on fire services and personnel to a *less than significant level.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-8.)

**Impact 4.11.2-2:** Development of the Specific Plan area will require additional fire protection infrastructure including construction of fire stations and
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Development of the proposed Specific Plan area will result in the need for additional fire protection infrastructure including new fire stations, trucks, and equipment necessary to provide fire protection services. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-9.)

The Placer County Fire Department has indicated that the Specific Plan traffic plan and location of fire stations must provide an initial four-minute delivery of service from receipt of call to 95% of the residential population with support from an additional company within eight minutes. All commercial or industrial areas must have the same initial response, have two companies within six minutes, and three companies within ten minutes. The Placer County Fire Department proposes to provide fire engine-based paramedic and Advanced Life Support Services (ALS) with AMR or other ambulance service providing emergency medical transport. The County intends to meet or exceed ALS services provided by Roseville (Greg Guyan, Placer County Fire Department, pers. comm., December, 2005). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-9.)

The need for additional fire protection infrastructure and equipment in the Specific Plan area is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-9.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.2-2a A minimum of two fire stations shall be provided to serve the Specific Plan area at buildout, which shall be fully funded and equipped (i.e., desks, computers, telephones, radio systems, beds, refrigerators and all other needs). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-9.)

4.11.2-2b A western fire station shall be constructed and equipped, at a location approved by the Placer County Fire Department, prior to issuance of a building permit for the first dwelling unit located west of Watt Avenue. This first station may initially be located in a temporary building or location; however, a permanent station shall be available for occupancy within 18 months of issuance of the certificate of occupancy for the first dwelling unit located West of Watt Avenue. The eastern fire station shall be constructed and equipped, at a location approved by the Placer County Fire Department, prior to issuance of a building permit for the 5,000th dwelling unit. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-9 to 4.11-10; FEIR Response 29UU.)

4.11.2-2c Formation of a County Services Area (CSA), a Community Facilities District (CFD), or expansion of CSA #28, including a landowner-approved special tax of an adequate amount or other financing mechanism acceptable to the County, shall be required
prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map to ensure that a funding mechanism for fire protection infrastructure and equipment is in place to provide adequate fire safety services in the Specific Plan area during all stages of development. Required fire stations shall be completed and fully staffed and equipped prior to the issuance of certificates of occupancy. Fire stations shall be located on sites readily accessible to service areas and final fire station locations shall be subject to approval by the Placer County Fire Department. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-10.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce the impact on fire protection to less than significant level by ensuring that adequate fire protection infrastructure, including new fire stations, trucks, and equipment, is available in a timely manner. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-9.)

**Impact 4.11.2-3:** Specific Plan area development could create additional fire hazards in large open space/natural areas and utility corridors by limiting pre-suppression and suppression accessibility. High fuel loading could result in areas of restricted or limited access. Development of residential areas in close proximity to utility infrastructure and open space areas increases the potential for fire related hazards. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-10.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The introduction of development and people to the Specific Plan area could create additional fire hazards in proposed open space, wetland preserves, stream corridors, landscaped areas, utility corridors and/or large lot residential areas. As more development occurs, the potential to restrict access to open space areas for fire suppression and fuels management increases. As more people and activities are present in the area, the potential for wildland fires increases. This is considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-10.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.2-3a Development and subdivision design shall include adequate setbacks, as determined by the Placer County Fire Department, between open space/corridor areas and structures. Fire pre-suppression and suppression access easements to utility corridors and open space areas shall be required as part of the subdivision map process. Building envelopes or another method shall ensure separation of structures, and shall ensure access, as deemed appropriate by the Placer County Fire Department prior to approval of any tentative subdivision map. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-10.)
4.11.2-3b A County Service Area (CSA), Community Facilities District (CFD), or Zone of Benefit under CSA #28, or other entity for sustainable park maintenance shall be formed for the Specific Plan area prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map. Funds for a fuels reduction program for open spaces and corridors shall be included in the financing arrangement by a vote of the landowners prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map. The maintenance entity shall establish and identify ongoing funding for a continuous maintenance program for vegetation (both wildland and landscaped) in any and all open space, vacant areas, and landscape trail, easement and corridor areas within the Specific Plan area prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-10 to 4.11-11.)

4.11.2-3c The developers shall fund a fire-safe plan for the subdivisions adjacent to wildland (natural, landscape, and corridor) areas. The fire-safe plan shall include a fuels management plan, and recommend building separations and distances from wildland areas, evacuation and access routes, fire safety zones and maintenance schedule prior to approval of tentative subdivision maps. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-11.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measures would reduce the impact on wildland fires to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-10.)

Impact 4.11.2-4: Construction of fire stations and related facilities within the Specific Plan area could lead to physical impacts on the environment. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-11.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Fire stations are an integral part of the Specific Plan and are shown at two locations on the Land Use Diagram. Analysis of impacts related to construction within the Specific Plan area is included in each of the topical areas contained in the Revised Draft EIR. No additional impacts related to construction of fire stations have been identified. This impact is, therefore, less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-11.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-11.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.
Off-Site Infrastructure Impact

**Impact 4.11.2-5:** Fire protection service impacts could result from installation and maintenance of utilities and other infrastructure. This impact is considered *less than significant*. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-11.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Off-site infrastructure would include underground utility lines, widened roadways, and wastewater treatment plant improvements. None of these proposed improvements would pose a fire hazard or be subject to threat of fire from another source. Construction activity could present an obstacle to movement, but would be temporary and subject to control through standard traffic control procedures. The impact would be *less than significant*. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-11.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-11.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

Cumulative Impacts

**Impact 4.11.2-6:** Cumulative impacts on fire services could occur due to development of the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered *less than significant*. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-11.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Fire services are provided based on established service standards and goals reflected in the *Placer County General Plan* and requirements of the Placer County Fire Department. The proposed Specific Plan would contribute to demand for fire services. The expansion of fire services is demand-responsive, and with the implementation of existing policies, implementation
measures, and mitigation measures listed in this section, these facilities would continue to be provided based on evolving service goals. Therefore, the cumulative impact on fire services would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-12.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-12.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

4.11.3 Police Protection

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered law enforcement facilities;

- Result in the need for new or physically altered law enforcement facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives; or

- Be inconsistent with the goals and policies in the Placer County General Plan.

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-14.)

Placer County has developed required staffing ratios for sworn officers, non-sworn officers and support staff. The County requires 1.10 to 1.42 sworn officers per 1,000 people, 1.1 non-sworn officer per 10,000 people and 1 support staff per 12,000 to 18,000 people. Additionally, the County requires one patrol vehicle per officer. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-14.)

Impact 4.11.3-1: The proposed Specific Plan would increase the demand for police protection services requiring additional personnel. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-14.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.
Explanation:

The proposed Specific Plan would include a total buildout of 14,132 dwelling units. According to persons-per-household rates contained in the Specific Plan, the project will house approximately 34,762 people at buildout. This addition to the County’s population will require between 38.2 and 49.4 sworn officers, 3.8 non-sworn officers and between 1.9 and 2.9 support staff. An estimated total of 43.9 to 56.1 employees will be needed at full buildout. Table 4.11-2 below describes the County’s staffing needs for the Specific Plan area based on the County’s staffing ratio requirements. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-14 to 4.11-15.)

Development pursuant to the Specific Plan would increase the demand for additional sworn and non-sworn officers and support staff to adequately serve the Specific Plan area. The County has estimated that the new Sheriff’s substation described under Impact 4.11.3-2 below would generate, at a minimum, a need for specific support staff as follows: 1 Administrative Secretary, 4 Administrative Clerks, and 1 Equipment Worker. This demand for sworn and non-sworn officers, and support staff is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-15.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.3-1 The staffing ratios contained in Table 4.11-2 shall be maintained for the Specific Plan area. The applicants shall be required to establish a special benefit assessment district or other funding mechanism to assure adequate funding for the ongoing maintenance and operation of law enforcement services, with funding responsibilities imposed on residential and commercial properties within the Specific Plan area, including the costs for services required to satisfy the staffing standards set forth above and General Plan standards now in existence or as later amended. The funding mechanism shall be subject to the prior review and approval of Placer County. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-15.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-15.)

Impact 4.11.3-2: The urban response time standards set forth in the Placer County General Plan are unattainable from the existing Sheriff’s substation in Loomis. Development of the Specific Plan area would require new facilities, including a Sheriff’s substation, equipment and patrol vehicles. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-15.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.
Explanation:

The proposed Specific Plan will ultimately result in an increase in population of 34,762 residents and 3,597,838 square feet of new commercial space. The demand for between 42.0 and 53.2 new sworn and non-sworn officers will result in a need for between 16.8 and 21.3 vehicles as well as equipment and new law enforcement facilities to house the additional personnel. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-15.)

As previously noted, the Specific Plan proposes to co-locate a Sheriff’s substation with other County administrative offices within the Town Center south of Baseline Road and east of 16th Street. The County has indicated that a substation approximately 19,000 square feet in size open 80 hours per week would be required to serve the Specific Plan area. The County has made specific recommendations regarding vehicles, equipment and facilities. This is considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-16.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.3-2a The project developer(s) shall comply with Placer County Policy 4.H.4, which requires that all future development either fund or develop law enforcement facilities. The project developer(s) shall dedicate land for development of a 19,000-square foot substation prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map. Said development shall be consistent with the requirements of the County, the needs of the County Sheriff’s Department and the County Facilities Services Department. Compliance with Policy 4.H.4 shall include formation of a County Service Area (CSA), Community Facilities District (CFD), or expansion of CSA #28 for the construction of an equipped Sheriff’s substation prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-16.)

4.11.3-2b The project developer(s) shall enter into a Development Agreement with Placer County prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map for facilities, staffing, and the purchase and scheduled replacement of the number of equipped vehicles needed as determined by the Sheriff in the same frequency and manner currently used by the County in its patrol vehicle replacement program. All patrol vehicles shall include the necessary equipment to accomplish the mission of the Placer County Sheriff’s Department or as otherwise required by the Sheriff. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-16.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the following mitigation measures will reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-16.)

Impact 4.11.3-3: Public safety could be compromised if the Specific Plan does not adequately consider public safety issues in its design. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-16.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

General Plan Policy 4.H.5 calls for project design to consider public safety issues, including crime prevention through environmental design. The Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan was amended by the adoption of Resolution 94-238 concurrently with the adoption of the Placer County General Plan. Although design criteria for public safety are not specifically mentioned in Exhibit 1 of Resolution 94-238, the adopted criteria set forth many elements related to public safety, such as requiring entries into small shops and offices to be oriented directly onto a pedestrian-oriented street. The Specific Plan indicates that the land use plan was designed with safety considerations in mind. The Specific Plan explains that the design layout ensures that residents and law enforcement personnel have access to and visibility of schools, parks and open spaces (see page 6-68 of the Specific Plan). Pedestrian areas will be well lighted and designed in such a manner as to maximize the safety of pedestrians (see page 6-30 of the Specific Plan), and buildings will be designed and sited to provide a safe environment (see page 6-6 of the Specific Plan. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-16 to 4.11-17.)

The Specific Plan Design Guidelines do not include specific guidance or provisions with regard to public safety considerations. In the absence of such guidance, Specific Plan development could result in improvements that do not provide adequate access and visibility for law enforcement personnel, or that otherwise degrade public safety. This is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-17.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.3-3 Law enforcement personnel shall have access to and visibility of schools, parks and open spaces, pedestrian areas shall be well lighted and designed in such a manner as to maximize the safety of pedestrians, and buildings shall be designed and sited to provide a safe environment. Improvement plans submitted for review and approval by the Placer County Planning Department shall be accompanied by a written explanation regarding the manner in which the design of the improvements achieves compliance with these requirements. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-17.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure will reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-17.)

Impact 4.11.3-4: Construction of a sheriff’s substation and related facilities within the Specific Plan area may lead to physical impacts on the environment. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-17.)
Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

A sheriff’s substation is an integral part of the Specific Plan and is to be constructed in the Town Center. Analysis of impacts related to construction within the Specific Plan area is included in each of the topical areas contained in the Revised Draft EIR. No additional impacts related to construction of the substation have been identified. This impact is, therefore, less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-17.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-17.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Off-Site Infrastructure

Impact 4.11.3-5: Law enforcement service impacts may result from installation and maintenance of utilities and other infrastructure. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-17.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Off-site infrastructure would include underground utility lines, widened roadways, and wastewater treatment plant improvements. None of these proposed improvements would pose an issue for law enforcement. Construction activity could present an obstacle to movement, but would be temporary and subject to control through standard traffic control procedures. The impact would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-17.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-18.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Cumulative Impact

**Impact 4.11.3-6:** Cumulative impacts on police protection due to development of the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered *less than significant.*

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-18.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Similar to fire protection services, police protection services are provided based on established service standards and goals. Cumulative development in western Placer County would be subject to standards outlined in the *Placer County General Plan* and Exhibit 1 of the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan.* Given current policies, implementation measures, and the mitigation measures outlined in this section (Mitigation Measures 4.11.3-1, 4.11.3-2a, 4.11.3-2b and 4.11.3-3), the cumulative impact on police protection would be *less than significant.*

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-18.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-18.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

4.11.4 Public Schools

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities;

- Result in the need for new of physically altered school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives; or
• Be inconsistent with the goals and policies in the *Placer County General Plan.*

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-23.)

**Impact 4.11.4-1:** Buildout of the Specific Plan area will substantially increase the public school student population, exceeding current school capacities. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-25.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant.
(Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The number of students to be generated in the Specific Plan area is determined by the number of residential units in the Specific Plan area multiplied by student generation rates of the local school districts, as presented in Table 4.11-4 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-24.)

At buildout, the Specific Plan area will generate approximately 8,273 new students in the region. Existing educational facilities are unable to accommodate the projected growth from the Specific Plan area; therefore, the Specific Plan proposes to set aside 140 acres of land for school district acquisition for the development of six elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school located throughout the Specific Plan area as shown on Figure 4.11-2. School location, sizes and enrollment capacities are based on the CUSD’s Master Plan criteria. Elementary schools are located in the center of neighborhoods, yet off major streets, while providing for easy access. Schools are located adjacent to open space corridors to allow for pedestrian and bicycle access. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-24.)

Student enrollments projected by the Specific Plan are based on student generation rates provided by the CUSD in 2005 (Michael Winters of Cauldwell, Flores and Winters, Inc., pers. comm., October 2005). These generation rates are anticipated to be revised in early 2006. According to these figures, 4,212 elementary students, 1,417 middle school students and 2,644 high school students will reside in the Specific Plan area upon full buildout, thereby totaling 8,273 students. A variety of factors have influenced the lowering of enrollment generation factors between 1996 and 2001. In this area, the closure of McClellan Air Force Base may have influenced this downward trend. Other factors may include better data, changes in demographics such as age, socio-economic levels, subsequent development and type of development. Enrollment projection factors included in District Master Plans will continue to change with characteristics of the population throughout the development of the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-24 to 4.11-25.)

Since Proposition 1A was passed by the voters and SB 50 was passed by the Legislature, school fees generated by new development are currently deemed sufficient mitigation of any impacts based on generation of students on school facilities. Because of the passage of Proposition 1A
and SB 50, County General Plan Policy 4.J.13, described above, may be unenforceable. The impact is considered less than significant, provided school impact fees are collected pursuant to State law. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-25.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-25.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.4-2:** A change in school district boundaries could adversely affect one or more of the three school districts. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-25.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Procedures are provided in the Education Code that protect the interests of all affected districts, when changes are proposed. The proposed change, and similar modifications for similar purposes, would be viewed as minor in nature and would permit the boundary to follow a logical dividing line as the area builds out: 16th Street and Dyer Lane. This is considered a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-25.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-25.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.4-3:** Construction of schools within the Specific Plan area could lead to physical impacts on the environment. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-25.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

Schools are an integral part of the Specific Plan and are to be constructed on several sites throughout the Specific Plan area. Analysis of impacts related to construction of schools within the Specific Plan area such as loss of agricultural land, loss of wildlife habitat, disruption of cultural resources, degradation of water quality, generation of noise, etc. is included in each of the topical areas contained in the Revised Draft EIR. No additional impacts related to construction of schools have been identified. This impact is, therefore, less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-25.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-25.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Off-Site Infrastructure Impact

**Impact 4.11.4-4:** Impacts on schools due to installation and maintenance of utilities and widening of roadways. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-25.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Construction activity associated with installation of off-site utilities or widening of roadways (in particular Watt Avenue in Sacramento County) could disrupt traffic and school access during the construction period. Construction activity could present an obstacle to movement, but would be temporary and subject to control through standard traffic control procedures. This impact would therefore be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-26.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-26.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.
**Cumulative Impact**

**Impact 4.11.4-5:** The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative increases in demand for schools. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-26.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Development of the proposed Specific Plan area, in conjunction with other planned residential development in the vicinity, would increase the demand for school services and facilities in the CUSD, the GJUHSD and the EJESD. New residential development within these districts would be required to pay school impact fees to the appropriate school district(s) to offset the capital costs of constructing new schools. Based on the discussion in Impact 4.11.4-1, this impact is *less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., less than significant).* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-26.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-26.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**4.11.5 Solid Waste Disposal**

**Standards of Significance**

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Be served by a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project’s solid waste disposal needs;

- Not comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste; or

- Be inconsistent with the goals and policies in the *Placer County General Plan.*

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-29.)

The Placer County Solid Waste Division has indicated that any project that contributes 3% additional waste per year, compared to current accepted tonnages at the MRF and landfill
(281,300 and 275,600 tons per year, respectively) should be considered to have a significant impact on those facilities. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-29 to 4.11-30.)

**Impact 4.11.5-1:** Residential and commercial development in the Specific Plan area will increase the waste stream that would be delivered to the MRF and disposed of at the Western Regional Landfill. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-30.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Table 4.11-5 in the Revised Draft EIR illustrates solid waste projected to be generated in the Specific Plan area based on 7.1 pounds of solid waste generated per dwelling unit per day, and 1.0 pound per day for each one hundred square feet of commercial development (Thom Carmichael, Placer County Solid Waste Management Division Planner, pers. comm., November 2005). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-30.)

At full buildout, development in the Specific Plan area will generate an estimated 24,878 tons per year of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW). Of that amount, 11.9% (2,960 tons) will go directly to the landfill, while the remaining 88.1% (21,918 tons) will go to the MRF for processing. The diversion rate at the MRF is approximately 63.1%; therefore, of the 21,918 tons per year that would be brought to the MRF for processing, 13,830 tons will be disposed of at the landfill.

These projections include sewage sludge (biosolids) and construction debris that will be generated during buildout of the Specific Plan area that will contribute to impacts to the landfill. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-30.)

A total of 21,918 tons annually will be hauled to the MRF for processing. This represents an increase of approximately 7.8% annually. A total of 16,790 tons annually will be disposed of at the landfill. This represents an increase of approximately 6.1%. The landfill is currently estimated to remain open until 2036 with a remaining net capacity of approximately 13,680,000 tons. The additional solid waste generated by the Specific Plan would have the potential to reduce the life of the landfill by one to two years. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-30.)

The County is required under AB 939 to prepare and adopt an SRRE, which includes the County’s plan to divert solid waste from the landfill for all generated waste. To meet this requirement, the County actively pursues composting, business waste reduction, school recycling, curbside collection, public education and outreach programs to reduce the amount of solid waste generated. Community access to recycling facilities will increase the life of the landfill and reduce the amount of solid waste being separated at the MRF. However, the MRF is currently operating at approximately 55% of permitted capacity, but activity is expected to intensify as growth in the area continues. The amount of development anticipated in the Specific Plan area would increase the amount of solid waste being delivered to the landfill.
Plan area would cause existing capacity and plans for future expansion to be exceeded and could hasten the closure of the Western Regional Landfill. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-30 to 4.11-31.)

Environmental impacts of the proposed expansion of the landfill on the west side of Fiddyment Road were analyzed in the Placer County Western Regional Landfill Expansion Draft Supplemental EIR (SCH# 1985120208). A Final EIR was completed and certified; therefore, no additional analysis is required. The document is available for review at the address appearing in Section 2.9 in Chapter Two of the Revised Draft EIR. There are currently no proposals for expanding the landfill on the east side of Fiddyment Road. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-31.)

According to Placer County Code Section 8.16.080, all commercial uses and certain residential uses within the Specific Plan area will be required to provide recyclable material storage, loading, and loading areas before building permits may be issued. Specific requirements for these areas and containers are to be determined by the County based on design criteria developed by the Department of Facility Services. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-31.)

Based on the standards of significance, at buildout, the direct contribution of the Specific Plan area to the volume of solid waste currently accepted at the MRF and the landfill will exceed an additional 3% per year, and will represent a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-31.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.5-1a Contractors shall be required to provide on-site separation of construction debris to assure a minimum 50% diversion of this material from the landfill, or all construction debris shall be hauled to the WMA MRF for recycling. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-31; FEIR Response 34B.)

4.11.5-1b Projects in the Specific Plan area shall contribute a fair share amount toward expansion of the MRF (including accommodation of a greenwaste program for Placer Vineyards) and landfill to the Western Placer Waste Management Authority. Payment of all applicable established fees in place at the time of issuance of a building permit shall constitute fair share pursuant to this mitigation measure. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-31; Supplement to the Final EIR, Appendix FEIR-F, p. 2.)

4.11.5-1c A source-separated greenwaste program shall be implemented within the Specific Plan area, subject to review and approval by the Western Placer Waste management Authority. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-31.)

4.11.5-1d The Specific Plan proponents shall present a plan for County approval that meets the requirements of Placer County Code Section 8.16.080. The plan shall ensure the development and continuous operation and maintenance of recycling centers within the Specific Plan area. Recycling centers shall accept all types of recyclable waste, shall be fenced and screened from view, and shall be located in commercial or industrial areas dispersed throughout the Specific Plan area. The first recycling center shall be established upon issuance of the 1500th residential building permit. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-31.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures will lessen impacts, but not to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-31.)

Off-Site Infrastructure Impact

Impact 4.11.5-2: There could be solid waste collection and disposal impacts due to installation and maintenance of utilities and roadway widening. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-32.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Construction and maintenance of utilities and roadway widening in off-site areas would create only minor amounts of solid waste. Construction activity could temporarily interfere with the collection of solid waste; however, standard traffic control and property access requirements will be implemented by the County or other affected jurisdictions, through the encroachment permit process. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-32.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-32.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.11.5-3: There could be impacts to roadways and surrounding land uses due to transportation of solid waste to the MRF and Western Regional Landfill. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-32.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

At buildout, Auburn-Placer Disposal Service could make as many as 20 trips a day to transport solid waste to the MRF and landfill. It is anticipated that trucks would use Baseline Road, Fiddyment Road, Blue Oaks Boulevard, Industrial Avenue, and Athens Avenue when traveling to and from the landfill. Roadways within the City of Roseville are designated as truck routes which means they have been designed to accommodate the anticipated truck traffic. The County does not identify specific truck routes, but the subject roadways contain signage indicating that they are to be used for landfill access and contain no weight-restricted bridges. Fiddyment Road and Blue Oaks Boulevard are “California Legal Routes,” while Baseline Road is an “STAA Federal Route” (http://www.roseville.ca.us/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=2144). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-32.)

Additionally, the County-maintained portion of Fiddyment Road (north of Blue Oaks Boulevard) was recently improved and the 7-ton weight limit was subsequently removed (Rick Dondro, Assistant Director, Placer County Public Works Department, pers. comm., January 2006). Although use of these roadways to transport solid waste could generate noise and roadway maintenance effects, these effects would have been anticipated when the routes were designated as truck routes, and subsequent planning would have taken this designation into consideration when roadways were constructed, sound walls erected, and building orientation and setbacks established. This is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-32.)

Mitigation Measures:
No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-32.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Cumulative Impact

Impact 4.11.5-4: The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative increases in the waste stream that would be delivered to the MRF and disposed of at the Western Regional Landfill. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-33.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the cumulative increases in the waste stream that would be delivered to the MRF and disposed of at the Western Regional Landfill. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.
Explanation:

The proposed Specific Plan, along with other approved and proposed projects within the service area of the MRF and Western Regional Landfill, will incrementally contribute to the decrease of their service life, thereby creating a *potentially significant and considerable cumulative impact*. It is estimated that the Specific Plan alone will reduce landfill life by one to two years. Other proposed projects are planning over 30,000 additional dwelling units in Placer County and will have a similar effect, shortening the useful life of the landfill by three to five years. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-33.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

See Mitigation Measures 4.11.5-1a through 4.11.5-1d, *supra.*

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of mitigation measures 4.11.5-1a-d will lessen this cumulative impact, *but not to a less than considerable level* (*i.e.*, *less than significant*). No other feasible mitigation measures are available. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-33.)

**4.11.6 Wastewater**

**Standards of Significance**

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable RWQCB.
- Require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.
- Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project’s projected demand in addition to the provider’s existing commitments.
- Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.
- Be inconsistent with the goals and policies of the adopted *Placer County General Plan*.

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-47.)

**Impact 4.11.6-1:** The proposed Specific Plan would require timely, new and reliable wastewater collection facilities including an on-site collection system and an off-site conveyance system. This impact is considered *potentially significant*. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-47.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The project proposes two options for wastewater collection and conveyance. The preferred wastewater proposal calls for the construction of lift stations and force mains to convey wastewater from the entire project eastward to the DCWWTP. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-47.)

Lift (pump) stations on- and off-site will be critical to the functioning of the sewer system, particularly if all wastewater is directed to DCWWTP. A major pump station will be required in the western portion of the Specific Plan area. It also appears that CFD planned Lift Station #2 will need to be expanded or an additional second lift station constructed. Lift stations are dependent on continuous power and fully functioning pumps. In the event power or pumps fail (or are removed for maintenance), it is necessary that lift stations have backup plans and storage facilities adequate to contain wastewater until the problem is corrected. The current Sewer Master Plan (MacKay & Somps, 2006) for the project does not address lift station failure and maintenance, or other emergency conditions. This is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-48.)

Mitigation measures will ensure that an adequate system to convey wastewater flows generated by the proposed project will be identified and constructed. There are, however, substantial agreements that must be reached, and planning, engineering and financing requirements that must be completed successfully in order to utilize one or both of the two wastewater treatment plants as envisioned. There is no assurance that this will occur, however, General Plan policy 4.D.2 requires proponents of new development to provide written certification from a service provider that either existing services are available or needed improvements will be made prior to project occupancy. Although potentially significant, because the County has adopted policy ensuring that service will be provided, impacts associated with constructing conveyance facilities to a suitable wastewater treatment plant can be addressed, even in the absence of such agreements. In the event new and unforeseen circumstances arise during subsequent planning and engineering, supplemental CEQA analysis could be required that would be paid for by project proponents. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-48.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.6-1a Prior to recordation of any large-lot final subdivision map, all required steps shall be taken to initiate formation of a new County Service Area (CSA, or expansion of CSA #28. Major core backbone infrastructure as shown on Figure 3-17A or Figure 3-17B in Chapter Three of the Revised Draft EIR shall be in place prior to recordation of the first small lot subdivision map. Other on-site collection and conveyance facilities shall be constructed as necessary to serve actual development (except as required in Mitigation Measure 4.11.6-1g). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-48.)
4.11.6-1b  All new commercial, industrial, institutional, and residential subdivisions in the Specific Plan area shall install collection systems and connect to a public wastewater system. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-48.)

4.11.6-1c  All new development in the Specific Plan area shall comply with General Plan Policy 4.D.2, which requires written certification from the service provider that either existing services are available or needed improvements will be made prior to occupancy to meet wastewater demands of the Specific Plan. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-48 to 4.11-49.)

4.11.6-1d  Approval of the Specific Plan shall be premised on concurrent County approval of a financing plan that will provide for funding the necessary wastewater collection facilities needed to serve the Specific Plan area, and implemented through approval for formation of a County Service Area (CSA) or expansion of CSA #28 and a corresponding funding mechanism. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-49.)

4.11.6-1e  The Specific Plan proponents shall construct or participate financially in the construction of off-site wastewater conveyance capacity, including lift stations, to accommodate projected wastewater flows that would be generated by development of the Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-49.)

4.11.6-1f  Adequately sized on-site collection facilities, including lift stations, shall be installed for each subdivision in the Specific Plan area concurrent with road construction for individual subdivisions. A “backbone” conveyance system sufficient to serve each subdivision shall be installed prior to issuance of building permits for that subdivision. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-49.)

4.11.6-1g  The Sewer Master Plan shall be revised prior to submission of any wastewater-related improvement plans to include a detailed description of necessary lift station components on-site as well as off-site. The Master Plan shall include a plan for dealing with power and pump failure, and pump maintenance. The plan shall identify how necessary pumping capacity will be replicated in the event of pump failure or pump maintenance, and shall provide for on-site back-up power sufficient to run pumps and any odor scrubbers, in the event of power failure. Each lift station shall include a wastewater storage component in the form of an enclosed reservoir or tank sufficient to deal with temporary emergency conditions while backup systems are brought on line, in accordance with sizing standards utilized by the County Department of Facility Services. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-49.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures ensuring that an adequate transmission system, lift stations, and lift station backup systems, to convey wastewater flows generated by the proposed project will be identified and constructed would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-48.)
Impact 4.11.6-2: The proposed Specific Plan would require expansion of existing wastewater treatment facilities. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-49.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Table 4.11-6 of the Revised Draft EIR shows anticipated wastewater flows for the Specific Plan area. According to the Sewer Master Plan, the project will generate an Average Dry Weather Treatment Plant Flow of 2,980,000 gallons per day (ADWF) at buildout. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-49.)

Table 4.11-7 shows flows broken down by shed. The eastern 890± acres (Shed B) of the Specific Plan area is within the service area of the DCWWTP. The Roseville Regional Wastewater System Master Plan indicates that current planned flows for the DCWWTP are based on the Dry Creek/West Placer Sewer Master Plan, which planned for a flow of 0.307 MGPD for the 890±-acre area. The projected total flow at buildout under the Specific Plan for Shed B is 0.48 MGD treatment plant flow. The additional flow and conflict with the adopted Sewer Master Plan is considered a potentially significant impact. However, as described in the “Setting” section, the current DCWWTP may have the capacity to serve additional areas because actual flows have been less than projected due primarily to a 27% reduction in flow factors for the residential units and a 20% overall reduction in the development densities (as compared to the 1996 Master Plan). These reductions are outlined in the Technical Memoranda prepared by RMC (see Appendix R) and described above. In addition, the treatment plant is currently constructed to treat 18 MGD, but can be expanded to treat 24 MGD under the current Master Plan. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-49 to 4.11-50.)

Although the western 4,340 acres (Shed A) is not in the present service area, the applicants’ preferred plan would be to direct all wastewater flows from the Specific Plan area to the DCWWTP. RMC has determined that the “Ultimate SPWA Service Area” (Figure 4.11-3), which includes all of the Specific Plan area, will generate cumulative dry weather flows of 42.7 MGD (this assumes a Blueprint Alternative for the Specific Plan). Of that amount, 19.3 MGD would flow to the DCWWTP. This exceeds the current constructed capacity of 18 MGD, but is well within the 1996 Master Plan capacity of 24 MGD. At buildout, the Specific Plan project would contribute approximately 2.79 MGD of the 19.3 MGD projected to flow to the DCWWTP for treatment and discharge. Again, RMC assumed buildout of the Blueprint Alternative rather than the applicants’ project, which means that flows from the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area would be 1.1 MGD less than assumed by RMC. Assuming all other assumptions used by RMC remained the same, total flows to the DCWWTP would be reduced to 18.2 MGD under the applicants’ project. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-50.)
The DCWWTP would need to be expanded to accommodate the additional flows, and the current NPDES waste discharge requirements would need to be amended. This is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-50.)

As described above, the westerly portion of the Specific Plan area is not within the service area of any wastewater treatment entity. Flows from the Specific Plan area have been considered in SRCSD’s formal planning efforts and planning documents. However, SRCSD has not taken formal steps to include the Specific Plan area within its service area and SRCSD has made no commitment that existing or future treatment capacity exists. SRCSD staff has held preliminary discussions with Placer County officials, and has advised Placer County that construction of infrastructure could be accelerated to serve the Specific Plan area as long as no extra expense was incurred by the SRCSD. To accommodate these additional flows into the Northwest Interceptor (NWI) system, if all the flows projected for the NWI occur, it may be necessary to construct an offline wastewater storage tank near the intersection of Interstate 5 and Interstate 80. Construction of such a storage tank would allow wastewater to be stored until the peak period flow recedes and the pipeline is able to accommodate the flow. Connection to the system would be allowed prior to construction of the storage tank, but the District’s Master Plan would need to be amended to incorporate this additional improvement and a fee structure to finance it. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-50.)

If Specific Plan area wastewater eventually is accepted and treated by the SRCSD facility, the additional 2.31 MGD (see Table 4.11-7, Shed A) in flow would contribute to the need to expand the capacity of the plant. The Specific Plan area has not been included in formal planning and projections for the future of the SRCSD plant, and the magnitude of the impact is difficult to determine, but it is clear the impact will be substantial in terms of planning effort, design, construction and maintenance. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-50 to 4.11-51.)

Mitigation measures will ensure that an adequate system to treat wastewater flows generated by the proposed Specific Plan will be identified and constructed. There are substantial agreements that must be reached, and planning, engineering and financing requirements that must be completed successfully in order to implement the proposal, and there is no assurance these will occur. However, General Plan policy 4.D.2 requires proponents of new development to provide written certification from a service provider that either existing services are available or needed improvements will be made prior to project occupancy. Although potentially significant, because the County has adopted policy ensuring that service be provided, impacts associated with expansion of treatment capacity can be addressed, even in the absence of such agreements. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-51.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.11.6-2a Commitments from the wastewater treatment provider to receive anticipated flows from the Specific Plan area at the DCWWTP and/or the SRWTP shall be secured by Placer County prior to County approval of improvement plans for wastewater collection and transmission infrastructure. The County shall comply with General Plan Policy 4.D.2, which requires written certification from the service provider that either existing services are available or needed improvements will be made prior to
occupancy to meet wastewater demands of the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-51.)

4.11.6-2b Specific Plan proponents shall participate financially through connection fees and other financial mechanisms in the construction of additional wastewater treatment capacity sufficient to accommodate projected flows and treatment at the DCWWTP and/or the SRWTP. In addition, Specific Plan proponents shall prepare, or shall provide a fair share contribution toward the preparation of any additional CEQA analysis that may be required for plant modifications and/or expansions. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-51.)

4.11.6-2c For each increment of new development within the Specific Plan area, the County shall confirm that all necessary permits (e.g., NPDES) are in place for either the DCWWTP or the SRWTP to discharge additional treated effluent in the amounts associated with the new development. This shall include a determination that development timing will not impede other development for which entitlements have been issued. The requirement for such a showing shall be made a condition of any small lot tentative map approval associated with the new development and shall be verified by the County prior to recordation any final map associated with the new development. Where no small lot tentative map and final map are required prior to non-residential development having the potential to increase wastewater flows, the requirement for such verification, to be demonstrated no later than the time of issuance of building permits, shall be made a condition of approval of project-level discretionary approvals analogous to issuance of small-lot tentative maps. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-51.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures will reduce impacts associated with treatment plant capacity to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-51.)

Impact 4.11.6-3: The proposed Specific Plan could result in an accidental discharge to the Dry Creek drainage shed or other drainage sheds within or downstream of the Specific Plan area and adversely affect adjacent ecosystems including plant and animal species and their habitat. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-52.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

As proposed, sewage conveyance facilities for the 890± acres east of Watt Avenue will flow to the DCWWTP and, depending upon the plan selected, conveyance infrastructure for the entire
Specific Plan area may either flow to the SRCSD facility south of Sacramento or the DCWWTP. Conveyance infrastructure would utilize lift stations and would cross the Dry Creek channel, although jack-and-bore construction techniques are proposed by the developers to avoid any direct impact to the creek area. For sections that are not force mains, peak flows in the pipeline could potentially result in pipe surges that could displace manhole covers and allow overland flow of untreated sewage into the creek channel. Lift stations could experience emergency conditions, resulting in the potential for accidental spills. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-52.)

Depending upon the pipe material used, sewer pipes typically leak at joints when leaks occur. This leakage can be limited by ensuring compliance with construction specifications for trenching, pipe installation and trench backfilling. However, in areas where the groundwater table is close to the pipeline, additional measures may be needed to protect groundwater quality. Impacts on groundwater and surface water quality are potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-52.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.6-3a Design of on- and off-site sewer pipelines shall have watertight joints and be in accordance with design standards adopted by Placer County in order to minimize the potential for accidental discharge. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-52.)

4.11.6-3b Paved access shall be provided to all sewer system access points to allow for pipeline maintenance and repair. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-52.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Lift station impacts are addressed by Mitigation Measure 4.11.6-1h and would be less than significant with mitigation. Implementation of the above mitigation measures will ensure proper pipeline design and access to pipelines for maintenance and reduce impacts to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-52.)

Off-Site Infrastructure Impact

Impact 4.11.6-4: Impacts due to the construction and maintenance of off-site utilities related to wastewater, including wastewater treatment plant expansions, could cause environmental effects related to Land Use, Visual Quality, disruption of Hydrology and Soils, disruption of Biological and Cultural Resources, Transportation and Circulation, Air Quality, Noise, other Public Services, and Hazards. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-52.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.) A so-called “mitigation measure” has been included in the Project plans, however, in order to reduce
even further any potential impacts associated with construction and maintenance of off-site utilities related to wastewater.

**Explanation:**

All of the above potential effects are considered under other sections of the Revised Draft EIR (see Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9), and other topics discussed in Section 4.11. The discussions under Impacts 4.11.6-1 and 4.11.6-3, and Mitigation Measures 4.11.6-1h, 4.11.6-3a and 4.11.6-3b also apply to off-site infrastructure. The construction and maintenance of utilities in off-site areas would not result in additional generation of wastewater. This is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-53.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

With application of the mitigation measures identified in the sections enumerated above, and Mitigation Measures 4.11.6-1h, 4.11.6-3a and 4.11.6-3b, this is a less than significant impact and no additional mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, 4.11-53.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant.

**Cumulative Impacts**

**Impact 4.11.6-5:** The Placer Vineyards Specific Plan would contribute to the cumulative impact of wastewater conveyance and treatment. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. .4.11-53.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

The cumulative context for wastewater services includes service areas of the SPWA, and more particularly the DCWWTP, and the service area of the SRCSD. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-53.)

On behalf of the SPWA, RMC has prepared a Technical Memorandum (Dry Weather Flow Projection for the Ultimate SPWA Service Area [Including Urban Growth Areas]) (see Appendix R of the Revised Draft EIR), which establishes the cumulative wastewater condition for western Placer County. The “Ultimate SPWA Service Area” is shown in Figure 4.11-3. Assuming all wastewater is treated in Placer County and none is conveyed to SRCSD at buildout western Placer County would generate cumulative dry weather flows of 42.7 MGD. Of that amount 19.3 MGD would flow to the DCWWTP. At buildout, the Specific Plan area would contribute approximately 2.79 MGD of the 19.3 MGD that RMC predicted would flow to the...
Placer Vineyards Specific Plan

Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations

Note: RMC assumed the Blueprint Alternative. Flows are actually 1.1 MGD less under the applicants’ proposed project than predicted by RMC.

Table 4.11-8 shows the contributions to the SPWA system from development within the current (2005) service boundary. Table 4.11-9 shows projected buildout contributions to the “Ultimate SPWA Service Area,” including contributions from the 2005 service area. Flows are separated by the two SPWA treatment plants (PGWWTP and DCWWTP). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-53.)

The DCWWTP was designed to serve proposed development that would occur in a geographic area that includes the eastern 890± acres of the Specific Plan area (Shed B). Service to this area was planned, and the wastewater facilities designed and constructed in anticipation of such service. However, the Roseville Regional Wastewater System Master Plan indicates flows planned in the DCWWTP are based on the Dry Creek West Placer Sewer Master Plan, which planned for a flow of 0.307 MGD for the 890±-acre area. The projected average day flow, however, to the DCWWTP (on a permanent basis) at buildout is 0.48 MGD. While, as previously discussed, plant capacity currently exists to accommodate these flows, the increase represents a potentially significant cumulative impact as the service area builds out. Further, there is uncertainty as to whether planned conveyance facilities (Lift Station #2) will have sufficient capacity to handle Shed B flows at buildout. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-55.)

The western portion of the Specific Plan area was not included in the service area of the DCWWTP. Extending wastewater treatment service at the DCWWTP to the western portion of the Specific Plan area would require additional capacity to be constructed to meet the cumulative condition in western Placer County. However, the entire Specific Plan area is included in the cumulative buildout condition described by RMC. This is considered a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-55.)

The project applicants have also identified utilization of the SRCSD interceptor system, with treatment of project wastewater at the SRCSD SRWTP as an alternative to SPWA service for the western 4,330 acres of the Specific Plan area (Shed A). While SRCSD has identified the Specific Plan area as a potential service area, the capacity at the SRCSD facility has not previously included consideration of such service. The Specific Plan area would generate an average day flow of 2.31 MGD to the treatment plant (see Table 4.11-7, Shed A). Treatment at the SRCSD facility would accelerate the need for eventual expansion of treatment facilities, and construction of interceptor infrastructure, as described above. This is considered a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-55.)

Mitigation Measures:

See Mitigation Measures 4.11.6-1a-g, and 4.11.6-2a-c, supra.

Significance After Mitigation:

Analysis prepared by RMC has shown that wastewater treatment infrastructure can feasibly be expanded to accommodate projected urban growth areas. Mechanisms are in place for accomplishing the expansion of the SPWA service area, and implementation of mitigation measures 4.11.6-1a-g, and 4.11.6-2a-c above would ensure that the Specific Plan area’s
contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than considerable (i.e., less than significant.) With proposed mitigation, this is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-55 to 4.11-56.)

**Impact 4.11.6-6:** The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative water quality degradation due to increased discharge of treated effluent to Dry Creek and/or the Sacramento River. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-57.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect related to temperature change, introduction of trace metals and organics, and changes in dissolved oxygen in Dry Creek as identified in the Final EIR.

However, changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with water quality and the Sacramento River at the SRWTP. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

Development of the Specific Plan area will contribute to increased discharge of treated effluent to Dry Creek and/or the Sacramento River, depending on which wastewater treatment plant or plants ultimately accepts flows from the Specific Plan area. Despite increasingly stringent waste discharge requirements for discharge of treated effluent into surface waters, this represents a potentially significant and unavoidable cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-56.)

Merritt Smith Consulting has prepared a Technical Memorandum (see Appendix Q of the Revised Draft EIR) to evaluate future anticipated compliance with water quality regulations in Dry Creek, and to assess the future cumulative impacts to water quality and aquatic biological resources in Dry Creek due to the prospect of treating and discharging greater amounts of wastewater from the DCWWTP. The technical memorandum acknowledges the future cumulative assessments included in previous EIRs, which address wastewater flows from within the current DCWWTP service area, and determines whether discharge of additional treated flows from proposed projects (including the Specific Plan) that are outside the current service area would result in any new significant cumulative impacts, not previously identified, or that would be more severe than those previously identified. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-56.)

The assessment of water quality impacts described in the technical memorandum is intended to contribute to a common basis for the cumulative impacts discussion of the project-specific CEQA documentation being prepared for proposed projects. For a more complete discussion of this topic, see Impact 4.3.4-9 in Section 4.3.4 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-56.)
Based on the discussion under Impact 4.3.4-9, the following effects on water quality, erosion and sedimentation are **cumulatively less than significant** and no mitigation is required: mercury loading, changes in pH, nutrient loading, change in taste or creation of odors, velocity, bank scour, and turbidity. The following effects are **cumulatively considerable and significant** but can be mitigated to a less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., less than significant) level by application of mitigation measures set forth in the 1996 Master Plan EIR: temperature change, introduction of trace metals and organics, and changes in dissolved oxygen. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-56.)

At the time of preparation of the Master Plan for the SRWTP, all impacts related to Sacramento River water quality were found to be less than significant with implementation of proposed mitigation measures. The complete analysis can be found in the *Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report* (September 1997), which is available for review at the address specified in Section 2.9 in Chapter Two of the Revised Draft EIR. Should expansion of the treatment plant be pursued to serve the Specific Plan area, a Master Plan Update would be required and additional analysis of water quality impacts to the Sacramento River would be needed in a cumulative context. This analysis would be performed in a manner similar to and at the same level of detail as the analysis contained in the EIR for the current Master Plan. Because the results of that analysis are not currently known, this is a **potentially significant and unavoidable cumulative impact**. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-56 to 4.11-57.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.11.6-6 *Should expansion of the SRWTP treatment plant be pursued to serve the Specific Plan area, a Treatment Plant Master Plan Update will be needed and additional analysis of water quality impacts on the Sacramento River will be required in a cumulative context. This analysis shall be performed in a manner similar to and at the same level of detail as the analysis contained in the EIR for the current Master Plan, and shall be consistent with standards established by RWQCB and SRCSD. All recommendations of the analysis shall be implemented utilizing a fair share funding arrangement with Placer Vineyards project proponents.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-57.)

See also Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-9A-c, *supra.*

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-9a-c would reduce impacts related to temperature change, introduction of trace metals and organics, and changes in dissolved oxygen in Dry Creek to a **less than significant level**.

The Mitigation Measure 4.11.6-6 will potentially reduce impacts related to water quality and the Sacramento River at the SRWTP, but not to a **less than significant level.** This impact would remain a **potentially significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.**
4.11.7 Water Supply

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Require or result in the construction of new water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.
- Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or new or expanded entitlements are needed.
- Substantially deplete groundwater supplies.
- Be inconsistent with the goals and policies of the adopted Placer County General Plan.
- Be inconsistent with the applicable terms of the WFA.

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-80.)

Evaluation of impacts related to the source of the proposed surface water supply and hydrologically related impacts are contained in Section 4.3 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-80.)

Impact 4.11.7-1: Water demand could exceed water supply available for the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-80.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Development pursuant to the proposed Specific Plan would result in an increased demand for potable water supplies. Table 4.11-8 of the Revised Draft EIR illustrates water demand for the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-80.)

Potable water for the Specific Plan area would be furnished by the PCWA. PCWA has concluded that it has sufficient water supply to satisfy the anticipated demand for potable water from projects in western Placer County through 2025, including demand generated by the Specific Plan (see Appendix M of the Revised Draft EIR). There is, however, insufficient existing infrastructure to convey and treat the water required by the Specific Plan. PCWA has
identified increased diversion from the Sacramento River, consistent with PCWA’s role as a signatory to the WFA, as the long-term source of water to meet Specific Plan buildout needs. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-80.)

The initial and long-term water supply proposals would use existing water rights for water supply to the proposed project. Exercise of such water rights would be consistent with the agreements reached as part the WFA. Impacts of the exercise of such rights have been considered in the EIR prepared in conjunction with consideration of the WFA. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-80 to 4.11-81.)

An initial water supply would need to be wheeled from the Foothill Water Treatment Plant through the City of Roseville’s system. PCWA estimates that it has 10.7 MGD of unallocated capacity from this source that can serve approximately 9,304 EDUs and that is available on a first-come, first-served basis. It is anticipated that the project would rely on this supply until approximately 2012, when the Sacramento River supply would be brought on line (see Appendix M of the Revised Draft EIR). Table 4.11-10 of the Revised Draft EIR indicates that by 2015, the Specific Plan area could require as much as 9.6 MGD to meet projected demand. Assuming a relatively constant rate of growth, it is apparent that as much as 7 to 8 MGD could be needed by 2012. When taking into consideration other existing and planned projects in western Placer County that could require an additional 7 MGD by 2012 (resulting in 15 MGD total demand with the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan), and the 10 MGD limitation on PCWA’s ability to wheel water through Roseville’s system (of which approximately 8.68 MGD remains uncommitted), these supply and infrastructure limitations are a potentially significant impact that could adversely affect the quantity or quality (including water pressure) of water delivered to existing customers served by the infrastructure. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-81.)

The Specific Plan would generate a demand for approximately 11,500 AFA at buildout. This calculation does not take into consideration use of recycled water that could reduce demand. However, recycled water would only be available to the Specific Plan area in an amount that does not exceed the average dry weather flow sent to the DCWWTP. Unless and until infrastructure for the long-term water supply is completed and implemented, continued development of the Specific Plan area could generate demand for water that exceeds the supply provided by the initial water supply. Should this occur, the Specific Plan has also identified secondary water supply plans that would deliver an additional 6,000 AFA to the Specific Plan area, including: (1) an extension of the existing San Juan Cooperative Pipeline and Northridge Transmission Pipeline (Cooperative Transmission Pipeline) that terminates at Antelope and Walerga Road, west along Antelope Road and north to Watt Avenue into the Specific Plan area.; and (2) a pipeline within PFE Road from Cook Riolo Road to Watt Avenue extending north to the Specific Plan area could also be used to convey this supply. Because a number of actions must occur in order to secure these water supplies, including multi-party agreements, treatment plant improvements, and the extension of an existing pipeline to the Specific Plan area, this impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-81.)

It is important to note that any effects of a water supply curtailment are likely to be temporary and would be ameliorated upon receipt of the long-term or buildout water supply, which is promising, if not certain. In many respects, this is not dissimilar to what commonly occurs in the
land development and construction business as a result of the cyclical nature of housing demand. Projects are often partially build out and awaiting additional market-driven housing demand before they can be completed. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-40.)

Table 4.3.5-1 of the SPRRDEIR provides an assumed development buildout for the project through 2025. The initial surface water supply is projected to be available through 2012, at which time it would be fully utilized. In 2012 it is projected that the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area would contain approximately 2,700 completed dwelling units and/or dwelling units under construction. The water supply analysis assumes that the secondary initial water supply could be extended to the Specific Plan area by 2012, and would allow development to continue unabated until approximately 2020, by which time the long-term or buildout water supply from the Sacramento River would likely be available. By 2020, approximately 6,500 dwelling units are projected for Placer Vineyards. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-30.)

Because Mitigation Measures 4.11.7-1a and 4.11.7-1c could be used to temporarily curtail development during the period of time that the project would be dependent on the initial water supplies, the following analysis is provided of the potential effects of a curtailment. Although the curtailment would be most probable after the construction of the first 2,700 dwelling units, the analysis assumes curtailment could occur at any time. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-30.)

**Land Use and Planning Policies.** Land use as approved by the County under the Specific Plan would not be altered by the temporary curtailment of development. Buildout would be slowed, but the ultimate buildout pattern would, in all likelihood, eventually be achieved. The potential for internal conflicts between pre-development land uses and those built under the Specific Plan could increase, due to the greater period of time required for buildout. In other words, pre-development land use such as cultivation of crops and the raising of livestock could remain in place for longer periods of time, causing temporary conflicts with land uses developed under the Specific Plan. On the other hand, agricultural land would remain in production for a longer period, delaying the significant and unavoidable removal of such land. Any identified conflicts with planning policies, as discussed in Section 4.1 of the Revised Draft EIR, would not generally be altered by the curtailment; however, a curtailment may pose a temporary barrier to balancing the mix of land uses within the Specific Plan area, as discussed under Revised Draft EIR Impact 4.1-1, due to the fact that employment uses and retail services typically follow residential development. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.3-40 to 4.3-41.)

**Visual Quality and Aesthetics.** If development were to be temporarily curtailed, some of the effects related to visual character, light, and glare would be delayed and areas of existing open space would remain for a greater period of time. Because the project description permits development anywhere within the Specific Plan area and provides backbone infrastructure to service discontiguous development, the visual and light producing characteristics of the area would be unevenly distributed across the Specific Plan area. However, the same type of discontinuity and unevenness would occur temporarily were the project to build out under the Specific Plan without the temporary curtailment. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-41.)

**Hydrology, Water Resources and Water Quality.** The proposed Development Agreement and project description for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan require Core Backbone Infrastructure
to be substantially complete prior to issuance of the first building permit. The Core Backbone Infrastructure will include primary roadways and appurtenant drainage structures. In addition, the Development Agreement (DA) requires that for each portion of the property then proposed for development, the developer shall design and construct all downstream permanent drainage facilities to provide drainage of the developing portion of the property. The DA also requires construction of all other drainage facilities necessary to serve the developing property prior to recordation of any small lot Final Subdivision Map (DA Section 3.12). As a result, if development were to be temporarily curtailed, there would be no consequent shortfall in adequate drainage facilities to serve the development and no impact. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-41.)

If development were curtailed, some immediate effects of development on water quality could be delayed. Because various mitigation measures dealing with water quality effects during construction and occupancy are implemented with each Final Subdivision Map and building permit, curtailment would have no impact on implementation of these measures and would cause no new impacts. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-41.)

**Biological Resources.** Temporary curtailment would delay some direct effects on biological resources, including open space. However, because off-site mitigation sites would be acquired and expanded as development occurred, less acreage would be preserved and preserve areas could be temporarily limited in size. Although project mitigation (Mitigation Measure 4.4-1a) requires that Open Space Mitigation and Management Plans be prepared for each specific property to be preserved, temporary curtailment could result in Management Plans that cannot be fully implemented (creation of large contiguous areas) until additional development occurs. Delays also cause the costs of preservation to increase and may result in the loss of some sites that would otherwise be available for purchase. On the other hand, curtailment would mean that there is less development creating the need for biological mitigation. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-41.)

**Geology and Soils.** Temporary curtailment would have little effect on geology and soils. Impacts related to geology and soils occur as a result of individual construction projects. Without continued development, there would be no impact except in the case of potential soil erosion caused by prior development activities. However, such effects would be fully mitigated at the point of initial development through NPDES and Revised Draft EIR Mitigation Measures 4.5-1a through 4.5-4f. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-42.)

**Archaeological/Paleontological Resources.** Temporary curtailment would delay some effects on cultural resources and would have no potential to increase impacts. Mitigation Measures contained in the Revised Draft EIR (Section 4.6) are operative when specific ground-disturbing activities occur and would remain effective under a temporary curtailment scenario. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-42.)

**Transportation and Circulation.** As is noted above, the proposed DA and project description for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan require Core Backbone Infrastructure to be substantially complete prior to issuance of the first building permit. The Core Backbone Infrastructure will include primary roadways. The DA also provides that secondary road improvements shall be completed when required by the timing set forth in the DA’s Road Improvement Table or an improvement agreement acceptable to the County. It is anticipated that the Long-Term or
Buildout Surface Water Supply would be available by approximately 2016, at which time temporary curtailments would no longer be necessary. It is projected that the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area would contain approximately 4,000 dwelling units by 2016. The various road improvements described in the DA’s Road Improvement Table are not required until commencement of construction of the 7,000th building permit or the 10,000th building permit. Therefore, a temporary curtailment would have no effect on the timing or construction of these improvements. Other improvements are tied to a specific future Small-Lot Final Map; however, those roadway improvements are needed only if the particular project proceeds. If the project were curtailed, the improvement would not be required unless the project later proceeded. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-42.)

There are a number of off-site roadway improvements for which the project proponents would pay a fee. If the project were temporarily curtailed, those fees would not be paid until a water supply became available (approximately 2016). By the same measure, the project also would not generate traffic warranting the payment of the fee and, presumably, the improvement. It is recognized that a perfect match will not always exist between fees collected and the timing of roadway improvements, and that market conditions often similarly curtail projects and the payment of fees that might otherwise be expected. Thus, in some instances there may be insufficient fees (from Placer Vineyards and other projects competing for limited water supplies) to pay for needed improvements; in other instances, there may not be sufficient need for improvements for which some fees have been collected but not spent. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-43.)

Although the traffic projections assume that there would be trips attracted internally by employment and retail centers that would otherwise leave the project area, thus increasing external congestion, such internal trip attractants are a more significant consideration under buildout of the project when roadways are fully loaded and employment and retail attractants actually exist. Such uses typically follow later in the buildout process, after “rooftops” have reached critical mass. Thus, it is possible that curtailment would cause Placer Vineyards residents to have to leave the project area in their vehicles for jobs and retail opportunities that would be available on-site under a scenario without curtailment. Any such external effects, however, are not expected to be incrementally considerable or significant in and of themselves. Thus, a temporary curtailment is unlikely to significantly increase traffic congestion based on the number of dwelling units expected prior to 2016. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.3-42 to 4.3-43.)

Air Quality. Emissions are tied to the amount of development occurring and trips generated during and following construction. Therefore, temporary curtailment would also curtail related emissions temporarily. This reduction could be offset by longer trips. As discussed above, retail and employment uses typically follow later in the buildout process, after “rooftops” have reached critical mass. Thus, it is possible that curtailment would cause Placer Vineyards residents to have to leave the project area in their vehicles for jobs and retail opportunities that would be available on-site under a scenario without curtailment. Any air pollution increases from such external effects, however, are not expected to be incrementally considerable or significant in and of themselves, especially given that, as the Revised Draft EIR already explains, air quality effects from the Project are significant and unavoidable. Thus, a temporary curtailment is unlikely to substantially increase the already significant air emissions from the Project based on the number of dwelling units expected prior to 2016. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-43.)
Noise. Noise affecting the Specific Plan area and surrounding uses is generated by three sources: aircraft, construction and traffic. Temporary curtailment would reduce noise generated by construction and traffic. No adverse effects from curtailment have been identified. Aircraft noise would continue to have a less than significant effect on the constructed portions of the project. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-43.)

Population, Employment and Housing. Any temporary curtailment in Specific Plan area population growth would almost certainly be accommodated elsewhere in the region within projects with an adequate water supply. Any indirect effects attributable to population growth, including air quality, traffic and public services impacts, would be shifted to areas in which growth was occurring. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-43.)

Although affordable housing issues typically fall outside the scope of CEQA analysis, it should be noted that development of affordable housing would be curtailed in the project area along with market rate housing. The project proponents propose to construct 1,413 affordable housing units (or 10% of the project’s housing), consistent with the County’s General Plan. The Specific Plan focuses affordable housing in high density and mixed use designations. Because buildout of these land use designation areas is likely to follow partial buildout of lower density areas, a temporary curtailment during early stages of the project should have little effect. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-43.)

The Revised Draft EIR reports that there will be short term imbalance of jobs and housing (more housing than jobs) that will correct itself over time. Because a temporary curtailment would slow or stop the construction of housing during the period when there would be more job seekers than jobs, the effect would actually be beneficial on a regional basis. Locally, since all construction within the project area would stop, there would be no effect. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-43.)

Public Services/Infrastructure. Fire: Based on triggers outlined in the DA, a temporary curtailment could curtail construction of the permanent eastern fire station that is to be complete by the time the 5,000th building permit is issued. However, an interim eastern station is required in the second year of development. At this time there would be fewer than 1,700 houses built or under construction (Table 4.3.5-1). Because the initial surface water supply is probable and would provide sufficient water for at least 2,700 homes, the interim station would be in place and available to serve any development with in its service area, if temporary curtailment did occur prior to the 5,000 building permit. After the 5,000th building permit is issued, all fire stations would be in place and curtailment would have no direct effect on adequacy of fire response. Also, with the 5,001st building permit the developers are required by the DA to pay a Regional Fire Facility Fee for development of a regional fire safety facility. This payment would be delayed if there was a temporary curtailment. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.3-43 to 4.3-44.)

Police: Similar to fire, the DA provides for an interim facility prior to the first building permit. A permanent facility is required prior to the 3,200th building permit. Although not likely, because curtailment could occur at the 2,700th building permit, operations could be required to use the interim facility for a longer period of time than originally anticipated. Revised Draft EIR
Mitigation Measure 4.11.3-2b requires an agreement for staffing and equipment prior to the recordation of the first final subdivision map, which precedes issuance of building permits. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-44.)

**Schools:** Procedures are provided in the Education Code to protect the interests of affected school districts; however, temporary curtailment of the project could lead to delays in the construction of schools within the project area and could cause additional busing and use of temporary facilities on the part of school districts until development reached the necessary trigger for school development. However, the DA provides that the developers will make at least two improved elementary school sites and one improved middle school site available to the school districts prior to issuance of any building permits. In any event, State law provides that the payment of school impact fees by new development is sufficient, as a matter of law, to mitigate all impacts related to school facilities to a less than significant level (Gov. Code § 65996). (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-44.)

**Solid Waste Disposal:** Temporary curtailment would have no effect on solid waste disposal. Use of disposal facilities would be reduced during the temporary curtailment, but would resume upon development of the long-term water supply. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-44.)

**Wastewater:** Backbone infrastructure for wastewater collection and disposal is required to be constructed upon project initiation. Revised Draft EIR Mitigation Measure 4.11.6-2a requires treatment commitments prior to improvement plan approval. In-tract improvements would be required prior to the issuance of any affected building permits. Temporary curtailment would have no effect on the adequacy or provision of sewer service to completed construction or homes for which building permits have been issued. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-44.)

**Recycled Water:** Recycled water requires that wastewater be generated. Temporary curtailment would temporarily reduce future generation of wastewater and recycled water; however, the amount being generated at the point of curtailment would continue to be generated and used as before. Any expansion of public landscape areas would be curtailed until additional recycled water became available. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-44.)

**Library Services:** The DA provides that a permanent library be constructed prior to the 3000th building permit. Until that time library services would be provided by bookmobile. If curtailment occurred prior to the 3,000th building permit (e.g., at the 2,700th building permit), library services would continue to be provided by bookmobile until the curtailment was lifted. An interim library facilities fee is required to be paid prior to the issuance of the first building permit within the project area. Payment of this fee would be unaffected by a temporary curtailment in water supply. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-45.)

**Parks and Recreation:** Parks and recreation facility development is required in a phased manner by the Revised Draft EIR and DA. Localized facilities have triggers tied to as few as 100 and 200 building permits, while some community facilities are not to be constructed until the latter stages of development. A temporary curtailment would delay the construction of certain community facilities; however, because local facilities are tied to a very low threshold, development of such facilities would be little affected by a temporary curtailment. Mitigation Measure 4.11.13-3 requires that funding mechanisms for park maintenance and recreation...
programs be in place prior to recordation of the first small-lot final map and would, therefore, be unaffected by any curtailment. (SPRREIR, p. 4.3-45.)

General County Facilities and Services: Mitigation Measure 4.11.14-3 requires that a phased schedule be prepared for the provision of general government facilities. The schedule is reflected in the DA, which provides for various facilities to be available at different times. Some facilities such as the Interim Government Center are to be available prior to issuance of the first building permit. A limited number of facilities are to be available during the period of time when the project would rely on the initial water supplies. These primarily include facilities related to start-up of transit service. If a temporary curtailment were to occur, transit service would also likely be curtailed, which could lead to increased use of automobiles, with attendant traffic, air quality and noise implications. However, because such curtailment would occur early in the development process, any temporary increase in impacts would be well within the buildout analyses provided in the Revised Draft EIR. (SPRREIR, p. 4.3-45.)

Hazards. A temporary curtailment would have little environmental effect. Hazards abatement typically occurs as property is developed consistent with the various mitigation measures contained in Revised Draft EIR Section 4.12. Any curtailment would simply lengthen the time in which full abatement would occur. There is a potential for dwellings to be constructed adjacent to properties on which abatement has not been completed due to curtailment, thus increasing the potential for exposure of residents to unhealthy conditions; however, this same potential would exist under a market-driven buildout and would be monitored by the County’s Environmental Health Division under either circumstance. (SPRREIR, p. 4.3-45.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.7-1a Prior to approval of any small lot tentative subdivision map for a proposed residential project of more than five hundred dwelling units, the County shall comply with Government Code Section 66473.7. Prior to approval of any small lot tentative subdivision map for a proposed residential project of 500 or fewer units, the County need not comply with Section 66473.7, or formally consult with PCWA or other public water system, but shall nevertheless make a factual showing or impose conditions similar to those required by Section 66473.7 in order to ensure an adequate water supply for development authorized by the map. Prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map, or prior to County approval of any similar project-specific discretionary approval or entitlement required for nonresidential uses, the applicant shall demonstrate the availability of a long-term, reliable water supply from a public water system for the amount of development that would be authorized by the final subdivision map or project-specific discretionary non-residential approval or entitlement. Such a demonstration shall consist of a written certification from the water service provider that either existing sources are available or that needed improvements will be in place prior to occupancy. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-81 to 4.11-82.)

4.11.7-1b The Specific Plan proponents shall, comply with PCWA water conservation strategies as described in PCWA’s Urban Water Management Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-82.)
4.11.7-1c Prior to approval of any small lot tentative subdivision map or similar project level discretionary approval for land uses that do not require a tentative subdivision map, the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) shall perform an analysis of the remaining wheeling capacity in the City of Roseville’s system. This analysis shall consider all of the previously committed demand to Morgan Creek, Placer Vineyards, Regional University or other projects within southwest Placer County that rely on water conveyed through City of Roseville facilities and/or pursuant to the wheeling agreement between the City of Roseville and PCWA, as amended from time to time. The analysis shall be submitted to both the County and the City of Roseville. The County shall confirm with PCWA that uncommitted capacity remains to wheel the required amount of PCWA-supplied water to the Specific Plan area prior to approval of discretionary actions. In the event sufficient uncommitted capacity does not exist, the County shall not grant the proposed tentative subdivision map or other project level discretionary approval until the County determines that a water supply not dependent on water from PCWA that is wheeled thru the Roseville system becomes available for the area at issue. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-82.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measures will reduce impacts related to water supply, including infrastructure capacity, to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-81.)

Off-Site Infrastructure Impact

Impact 4.11.7-2: Impacts due to the construction and maintenance of off-site utilities related to water supply could cause environmental effects related to Land use, Visual Quality, disruption of Hydrology and Soils, disruption of Biological and Cultural Resources, Transportation and Circulation, Air Quality, Noise, other Public Services, and Hazards. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-82.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

All of the above potential effects are considered under other sections of the Revised Draft EIR (see Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9), and other topics discussed in Section 4.11. The construction and maintenance of utilities in the off-site areas would not result in additional demand for water, and would not otherwise affect the impacts identified above. This is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-82.)
Mitigation Measures:

With implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the sections enumerated above, this is a less than significant impact and no additional mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-83.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant.

Cumulative Impact

Impact 4.11.7-3: The proposed project would contribute to the cumulative demand for potable water. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-82.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

As discussed under Impact 4.11.7-1, PCWA has concluded that it has sufficient water rights to meet the Specific Plan demand at buildout through the year 2025. The long-term supply of 11,500 AFA for the Specific Plan area would be furnished by PCWA via pipeline with diversion of water from the Sacramento River. This diversion is included in the WFA, subject to the successful resolution of outstanding issues and the completion of an EIR/EIS and compliance with relevant federal and State laws such as the Endangered Species Act. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-83.)

Section 4.3 of the Revised Draft EIR identifies cumulative impacts related to the water supply, including the Sacramento diversion. Included are the following:

- Impact 4.3.3-7 identified an impact on CVP hydropower generation and gross capacity. The cumulative impact is considered to be less than significant.

- Impact 4.3.3-8 indicated that increased diversions under the cumulative conditions would result in lower water surface levels in Folsom Reservoir, with resulting effects on energy use and cost. The proposed long-term water supply for the Specific Plan is not viewed as a factor in these changes, and the cumulative impact was found to be less than significant.

- Impact 4.3.3-9 identified the impact that cumulative conditions would have on State Water Project customers. Under the cumulative condition, reductions in deliveries to State Water Project customers would range from 5% to 45%, relative to existing conditions, in 45 of the 70 years modeled. The proposed Specific Plan long-term water supply would not contribute,
in either frequency or magnitude, to any anticipated future long-term State Water Project delivery reductions, and it would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. The impact is therefore considered less than significant.

- Impact 4.3.3-10 identified the impact that cumulative conditions would have on CVP customers. Under the cumulative condition, CVP water service contractors would experience delivery reductions of 5% to 20%, relative to existing conditions, in 24 of the 70 years modeled. The long-term water supply would not contribute, in either frequency or magnitude, to any reduction in delivery to any CVP contractor, and it would not have a cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant impacts to CVP deliveries that would occur under the cumulative condition. The cumulative impact is considered to be less than significant.

- Impact 4.3.4-11 discusses the cumulative impact of increased diversions and changes in CVP operations that could result from the cumulative conditions. These changes include reduced water storage levels in the Folsom, Shasta and Trinity reservoirs, and substantially reduced flows in the lower American and Sacramento Rivers. The cumulative impact is considered to be less than significant.

- Impact 4.3.4-12 discusses the cumulative impact that the proposed water supply could have on Delta water quality. Reductions in the Delta outflow could result in a possible reduction in Delta water quality. The cumulative impact is considered to be less than significant.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.11-83 to 4.11-84.)

The cumulative impacts of the long-term water supply were also considered and addressed in the Environmental Impact Report for the Water Forum Agreement, State Clearinghouse # 95082041. The WFA is to be implemented over the next three decades, and the cumulative analysis considered events that could occur in that time frame. The Water Forum EIR recognized that there is a large degree of speculation and uncertainty when attempting to make such projections, and that the actions of various persons and agencies could have a substantial impact on future events. The Water Forum EIR provided a summary of cumulative impacts at Table 2-3 of the EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-84.)

As reported above, at buildout, Placer Vineyards will require 11,500 AFA to meet demand. PCWA estimates that 86,837 AFA can be made available in normal years for use in western Placer County, and that this will be more than an adequate amount to meet projected demand over the next 20 years (see Appendix M of the Revised Draft EIR). Some of the other identified projects in western Placer County that could contribute to the cumulative demand for potable water include:

- The proposed Curry Creek Community Plan, which at buildout is anticipated to contain 16,200 dwelling units as well as 2,025,000 and 2,124,000 square feet of retail and office space, respectively.
• The Regional University and Community Specific Plan, which would encompass a six hundred-acre four-year private university campus, approximately 4,223 dwelling units and 73 acres of retail space at buildout.

• The Sierra Vista Specific Plan, which at buildout it would consist of approximately 10,000 dwelling units, along with approximately 77 acres of commercial and 57 acres for office development (3,000,000 square feet of floor area).

• The West Roseville Specific Plan, which at buildout would contain approximately 8,500 dwelling units, and 200 acres of commercial/office development.

• The proposed Creekview Specific Plan, which at buildout would consist of approximately 2,160 dwelling units, 38 acres of industrial land use, a proposed school.

• The Placer Ranch Specific Plan, which at buildout would consist of approximately 6,793 residential dwelling units, 527 acres of business park and light industrial uses, 150 acres of office professional uses and 99 acres for commercial uses. In addition, the proposed project includes a 300-acre branch campus of California State University Sacramento, with an estimated total enrollment of 25,000 students.

• Riolo Vineyards Specific Plan, which at buildout will consist of approximately 805 dwelling units. Southeast from the proposed Riolo Vineyards Specific Plan area is the Morgan Place development, which is proposed to have approximately 91 dwelling units.

• The proposed Morgan Place development area is located on approximately 12 acres southeast of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area. Proposed development of this site includes approximately 91 dwelling units.

• The proposed Silver Creek development area is located on approximately 28.6 acres southeast of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area. Proposed development of this site includes approximately 79 dwelling units.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.11-84 to 4.11-85.)

Assuming all of the above projects were to be built and supplied water by PCWA, and assuming demand factors for all projects are similar to those used for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, demand would be in the general range of 40,000 AFA, which is well within the projected PCWA water availability of 86,837 AFA. In addition, because some of the above projects are or will be within the City of Roseville, it is unlikely that PCWA would actually be the water provider. Cumulative impacts related to long-term supply are, therefore, less than significant; however, infrastructure capacity is constrained, as described under Impact 4.11.7, which could lead to a potentially significant cumulative impact to which the project’s contribution could be cumulatively considerable. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-85.)
Mitigation Measures:

See Mitigation Measures 4.11.7-1a-c, supra.

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.11.7-1a-c would reduce the projects contribution to cumulative water supply impacts related to infrastructure capacity to a less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., less than significant) level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-85.)

4.11.8 Recycled Water

Standards of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines provides examples of impacts that could be considered significant for utilities and service systems which refer to wastewater treatment and, although not stated, relate to the use of recycled water as it is a part of the utilities and service systems. Placer County has determined that a project could result in a significant impact if it would:

- Require or result in the construction of new water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects;

- Have insufficient recycled water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or new or expanded entitlements are needed; or

- Be inconsistent with the goals and policies of applicable General Plans.

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-92.)

Impact 4.11.8-1: Implementation of the Specific Plan could result in inconsistencies with recycled water treatment requirements and City/County goals, policies and regulations. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-92.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The recycled water distribution system as identified in the Specific Plan will meet the reclamation criteria contained in Title 22, Division 4 of the California Code of Regulations. These standards set by the DHS and the RWQCB, and would be consistent with City of Roseville Municipal Code, Roseville General Plan goals and policies and Placer County
**General Plan** goals and policies. This impact is considered **less than significant.** (RDEIR, p. 4.11-92.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-92.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.8-2:** The recycled water demand could exceed available recycled water supply for the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered **potentially significant.** (RDEIR, p. 4.11-92.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with project effluent being sent from its western area to SRCSD. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects (or some of the effects) therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

However, if all effluent is sent to the DCWWTP, changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

The annual average recycled water demand for the Specific Plan area has been estimated by MacKay & Somps to be 1.39 MGD (Memorandum from MacKay & Somps to RMC, March 2005) and was supplied to RMC for use in the Market Assessment for Recycled Water Distribution System. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-92.)

Design flow rates are affected by recycled water demand, the time frame in which it is to be used, as well as the supply. The City has determined that the Specific Plan area will only receive the amount of recycled water that it produces in wastewater on an average day in July. RMC projects that the Specific Plan recycled water demand would be 3.44 MGD on an average day in July. Although RMC reports that the Specific Plan area would generate more wastewater than recycled water demand, this assumes the Blueprint Alternative and projected wastewater flows of 3.89 MGD. Flows for the “project” would be 2.79 MGD, which leaves a .65 MGD deficit when compared to July average day recycled water demand (3.44 MGD). Based on the supply formula used by the City, the project would be entitled to receive 81% of projected average annual day recycled water demand, or approximately 1.13 MGD. Projected recycled water supply is determined based on a ratio of wastewater to recycled water demand during the peak demand month (July). (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-92 to 4.11-93.)
The above calculations assume that all of the Specific Plan area is served by the DCWWTP. In the event the western 4,340 acres are directed to SRCSD for wastewater service, the flows to DCWWTP would be significantly reduced (0.48 MGD versus 2.79 MGD). (RDEIR, p.4.11-93.)

Although the applicants have proposed that only the eastern 890 acres be supplied with recycled water in the event the balance of the site is directed to SRCSD (see Figure 3-19 in Chapter Three of the Revised Draft EIR), there have been no studies performed similar to the RMC study to document recycled water demand versus supply for this area. In the event the western 4,340 acres of the Specific Plan area receive wastewater service from SRCSD, the absence of a recycled water supply for this area would be a potentially significant and unavoidable impact. Although additional recycled water may be made available by SRCSD in Sacramento County due to the availability of inflow from the Specific Plan, there would be no direct benefit to the Specific Plan water supply or reduction in demand for potable water from PCWA (however, water demand reported in Section 4.11.7 does not assume recycled water). Although recycled water may be available to the eastern 890 acres in the event service is not expanded to the western 4,340 acres, absent a plan demonstrating its feasibility, this would also be a potentially significant and unavoidable impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-93.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are available to offset the potential lack of supply, with the exception of a change in the project description to eliminate the potential to bifurcate wastewater treatment. This remains a potentially significant and unavoidable impact under a scenario in which the project sends effluent from its western area to SRCSD, although it would be mitigated to a less than significant level under a scenario in which all effluent is sent to the DCWWTP.

Significance After Mitigation:

Significant and unavoidable or less than significant, depending upon effluent destination.

Impact 4.11.8-3: Construction and operation of the recycled water distribution system could lead to adverse environmental effects. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-93.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Recycled water would be used in parks, schools, publicly landscaped areas, and the landscaping associated with commercial, business professional, light industrial and multi-family uses. It is proposed to initially provide recycled water to the project site from the DCWWTP and ultimately from the PGWWTP. A connection will be made to an existing 24-inch gravity recycled water
line constructed as part of the Dry Creek West Placer Community Facilities District #1. The pipeline currently terminates south of Dry Creek on the east side of Walerga Road. The line will be extended in a northerly direction along Walerga Road to Baseline Road where it will turn west to the project site (see Figure 3-5 in Chapter Three of the Revised Draft EIR). In the future, as the west Placer area builds out, a recycled water line will be constructed from the PGWWTP to serve the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan and other areas. It is currently proposed to extend the future recycled water line westward from PGWWTP along Phillip Road to the alignment of Watt Avenue, and then south to Baseline Road where it would tie into other recycled water infrastructure. The PGWWTP supply would supplement and/or ultimately replace the DCWWTP supply (Figure 3-5 in Chapter Three of the Revised Draft EIR). (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-93 to 4.11-94.)

Figures 3-18 and 3-19 show the proposed on-site core backbone infrastructure for recycled water. Storage and pumping facilities would be required within the Specific Plan area, along with a backbone of dedicated non-potable water lines within street rights-of-way ranging in size from 6 to 24 inches in diameter. A proposed recycled water storage tank is to be located near the intersection of 16th Street and Dyer Lane (Figure 3-18 in Chapter Three of the Revised Draft EIR). According to RMC, storage will be a requirement for future projects. In the case of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, the tank must be capable of holding peak day demand, or approximately 3.00 MGD. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-94.)

Exposure to recycled water could occur through drinking water that has been contaminated by recycled water, through contact with plant or soil materials that have been irrigated using recycled water, and inhalation of aerosols generated during spray irrigation with recycled water; however, tertiary treatment would provide an overall effective level of removal of pathogens and other harmful chemicals. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-94.)

Construction of recycled water distribution pipelines present the possibility of cross-connection with the potable water system, especially in areas where potable water systems are provided as a backup. Any potential for mixing of recycled water with the drinking water supply would pose a concern due to the possibility of ingestion of recycled water. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-94.)

Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations, implemented by the DHS, provides specifications to avoid any potential for cross-connections with drinking water supplies. This includes identification (purple pipe) and signage of pipe materials, backflow prevention requirements, proper air gaps or cross-connection control design measures, plus minimum separation criteria for recycled water pipelines and water supply pipelines. The DHS Public Water Supply Branch has published the Guidance Manual for Cross-Connection Control Programs, which provides detailed information on compliance with the requirements. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-94.)

The quality of the recycled water would meet Title 22 requirements for all allowable unrestricted non-potable uses and the City of Roseville, with its experience and established protocols, would be the system operator. Because there is no evidence that construction or operation of a system using water treated to Title 22 standards would result in undue risk, and a responsible entity for system operation has been identified, this is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-94.)
There is a potential for spillover of recycled water to occur from planned storage facilities. As noted above, a recycled water storage tank is to be provided. This would be an enclosed steel tank and would not normally permit recycled water to come in contact with the environment in an unplanned manner. However, other smaller scale project specific facilities may be necessary as the recycled water system is built out. This is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-94.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.8-3a Plans for site-specific recycled water storage facilities shall include provisions for emergency storage, including redundant in-ground storage ponds or enclosed tanks capable of holding one day peak demand for the area served. All recycled water storage ponds shall be bermed to prevent inflow from surface sources and shall not be located where a direct discharge to a drainage course or natural waterway could occur if the pond should experience a containment failure. All storage ponds for recycled water shall be fenced to restrict access and posted with warning signs to reduce the potential for direct human contact with recycled water. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-95.)

4.11.8-3b The project applicants shall be responsible for completing the Engineering Report that is required to be submitted to the State for the production, distribution and use of recycled water. Recycled water shall not be used until the Engineering Report is approved by the State. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-95.)

4.11.8-3c Adequate storage and pumping facilities must be provided prior to connection to the recycled water system. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-95.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Potential impacts related to construction of infrastructure are addressed in Sections 4.1 through 4.12 of the Revised Draft EIR. With mitigation provided in those sections for construction-related impacts and the above mitigation measures related to recycled water storage, this impact would be reduced to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-95.)

Cumulative Impact

Impact 4.11.8-4: Placer Vineyards Specific Plan recycled water demand could have an adverse cumulative effect on available recycled water supply. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-95.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
**Explanation:**

RMC has examined the cumulative condition with regard to recycled water availability and found that adequate supplies are available to serve existing customers, as well as future customers, including Urban Growth Areas and the Specific Plan area. Table 4.11-11, 4.11-12 and 4.11-13 show total recycled water to be delivered to urban growth areas, annual recycled water demand, and peak day flow rates for the region to be served by the City of Roseville’s system. However, the RMC work assumed the Blueprint Alternative for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area, which overstates wastewater flows from the project. Wastewater flows for the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area would actually be 1.1 MGD less than those reported by RMC on Table 4.11.13 and recycled water average day demand, as reported on Table 4.11.12, would be reduced by .26 MGD. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-95 to 4.11-96.)

The concept proposed by RMC would transfer a small amount (700 gallons per minute) of recycled water from the Woodcreek Oaks Golf Course storage tank to the DCWWTP system in order to meet demand and maintain adequate flows in Dry Creek. A minimum flow of 4 MGD must be maintained in Dry Creek in order to avoid aquatic impacts, which limits the availability of DCWWTP recycled water. As previously described, as Placer Vineyards Specific Plan builds out, it will be necessary to obtain recycled water from the PGWWTP, even though all Placer Vineyards wastewater would be transmitted to DCWWTP. This imbalance is explained by the need to maintain minimum creek flows and the fact that DCWWTP (the older of the two wastewater treatment plants) already serves some areas with recycled water that are now within the PGWWTP service area. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-97.)

RMC concludes “These preliminary results indicate there will be sufficient recycled water supply to meet the daily demand of 29 MGD shown above [see Revised Draft EIR Table 4.11-13]. The projected wastewater flow of 19.6 MGD ADWF to DCWWTP will be sufficient to meet the recycled water demands and maintain the minimum 4 million gallon discharge to Dry Creek. The projected ADWF of 21.59 MGD to PGWWTP will provide enough supply to supply recycled water demands.” As described above, although Placer Vineyards Specific Plan contribution of wastewater will be less than predicted by RMC, its use of recycled water will be commensurately reduced. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to recycled water supply are less than considerable, (i.e., less than significant). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-98.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-98.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.
4.11.9 Drainage

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.

- Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site.

- Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.

- Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map.

- Place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area that would impede or redirect flood flows.

- Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

- Be inconsistent with the goals and policies of the adopted Placer County General Plan.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.11-106 to 4.11-107.)

The hydrologic impacts of the proposed Specific Plan, including the flooding, siltation, erosion, water quality, impacts of drainage facilities downstream and on a cumulative basis, are discussed in Section 4.3.2 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-107.)

**Impact 4.11.9-1:** Potential lack of compliance of future projects with the Master Project Drainage Study, and Placer County policies, standards and ordinances could contribute to inadequate project drainage. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-107.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.
Explanation:

A *Master Project Drainage Study* has been prepared for the proposed Specific Plan. This Drainage Study has been reviewed by the Flood Control District and the Placer County Department of Public Works for compliance with County standards and ordinances. The document was also peer reviewed by WRIME Inc. (WRIME). The WRIME peer review appears as Appendix S of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-107.)

The *Master Project Drainage Study* was revised to reflect peer review comments; however, the documentation remains preliminary until actual projects are submitted that detail lot layout and project specific infrastructure. The County will require that individual drainage reports be submitted with each development project showing compliance with the *Master Project Drainage Study*, and Placer County policies, standards and ordinances. Until this process is completed, this remains a *potentially significant impact*. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-107.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.9-1a *The Master Project Drainage Study shall be incorporated as part of Specific Plan approval by reference or other similar means.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-108.)

4.11.9-1b *Individual project drainage reports consistent with the County’s Stormwater Management Manual and Grading Ordinance shall be submitted for each development project, including installation of backbone infrastructure. Drainage reports shall identify the proposed detention/retention basins that will serve the new development area or submit an interim detention basin design with supporting calculations subject to approval by County staff.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-108.)

4.11.9-1c *Drainage reports for development projects within the Specific Plan area shall comply with the current permit requirements of the NPDES Phase II (Attachment 4).* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-108.)

4.11.9-1d *The Master Project Drainage Study shall be submitted to the Placer County Department of Public Works and reviewed and approved by the Department of Public Works prior to the recordation of the first large lot tentative map.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-108.)

4.11.9-1e *Individual project drainage reports shall be consistent with the approved Master Project Drainage Study.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-108.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures will assure compliance with the *Master Project Drainage Study*, and County policies, standards and ordinances, and reduce impacts to a *less than significant level*. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-108.)
Impact 4.11.9-2: Construction of drainage facilities in the Specific Plan area will create an ongoing need for maintenance and repair of the facilities in order to avoid long-term environmental effects. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-108.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The area currently contains few drainage facilities for which the County is responsible. This condition will be altered with development of the Specific Plan, potentially placing a significant burden on the County’s limited personnel and equipment maintenance resources, which could lead to drainage-related physical impacts on the environment due to lack of maintenance. This is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-108.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.9-2 Prior to recordation of the first small lot final subdivision map in the Specific Plan area, a drainage service area under a new County Service Area (CSA), existing CSA #28, or a Community Facilities District (CFD) shall be established for the Specific Plan area in compliance with law. The CSA or CFD shall identify and establish ongoing funding for a continuous drainage facility maintenance program. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-109.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce the impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-108.)

Impact 4.11.9-3: Construction of drainage systems within the Specific Plan area could lead to physical impacts on the environment. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-109.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Pipelines up to 96 inches in diameter will be installed along with grading of new drainage channels, construction of retention/detention basins, water quality structures and outfall structures. All drainage systems infrastructure is an integral part of the Specific Plan and
analysis of impacts related to its construction is included in each of the topical areas contained in the Revised Draft EIR, including the topics of Biological Resources, Geology and Soils, Archaeological and Paleontological Resources, Air Quality, Noise and Hazards. No additional impacts related to construction of drainage infrastructure have been identified. This impact is, therefore, less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-109.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-109.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

4.11.10 Electrical and Natural Gas Service

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered facilities, or create a need for new or physically altered facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, or other performance objectives.

- Use scarce energy resources in a wasteful or inefficient manner.

- Be inconsistent with the adopted Placer County General Plan.

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-114.)

Impact 4.11.10-1: Development of the Specific Plan area will increase the demand for electricity and natural gas and will result in the need to construct new infrastructure to serve the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-114.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Extensions of existing electrical facilities by both PG&E and SMUD are necessary to provide adequate electrical service to support the demands of the Specific Plan. SMUD indicates that it
has or can develop the necessary capacity to serve its portion of the Specific Plan area. PG&E has the ability to provide electrical service for new development for approximately one year without the construction of new infrastructure. Much of the existing infrastructure capacity is being consumed by other developments in the vicinity of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan. To serve the project, PG&E will construct a new substation. When new energy infrastructure is needed, there will be short-term construction impacts. To minimize impacts, development of on-site and off-site electrical infrastructure needs to occur concurrently with Specific Plan area development. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-114.)

In order to provide natural gas service to the Specific Plan area, new gas distribution feeder mains, regulator stations, and distribution and transmission lines will be needed. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-114.)

Energy supply is surpassed by energy demand during peak usage times in California. Increased energy efficiency and conservation could reduce the need for additional power plants or other energy facilities that could cause undesirable environmental effects, as well as reducing costs for future homeowners and businesses. Energy efficiency measures may be used in the design of subdivisions and the location and design of commercial and residential properties. Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations addresses required energy efficiency measures for construction. These construction practices can reduce costs to homeowners and businesses over the long-term. The Specific Plan specifies that all residential units will be built to Title 24 standards. The Specific Plan also encourages integration of solar orientation and design of buildings. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-115.)

Energy consumption for natural gas and electricity for uses by geographic area is shown in Table 4.11-14 of the Revised Draft EIR. According to this table, natural gas and electrical consumption for the Specific Plan area will be 38,323,440 therms per year and 182 MW per year, respectively, upon full buildout. Since PG&E and SMUD report that they have the ability to supply the necessary energy to the Specific Plan area, this impact is considered less than significant. However, impacts related to timing of installation of utilities are potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-115.)

There are many sources of electrical energy, and it is likely that various sources would be used in the Specific Plan area at buildout. According to PG&E’s 2004 Generation Portfolio, the company obtains energy from hydroelectric, nuclear and fossil facilities. According to SMUD’s Power Content Label, this company obtains energy from natural gas, hydroelectric, coal, nuclear, geothermal, biomass and waste, wind and solar facilities. It is beyond the scope of the Revised Draft EIR to speculate regarding impacts of using any particular source of energy; however, for informational purposes, common potential environmental impacts from various energy sources are listed below.

- Hydroelectric: Alteration of aquatic ecosystems and hydrologic processes, soil erosion, disruption of natural fish movement.
- Nuclear: Significant water use, discharge of warmed and polluted water into natural water bodies, generation of radioactive waste, soil contamination.
• Coal: Emission of nitrogen oxides, carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, mercury and methane into the air; significant water use; discharge of warmed and polluted water into natural water bodies; generation of solid waste; soil contamination; alteration of wildlife habitat during surface mining.

• Natural Gas: Emission of methane, nitrogen oxides, and carbon dioxide; alteration of habitat during extraction.

• Geothermal: Significant water use, groundwater contamination, land subsidence.

• Biomass and Waste: Emission of nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide, significant water use, discharge of warmed and polluted water into natural water bodies, generation of solid waste.

• Wind: Aesthetic impacts, excessive noise, bird and bat mortality; use of large amounts of land.

• Solar: Generation of hazardous materials, use of large amounts of land.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.11-115 to 4.11-116.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.10-1a The Specific Plan applicants and subsequent developers shall work closely with PG&E and SMUD to ensure that development of electrical and natural gas infrastructure with the capacity to service the entire Specific Plan area is located and provided concurrently with roadway construction and in accordance with PUC regulations. The applicant(s) shall grant all necessary easements for installation of electrical and natural gas facilities, including utility easements along existing and future on-site major arterial roads for the development of area-wide utility corridors. Coordination with SMUD and/or PG&E shall occur, and any required agreements shall be established prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-116.)

4.11.10-1b Implement Mitigation Measures 4.8-3a through 4.8-3g as set forth in Section 4.8 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-116.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure will reduce energy-related impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-116.)

Impact 4.11.10-2: Development associated with the Specific Plan could have an adverse effect on the ability of PG&E or SMUD to access their facilities and provide adequate service to their customers. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-116.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Land uses within the transmission line corridors that traverse the Specific Plan area are restricted. No structures are permitted in these areas, and clear and unrestricted access must be maintained. Some of the utility infrastructure could be located in areas that have the potential to become inaccessible for maintenance and/or for emergency response. In addition parking/storage for a County corporation yard and parking for a religious use are proposed within the easements. A site for a future cemetery is also proposed. Utility easements may be located behind fences or buildings without means of ingress and egress. As development occurs in the Specific Plan area, the potential to block access to utility infrastructure is increased. This is considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-116 to 4.11-117.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.10-2a  All locations and continuous maintenance access points for natural gas and electrical infrastructure shall be identified in consultation with PG&E and/or SMUD and are to be clearly marked or noted on tentative subdivision maps. Dedicated easements for utility maintenance equipment shall be recorded prior to or concurrent with acceptance and recordation of final maps. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-117; FEIR Response 28C.)

4.11.10-2b  Clear, unrestricted access shall be maintained beneath existing transmission lines that traverse the Specific Plan area. This may include provision for unobstructed access to gates in proposed fences that may surround such uses as the County corporation yard. Any realignment of transmission line paths shall be negotiated with PG&E. Structures shall only be allowed in those areas that do not restrict access and meet the requirements of PG&E. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-117.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measures would ensure consistency with the requirements of utility easements identified above and will mitigate the potential for impacts associated with the provision of electrical and natural gas service to the Specific Plan area to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-117.)

Cumulative Impact

Impact 4.11.10-3:  The proposed Specific Plan, in conjunction with other development in the area, would increase the demand for electricity service, creating a
potentially significant cumulative impact. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-117.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Thousands of additional acres are approved, or proposed for development in Placer, Sacramento and Sutter counties as shown in Figure 4.1-2 in Section 4.1 of the Revised Draft EIR, including the Elverta Specific Plan, South Sutter County Industrial/Commercial Reserve, Curry Creek Community Plan, the Regional University and Community, West Roseville Specific Plan, Placer Ranch, Lincoln Crossing, Lincoln 270, Sierra Vista Specific Plan, Creekview Specific Plan area, Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan, Silver Creek, and Riolo Vineyards Specific Plan. The Elverta Specific Plan area consists of 1,734 acres of land located south of the Specific Plan area. The Elverta Specific Plan has a holding capacity of up to 4,950 units and ten acres of commercial. The South Sutter County Industrial/Commercial Reserve includes 3,600 acres of commercial and industrial uses and 2,900 acres of residential development, immediately west of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area. The Curry Creek Community Plan area, located north of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area, will contain approximately 16,200 dwelling units at buildout, and the Regional University and Community will contain approximately 4,223 dwelling units. The West Roseville Specific Plan area (located north of the Specific Plan area), consists of 3,150 acres, including approximately 8,500 proposed residential dwelling units, 200 acres of commercial/office uses and 980 acres of public uses including open space. Placer Ranch includes approximately 6,793 residential dwelling units and Lincoln Crossing consists of approximately 2,958 dwelling units at buildout. Sierra Vista Specific Plan consists of approximately 10,617 dwelling units, Creekview Specific Plan includes approximately 2,160 dwelling units, Silver Creek includes 79 dwelling units, Morgan Placer contains 91 dwelling units, and Riolo Vineyards consists of approximately 805 residential units. The West Roseville, Creekview, and Elverta specific plan areas include schools, parks and open space. Elverta Specific Plan area is within the SMUD service area, South Sutter is in the PG&E service area, and West Roseville would be developed in Roseville Electric’s service area. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-117 to 4.11-118.)

The cumulative context for electricity is the area served by PG&E, Roseville Electric and SMUD. According to PG&E, a new substation will be needed at full buildout of the Specific Plan. Although there are engineering solutions, the need for additional electrical facilities increases as development occurs. PG&E, SMUD and Roseville Electric build and/or contract for additional capacity on a continuing basis as development planning occurs in an area. Therefore, this is considered a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-118.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR< p. 4.11-118.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

4.11.11 Telecommunications/Cable Television

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered telecommunications/cable television facilities.

- Result in the need for new or physically altered telecommunications/cable television facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service or other performance objectives.

- Be inconsistent with the goals and policies adopted in the Placer County General Plan. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-121.)

Impact 4.11.11-1: Buildout of the Specific Plan area would result in increased demand for cable television and telephone services and installation of new cable and telephone lines. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-121.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The development of the Specific Plan area would create an additional demand for cable television and telephone services. Assuming each residence had one connection each for cable television and one telephone connection, at full buildout a minimum of 28,264 residential connections would eventually be needed. Assuming that each acre of commercial land would require one cable television and one telephone connection, a minimum of 566 additional connections would eventually be needed, for a total of 28,830 connections. The cable TV needs of the Specific Plan area would be served by Comcast and/or other franchised cable service providers. Telephone service to the area east of Tanwood Avenue will be provided by SureWest Communications, and the area west of Tanwood Avenue will be served by SBC. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-121.)
As previously stated, additional services would be provided by private utility companies and/or Placer County franchise holders, and would be funded through customer user fees. In addition, the utility companies would be given the opportunity to review and comment on any proposed development requiring new service. Since the service providers are able to provide the service, the impacts of these services are less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-121.)

Installation of new cable and television lines is an integral part of Specific Plan buildout. An analysis of the physical impacts related to construction within the Specific Plan area is included in each of the topical areas contained in the Revised Draft EIR. No additional impacts related to placement of telephone and cable utility lines have been identified. This impact is, therefore, less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-121.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-121.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Cumulative Impact

Impact 4.11.11-2: The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative demand for telecommunications and cable television service. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-122.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The cumulative context for telephone and cable television services is the western Placer County area, which is served by AT&T/SBC and SureWest Communications. Both these companies will build new infrastructure as part of the subdivision process, in compliance with PUC regulations, for new development in the Specific Plan area as well as in the vicinity. Placer County allows non-exclusive franchises for cable TV services. Typically, a cable franchise company will build in capacity when the demand occurs. Since telephone and cable companies build in capacity when needed, cumulative impacts are considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-122.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-122.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

4.11.12 Library Services

Standards of Significance

Based, in part, on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered library facilities.

- Result in the need for new or physically altered library facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives.

- Be inconsistent with the Placer County General Plan or the Auburn-Placer County Library Long-Range Plan.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.11-123 to 4.11-124.)

In addition to the facility standards adopted by the Placer County Board of Supervisors as part of the Auburn-Placer County Library Facilities Master Plan, other common standards used by library professionals include one computer per one thousand residents, three reading seats per one thousand residents, and two meeting room seats per one thousand residents. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-124.)

Impact 4.11.12-1: Development of the Specific Plan area could result in inadequate library facilities. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-124.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

According to the existing Auburn-Placer County Library Long-Range Plan, a population of 34,762 will generate a demand for an additional 13,905 square feet of library space at full buildout. Table 4.11-15 in the Revised Draft EIR shows library demand based on population at full buildout. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-124.)
The Specific Plan proposes that an approximate 25,500 square-foot branch library be located in the Town Center. The applicants propose to pay their fair share of the costs for the construction of the library facility. As noted above, fair share for the Specific Plan area would be a 13,905 square-foot facility. However, Placer County has requested that one 25,500 square-foot regional library be constructed to serve the Specific Plan area as well as the Regional University and Placer Ranch developments, and the applicants have accommodated this request. Alternatively, Placer County has suggested that two libraries could be constructed: (1) a 15,000 square-foot library located in or near the Specific Plan area between 2010 and 2020 and (2) a 10,500 square-foot library located in or near the Placer Ranch development between 2030 and 2040.

Occupation of the Specific Plan area is not anticipated before 2010. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-124.)

The City of Roseville operates the nearest library to the Specific Plan area. This City’s library could be affected until the proposed permanent facility is developed on the site. The City has requested that construction of the first library begin no later than 2010 and the second by 2015, if the County plans to build two smaller library facilities rather than one larger one. If the County plans only one library facility, construction of that facility should begin no later than 2010. Residents of the area will not have access to a full range of library services until a permanent facility is located in the Specific Plan area and is operational. This is considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-124.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.11.12-1a Formation of a County Service Area (CSA), Community Facilities District (CFD), or expansion of CSA #28, or other financing mechanism acceptable to the County shall be required prior to recordation of the first final small lot subdivision map to ensure that immediate funding for adequate library infrastructure consistent with County standards is in place. The Specific Plan developers shall enter into a Development Agreement to ensure a fair share contribution to adequate library facilities, and that such facilities are available prior to demonstrated need. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-125.)

4.11.12-1b Completion of one or more branch libraries to provide a minimum of 0.4 square feet per capita, dedication of land, and stocking with books and other materials necessary for a functioning library with a minimum of 2.2 volumes per capita and otherwise meeting the standards of the Auburn-Placer County Library Long-Range Plan, including any subsequent amendments, shall occur concurrent with demand. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-125.)

4.11.12-1c Project developers shall be required to establish a special benefit assessment district or other funding mechanism to ensure adequate funding of the Specific Plan’s fair share for the ongoing operation and maintenance of library facilities. Such funding mechanism shall be established prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map to ensure that immediate funding for adequate library operations and maintenance is in place. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-125.)
Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measures would reduce the impacts on the City of Roseville’s library system and the Auburn-Placer County Library District to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-125.)

**Impact 4.11.12-2:** Construction of a library and related facilities within the Specific Plan area could lead to physical impacts on the environment. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-125.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

A branch library is an integral part of the Specific Plan and is to be constructed in the Town Center. Analysis of impacts related to construction within the Specific Plan area is included in each of the topical areas contained in the Revised Draft EIR. No additional impacts related to construction of the branch library have been identified. This impact is, therefore, less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-125.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-125.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Cumulative Impact

**Impact 4.11.12-3:** The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative demand for library services. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-126.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Placer County has adopted a Capital Facilities Fee for library services (see Section 4.11.2) that is applicable to any development in the unincorporated area of Placer County. As discussed above,
the impact addressed in Impact 4.11.12-1 would be reduced to a level of insignificance with adoption of mitigation measures, thereby reducing the cumulative impacts related to the provision of library services to a level that is \textit{less than considerable, (i.e., less than significant)}. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-126.)

\textbf{Mitigation Measures:}

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-126.)

\textbf{Significance After Mitigation:}

Less than significant without mitigation.

\section*{4.11.13 Parks and Recreation}

\textbf{Standards of Significance}

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered park facilities.
- Result in the need for new or physically altered park facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios or park standards.
- Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreation facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.
- Be inconsistent with the adopted \textit{Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan} Exhibit 1 or the \textit{Placer County General Plan} policies and standards.

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-156.)

\textbf{Standards Of Significance For The Provision Of Parks.} The \textit{Placer County Recreation and Park Development Project Final Report} (Citygate Associates, LLC, 2005) describes proposed County guidelines and standards for active and passive parkland as well as for various types of recreational facilities. These guidelines are shown in Table 4.11-23 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-156 to 4.11-157.)

\textbf{Standards Of Significance For Surface Water Supply Related Recreation.} The significance criteria used for recreational use of Folsom, Shasta, and Trinity reservoirs, the lower American
River, and the upper and lower Sacramento River and Delta are based on the Water Forum Proposal Final EIR (CCOMWP 1999). The Water Forum Proposal Final EIR presents an extensive review of sources that suggest minimum, maximum, and optimum flows for common recreational activities at each of the water bodies in the regional study area. These discussions and evaluations are incorporated herein by reference. The results of these evaluations and the thresholds of significance that were developed from them in the Water Forum Proposal Final EIR are used in the Revised Draft EIR to evaluate regional recreational impacts. Significance criteria for each of the potentially affected water bodies are presented in Table 4.11-24 of the Revised Draft EIR, along with other recreational criteria. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-157.)

**Impact 4.11.13-1:** Development of the Specific Plan area could result in an inadequate amount of developed passive and active parkland and related facilities. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-159.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Based on a buildout population of 34,762, there will be a need for a minimum of 174 acres of improved parkland and 174 acres of passive parkland in the Specific Plan area to meet the parkland dedication and improvement requirements set forth in Table 4.11-25. The developers are proposing to incorporate 217 acres of parks and 714 acres of open space dedicated for active and passive recreation. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-159.)

Provision of an inadequate amount of dedicated passive and active parkland and related facilities is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-159.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.11.13-1 Project developers in the Specific Plan area shall comply with the requirements of the General Plan by dedication and improvement of a minimum of 174 acres of active parkland and 174 acres of passive parkland. Project developers shall be responsible for dedicating and fully developing parks and or portions thereof, concurrent with demand in accordance with County levels of service. The County may require oversizing of neighborhood and larger type recreation parks, trails and facilities on a subdivision basis when it is deemed necessary and practical to serve the needs of future residents. In such cases, the County will enter into reimbursement agreements whereby future developments will pay initial developers for oversizing.

Concurrent with the construction of the community parks, project developers shall construct a park maintenance building and yard and provide maintenance equipment.
The design and building materials, location and quantity of equipment shall be subject to the approval of the Department of Facility Services.

All plans and specifications shall be approved by the Department of Facility Services and/or the managing agency prior to the recordation of each final small lot subdivision map. A procedure or agreement to govern the acquisition of parklands and completed park improvements acceptable to the County and/or managing agency, and in compliance with applicable General Plan standards and policies, shall be in place prior to recordation of the first final small lot subdivision map.

The specific park plans shall be submitted to the County for approval prior to the final decision as to the number and location of facilities. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-160.)

Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measure would reduce potential impacts of inadequate parkland dedication to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-160.)

Impact 4.11.13-2: Additional population in the Specific Plan area may result in increased reliance upon park facilities and services in neighboring jurisdictions. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-160.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

At full buildout, the Specific Plan area will have 14,132 residences and an estimated population of 34,762 living in the Specific Plan area. Based on this population, the County requires a minimum 174 acres of improved parkland and 174 acres of passive parkland. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-160.)

The proposed Specific Plan includes 217 acres of active parkland and 714 acres of open space dedicated for active and passive recreation, which meets the County’s standard. Although it cannot be guaranteed that County residents will not utilize facilities in Roseville and Sacramento County (or vice versa), the project is proposing to contribute its fair share toward park and recreational demand. In addition, sharing of facilities is viewed as desirable in some respects, and is the reason trail networks in Sacramento County, Placer County and Roseville are to be connected. This is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-160.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-161.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.13-3:** Parks within the Specific Plan area have the potential to be poorly maintained if an adequate funding source is not identified. This impact is considered **potentially significant.** (RDEIR, p. 4.11-161.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Existing park fees pay for park dedication and infrastructure only. Maintenance dollars will need to be provided to pay for maintenance costs. The Specific Plan proponents are proposing that a County Service Area or other special district be formed to fund and maintain passive and active parks in the area. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-161.)

As noted under Regulatory Setting, Article XIIIID of the California Constitution was added by the voters in 1997 (Proposition 218). Article XIIIID generally requires that assessment fees and charges be submitted to property owners for approval or rejection after the provision of written notice and the holding of a hearing. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-161.)

Lack of adequate funding for park maintenance is a **potentially significant impact.** (RDEIR, p. 4.11-161.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.11.13-3 Project developers shall cause a new County Service Area (CSA) or Community Facilities District (CFD) to be formed, or expand CSA #28 for sustainable park maintenance and recreation programs for the Specific Plan area prior to recordation of the first final small-lot subdivision map. A procedure or agreement to govern park maintenance and local recreation programs shall also be finalized prior to recordation of the first final small-lot subdivision map within the Specific Plan area. This entity would thus have the ability to participate in design, inspection and acceptance of facilities, and determination of appropriate funding levels necessary to maintain these facilities and operate recreational programs. A park maintenance special tax or special assessment with a provision for increases indexed to the CPI shall be approved by the landowners (voters) of the Specific Plan area, to be developed prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map in the Specific Plan area. An indexing formula for maintenance and operation of recreational facilities and programs shall be in place prior to recordation of the first final subdivision map. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-161.)
Significance After Mitigation:

The above mitigation measure would reduce the impact of inadequate funding for park maintenance to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-161.)

**Impact 4.11.13-4:** Development of the Specific Plan area will create a demand for community recreation facilities. This impact is considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-161.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Based on a Specific Plan buildout population of 34,762, there will be a demand for community recreation facilities, including one community swimming pool, one gymnasium, a community center/recreation services facility, maintenance facilities, and administrative offices. These facilities should be located in each phase of the Specific Plan area to serve the residents as demand is created. Lack of community recreation facilities to serve the Specific Plan area population could have an impact on similar facilities in Roseville and Sacramento County, and would be a significant impact. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-161 to 4.11-162.)

Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measure

4.11.13-4 As a condition of Specific Plan approval, proponents shall submit a phased schedule for providing community recreation facilities for approval by the County Parks Division. This phasing plan shall comply with County levels of service for parks and recreational facilities. Funding for construction, operation and maintenance of these improvements shall be provided in accordance with Mitigation Measures 4.11.13-1 and 4.11.13-3. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-162.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce impacts related to community recreation facilities to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-162.)

Off-Site Infrastructure Impacts

**Impact 4.11.13-5:** Development of the Specific Plan could impact public recreation trail access. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-162.)
Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, there would be no effect on public recreation trails beyond that which currently occurs. As the Specific Plan initial water supply does not purport to alter or change public recreation trail access from existing conditions, there would be a less than significant impact to trails throughout the riverine (i.e., lower American River) area. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-162.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-162.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.11.13-6 Development of the Specific Plan could impact public safety. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-162.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would not increase hazards to land or water-based recreational activities beyond those currently experienced. As the Specific Plan initial water supply does not purport to structurally alter recreational facilities or access points, the potential hazards to recreationists would not change from existing conditions. This is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-162.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-163.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.
**Impact 4.11.13-7:** Development of the Specific Plan could impact lower American River recreation. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-163.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Water-dependent and water-enhanced recreation use on the lower American River is higher in May through September than in other months because of the warm, sunny weather. Therefore, the focus of this evaluation was on the effect of changes on lower American River hydrology during May through September. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-163.)

When compared to the existing condition, the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in, at times, less frequent occurrences (i.e., one month) of lower American River flows within the optimal and maximum and minimum ranges for recreation, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-44). However, neither the frequency nor the magnitude of these changes is sufficient to adversely impact recreation. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-163.)

Table 4.11-26 in the Revised Draft EIR presents a summary of the number of years over the 70-year simulation period in which the monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam would remain within the optimal range for river recreation (3,000 to 6,000 cfs) and within the minimum to maximum range for adequate river recreation flow (1,750 to 6,000 cfs) under both the existing condition and the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply. The data show that over the course of the 70-year simulation, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in monthly mean flows within the optimal flow range for recreation that would be unchanged, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-44). For the entire May through September recreation season, there is no change in the total number of months in which the flows would be outside the optimal range, when compared to existing conditions. In addition, the data show that over the course of the 70-year simulation, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in one less year (i.e., during August) in which flows in the lower American River at Nimbus Dam would not be within the minimum to maximum flow range suitable for recreation. However, this reduction would not be of sufficient frequency to constitute a significant impact to lower American River recreation opportunities. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-163.)

Based on the above assessment, the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would have a *less than significant impact* on water-dependent and water-enhanced recreation use on the lower American River. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-164.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-164.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.11.13-8: Development of the Specific Plan could impact boating at Folsom Reservoir. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-164.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The primary boating season at Folsom Reservoir encompasses the months March through September, with peak use occurring in May, June, July, and August. Therefore, the focus of this assessment is the effect of changes in reservoir water surface elevation associated with the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply during the boating season. As boating opportunities are heavily influenced by boaters' access to the launching ramps and marina, the relationship of expected lake levels to the usability of these facilities is evaluated. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-164.)

When compared to the existing condition, the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in slightly less occurrences (i.e., three months) when the reservoir surface elevation would be above the minimum required for boaters' access to launching ramps and marinas, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-47). However, this effect is not sufficient in either frequency or magnitude to adversely impact boating opportunities at Folsom Reservoir. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-164.)

Table 4.11-27 of the Revised Draft EIR compares the reservoir elevation and usability of boat launching facilities under the existing and proposed Specific Plan initial water supply conditions. For the months of March - September, Folsom Reservoir levels would fall below the 420-foot elevation necessary to keep all boat ramps operable in a total of 3 months (out of 490) under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply condition, relative to the existing condition. Table 4.11-25 also shows that at least two low-water boat ramps would remain available on each side of Folsom Reservoir in two additional months under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply condition, relative to the existing condition. Finally, the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would not reduce the usability of the Folsom Reservoir Marina wet slips (which require a minimum 412-foot elevation) in the primary boating season when compared to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-164.)
The negligible decrease in boating opportunities under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply when compared to the existing condition is not expected to affect boating use at the reservoir. Consequently, the overall effect of the proposed initial water supply on Folsom Reservoir boating opportunities would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-164.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-165.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.13-9:** Development of the Specific Plan could impact swimming at Folsom Reservoir. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-165.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The most popular swimming months at Folsom Reservoir are May through September, when the weather is typically sunny and hot. Designated swimming beaches at Beal's Point and Granite Bay are generally usable between the elevations of 420 and 455 feet msl. Below 420 feet msl, the water declines below sandy areas and/or is too distant from parking and concessions; visitation decreases substantially when low-water conditions occur. Even with reservoir levels in the vicinity of 430 feet msl, the water is relatively far from parking and concessions, and some special low-water facilities are necessary to adequately accommodate swimmers. Above 455 feet msl, the high water limits the width of the available beach area, reducing the capacity of the beaches. As a result, to evaluate the effects on swimming opportunities of the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, the number of months when water levels are in the usable range during the peak swimming period were examined and compared to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-165.)

As indicated in Table 4.11-27 of the Revised Draft EIR, the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would slightly affect the availability of swimming beaches during the months of May through September. Overall, however, the number of years with water levels within the usable beach range during the months of May through September would decrease by 3 out of 350 months, relative to the existing condition. The number of years with water levels within the optimum range (435 to 455 feet msl) would remain unchanged, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-165.)
Over the recreation season, the effect of the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply is negligible when compared to the existing condition. Therefore, the overall impact on Folsom Reservoir swimming opportunities would be less than significant. (REIR, p. 4.11-165.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-165.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.13-10:** Development of the Specific Plan could impact recreation at Shasta Reservoir. This is considered no significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-167.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The primary season for water-dependent and water-enhanced recreation activities at Shasta Reservoir is May through September. Therefore, the potential to affect reservoir levels during these months was assessed to evaluate impacts on boating-related activities, shoreline recreation, and boat-in camping. Boating opportunity is heavily influenced by access to launching ramps, thus the relationship of reservoir levels to the operability of ramps was evaluated similar to the elevation for Folsom Reservoir. The drawdown distance of water from the vegetated shoreline was also considered as an important factor in sustaining shoreline recreation use and boat-in camping. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-167.)

When compared to the existing condition, the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in no changes in the frequency of Shasta Reservoir water surface elevation within the ranges required for boating and other water-related recreation activities at Shasta Reservoir (Template Output B-52). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-167.)

The proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in no change in the total number of years when all boat ramps are usable (elevation 1,017 feet msl) during any month of the season. The number of years when at least one public ramp would be maintained on each of the reservoir arms (elevation 941 feet msl) also would remain unchanged under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, compared to the existing condition (Template Output B-52). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-67.)

With regard to Shasta Reservoir shoreline and camping facilities, repeat visitors have come to expect the level to decline as the summer progresses; therefore, they appear to exhibit some
tolerance of low-water conditions. Using the 60-foot drawdown criterion where boat-in camping and shoreline use begin to decline (1,007 feet msl), the analysis indicates that the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in no change in the number of years in which Shasta Reservoir levels would be suitable, relative to existing conditions. The proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would also result in no change in the number of years that Shasta Reservoir levels would be at or above the 100-foot drawdown (967 feet msl) during May through September (Template Output B-52). Therefore, there would be no significant impact on Shasta Reservoir recreation opportunities under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-167.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-167.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.11.13-11: Development of the Specific Plan could impact recreation at Trinity Reservoir. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-167.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Similar to Shasta Reservoir, the primary recreation use season for water-dependent and enhanced recreation activities at Trinity Reservoir is also from May through September. Therefore, the potential to affect reservoir levels during these months of the year was assessed for boating-related activities and shoreline recreation. Boating opportunity is heavily influenced by access to launching ramps, thus the relationship of Trinity Reservoir levels to operability of ramps was considered. Also, the drawdown distance of water from the vegetated shoreline was evaluated as an important factor in sustaining shoreline recreation use. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-167.)

When compared to the existing condition, the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in no change in the frequency with which Trinity Reservoir water surface elevations would be adequate for boating and other water-related recreation activities at Trinity Reservoir, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-57). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-168.)

The proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in no change in the frequency of reservoir levels required to allow for boat launching from the three major public ramps at Trinity Reservoir during May through September (Template Output B-57). Therefore, there would be
no significant impact on recreation at Trinity Reservoir, under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply.  (RDEIR, p. 4.11-168.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required.  (RDEIR, p. 4.11-168.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.11.13-12: Development of the Specific Plan could impact recreation on the upper Sacramento River.  This impact is considered less than significant.  (RDEIR, p. 4.11-168.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant.  (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Water-dependent recreation use on the upper Sacramento River, between Keswick Dam and the confluence of the American River, is higher in May through September than in other months of the year, coincident with the warmer summer weather.  Consequently, effects of the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply on Sacramento River flows during this period are important for evaluating recreation opportunity impacts.  (RDEIR, p. 4.11-68.)

When compared to the existing condition, the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would not result in a greater frequency of upper Sacramento River flows above the minimum flow required for recreation.  A minimum recreation flow of 5,000 cfs is identified for the Sacramento River in the California Water Plan Update (DWR 1994).  This is an overall standard that is not related to specific reaches of the upper Sacramento River, so it provides only general guidance in assessing recreation impacts.  Definitive optimum and maximum/minimum river flows for recreation uses are not available for the upper Sacramento River, so the relative change in river flows are compared between the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply and the existing condition to assess potential recreation impacts.  If relative flows are not substantially less for the proposed initial water supply compared to the existing condition, boat ramps and access points along the river between Keswick Dam and Colusa would not be adversely affected.  (RDEIR, p. 4.11-68.)

Exceedance plots for Sacramento River flow below Keswick Dam for May through September demonstrate that the probability of flow below Keswick exceeding 5,000 cfs is identical in all months.  Additionally, flows under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply remain the same as those under the existing condition at flows above 9,000 cfs (Template Output B-139 to B-140).  Therefore, flow conditions attributable to the proposed initial water supply would result
in no significant impact upon recreation opportunities in the upper Sacramento River. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-168.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-169.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.11.13-13: Development of the Specific Plan could impact recreation on the lower Sacramento River. This is considered no significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-169.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Similar to other water recreation areas of northern California, the highest recreation use period for the lower Sacramento River (between the American River confluence and the Delta) is from May to September. Under the existing condition, monthly mean flow in the Sacramento River at Freeport averages from 13,300 to 19,300 cfs during this period. As with the upper Sacramento River, although 5,000 cfs has been identified as an overall flow standard, no definitive thresholds for optimal or minimum/maximum recreation flows are available. Therefore, the relative difference between the existing condition and the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply was evaluated. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-169.)

Exceedance plots for Sacramento River flow at Freeport for May through September demonstrate that the probability of flow at Freeport exceeding 10,000 cfs is identical in all months between the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply and existing condition. The entire flow range is virtually identical throughout the May to September period (Template Output B-145 to B-146). Therefore, there would be no significant impact on recreational opportunities on the lower Sacramento River associated with the proposed initial water supply. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-169.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-169.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.
**Impact 4.11.13-14:** Development of the Specific Plan could impact recreation at the Delta. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-169.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

The Delta's hydrology is complex and influenced by other water sources, specifically tidal action, San Joaquin River inflows, and east-side tributary inflows. Consequently, differences in Delta inflow from the Sacramento River would not translate directly into Delta water recreation effects. For instance, incoming tidal action in the summer contributes approximately 70,000 cfs in the Sacramento River near Rio Vista and 58,000 cfs in the central Delta reach of the San Joaquin River (DWR 1994). (RDEIR, p. 4.11-169.)

The proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would have no impact on Delta inflows, relative to the existing condition (Template Output B-453). The largest decrease in Delta inflow under the proposed initial water supply would be four cfs (July), compared to the existing condition. Consequently, the differences in summertime inflow to the Delta resulting from the proposed initial water supply condition would not significantly change the Delta recreation opportunities. When compared to the existing condition, the proposed initial water supply condition would result in no significant impact on flows entering the Delta. Therefore, this impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-169.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-170.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.13-15:** Development of the Specific Plan could impact Oroville Reservoir or Feather River recreation. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-170.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)
Explanation:

The proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would not result in substantial changes in storage or water surface elevation at Oroville Reservoir, or in flow in the Feather River, relative to the existing condition. The water surface elevation and end of the month storage at Oroville Reservoir would remain unchanged in 840 of the 840 months modeled, relative to the existing condition. In addition, the flow in the Feather River would also remain unchanged in 836 of the 840 months modeled, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendices A-121 to A-132 and A-580 to A-591 and A-592 to A-603). Any small changes that might occur would be considered less than significant impacts upon the recreation resources and activities inherent to those bodies of water. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-170.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-170.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.11.13-16: Development of the Specific Plan could be inconsistent with the American River Parkway Plan. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-170.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The American River Parkway Plan Policy 3.1 on water flow anticipates that flow requirements are being researched and should be defined in the Plan once the research is completed. The policy indicates that flow standards associated with the SWRCB's D-1400 (1,500 cfs for recreation) would be too low if they are implemented. The analysis in the Revised Draft EIR indicates that the minimum flow for adequate recreation opportunity on the lower American River, based on a review of known flow criteria, would be 1,750 cfs. The low end of an optimum flow range appears to be about 3,000 cfs. Both the minimum and optimum flow criteria used in the Revised Draft EIR are higher than the D-1400 standard, and implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would not result in summertime flows being reduced below these criteria more often than under the existing condition. Therefore, the proposed initial water supply would be consistent with the American River Parkway Plan, and no conflicts with environmental plans or goals of the Plan would occur. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-170.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-170.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.13-17:** Development of the Specific Plan could be inconsistent with State and federal Wild and Scenic River Act designations. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-170.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

The proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would not result in summertime flows being reduced below optimal (3,000 to 6,000 cfs) and minimum (1,750 cfs) flow criteria for recreation on the lower American River more often than under the existing condition. There is no change in the total number of months in which the flows would fall within the optimal flow range under the proposed initial water supply when compared to the existing condition, for the entire May through September recreation season, as shown in Table 4.11-25. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply would result in one less year (i.e., during August) in which flows in the lower American River at Nimbus Dam would be below the minimum flow range suitable for recreation (Technical Appendices A-320 to A-324). However, this reduction would not be of sufficient frequency to constitute a significant impact to lower American River recreation opportunities. Therefore, the proposed initial water supply would not diminish the recreational values of the lower American River, consistent with the state and federal recreational river designations. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-171.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-171.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.
Cumulative Impacts

Impact 4.11.13-18: Development of the Specific Plan area could result in cumulative impacts on passive and active parkland and related facilities. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-171.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Because the project as mitigated (see Mitigation Measures 4.11.12-1 and 4.11.12-3) will include park and recreational facilities consistent with County standards, and the developers will be required to provide for the funding to construct and maintain those facilities, no cumulative impacts related to parks and recreation have been identified. This is a less than significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-171.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-171.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

Impact 4.11.13-19: Development of the Specific Plan could result in a cumulative effect on lower American River recreation. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-172.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Under the cumulative condition, flows would be reduced by greater than 1%, relative to the existing condition, in 229 months of the 350 months modeled throughout the May through September recreational use period. This would be considered a significant reduction in recreational opportunities on the lower American River. For recreational flow ranges, the cumulative condition would result in 12 fewer months in which lower American River flows would be in the minimum to maximum flow range (1,750 to 6,000 cfs), relative to 255 months within this range under the existing condition, and 19 fewer months within the optimum flow range.
range (3,000 to 6,000 cfs), relative to 165 months within this range under the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-172.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply.** The proposed long-term water supply long-term average results indicate no fewer months in which lower American River flows would be in the minimum to maximum flow range (1,750 to 6,000 cfs), and no fewer months within the optimum flow range (3,000 to 6,000 cfs), relative to the cumulative condition (Template Output H-44). Therefore, the proposed long-term water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant recreational impacts that would occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. The impacts would be considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-173.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-173.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.13-20:** Development of the Specific Plan could result in a cumulative effect on Folsom Reservoir boating. This impact is considered *less than significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.11-173.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Under the cumulative condition, Folsom Reservoir elevation levels during the March through September recreational use period would be above the elevation required for use of all boat ramps (420 feet msl) in 37 fewer months, relative to 330 months available under the existing condition. Reservoir elevations would fall below 412 feet msl, the elevation required for the use of marina wet slips, in 37 additional months, relative to 368 months available under the existing condition. Such reductions in reservoir elevation would be considered to significantly reduce Folsom Reservoir boating opportunities under the cumulative condition, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-173.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply.** The proposed long-term water supply would be above the elevation required for use of all boat ramps (420 feet msl) in no fewer months, and reservoir elevations would fall below 412 feet msl in no additional months during the March through September period, relative to the cumulative condition.
Consequently, the proposed long-term water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant Folsom Reservoir boating impacts that would occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. The impacts would be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-173.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-173.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.13-21:** Development of the Specific Plan could result in a cumulative effect on Folsom Reservoir swimming. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-173.)

**Finding:**

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

**Explanation:**

Under the cumulative condition, Folsom Reservoir water levels would be within the usable swimming range (420 to 455 feet msl) during the peak May through September swimming season in 26 fewer months, relative to 149 usable months under the existing condition. For the optimum use elevation range (435 to 455 feet msl), there would be 15 fewer usable months, under the cumulative condition, relative to 73 months within the range under the existing conditions. Such changes in reservoir water levels under the cumulative condition would significantly limit swimming opportunities at Folsom Reservoir, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-174.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply.** The proposed long-term water supply would not contribute to reductions in the frequency of usability for either the usable or optimum elevation ranges required for swimming activities at Folsom Reservoir in any month modeled for the May through September period (Template Output H-47). Therefore, the proposed long-term water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to Folsom Reservoir swimming impacts under the future cumulative condition. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. The impacts would be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-174.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-174.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.13-22:** Development of the Specific Plan could result in a cumulative effect on Shasta Reservoir recreation. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-174.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Under the cumulative condition, long-term average water surface elevation at Shasta Reservoir would not be substantially reduced during the May through September period. However, reservoir water surface elevation levels would fall below individual recreational thresholds more frequently than under the existing condition. Under the cumulative condition, there would be 25 fewer months in which reservoir water surface elevations would be at or above the levels required for usability of all boat ramps (1,017 feet msl), relative to 206 usable months under the existing condition. Similarly, there would be 12 fewer months in which reservoir water surface elevations would be at or above the levels required for usability of at least one boat ramp (941 feet msl), relative to 329 usable months under the existing condition. Furthermore, there would be 27 fewer months in which water surface elevations would be suitable for shoreline uses (1,007 feet msl), and 17 fewer months in which boat-in camping would be sustained (967 feet msl), relative to 234 and 310 months, respectively, in which these uses would be sustained under the existing condition. Such reductions would occur with sufficient frequency to significantly limit future recreational opportunities at Shasta Reservoir, under the cumulative condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-174.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply.** The proposed long-term water supply, however, would not contribute to reductions in the usability of any recreational activity at Shasta Reservoir in any month modeled for the May through September recreational use period, as shown in Table 4.11-28 of the Revised Draft EIR (Template Output H-52). Therefore, the proposed long-term water supply would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to significant cumulative impacts to recreation at Shasta Reservoir that would occur under the cumulative condition. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. The impacts would be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 4.11-174 to 4.11-175.)
Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-175.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

4.11.14 General County Facilities and Services

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with provision of new or physically altered County facilities.
- Need for new or physically altered County facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives.
- Result in a project developed in a manner inconsistent with the adopted Placer County General Plan.

(RDEIR, pp. 4.11-181 to 4.11-182.)

Impact 4.11.14-1: Public facility needs generated by development pursuant to the Specific Plan could exceed funding capacity. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-182.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Placer County has adopted a Capital Facilities Fee program. The purpose of the program is to ensure that adequate funding for capital and public facilities is generated in a timely manner when new development occurs. At full Specific Plan buildout, a total of $40,184,779 would be generated in gross new capital facilities fees needed to serve new growth (see Table 4.11-30 in the Revised Draft EIR). Revenue from the program is used to fund specific capital improvements necessitated by new development including the expansion and construction of office space, libraries, adult and juvenile detention facilities, clinics and laboratory space, social service facilities, communications/dispatch equipment, warehouses, vehicles and related...
furnishings and equipment. Because the imposition of the Capital Facilities Fee (as updated from time-to-time) is based on a documented assessment of need, the fee demonstrably responds to the need for general County facilities generated by the proposed Specific Plan. The potential impacts are, therefore, considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-182.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-182.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.11.14-2:** Total revenues generated by the proposed Specific Plan may be less than the cost of providing public services. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-182.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Failure by the Specific Plan to generate revenues at least equal to Specific Plan costs would be inconsistent with the Placer County General Plan and Specific Plan, and would be a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-182.)

Mitigation Measure:

4.11.14-2 Project developers shall establish a special benefit assessment district or other funding mechanism to ensure fair share funding for the ongoing operation and maintenance of general County services serving the Specific Plan area. This funding mechanism shall be established prior to recordation of the first final small lot subdivision map in the Specific Plan area to ensure that immediate funding for adequate general County services is in place. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-183.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce impacts on public services to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-182.)

**Impact 4.11.14-3:** New public facility demands will be generated by development in the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-183.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The County has indicated that the proposed project will require the following general government public facilities:

- A shared Corporation Yard on approximately 15.81 acres to accommodate the needs of the County Fire Department, Public Works Department, Sheriff’s Department, and Facility Services Department as follows:
  - Transit, Fleet and Roads Divisions:
    - shared office
  - Transit Division:
    - parking buses
    - parking for staff cars
    - employee parking spaces
    - 2 maintenance bays
    - high capacity rapid fill CNG dispenser hookups
    - a CNG tank storage
    - CNG fueling compressors
    - bus wash facility
  - Fleet Services Division:
    - area for parts storage, fueling island for diesel and gas, vehicle wash bay, parking for autos and large trucks/buses
    - fleet maintenance facility
  - Roads Division:
    - material and equipment storage and employee parking
  - Sheriff’s Department:
    - equipment storage facility
    - vehicle parking
  - Fire Division:
    - indoor training facility
    - outdoor mini training facility
    - storage
    - property and vehicle storage
• Special Districts Division:
  – office and shop area
  – indoor storage
  – covered parking
  – outdoor storage

• Maintenance Division:
  – area for vehicle parking, maneuvering area, work areas, and miscellaneous yard area

(RDEIR, pp. 4.11-183 to 4.11-184.)

In addition, the following facilities will be needed in other locations within the Specific Plan area:

• Department of Facility Services
  – Two park maintenance facilities to be located in the two community parks
  – One community center
  – One recreation center
  – One senior center
  – One youth center
  – One gymnasium
  – One aquatic center
  – Two skateboard parks

• Land Development Administrative Services

• Fire Department and Sheriff Administrative Offices

• Health and Human Services
  – Office for Health & Human Services

(RDEIR, p. 4.11-184.)

Although the Specific Plan reflects many of these facilities, not all have been described or provided for. Lack of these facilities would be a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-184.)

Mitigation Measure:

4.11.14-3 The Specific Plan proponents shall submit a phased schedule for providing the above described general government facilities for approval by the County Executive Office. Funding for construction, operation and maintenance of these improvements shall be provided in accordance with Mitigation Measure 4.11.14-2. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-184.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce impacts on public facilities to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.11-184.)

L. HAZARDS

Standards of Significance

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines provides criteria for judging potentially significant impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials. Placer County has determined that a project could result in a significant impact if it would:

- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.
- Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.
- Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.
- Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

(RDEIR, p. 4.12-23.)

Additionally, the potential for exposure to existing hazardous conditions, materials, soil contamination, or groundwater contamination is considered in determining the significance of impacts regarding the proposed Specific Plan. This potential for exposure includes members of the public, or workers on the project, and associated potential for health risks during construction or maintenance activities. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-23.)

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines does not address health or vector control hazards. The previous Environmental Checklist in the CEQA Guidelines (prior to the 1998 amendments) did, however, indicate that a project could result in a significant impact if it would involve:

- The creation of any health hazard or potential health hazard.
- Exposure of people to existing sources of potential health hazards.

(RDEIR, p. 4.12-23.)
Impact 4.12-1: The presence of underground storage tanks (USTs) could create hazardous conditions. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-24.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Two USTs were located on Property #7 (now Property #7 and Property #4) during the Phase II ESA. One UST was located a short distance north of the former radio beacon building near the northern border of the property. A second UST, the Hilltop Site, was located about 1,300 feet south and east at the location of a former radio beacon building with only a concrete slab and some steel pipe visible. The USTs may pose a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-24.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-1 The two USTs shall be removed and soil samples shall be collected and analyzed. In the event soil or water contamination has occurred above regulatory clean-up thresholds, remediation shall be performed consistent with State and County regulations. All required remediation shall be completed prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map on Property #7 (now Properties #4 and #7). (RDEIR, p. 4.12-24.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce the potential impacts of USTs to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-24.)

Impact 4.12-2: The presence of contaminated soils could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-24.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Samples from Properties #7-2 and #7-3 were found to contain low concentrations (likely below the level of concern) of motor oil and TPH diesel, respectively. Samples from Properties #7-2 and #7-3 were collected near the Hilltop site UST. The level of concentration found in these samples is a less than significant impact. If further sampling (see Mitigation Measure 4.12-1)
finds concentrations at or above the level of concern, this impact would be potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-24.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-2 If sampling during removal of the UST for the Hilltop site should confirm concentrations of potential motor oil and/or TPH diesel contamination at or above the level of concern, the site shall be remediated as described in Mitigation Measure 4.12-1. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-24.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-24.)

Impact 4.12-3: The presence of an open well on Property #7 (now Property #4) could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-24.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

An abandoned open irrigation well was located during the Phase II ESA on Property #7 (now Property #4). This open well may pose a health hazard by providing a conduit for contaminants released during project construction and operation to reach a potable water supply. This is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-24.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-3 Prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map on Property #7 (now Property #4), the open well shall be abandoned/destroyed according to California Well Standards, California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 74-90 Section 23, and Placer County Environmental Health Services requirements. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-25.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce impacts of the open well to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-25.)

Impact 4.12-4: A burn pit, debris piles, and an illegal dumping site on Property #9 could pose hazardous conditions. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-25.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

A sample from site #9-1 was collected at the corner of Dyer Lane and Tanwood Avenue in the area of illegal dumping northwest of the road pavement. A sample from Property #9-3 was collected in the oak grove in the southeastern portion of the property in the vicinity of a burn pit and debris piles. Analysis of the sample from Property #9-1 indicated motor oil concentration likely above the level of concern. This sample indicates a potentially significant impact at this location. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-25.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-4 Additional sampling shall be performed at the Dyer Lane and Tanwood Avenue area of illegal dumping. If test results show that the level of concern is exceeded, remediation shall be required to meet State and County regulations. All remediation shall be completed prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map on Property #9. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-25.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce the impact related to Property #9 to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-25.)

Impact 4.12-5: Unused wells on Property #9 could pose a hazardous condition. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-25.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Two unused wells with pumps installed were observed on Property #9. While the wells do not present a physical hazard in their current condition, they should be destroyed prior to project development. Unused wells pose a health hazard by providing a conduit for contaminants released during project construction and operation to reach a potable water supply, creating a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-25.)
Mitigation Measures:

4.12-5 Prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map on Property #9, unused wells on-site shall be destroyed according to California Well Standards, California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 74-90 Section 23, and according to Placer County Division of Environmental Health Services requirements. (RDEIR, pp. 4.12-25 to 4.12-26.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce the impacts from abandoned wells to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-25.)

Impact 4.12-6: Contaminated soils and unused wells on Property #10 could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-26.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Sites #10-1 and #10-2 were found to contain low concentrations (below the level of concern) of motor oil and grease. A sample from site #10-2 was also found to contain low concentrations (below regulatory clean-up thresholds) of lead. The level of concentration found in these samples appears to be less than significant. However additional testing should be performed prior to development to confirm this finding. If further sampling finds concentrations at or above the regulatory threshold, this impact would be potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-26.)

Two unused wells with pumps installed were observed on Property #10 near the former residence. While the wells do not present a physical hazard in their current condition, they should be destroyed prior to development of the immediately affected area. Unused wells pose a health hazard by providing a conduit for contaminants released during project construction and operation to reach a potable water supply, creating a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-26.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-6a Additional sampling shall be performed on sites #10-1 and #10-2. If test results show that regulatory clean-up thresholds are exceeded, remediation shall be required to meet State and County regulations. All remediation shall be completed prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map on Property #10. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-26.)
4.12-6b  Prior to recordation of any final maps on Property #10, unused wells on-site shall be destroyed according to California Well Standards, California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 74-90 Section 23, and according to Placer County Division of Environmental Health Services requirements. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-26.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce impacts related to hazards on Property #10 to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-26.)

Impact 4.12-7: Contaminated soils and unused wells on Property #11 could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-26.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Sites #11-1 and #11-2 were found to contain low concentrations (below the level of concern) of motor oil and grease. The level of concentration found in these samples appears to be less than significant. However additional testing should be performed prior to development to confirm this finding. If further sampling finds concentrations at or above the regulatory threshold, this impact would be a potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-26.)

An abandoned open well was located during the Phase II ESA on Property #11. While the well does not present a physical hazard in their current condition, it should be destroyed prior to development of the immediately affected area. Unused wells pose a health hazard by providing a conduit for contaminants released during project construction and operation to reach a potable water supply, creating a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-26.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-7a  Additional sampling shall be performed on sites #11-1 and #11-2. If test results show that levels of concern are exceeded, remediation shall be required to meet State and County regulations. All remediation shall be completed prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map on Property #11. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-27.)

4.12-7b  Prior to recordation of any final maps on Property #11, unused wells on-site shall be destroyed according to California Well Standards, California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 74-90 Section 23, and according to Placer County Division of Environmental Health Services requirements. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-27.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce impacts related to hazards on Property #11 to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-27.)

**Impact 4.12-8:** Abandoned materials on Property #15A (now Property #22) could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-27.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Petroleum products, batteries, tires, and refrigerators were found in and around buildings and storage areas on Property #15A (now Property #22) during the site assessments. These items pose a health hazard and a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-27.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-8 Disposal of refrigerators, tires, batteries and similar materials by licensed waste haulers at approved waste disposal facilities shall be completed prior to recordation of any final maps on Property #15A (now Property #22). (RDEIR, p. 4.12-27.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce impacts related to conditions on Property #15A (now Property #22) to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-27.)

**Impact 4.12-9:** Contaminated soils on Property #15A (now Property #22) could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-27.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

A sample from site #15-1 was found to contain low concentrations (likely below levels of concern) of motor oil and TPH diesel. Analysis of samples from sites #15-2, #15-3, #15-4, #15-5, #15-6, #15-7, #15-8, #15-9, #15-10, #15-11, #15-12, and #15-13 indicated motor oil, oil and grease, and/or TPH diesel concentration (likely above the level of concern or regulatory clean-up.
threshold). Refer to Table 4.12-1 for concentrations in each sample, and Table 4.12-2 for analytical results summary for soil samples. These concentrations indicate a potentially significant impact at this location. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-27.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-9 Additional sampling shall be performed on sites #15-1, #15-2, #15-3, #15-4, #15-5, #15-6, #15-7, #15-8, #15-9, #15-10, #15-11, #15-12, and #15-13. If test results show that levels of concern, or regulatory clean-up thresholds are exceeded, remediation shall be required to meet State and County regulations. All remediation shall be completed prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map on Property #15A (now Property #22). (RDEIR, p. 4.12-28.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce the impact of this contamination to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-27.)

Impact 4.12-10: Abandoned materials and refuse encountered on Property #19 could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-28.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Auto parts, debris, and household waste were found on Property #19 during the site assessments. These items pose a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-28.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-10 Disposal of auto parts, debris, household waste and similar materials by licensed waste haulers at approved waste disposal facilities shall be completed prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map on Property #19. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-28.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce impacts related to conditions on Property #19 to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-28.)

Impact 4.12-11: Contaminated soils and miscellaneous materials storage on Property #20 (now Property #21) could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-28.)
Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

One section of the barn, located on Property #20 (now property #21), contains a storage area with an exposed soil floor, and another part consists of a workshop area with a concrete floor (see Figure 3-11). The storage area contained automotive batteries, small gasoline containers, and auto parts. The workshop area contained tools and small containers of paints and automotive fluids. Northeast of the barn doors were used tires, auto wet cell batteries and various auto parts. Auto parts and household waste were found in a burn area west of the barn. These items may pose a potentially significant impact. An existing in-service well was observed north of the house on Property #20. Upon discontinuance of use of the well, it should be properly abandoned/destroyed. Without such steps being taken, the well may pose a potentially significant health hazard. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-28.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-11a Soil in the storage area and below the concrete slab in the workshop shall be inspected by a California Registered Environmental Assessor II for indications of impacts to soil at the time of the demolition of the site buildings and concrete slab. Recommendations for soil sampling and analysis shall be determined at that time. If sampling results show that regulatory clean-up thresholds are exceeded, remediation shall be required to meet State and County regulations. All demolition and remediation shall be completed prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map on Property #20 (now Property #21). (RDEIR, pp. 4.12-28 to 4.12-29.)

4.12-11b Disposal of auto parts, debris, household waste and similar materials by licensed waste haulers at approved waste disposal facilities shall be completed prior to recordation of any final small lot subdivision map on Property #20 (now Property #21). (RDEIR, p. 4.12-29.)

4.12-11c The in-service well shall be abandoned/destroyed according to California Well Standards, California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 74-90 Section 23, and Placer County Environmental Health Services (EHS) requirements upon discontinuation of use. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-29.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce impacts related to conditions on Property #20 (now Property #21) to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-28.)
**Impact 4.12-12:** Mosquitos and other vectors could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered *potentially significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.12-29.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

The Placer Mosquito Abatement District serves the Specific Plan area. A benefit assessment has been established to provide revenue as development occurs. The Specific Plan area includes wetland, park, and open space corridor areas that have the potential to become locations for mosquito breeding. If not managed properly, residents and businesses may be exposed to diseases transmitted by vectors such as mosquitoes. This is considered a *potentially significant impact.* (RDEIR, p. 4.12-29.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.12-12a *During construction, all grading shall be performed in a manner to prevent the occurrence of standing water or other areas suitable for breeding of mosquitoes and other vectors.* (RDEIR, p. 4.12-29.)

4.12-12b *The Placer Mosquito Abatement District shall be granted access to perform vector control in all common areas including drainage, open space corridor and park areas in perpetuity. Such access shall be a condition of approval of all tentative maps approved within the Specific Plan area.* (RDEIR, p. 4.12-29.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

The above mitigation measures and the existing benefit assessment would reduce impacts related to vector control to a *less than significant level.* (RDEIR, p. 4.12-29.)

**Impact 4.12-13:** Abandoned septic systems could pose a health and safety hazard upon development of the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered *potentially significant.* (RDEIR, p. 4.12-29.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Abandoned septic systems present health and safety hazards regarding subsidence, subsurface voids, and possible chemical contamination resulting from disposal of hazardous materials in the...
systems, thereby introducing hazardous materials to the native soils of the disposal areas. The presence of existing homes and evidence of previously existing dwellings in the Specific Plan area indicates that septic systems consisting of septic tanks and disposal fields or dry wells, or cesspools, have been used to dispose of domestic wastewater on-site. Septic tanks have commonly been constructed from metal, wood and concrete. Metal and wooden tanks (or tank lids) decompose and corrode over time and can leave subsurface voids which are unidentified at the surface. Concrete tanks may also become weak and unable to support surface loads. Septic systems may have been used to dispose of hazardous materials, including petroleum hydrocarbon products and wastes. Materials disposed of in domestic wastewater drains may enter subsurface disposal trenches or dry-wells, and thereby impact the subsurface soils or groundwater. The presence of existing and probable abandoned septic systems in the Specific Plan area is considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, pp. 4.12-29 to 4.12-30.)

Mitigation Measure:

4.12-13 Site-specific evaluation by a California Registered Environmental Assessor II shall be conducted at each identified existing and former dwelling area to identify surface indications and locations of septic tanks or cesspools prior to demolition of existing residences. Identified septic tanks shall be destroyed according to Placer County Division of Environmental Health criteria prior to recordation of final small lot subdivision map for the affected property.

Surface conditions shall be evaluated by a California Registered Environmental Assessor II when the dwellings are vacated, and prior to demolition of the structures, regarding the possibility of previous site uses which may have included hazardous materials that could have been disposed of in on-site wastewater disposal systems.

Tank or cesspool destruction shall be monitored by a California Registered Environmental Assessor II regarding the likelihood of hazardous materials disposal in the systems. Any required remediation work shall be completed in accordance with State and County regulations prior to recordation of final small lot subdivision map for the affected property. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-30.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce the potential impacts from abandoned septic systems to a less than significant level:

Impact 4.12-14: Asbestos in older structures to be demolished could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-30.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.
Explanation:

The presence of structures in the Specific Plan area which were constructed prior to federal and state regulation of asbestos-containing building materials indicates the potential for asbestos-containing materials in the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-30.)

Construction/building materials were produced and used prior to regulation of asbestos-containing construction materials during the 1970s and 1980s. Dwellings observed in the Specific Plan area appear to have been constructed prior to regulation, and ruin areas observed indicate that previous buildings may have been constructed in the decades prior to 1970. Non-friable asbestos containing materials were found on the shingles of the abandoned radio beacon structure on Property #7. The possible presence of asbestos-containing materials in the Specific Plan area is considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-30.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-14a  Surveys of structures that are planned for demolition (that were not surveyed in the Phase II ESA) during Specific Plan development shall be conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant licensed with the California Department of Occupational Safety and Health to determine if friable Regulated Asbestos Containing Materials or non-friable asbestos containing materials are present within the structure demolition areas. Any regulated asbestos materials found in the investigated areas shall be removed and disposed of by a California licensed asbestos abatement contractor. All removal of asbestos material shall be completed prior to recordation of Final Maps for the affected property. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-31.)

4.12-14b  A California licensed asbestos abatement contractor shall be hired to remove the exterior wall shingles prior to demolition of the abandoned radio beacon structure on Property #7. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-31.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of the above mitigation measures would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-31.)

Impact 4.12-15: Soils contamination in former orchard sites could pose a health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-31.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.
Explanation:

Past orchard development in the Specific Plan area indicates the potential for environmentally persistent agricultural chemicals in the near-surface soils. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-31.)

Some agricultural chemicals have the potential to persist in near-surface soils, depending upon the concentrations and types used. As one example, from approximately the late 1880’s to 1950’s lead arsenate was commonly applied as both a pesticide and herbicide in orchards, and perhaps in other crops (such as vineyards). During approximately the last 25 years, environmentally persistent chemicals such as the chlorinated pesticide DDT and Chlordane have been banned from use. Prior to such regulation, and especially during the 1940s and 1950s, DDT was essentially the sole commercially practical chemical available and used as a pesticide. Both chlorinated pesticides and arsenic can persist in the environment. Some of the identified Property Groups where orchards or vineyards are reported to have existed appear to be in proximity to proposed residential or school sites. Residences or schools are considered especially sensitive receptors regarding potential environmental contaminants. Dependent on the degree of site disturbance, some commercial uses can also lead to exposures of health concern. The possible presence of environmentally persistent agricultural chemicals in near-surface soils is considered a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-31.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-15 Prior to submittal of a small lot tentative subdivision map or plans for industrial/commercial development, properties not previously evaluated with a current Phase I Environmental Site Assessment may be required to complete a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, as determined by Environmental Health Services. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment shall be conducted by a qualified professional. If past commercial agricultural uses are disclosed that could have resulted in persistent contamination, such as orchards or vineyards, then soil sampling shall be conducted within former commercial agriculture areas. In these instances, prior to setting conditions for subdivision or industrial/commercial development soil investigation shall be conducted according to guidelines developed by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and contained in the DTSC August 2002 “Interim Guidance for Sampling Agricultural Fields for School Sites”, or equivalent protocol. Sampling and site investigation shall be conducted by a California registered environmental professional, performed with oversight from Placer County Environmental Health Services, and with applicable permits.

As a result of soil investigation, a limited and confined area of contamination may be identified and found to be suitable for simple removal. If this is the case, remediation will be required to meet State and County regulations and be completed prior to recordation of the final small lot subdivision map or equivalent final Placer County approval for commercial/industrial projects.
As a result of soil investigation, unconfined and/or widespread residual concentrations of agricultural chemicals may be identified at levels where they individually or in combination meet or exceed US EPA, CalEPA Preliminary Remediation Goals, or equivalent screening levels, thereby indicating the need for risk assessment. Any indicated risk assessment shall be completed prior to improvement plans or equivalent approval. Risk assessments shall include a DTSC Preliminary Endangerment Assessment or no further action determination, or equivalent.

Any remedial action indicated by a risk assessment shall be completed and certified prior to recordation of the small lot tentative subdivision final map or equivalent final Placer County approval for commercial/industrial projects. Remediation shall include a DTSC Remedial Action Workplan, or equivalent, and can include a range of activities, including restrictions on use, soil excavation and disposal off-site, or encapsulation in appropriate areas away from sensitive receptors in the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-32.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Implementation of the above mitigation measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-31.)

**Impact 4.12-16:** Unused wells could be encountered during Specific Plan area development, posing a safety and health hazard. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-32.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

**Explanation:**

Unused or abandoned wells may be encountered in the Specific Plan area during remediation and/or development stages. Unused wells may represent a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-32.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.12-16 Any unused well encountered during subsequent exploration or development of the Specific Plan area shall be destroyed according to California Well Standards, California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 74-90 Section 23, and according to Placer County Division of Environmental Health Services requirements. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-33.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce the impacts of unused wells to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-33.)

Impact 4.12-17: Surface soils may be contaminated in areas not surveyed. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-33.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Surface soil affected by illegal dumping or containing soil staining or potential contamination may be encountered that presents potential residual chemical or hazardous material impacts to underlying soil in areas not previously evaluated in a Phase I ESA. If found, these sites may pose a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-33.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-17 Prior to submittal of a small lot tentative subdivision map or plans for industrial/commercial development, properties not previously evaluated with a current Phase I Environmental Site Assessment may be required to complete a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, as determined by Environmental Health Services. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment shall be conducted by a qualified professional. If past commercial uses are disclosed that could have resulted in persistent contamination then soil sampling shall be conducted within former commercial areas. In these instances, prior to setting conditions for subdivision or industrial/commercial development soil sampling shall be conducted according to guidelines developed by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) Phase II Environmental Site Assessment and/or Preliminary Endangerment Assessment with DTSC, or equivalent protocol. Sampling and site investigation shall be conducted by a California registered environmental professional, performed with oversight from Placer County Environmental Health Services, and with applicable permits.

As a result of soil investigation, a limited and confined area of contamination may be identified and found to be suitable for simple removal. If this is the case, remediation will be required to meet State and County regulations and be completed prior to recordation of the small lot tentative subdivision final map or equivalent final Placer County approval for commercial/industrial projects.

As a result of soil investigation, unconfined and/or widespread residual concentrations of chemicals or other contaminants maybe identified at levels where
they individually or in combination meet or exceed US EPA, CalEPA Preliminary Remediation Goals, or equivalent screening levels, thereby indicating the need for risk assessment. Any indicated Risk Assessment shall be completed prior to improvement plans or equivalent approval. Risk assessments shall include a DTSC Preliminary Endangerment Assessment or no further action determination, or equivalent.

Any remedial action indicated by a risk assessment shall be completed and certified prior to recordation of the small lot tentative subdivision final map or equivalent final Placer County approval for commercial/industrial projects. Remediation shall include a DTSC Remedial Action Workplan, or equivalent, and can include a range of activities, including restrictions on use, soil excavation and disposal off-site, or encapsulation in appropriate areas away from sensitive receptors in the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, pp. 4.12-33 to 4.12-34.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce potential surface soil impacts in areas not surveyed to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-33.)

Impact 4.12-18: Commercial use of potentially hazardous materials within the Specific Plan area could pose a safety and health hazard. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-34.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Development of the Specific Plan area will include commercial businesses and other related activities such as the County’s proposed corporation yard that will use hazardous materials in the course of business. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-34.)

Businesses including but not limited to: automotive fueling, private and County maintenance, and repair facilities; retail businesses with photographic processing services; and medical facilities with radiology imaging services may be developed in the areas designated for commercial use. These and other businesses routinely use, generate, and store hazardous materials. However, construction and operation of fueling related containers (USTs) and delivery systems for service stations are regulated by the Placer County Division of Environmental Health. The public safety aspects of transport of fuels and automotive service supplies and other hazardous materials used in commercial businesses likely to be established in the Specific Plan area are regulated by California State and federal transportation laws. Plans that describe the practices and materials used for business purposes as they involve generation, use and storage of hazardous materials must be submitted to the Placer County Division of
Environmental Health Services. These business plans address worker and public safety aspects of handling and management of hazardous materials. Because regulations have been adopted to mitigate impacts associated with future handling and use of hazardous materials this is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-34.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-34.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.

**Impact 4.12-19:** The proposed power lines and substation could expose project occupants to electromagnetic fields, hazardous material and waste, electric shock, and fire. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-34.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

The Specific Plan area is crossed by electric transmission and distribution lines. A distribution substation is proposed for an approximately six-acre site located at the intersection of Palladay Road and A Street, contiguous to and west of the existing PG&E electric transmission line. The transmission lines and substation would emit electric magnetic fields, which have been implicated in increased cancer risks in some studies. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-35.)

The *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* “Exhibit 1” suggests that the existing power line easements should be maintained as open space corridors and should be developed as pedestrian, equestrian, and/or bicycle trail systems. The three power line easement corridors are primarily designated as open space under the proposed Specific Plan, which restricts intensive forms of development immediately adjacent to or under the power lines. Other related types of development proposed under the powerlines includes a cemetery, religious site, and County corporation yard, as shown on Figure 3-12. The power line easements contain three 115kV transmission lines and seven 230kV transmission lines. In addition, a new 230/21kV distribution substation is proposed for an approximately six-acre site located at the intersection of Palladay Road and A Street, Refer to Figure 3-10 for the location of existing electric transmission lines and substations. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-35.)

Electrical currents and voltages at the substation and along its connection lines would generate electric and magnetic fields (EMFs). EMFs are fields of force created by electric voltage (electric fields) and by electric current (magnetic fields). Voltage on any wire produces an
Electric field in the area surrounding the wire. Electric field strength is described in terms of voltage per unit distance at a specified position (volts per meter V/m). A magnetic field is produced from current in a conductor such as a wire. Magnetic field strength is measured in terms of lines of force per unit area (Gauss, G; or milligauss, mG). EMFs are found whenever electricity is used, such as utility lines, building wires in homes, offices, schools, and home appliances. Typical magnetic fields from these sources range from below 1.0 mG to 1,000 mG. The operation of the new substation will result in an increased exposure to EMFs. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-35.)

Electric power transmission lines maintained by power companies may or may not be hazardous to human health. Research continues on the effects of electromagnetic fields (EMF) on human beings. There is only limited evidence that exposure to EMFs from power lines could cause cancer or other diseases in humans. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-35.)

The strength of EMFs diminishes with distance from power lines. The power lines traversing the Specific Plan area would be buffered from residential areas by a minimum of 100 feet of open space. School districts should be cautious about the health and safety aspects relating to overhead transmission lines. School districts should take a conservative approach when reviewing sites situated near easements for power transmissions lines. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-35.)

According to the Land Use Plan contained in the Specific Plan, the property lines of proposed school sites will be greater than 200 feet from the existing 230kV lines in the Plan area. No proposed school sites are in the vicinity of the existing 115kV lines in the western portion of the Plan area. (RDEIR, 4.12-35.)

Currently, there are no standards for locating residential uses near high-voltage power transmission line easements. However, the Land Use Plan does provide a buffer of at least 80 feet between residential uses and the 230kV power line easement that runs east-west through the Plan area, and a buffer of at least 35 feet between residential uses and the 115kV and 230kV power line easements that run north-south. The open space corridors, above described uses, and mitigation as described under Impact 4.1-6 (Mitigation Measure 4.1-6) will ensure that hazardous conditions that could occur due to high-voltage power lines are less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-36.)

During construction and operation of the project, hazardous wastes will be generated and several types of hazardous materials will be used and stored at the substation. Electrical transformers contain nonconducting mineral oil (highly refined hydrocarbon-base oil) used for insulation between conducting surfaces and as a coolant. Older transformers frequently contained polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which are defined as hazardous materials. The existing transformers are not labeled as to the potential for PCB content. When a transformer is taken out of service, the oil must be disposed of as hazardous waste. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-36.)

The substation will have lead acid batteries to provide DC power for monitoring, alarm, protective relaying, instrumentation and control, and emergency lighting. The batteries will have 60 cells and be rated at 125 volts DC nominal. The electrolyte in the batteries is in a gel form.
that is totally sealed in a steel case. There will be liquid tight control barriers under and around the battery racks. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-36.)

Sulfur hexafluoride gas (SF6) is used as an insulator and an arc suppresser in circuit breakers. It is completely contained in the equipment and not released under normal conditions. Since the gas is inert and non-toxic, its release would not cause a significant impact.

The substation will contain approximately four cylinders of compressed nitrogen gas. This is used to maintain a slight nitrogen pressure in oil-filled electrical equipment. This pressure serves to keep out air that contains moisture, which can damage the equipment. Since the gas is inert and non-toxic, its release would not cause a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-36.)

The proposed substation could pose a hazard of electric shock for site trespassers. This hazard will occur at the transformers and will not extend off-site to the general public. Since the substation involves the transformation of electricity, the new operating facility will be a potential electrical fire hazard. Incidents such as downed power lines and malfunctions at the substation could generate sparks and start a fire. The risk will be low for number of reasons. The substation will have asphalt pavement for road access and a gravel surface yard. There are minimum distance requirements implemented by PG&E for certain electrical equipment in the substation. In addition, PG&E installs high-speed relay equipment that senses a broken line condition and actuates circuit breakers to de-energize the line in a matter of milliseconds. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-36.)

The operation of the proposed substation is a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-36.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-19a The design of the substation shall implement no cost and low cost EMF reduction measures on new and upgraded transmission, substation, and distribution facilities. These measures shall reduce the magnetic field strength in the area by 15% or more at the fence line as compared to traditional installations. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)

4.12-19b PG&E proposes to prepare an EMF Field Management Plan that will specifically delineate the no-cost and low-cost EMF measures to be installed as part of the final engineering design for the substation. PG&E shall submit to the California Public Utilities Commission the EMF Field Management Plan for the project, prior to construction activity on the substation. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)

4.12-19c The site shall be graded to direct drainage to a pond that meets Federal Guidelines (40 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 112) for the facility so that, in the event a transformer becomes damaged and leaks oil, the oil would drain into the pond. The pond shall be designed to be impermeable and designed to contain 100% of the largest transformer oil volume plus 10% to contain rainwater and prevent discharge to surface water. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)
4.12-19d Storage batteries shall be located inside a dedicated metal-enclosed compartment in the switchgear. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)

4.12-19e Access to the site shall be restricted by fencing and warning signs posted to alert persons of the potential electrical hazards. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)

4.12-19f The power lines shall be designed in accordance with California Public Utilities Commission General Order 95 Guidelines for safe ground clearances that have been established to protect the public from electric shock. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)

4.12-19g The substation shall be fitted with an automated central alarm system that will immediately alert PG&E to any change in equipment condition. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Mitigation Measure 4.1-6 in Section 4.1 of the Revised Draft EIR will reduce effects related to high voltage transmission lines to a less than significant level. Implementation of the mitigation measures above would reduce potential impacts from the proposed substation to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)

Impact 4.12-20: Listed hazardous waste sites could be present within the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

In addition to the Phase I and Phase II ESAs that were performed for the Specific Plan area, various databases, lists, and reports, compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, were consulted to determine if any known hazardous waste sites were listed as being located within the Specific Plan area. The results of this search indicate that there are no such sites within the Specific Plan area; therefore, this impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-38.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.
Off-Site Infrastructure Impacts

Impact 4.12-21: Hazards related to underground storage tanks, potential surface soil contamination, unused wells, asbestos containing structures and other waste materials within roadway and utility corridors, or wastewater treatment plant sites not previously surveyed, could be present. This impact is considered potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-25.)

Finding:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that avoid the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

Explanation:

Impacts in off-site infrastructure areas could include the potential to encounter underground storage tanks, contaminated soils, refuse and other abandoned materials, abandoned wells, septic systems, and structures containing asbestos. Expansion of the DCWTP, or SRWTP, and construction of recycled water storage facilities at the City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment Plant may also have the potential to encounter hazardous materials, or pose a hazard to others during operation. All of the above conditions may be encountered during off-site construction, similar to the Specific Plan area. If encountered, these conditions may pose a potentially significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-38.)

Some of the off-site infrastructure would be located in other jurisdictions and not subject to Placer County oversight. Placer County cannot compel other jurisdictions to implement the same mitigation measures. However, most off-site utility lines will be placed in already disturbed roadway easements. Further, any construction will be subject to State and local requirements regarding underground storage tank removal, well and septic tank abandonment, wastewater treatment facilities operation, etc. NPDES requirements will also apply to all construction, including submission of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP), as administered by the State Water Resources Control Board. In addition, any construction will be under the oversight of another public agency, and ultimate owner of the improvements (e.g., the Sacramento Suburban Water District, Placer County Water Agency, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District, Sacramento County, Sutter County). Each of these agencies has similar construction protocols to those administered by Placer County, and similar responsibilities and obligations. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-38.)

Mitigation Measures:

4.12-21a Any USTs that are encountered during off-site utility line/roadway survey or construction, or wastewater treatment or storage facility construction shall be removed and soil samples shall be collected and analyzed. If a UST is subject to UST regulation, then a UST removal permit from Environmental Health Services shall be obtained. In the event soil or water contamination has occurred above regulatory
clean-up thresholds, remediation shall be performed consistent with State and County regulations. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-38.)

4.12-21b Prior to any utility, roadway, or wastewater treatment or storage facility construction on properties not previously evaluated in a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment shall be conducted by a Registered Environmental Assessor. If contaminant concentrations are found to be at or above regulatory clean-up thresholds, the site shall undergo remediation in accordance with State and County standards. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-39.)

4.12-21c Any unused well encountered during construction of off-site utilities, roadways, or wastewater treatment and storage facilities shall be destroyed according to California Well Standards, California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 74-90 Section 23, and local requirements. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-39.)

4.12-21d Surveys of any structures that are planned for demolition during off-site utility line, roadway, or wastewater treatment and storage facility construction shall be conducted by a Certified Asbestos Consultant licensed with the California Department of Occupational Safety and Health to determine if friable Regulated Asbestos Containing Materials or non-friable asbestos containing materials are present within the structure demolition areas. Any regulated asbestos materials found in the investigated areas shall be removed and disposed of by a California licensed asbestos abatement contractor. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-39.)

4.12-21e Site-specific evaluation by a California Registered Environmental Assessor II shall be conducted at each identified existing and former dwelling area that may be affected by off-site utility line, roadway, or wastewater treatment and storage facility construction to identify surface indications and locations of septic tanks or cesspools prior to demolition of existing residences. Identified septic tanks shall be destroyed under permit of either the County Environmental Health Services Division or the Public Works Department.

Surface conditions shall be evaluated by a California Registered Environmental Assessor II when the dwellings are vacated, and prior to demolition of the structures, regarding the possibility of previous site uses which may have included hazardous materials that could have been disposed of in on-site wastewater disposal systems.

Tank or cesspool destruction shall be monitored by a California Registered Environmental Assessor II regarding the likelihood of hazardous materials disposal in the systems. Any required remediation work shall be completed in accordance with State and County regulations prior to recordation of final small lot subdivision maps for the affected property. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-39.)

4.12-21f Disposal of auto parts, debris, household waste and similar materials by licensed waste haulers at approved waste disposal facilities shall be completed prior to any construction within off-site utility corridors. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-39.)
Significance After Mitigation:

Based on the previously described regulatory and institutional safeguards, and the availability of the above recommended mitigation measures, these are less than significant effects. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-38.)

Impact 4.12-22: Operational hazards could occur due to expanded wastewater treatment facilities at the DCWWTP and SRWTP; and use of recycled water within the Specific Plan area. This impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-37.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

With construction of dwellings and other uses in the Specific Plan area, the DCWWTP and SRWTP may be expanded and the amount of chemical use would increase. The increased chemical use could require more frequent chemical deliveries to the plant. The existing and future risk of a hazardous materials incident is slight due to the extensive precautions taken at the existing facilities. The precautions are described in the Risk Management and Prevention Program (RMPP) for Chlorine and Sulfur Dioxide for the DCWWTP site. SRWTP has precautions outlined in the RMPP for the plant, and specific precautions for use of chlorine and sulfur dioxide are described in the Chlorine/Sulfur Dioxide Procedures Manual. The greatest risk occurs during the unloading of chemicals, but this risk is small because staff has specific procedures used to unload the liquid chlorine and sulfur dioxide. The procedures include directions for parking the delivery vehicle, barricades and warning signs, equipment inspection, and inspections for leaks. Due to a positive history of past chemical use and the extensive regulatory precautions already in place, along with the plans to replace the chlorine and sulfur dioxide systems with Ultraviolet disinfection at DCWWTP, any increased chemical use at the existing facilities will result in a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-40.)

The Specific Plan would allow use of recycled water for irrigation of parks, open space and other landscape areas. Recycled water would be supplied initially from the DCWWTP, and ultimately from the PGWWTP. The City of Roseville has indicated a willingness to be the operator for the system. The City has a successful program in place and has established protocols for its operations. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-40.)

Exposure to recycled water could occur through drinking water that has been contaminated by recycled water, through contact with plant or soil materials that have been irrigated using recycled water, and inhalation of aerosols generated during spray irrigation with recycled water; however, tertiary treatment would provide an overall effective level of removal of pathogens and other harmful chemicals. Public health effects would only be likely to occur if the recycled
water was confused with potable water or if ingestion were possible via another route, such as contact with a drinking water fountain or during play. The extent of the public health impacts at various potential user sites depends on site-specific conditions relating to types of uses, soil, proximity to surface waters, etc. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-40.)

Construction of recycled water distribution pipelines present the possibility of cross-connection with potable water system, especially in areas where potable water systems are provided as a backup. Any potential for mixing of recycled water with the drinking water supply would pose a public health concern due to the possibility of ingestion of recycled water. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-40.)

Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), implemented by the Department of Health Services, provides specifications to avoid any potential for cross-connections with drinking water supplies. This includes identification (purple pipe) and signage of pipe materials, backflow prevention requirements, proper air gaps or cross-connection control design measures, plus minimum separation criteria for recycled water pipelines and water supply pipelines. The Department of Health Services, Public Water Supply Branch, has published the Guidance Manual for Cross-Connection Control Programs, which provides detailed information on compliance with the requirements. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-40.)

The quality of the recycled water would meet Title 22 requirements for all allowable unrestricted non-potable uses and the City of Roseville, with its experience and established protocols, would be the system operator. Because there is no evidence that use of water treated to Title 22 standards would result in undue exposure of people to risk, and a responsible entity for system operation has been identified, this is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-40.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 4.12-41.)

**Significance After Mitigation:**

Less than significant without mitigation.

**M. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

**Standards of Significance:**

No air district in California, including the Placer County Air Pollution District, has identified a significance threshold for GHG emissions or a methodology for analyzing air quality impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions. The state has identified 1990 emission levels as a goal through adoption of AB 32. To meet this goal, California would need to generate lower levels of GHG emissions than current levels. However, no standards have yet been adopted quantifying 1990 emission targets. It is recognized that for most projects there is no simple metric available to determine if a single project would help or hinder meeting the AB 32 emission goals. In
addition, at this time AB 32 only applies to stationary source emissions. Consumption of fossil fuels in the transportation sector accounted for over 40% of the total GHG emissions in California in 2004. Current standards for reducing vehicle emissions considered under AB 1493 call for “the maximum feasible reduction of greenhouse gases emitted by passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks and other vehicles,” and do not provide a quantified target for GHG emissions reductions for vehicles. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-10.)

Emitting CO₂ into the atmosphere is not itself an adverse environmental effect. It is the increased concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere resulting in global climate change and the associated consequences of climate change that results in adverse environmental effects (e.g., sea level rise, loss of snowpack, severe weather events). Although it is possible to generally estimate a project’s incremental contribution of CO₂ into the atmosphere, it is typically not possible to determine whether or how an individual project’s relatively small incremental contribution might translate into physical effects on the environment. Given the complex interactions between various global and regional-scale physical, chemical, atmospheric, terrestrial, and aquatic systems that result in the physical expressions of global climate change, it is impossible to discern whether the presence or absence of CO₂ emitted by the project would result in any altered conditions. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.13-10, 4.13-11.)

Given the challenges associated with determining a project specific significance criteria for GHG emissions when the issue must be viewed on a global scale, a quantitative significance criteria was not used for the Placer Vineyards project. For this analysis, a project’s incremental contribution to global climate change would be considered significant if due to the size or nature of the project it would generate a substantial increase in GHG emissions relative to existing conditions. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.3-11.)

**Impact 4.13-1:** Development of the project could potentially result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the significant cumulative impact of global climate change. This impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.13-15 to 4.13-17.)

**Finding:**

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that substantially lessen, but do not avoid, the potentially significant environmental effect associated with the project’s cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the significant cumulative impact of global climate change. No mitigation is available to render the effects less than significant. The effects therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

**Explanation:**

Broadly speaking, climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies fall into three categories: (1) transportation sector strategies; (2) electricity sector strategies, including renewable energy and energy efficiency; and (3) all other adaptation strategies, such as carbon sequestration, participation in emissions trading markets and research and public education (California Energy Commission 2003). The Placer Vineyards Specific Plan project incorporates guidelines,
strategies and mitigation measures that minimize the human and spatial environmental footprint in the Specific Plan area, including transportation and electricity impacts. Implementation of these measures will help reduce potential GHG emissions resulting from the development of the Project. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-15.)

The state’s primary source of GHG emissions is the consumption of fossil energy (California Energy Commission 2003). The proposed Specific Plan has several components that would reduce consumption of fossil energy within the Specific Plan area, and thereby reduce potential GHG emissions. These components are consistent with “smart growth” principles developed and promoted by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) (see Development Review Committee Staff Report (Jan. 12, 2007) to Placer County Planning Commission.) (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.13-15 to 4.13-16.)

The proposed Specific Plan has several components that will promote the use of alternative modes of transportation that produce less greenhouse gas emissions than vehicular travel, or none at all. First, the proposed development is designed to encourage people to walk, ride bicycles, take public transportation, or carpool (see Development Review Committee Staff Report (Jan. 12, 2007) to Placer County Planning Commission). Second, the overall design and land use plan of Placer Vineyards creates a compact development pattern that encourages walking, biking, and public transit use, as well as shortens auto trips (see ibid.) Third, the Specific Plan improves the regional balance of housing and jobs. Housing opportunities are made available closer to employment to encourage fewer long distance commutes, thus reducing vehicular travel time (see ibid). (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-16.)

Implementation of the Specific Plan’s transportation and circulation goals, policies, and mitigation measures will also help reduce potential GHG emissions by soothing the flow of traffic to allow engines to operate more efficiently. By implementing measures to decrease stop-and-go driving and idling at intersections, these measures will help reduce overall fuel consumption and GHG emissions. The Project’s transportation and circulation system will also promote non-vehicular travel through the implementation of traffic calming measures that will make roads safer for pedestrians and bicyclists (see International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) 2001). Improvements in vehicle efficiency and alternative fuel vehicles will also help reduce GHG emissions in the project area. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-16.)

In addition to targeting GHG emissions through the transportation sector, the proposed Specific Plan contains several goals and policies that will reduce energy consumption from power plants and non-transportation sources of fossil fuel consumption. Specific Plan policies require building design features that accommodate and encourage use of alternative energy sources and promote low-emission energy by incorporating landscaping conducive to passive solar energy uses. For example, the Specific Plan encourages buildings to be oriented in a south-to-southwest direction and for deciduous tress to be planted on the west and south sides of structures. It also specifies that landscapes should be provided with drought-resistant species and groundcovers rather than pavement to reduce heat reflection. In addition, existing measures in place through AB 32, SB 1368, and other state initiatives will help contribute to a countywide reduction of GHG emissions. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-16.)
Even with implementation of the above described measures, however, the Placer Vineyards Project will likely result in a substantial amount of GHG emissions. Because it cannot be determined to a reasonable degree of certainty that the Placer Vineyards Project will not result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the significant cumulative impact of global climate change, the impacts of the proposed project on global climate change are considered significant and unavoidable. (SPRREIR, p. 4.13-17.)

**Mitigation Measures:**

4.13-1a  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.8-3a, establishing guidelines for County review of future project-specific submittals for non-residential development within the Specific Plan area in order to reduce generation of air pollutants.*

4.13-1b  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.8-3b, requiring implementation measures to accomplish an overall reduction of 10 to 20% in residential energy consumption relative to the requirements of State of California Title 24.*

4.13-1c  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.8-3c, promoting a reduction of residential emissions.*

4.13-1d  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.8-3e, requiring measures to promote bicycle usage.*

4.13-1e  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.8-3f, requiring measures to promote transit usage and ride sharing.*

4.13-1h  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.8-3h, encouraging school districts to incorporate energy saving measures into the design, construction, and operation of elementary, middle and high school buildings and facilities.*

4.13-1i  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.8-3i, requiring measures to promote bicycle use, ride sharing, and commute alternatives to be incorporated into the design, construction and operation of public park areas.*

4.13-1j  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.8-3j, prohibiting open burning throughout the Specific Plan Area and requiring this prohibition in any project CC&Rs that are established.*

4.13-1k  *Implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a-b; 4.7-5a-b, 4.7-6a-b; 4.7-12; and 4.7-13a-b, 4.7-15a-b, 4.7-16a-b, 4.7-17a-b, 4.7-19a-b, mitigating traffic impacts (see Recirculated RDEIR, July 2006).*

4.13-1l  *Implement mitigation measures 4.11.5-1a -4.11.5-1d, requiring waste diversion and recycling.*

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3  / It should be noted that there are no Mitigation Measures 4.13-1f or 4.13-1g.
4.13-1m  Placer County and the project applicant shall work together to publish and distribute an Energy Resource Conservation Guide describing measures individuals can take to increase energy efficiency and conservation. The applicant shall be responsible for funding the preparation of the Guide. The Energy Resource Conservation Guide shall be updated every 5 years and distributed at the public permit counter.

4.13-1n  The project applicants shall pay for an initial installment of Light Emitting Diode (LED) traffic lights in all Specific Plan area traffic lights.

4.13-1o  The project applicants and Placer County shall jointly develop a tree planting informational packet to help project area residents understand their options for planting trees that can absorb carbon dioxide.

4.13-1p  Prioritized parking within commercial and retail areas shall be given to electric vehicles, hybrid vehicles, and alternative fuel vehicles.

4.13-1q  The County shall monitor and support the efforts of the California Air Resources Board, the California Energy Commission, the California Public Utilities Commission, the California Power Authority, and any other State Agency charged with reducing California’s contribution to global climate change to formulate mitigation strategies, if any, that may be implemented on a voluntary basis by local government. If and when any such strategies become available, the County shall condition site-specific approvals under the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan on the adoption of such measures if the County Board of Supervisors determines that such measures are feasible. As used in this Mitigation Measure, “feasible” means: (1) the mitigation strategy has been successfully demonstrated in the same or very similar application; (2) the mitigation strategy has been demonstrated in a similar development such that application of the mitigation strategy to the Placer Vineyards site specific development is inappropriate; and (3) the mitigation strategy is cost effective in terms of the number of dollars that would be expended per metric ton of GHG emissions reduced.

Significance after Mitigation:

Implementation of the mitigation measures above would substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the Specific Plan area, but not to a level that is less than significant. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.13-17 to 4.13-18; Supplement to Final EIR, Response 59D.)

Effects of Global Climate Change on Water Resources

Standards of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, Placer County has determined that a significant environmental impact could occur if the proposed Specific Plan would:
• Require or result in the construction of new water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

• Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or new or expanded entitlements are needed.

• Substantially deplete groundwater supplies.

• Be inconsistent with the goals and policies of the adopted Placer County General Plan.

• Be inconsistent with the applicable terms of the Water Forum Agreement (WFA) (January 2000).

Evaluation of impacts related to the source of the proposed surface water supply and hydrologically related impacts are contained in Section 4.3 of the Revised Draft EIR (RDEIR). Evaluation of water supply impacts related to public services/infrastructure is contained in section 4.11 of the RDEIR. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.13-25 to 4.13-26.)

Impact 4.13-2: The impacts of global climate change on water supply and availability could affect future water supply and availability in the Specific Plan area. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-26.)

Finding:

Under CEQA, no mitigation measures are required for impacts that are less than significant. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15126.4, subd. (a)(3), 15091.)

Explanation:

Because considerable uncertainty remains with respect to the overall impact of global climate change on future water supply in California, it is unknown to what degree global climate change will impact future Placer County water supply and availability. However, based on consideration of the recent regional and local climate change studies described in the literature review included in the Second Partially Recirculated Revised Draft EIR, and based on an assessment of water supply under the Base Plan, it is reasonably expected that the impacts of global climate change on water supply would be less than significant under either alternative. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-26.)

As described by the literature survey, overall, climate change is expected to have a greater effect in Southern California and agricultural users than urban users in the Sacramento Valley/Sierra Nevada area. For example, for 2020 conditions, where optimization is allowed (i.e., using the CALVIN model), scarcity is essentially zero in the Sacramento Valley for both urban and agricultural users, and generally zero for urban users in the San Joaquin and Tulare Basins. Rather, most water scarcity will be felt by agricultural users in Southern California, though Southern California urban users, especially Coachella urban users, will also experience some scarcity. By the year 2050, urban water scarcity will remain almost entirely absent north of the
Tehachapi Mountains, although agricultural water scarcity could increase in the Sacramento Valley to about 2% (Medellin et al. 2006; see also Tanaka et al. 2006 and Lund et al. 2003 for further discussion of global climate change impacts on agricultural uses). (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-26.)

Based on the conclusions of current literature regarding California’s ability to adapt to global climate change, it is reasonably expected that, over time, the State’s water system will be modified to be able to handle the projected climate changes, even under dry and/or warm climate scenarios (DRW 2006). Although coping with climate change effects on California’s water supply could come at a considerable cost, based on a thorough investigation of the issue, it is reasonably expected that statewide implementation of some, if not several, of the wide variety of adaptation measures available to the state will likely enable California’s water system to reliably meet future water demands. For example, traditional water supply reservoir operations may be used, in conjunction with other adaptive actions, to offset the impacts of global warming on water supply (Medellin et al. 2006; see also Tanaka et al. 2006 and Lund et al. 2003). Other adaptive measures include better urban and agricultural water use efficiency practices, conjunctive use of surface and ground waters, desalination, and water markets and portfolios (Medellin et al. 2006; see also Lund et al. 2003, Tanaka et al. 2006). More costly statewide adaptation measures could include construction of new reservoirs and enhancements to the state’s levee system (California Energy Commission 2003). As described by Medellin et al. 2006, with adaptation to the climate, the water deliveries to urban centers are expected to decrease by only 1%, with Southern California shouldering the brunt of this decrease. (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.13-26 to 4.13-27.)

Although California could potentially experience an increased number of single-dry and multiple-dry years as a result of global climate change, based on current knowledge, it is reasonably expected that such increase would not significantly affect the ability of the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) to reliably meet the Project’s build-out water demands. As described by the PCWA Integrated Water Resources Plan (IWRP) (Attachment A to the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan Final EIR), PCWA’s use of an integrated resources approach will ensure that there is adequate water supply to reliably meet all the projected PCWA western Placer County service area demands, including those of the proposed Project, even under single-year and multiple year drought conditions. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-27.)

Importantly, each of PCWA’s surface water supply entitlements for use in western Placer County has historically demonstrated a high reliability during even multiple-dry years. PCWA’s first source of surface water supply is a water supply contract with PG&E for 100,400 acre feet annually (afa) of Yuba/Bear River Water that is delivered through PG&E’s Drum Spaulding hydro system. This source of water has a high reliability during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years. For example, between 1987 and 1992, California experienced five years of drought, during which many areas in the state had reduced supplies. During that period, PCWA had a full Yuba/Bear River supply each year. Indeed, the only year in which PCWA had to impose drought restrictions on its customers due to reduced PG&E supply was 1977, the driest single year in California’s measured hydrologic record (2006 RDEIR, Attachment M). PCWA’s second source of water supply (i.e., Middle Fork Project water rights) also has high reliability during even multiple-dry years (see 2006 RDEIR, Attachment M). Finally, the Agency’s third source of
surface water (i.e., its federal CVP Municipal and Industrial water supply contract), currently anticipated to be exercised on the Sacramento River, should also be a reliable source of water because under the Agency’s Integrated Water Resources Plan, the Agency plans to supplement its CVP contract supply with groundwater in dry years to improve reliability to the point where the full contract amount can be relied upon to serve urban development needs (see RDEIR Appendix M; see also Final EIR Appendix A, see below for a discussion of climate change impacts on groundwater supply). (SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.13-27 to 4.13-28.)

In addition, PCWA’s surface water supply entitlements are unlikely to be affected by global climate change because, as indicated by preliminary results from DWR (2006), water supply impacts from climate change would be largely reflected in reduced south-of-Delta exports, while existing Delta water quality requirements would continue to be satisfied. It is therefore reasonable to consider that global climate change may have relatively less effect on the Placer County water supply because the PCWA’s surface water supplies are based on existing water rights and contract entitlements for in-basin use above the Delta. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-28.)

Based on current knowledge, global climate change is also not expected to significantly impact groundwater supply for the Specific Plan area. Western Placer County lies within the northeastern section of the North American Groundwater sub-basin, which lies in the eastern central portion of the Sacramento Groundwater Basin. Preliminary studies indicate that the Sacramento Valley would experience only a small decline in groundwater levels as a result of global climate change (Vicuña 2006). Although groundwater may be used to supplement surface water supply to the Specific Plan area during dry years, it is unlikely that such future groundwater pumping would exceed safe yield. The PCWA integrated water resources strategy anticipates that groundwater pumping would not exceed safe yield as long as the long-term (multiple years) average does not exceed 95,000 ac-ft/yr (Final EIR Appendix A). Although, as discussed above, there is still a great deal of uncertainty in respect to impacts of climate change on future groundwater availability in California, in view of the high reliability of PCWA surface water supplies and the wide variety of integrated water management techniques available to PCWA, long-term average groundwater pumping in not reasonably expected exceed the 95,000 ac-ft/yr average. Moreover, the planned replacement of agricultural lands in western Placer County with urban development is expected to result in an in-lieu groundwater recharge, thereby further reducing the likelihood of a groundwater overdraft (Final EIR Appendix A). The impacts of global climate change on groundwater in western Placer County are, therefore, reasonably considered less than significant. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-28.)

For these reasons, impacts of global climate change on water supply for proposed Project are considered less than significant. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-28.)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required. (SPRRDEIR, p. 4.13-28.)

Significance After Mitigation:

Less than significant without mitigation.
N. CONCLUSION

The Board has adopted all of the mitigation measures identified in Sections A-M above. Some of the measures identified are also within the jurisdiction and control of other agencies. To the extent any of the mitigation measures are within the jurisdiction of other agencies, the Board finds those agencies can and should implement those measures within their jurisdiction and control.

Mitigation measures within the control of other agencies include the following:

**Impact 4.4-15:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for special-status plant species potentially occurring there.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing habitat for special-status plant species.

**Impact 4.4-16:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could result in removal of habitat for listed vernal pool invertebrates potentially occurring there.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing habitat for listed vernal pool invertebrates.

**Impact 4.4-17:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a federally-listed species.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing habitat for valley elderberry longhorn beetle.

**Impact 4.4-18:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for western pond turtle, a special-status species potentially occurring there.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing habitat for western pond turtle.
**Impact 4.4-19:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active nests or disturb burrowing owls.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas potentially containing burrowing owl nests.

**Impact 4.4-21:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for tricolored blackbird.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville and Placer County can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing habitat for tricolored blackbird.

**Impact 4.4-22:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active raptor nests or disturb nesting raptors.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas potentially containing active raptor nests.

**Impact 4.4-23:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could harm or destroy the California horned lizard.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing the California horned lizard.

**Impact 4.4-24:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active roosts or disturb several species of bats.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing roosts and/or several species of bats.

**Impact 4.4-25:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could result in removal of oak trees.
Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing roosts and/or several species of bats.

**Impact 4.4-26:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within the off-site infrastructure areas could fill jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

**Impact 4.4-27:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within the off-site infrastructure areas could result in the loss of riparian habitat and disturbance of drainages.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing riparian habitat and drainages.

**Impact 4.4-28:** Installation of infrastructure within the Natomas Basin could affect Giant Garter snake habitat and/or individual snakes.

Sutter County may require that construction of the infrastructure improvements within its jurisdiction per subject to the NBHCP requirements because Sutter County is a permittee. PCWA, SRCSD and Sacramento County can and grant incidental take permits and adopt or implement the NBHCP conservation measures.

**Impact 4.4-29:** Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove nesting habitat for Loggerhead shrike.

Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville can and should grant permits to the Project applicants and future developers at the Project site for the installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas containing nesting habitat for Loggerhead shrike.

**Impact 4.7-4:** Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in the City of Roseville.

The City of Roseville can and should implement the suggested or similar mitigation measures addressing peak hour traffic volumes on Roseville study area intersections.
Impact 4.7-5: Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sacramento County.

Sacramento County can and should implement the suggested or similar mitigation measures addressing daily traffic volumes on Sacramento County study area roadways.

Impact 4.7-6: Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sacramento County.

Sacramento County can and should implement the suggested or similar mitigation measures addressing peak hour traffic volumes on Sacramento County study area intersections.

Impact 4.7-8: Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sutter County.

Sutter County can and should implement the suggested or similar mitigation measures addressing peak hour traffic volumes on Sutter County study area intersections.

Impact 4.7-9: Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways and intersections that are part of the state highway system.

Caltrans can and should implement the suggested or similar mitigation measures addressing peak hour traffic volumes on state highway system study area roadways and intersections.

Impact 4.7-12: Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase daily traffic volumes on roadways in unincorporated Placer County.

The best combination of improvements depends on the size, nature and timing of development and transportation improvements in Placer County, City of Roseville, Sacramento County and other jurisdictions. The County will continue to coordinate with these jurisdictions, but the specific set of improvements that will ultimately be constructed cannot be identified at this time.

Impact 4.7-13: Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County.

The best combination of improvements depends on the size, nature and timing of development and transportation improvements in Placer County, City of Roseville, Sacramento County and other jurisdiction. The County will continue to coordinate with these jurisdictions, but the specific set of improvements that will ultimately be constructed cannot be identified at this time.
Impact 4.7-14: Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in the City of Roseville.

The City of Roseville can and should collect funds for and/or construct the improvements identified in the Mitigation Measures.

Impact 4.7-15: Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sacramento County.

Sacramento County can and should collect funds for and/or construct the improvements identified in the Mitigation Measures.

Impact 4.7-16: Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sacramento County.

Sacramento County can and should collect funds for and/or construct the improvements identified in the Mitigation Measures.

Impact 4.7-18: Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sutter County.

Sutter County can and should construct the improvements identified in the Mitigation Measures.

Impact 4.7-19: Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways that are part of the state highway system.

Caltrans can and should construct the improvements identified in the Mitigation Measures.

XI.

GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

An Environmental Impact Report must discuss the ways in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing in the vicinity of the project, and how that growth will, in turn, affect the surrounding environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d)). Included in this are projects that would remove obstacles to population growth (such as a major expansion of a wastewater treatment plant, new roadways or other infrastructure that might allow for additional development within western Placer County). Unplanned increases in population can tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects. The EIR must also discuss the characteristics of the proposed Specific Plan which would encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or
cumulatively. As stated in the CEQA Guidelines, it must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment. (RDEIR, p. 5-1.)

Concurrent with adoption of the Placer County General Plan in 1994, the Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 94-238 which amended the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan to include the West Placer Specific Plan area. This amendment, included as Exhibit 1 of the resolution (and included as Appendix D of the Revised Draft EIR), specified standards for development in the Specific Plan area, and changes to the Community Plan Land Use Diagram. Exhibit 1 states that the West Placer Specific Plan area was identified in the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan as an area to be examined as part of the Countywide General Plan Update, and that update resulted in this designation for the area. The boundaries of the West Placer Specific Plan area are identical to the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area. It was one of only two areas designated in the 1994 Placer County General Plan for large-scale development at increased densities to be considered through the specific plan process in the unincorporated area of Placer County. The Board of Supervisors thus engaged in the decision-making process that identified sites for large-scale specific plan development in 1994, and made the necessary findings to support that decision. Section 10.5 of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Placer County General Plan Update (SCH#93082012) includes the following statement regarding growth-inducing impacts:

Arguably, any general plan that designates undeveloped land for future development can be defined as “growth-inducing.” Since one of the County’s clear objectives in updating its General Plan is the promotion of economic development and accommodation of demand for residential growth, this is the case with the Draft Countywide General Plan. In promoting such development and accommodating such growth, the Draft General Plan, however, attempts to address all the potentially adverse implications through policies, programs, and proposals for adequate infrastructure, promotion of a reasonable balance between jobs and housing, and protection of environmentally-sensitive resources.

(RDEIR, p. 5-1.)

Elimination of Obstacles to Growth. The elimination of obstacles to growth is considered to be a growth-inducing effect. As discussed in Chapter Three and in Section 4.11 in Chapter Four of the Revised Draft EIR, the proposed Specific Plan would require new on-site and off-site infrastructure to accommodate the proposed development. This includes provision of new utilities to serve the Specific Plan area, including a wastewater collection system, arrangements to use one or more wastewater treatment plants, water supply and distribution system, electrical and natural gas service, telecommunications and cable television service. An electrical substation is proposed to serve the Specific Plan area. On-site collection and distribution facilities would serve only the Specific Plan area. Off-site roadway improvements are also included in the proposed Specific Plan, or are recommended as mitigation measures for traffic impacts resulting from the proposed Specific Plan. This includes roadways parallel to Baseline Road in the area north of Baseline Road, which currently undeveloped and designated for agricultural use by the current County General Plan. (RDEIR, p. 5-2.)
As noted above, the decision to allow urbanization of the project site was included in the approval process for the 1994 Placer County General Plan. The policies and land use designations included in the General Plan, as well as zoning and Williamson Act contracts, currently preclude urbanization of surrounding properties outside the project site within the unincorporated area of Placer County. However, as described in Section 5.2, Cumulative Impacts, the project site borders the County of Sacramento and the County of Sutter, and is in proximity to the City of Roseville. All of these jurisdictions have either adopted or are in the process of adopting or considering General Plan amendments and specific plans that would allow substantial urbanization adjacent to or in proximity to the project site. Because these plans have been adopted or are already under consideration, it can be argued that the anticipated urbanization would occur with or without adoption of the proposed Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, and not as a result of pressures created by the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 5-2.)

Although County plans and zoning currently preclude urbanization north of Baseline Road in unincorporated Placer County, proposals to change the General Plan to permit urbanization of the area are in various stages of development and entitlement processing by the County. These include projects known as the Curry Creek Community Plan, the Regional University and Community, Placer Ranch, and other projects within the Roseville MOU area. Two proposed projects within the MOU area that will require annexation are the Creekview Specific Plan and the Sierra Vista Specific Plan. The proposed Creekview Specific Plan development area consists of approximately 570 acres. If the project is approved as proposed, this area at buildout will consist of approximately 2,160 dwelling units, 38 acres of industrial land use, a proposed school situated on 14 aces, and a community clubhouse on three acres. The project is in the initial planning stages and is being processed by the City of Roseville. The proposed Sierra Vista Specific Plan area is located on approximately 1,900 acres. The City of Roseville is currently processing this application. Although in the initial planning stages, if the project is approved as proposed, at buildout it would consist of approximately 10,000 dwelling units, along with approximately 77 acres of commercial and 57 acres for office development (3,000,000 s.f. of floor area). These projects are proceeding in parallel with the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan and have been proposed independent of the outcome of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan project. Much of the regional infrastructure proposed in conjunction with the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan would be necessary to support the other projects even if the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan was not implemented. (RDEIR, pp. 5-2 to 5-3.)

Improvements to Baseline Road and proposed mitigation measures that recommend parallel roadways north of Baseline Road would facilitate access to the project site as well as properties to the east, west and north. The properties to the west are already included in the area designated Industrial-Commercial Reserve in the Sutter County General Plan, and properties to the east are within the City of Roseville and developed or designated for development on the Roseville General Plan. As noted above, properties to the north are already under consideration for development. In the case of the Regional University and Community, a Draft EIR is in preparation. The Placer Parkway was already under study prior to consideration of the proposed Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, although development of the Specific Plan area was contemplated in the 1994 Placer County General Plan and the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan. Properties to the south of the project site are within the proposed Elverta
The proposal for sewer service to the Specific Plan area is connection to the Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, located east of the Plan area. The size of future lift stations, force mains, sewer interceptors and trunk lines (and eventually, the capacity of the DCWWTP) would need to be designed to accommodate the project; sizing of the system (and the costs associated with the development and expansion of the system) would determine whether urban development beyond the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan could be served or accommodated by expansion of the system. Similar considerations would apply to the option of receiving sewer service from SRCSD. The South Placer Wastewater Authority is currently conducting studies to determine the most efficient and effective way to provide the additional sewer capacity needed to serve Placer Vineyards Specific Plan and other proposed projects. (RDEIR, p. 5-3.)

With regard to water supply, refer to the discussion under Section 5.2, Cumulative Impacts, below. The diversion of 35,000 AFA from the Sacramento River (of which the proposed Placer Vineyards Specific Plan would ultimately use approximately 11,000 AFA) is being pursued by PCWA as lead agency independent of the Specific Plan proposal. The diversions would have a growth-inducing impact in that it would enable additional urbanization to occur within the PCWA service area. However, PCWA does not control land use entitlements in Placer County, which are under the jurisdiction of the County and the cities. Decisions by the County and its cities must be consistent with their respective General Plans. (RDEIR, p. 5-3.)

**Stimulation of Economic Activity.** Implementation of the project is expected to provide for an additional 7,824 jobs, based on proposed land uses within the Specific Plan area. These jobs will come from employment generated in the commercial/business designations, including retail and office, and through the development of local public employment opportunities such as additional schools. These jobs are referred to as direct employment. A breakdown of the jobs generated from the project is summarized in Table 3.4-1. In addition to the jobs generated directly from the uses within the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area, two types of additional local employment will also be generated. These two types of employment are known as indirect employment and induced employment. (RDEIR, pp. 5-3 to 5-4.)

Indirect employment is the jobs that are generated through the expenditure patterns of those directly employed within the project. Workers directly employed within the project will spend money in the local economy and the expenditure of that money will result in additional jobs. Induced employment is created from the stream of goods and services that are necessary to support businesses within the proposed project. The employment associated with the manufacturing of a product sold in the project area is considered induced employment. (RDEIR, p. 5-4.)

The process through which the indirect employment and the induced employment are created is known as the multiplier effect. An estimate of additional indirect employment and induced employment was determined using the Association of Bay Area Government’s (ABAG) San Francisco Bay Area Input-Output model’s estimates of the multiplier effect. The indirect multiplier and induced multiplier were used to determine the amount of indirect employment and
induced employment, respectively. It should be noted that ABAG’s estimates were determined using data from the Bay Area; however, the relationships in which the estimates were based are similar to the local economy. (RDEIR, p. 5-4.)

Table 5-1 in the Revised Draft EIR summarizes the amount of direct, indirect, and induced employment that is estimated to result from implementation of the project. (RDEIR, p. 5-4.)

Since the economic activity associated with the project has the potential to spread throughout the region, the environmental implications associated with the simulation of economic activity can not be determined, but could be a significant growth inducing effect of the project. (RDEIR, p. 5-4.)

**Summary of Growth Inducing Effects.** Although the Specific Plan of and by itself will not remove obstacles to growth, when combined with other activity occurring in the west Placer region, it is apparent that the project will contribute to collective actions designed to remove growth obstacles in western Placer County. Further, the indirect and induced effects of added economic activity will contribute to this effect. The specific environmental effects resulting from anticipated growth in western Placer County are listed and described in Section 5.2 below, including loss of agricultural and open space lands, alteration of views, increases in light and glare, increases in surface runoff, environmental effects due to increases in regional water use, effects on surface water quality, aquatic resource impacts, removal of habitat for federally and state listed and other special-status species, loss of cultural resources, transportation and roadway impacts leading to increased congestion, air quality impacts, increases in noise, increases in population, and increases in demand for public services. (RDEIR, p. 5-5.)

XII.

**PROJECT ALTERNATIVES**

A. **BASIS FOR ALTERNATIVES—FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS**

1. **Impacts that Were Not Substantially Lessened by Mitigation in the EIR**

The potential environmental impacts that would result from implementation of the proposed *Placer Vineyards Specific Plan* are summarized in Table S-1 in Chapter One of the Revised Draft EIR. In some cases, impacts that have been identified would be less than significant. In other instances, incorporation of the mitigation measures proposed in the Revised Draft EIR would reduce the impacts to levels that are less than significant. Although the proposed Specific Plan contains standards and policies that mitigate certain impacts, no mitigation measures have been identified by the applicant to reduce the following impacts to a less than significant level. Those impacts that cannot feasibly be mitigated to a less than significant level, or for which no mitigation measures are available, would remain as significant unavoidable adverse impacts. Those impacts are listed below. (RDEIR, p. 5-95.)

- There could be potential conflicts with the principles contained in the SACOG Preferred Blueprint Plan, which could lead to physical impacts on the environment.
- Agricultural land, including “Important Farmland” would be converted to non-agricultural uses.

- Acquisition of existing off-site structures and alteration of existing off-site land uses would occur due to the widening of Baseline/Riego Road and Watt Avenue.

- Potential impacts may occur as a result of compliance with Standard 8 (Agricultural Water Supply) of Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek /West Placer Community Plan.

- The Specific Plan will contribute to the loss of agricultural and open space land throughout Placer County, the region and the state.

- Views could be altered due to off-site utility line and roadway construction.

- Urbanization of the Specific Plan area will alter views from surrounding roadways and properties.

- Urbanization of the Specific Plan area will alter views for those currently residing within the Specific Plan area.

- The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative alteration of views in rural west Placer County.

- Cumulative impacts may occur that are related to introduction of new sources of light and glare.

- Urbanization within the Specific Plan area and up-gradient of the Specific Plan area could result in a cumulative increase in surface runoff. Increased runoff could exceed design assumptions for proposed culverts, roadways, channels and other conveyance systems and result in overtopping and downstream flooding.

- The Specific Plan area could contribute to the cumulative affect of water quality due to the introduction of urban pollutants including vehicle oils and greases; heavy metals on roads, parking lots, and driveways; fertilizers and pesticides used on site landscaping; and toxic compounds released from auto maintenance areas into surface runoff.

- Use of groundwater as a redundant water source in the Specific Plan area would have a cumulative impact on the North American River groundwater subbasin if the project sends most of its effluent to the SCRSD wastewater treatment plant in Freeport..

- Development will remove the majority of open space in the Specific Plan area.

- Development could remove habitat for potentially occurring listed vernal pool invertebrates.

- Development could result in removal of nesting and foraging habitat for Swainson’s hawk, a state-listed species.
• Development could result in removal of individual oak trees.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for special-status plant species potentially occurring there.

• Development would fill jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands, and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for special-status plant species potentially occurring there.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could result in removal of habitat for listed vernal pool invertebrates potentially occurring there.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a federally-listed species.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for western pond turtle, a special-status species potentially occurring there.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active nests or disturb burrowing owls.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for tricolored blackbird.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active raptor nests or disturb nesting raptors.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could harm or destroy the California horned lizard.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active roosts or disturb several species of bats.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could result in removal of oak trees.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within the off-site infrastructure areas could fill jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within the off-site infrastructure areas could result in the loss of riparian habitat and disturbance of drainages.
• Installation of infrastructure within the Natomas Basin could affect Giant Garter snake habitat and/or individual snakes.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove nesting habitat for Loggerhead shrike.

• Cumulative development would contribute to the ongoing loss of natural undisturbed open space in the region, increase human intrusion and activity levels in proximity to habitat areas, and would remove potential habitat for federally and state listed and other special-status species.

• Development of the Specific Plan Area could destroy or alter known historic or unique archaeological resources.

• Development of the Specific Plan Area could destroy or alter unknown historical and/or unique archaeological resources.

• Implementation of the Baseline Road widening project could adversely affect the historic archaeological site of “Eagle House,” an early inn.

• Implementation of the Watt Avenue widening project could destroy or alter two unique archaeological sites and a portion of one historic cemetery.

• Implementation of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply line could alter or destroy portions of two historic sites and one historic district.

• Implementation of a sewer force main along Watt Avenue and PFE Road could alter or destroy portions of three unique archaeological sites and one historic cemetery.

• Implementation of Sewer Line (SRCSD) Alternative “A” could alter or destroy a portion of two historic sites.

• Impacts to undiscovered cultural resources may occur in unsurveyed areas.

• The proposed Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative impacts on historic or prehistoric resources.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in the city of Roseville.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sacramento County.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sacramento County.
- Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sutter County.

- Buildout of the Specific Plan would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways and intersections that are part of the state highway system.

- Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase daily traffic volumes on roadways in unincorporated Placer County.

- Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County.

- Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in the City of Roseville.

- Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sacramento County.

- Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sacramento County.

- Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sutter County.

- Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways that are part of the state highway system.

- Mitigation measures implemented to reduce traffic impacts could adversely affect traffic in other jurisdictions.

- Mitigation measures implemented to reduce traffic impacts could adversely affect the environment.

- Exhaust and fugitive dust emissions will be generated by construction activities in the Specific Plan area, such as excavation and grading, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth.

- Exhaust and fugitive dust emissions will be generated by construction activities in off-site infrastructure areas, such as excavation and grading, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth.

- Activity within the Specific Plan area would result in the generation of both mobile and stationary source air pollutants, increasing total air pollution emissions.

- Increased volumes of wastewater requiring treatment could cause odors and air quality degradation due to pump station and wastewater treatment plant operations.
• Cumulative air quality impacts would result from Specific Plan development.

• Off-site noise levels due to traffic generated by development of the Specific Plan area could be substantial resulting in noise levels that adversely affect sensitive receptors at one or more locations.

• The proposed Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative increases in off-site noise levels due to traffic.

• Buildout of the proposed Specific Plan could promote an imbalance of jobs and housing in both the regional and project level context.

• Residential and commercial development in the Specific Plan area will increase the waste stream that would be delivered to the MRF and disposed of at the Western Regional Landfill.

• The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative increases in the waste stream that would be delivered to the MRF and disposed of at the Western Regional Landfill.

• The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative water quality degradation due to increased discharge of treated effluent to Dry Creek and/or the Sacramento River.

• The recycled water demand could exceed available recycled water supply for the Specific Plan area.

• Development of the Specific Plan will create a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change.

• The long-term surface water supplies for the Project could yield less water than is projected, resulting in a permanent curtailment of development in western Placer County.

(RDEIR, pp. 5-95 to 5-99, 6-5 to 6-9; SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.3-39, 4.13-17.)

2. **Scope of Necessary Findings and Considerations for Project Alternatives**

These findings address whether the various alternatives lessen or avoid any of the significant unavoidable impacts associated with the project and consider the feasibility of each alternative. Under CEQA, “‘(f)easible’ means capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors.” (CEQA Guidelines § 15364.) The concept of feasibility permits agency decisionmakers to consider the extent to which an alternative is able to meet some or all of a project’s objectives. In addition, the definition of feasibility encompasses desirability to the extent that an agency’s determination of infeasibility represents a reasonable balancing of competing economic, environmental, social, and technological factors.
As stated in Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, the primary intent of the alternatives evaluation in an EIR is to:

…describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.

(RDEIR, p. 6-1.)

Further, the CEQA Guidelines state:

The discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives capable of eliminating any significant adverse environmental effects or reducing them to a level of insignificance, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly.

(RDEIR, p. 6-1.)

The feasibility of an alternative may be determined based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to, site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, General Plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and site accessibility and control (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(1)).

B. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

1. Alternatives Considered and Eliminated from Further Review

Several alternatives were considered and eliminated from further review in the EIR, as discussed below.

One alternative considered and eliminated from further analysis is the off-site alternative (i.e., development of the proposed Specific Plan on another site that would have fewer impacts on the environment.) (RDEIR, p. 6-9.)

As presented in Section 15126.6(f)(2)(A) of the CEQA Guidelines, the key question and first step in the analysis of alternative project locations is whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by putting the project in another location, and only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR. If the lead agency concludes that no feasible alternative locations exist, it must disclose the reasons for this conclusion, and should include the reasons in the EIR (Section 15126.6(f)(2)(B)). (RDEIR, pp. 6-9 to 6-10.)

In the case of the *Placer Vineyards Specific Plan*, Placer County has concluded that an off-site alternative is not feasible for this proposed project. Concurrently with adoption of the *Placer County General Plan* in 1994, the Placer County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No.
94-238 which amended the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* to include the West Placer Specific Plan area. This amendment, included as Exhibit 1 of the resolution (and included as Appendix D of the Revised Draft EIR), includes standards for development in the Specific Plan area and changes to Community Plan Land Use Diagram, all appropriate exhibits and minor text amendments to reflect the Specific Plan area. Exhibit 1 states that the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area was identified in the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* as an area to be examined as part of the Countywide General Plan Update and that update resulted in this designation for the area. The West Placer Specific Plan area is identical to the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area. It was one of only two areas designated in the 1994 *Placer County General Plan* for large-scale development at increased densities to be considered through the specific plan process in the unincorporated area of Placer County. The other area, originally identified as the Boulder Ridge area, is the approved *Bickford Ranch Specific Plan* area. The Board of Supervisors thus engaged in the decision-making process that identified suitable and feasible sites for large-scale specific plan development in 1994, and made the necessary findings to support that decision. (RDEIR, p. 6-10.)

The *West Roseville Specific Plan* (WRSP), recently approved by the City of Roseville, is not considered a feasible off-site alternative because the City approved the WRSP in addition to County consideration of the *Placer Vineyards Specific Plan*. Placer County does not consider the WRSP to be a substitute for the *Placer Vineyards Specific Plan*. (RDEIR, p. 6-10.)

Two alternatives analyzed in the previous Draft EIR are no longer relevant due to changes in the project and have been eliminated from further consideration as follows: a Redesigned Project Alternative, and an Expanded Phase 1 Alternative. The Redesigned Project Alternative consisted of a 25% reduction in proposed density with the Town Center moved toward the center of the Specific Plan area away from Baseline Road. This alternative is no longer relevant because the Town Center location has been moved on the current proposed plan to reflect the alternative. The Expanded Phase 1 Alternative is no longer relevant, due to the elimination of Phase 1 from the Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-10.)

With regard to water supply, the Specific Plan proposes the use of surface water, as described in Sections 4.3.3 and 4.11 in Chapter Four of the Revised Draft EIR. Although the use of groundwater as an alternative water supply was originally rejected by the County and applicants, at the request of the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA), groundwater is now included in the project description as a back-up or redundant water supply in dry years when surface water supplies are cut back under PCWA’s Water Forum Agreement. (RDEIR, p. 6-10.)

2. **Alternatives Considered in EIR**

This section provides a description of the alternatives to the proposed Specific Plan analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR, and presents specific impacts that differ in significance and/or severity from those associated with the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-11.)

The alternatives evaluated are listed below:
• No Project Alternative, which provides that no additional development will occur on the project site.

• Reduced Density Alternative, which would reduce the amount of development by approximately 50%. This alternative would allow a maximum of 7,500 dwelling units.

• Rural Density Alternative, which consists of development of the Specific Plan area with approximately 500 new single family residential lots with a minimum parcel size of 10 acres. Because there are approximately 150 existing residences in the Specific Plan area, the total number of dwelling units would be 650.

• Blueprint Alternative, which would increase the number of residential dwelling units from 14,132 to 21,631 (a 53% increase).

(RDEIR, p. 6-11.)

Other alternatives that affect limited aspects of the project are also described; however, they are not to be viewed as full “CEQA Alternatives” within the meaning of CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6. They are:

• Alternative Off-Site Utility Corridor, to connect to the alternative long-term water supply. This alternative consists of three PCWA Zone 1 transmission mains: one to connect the Penryn Water Storage Reservoir to the Sunset Water Treatment Plant; one to connect the Sunset Water Treatment Plant to the Roseville intertie; and one to connect the Roseville intertie to Baseline Road.

• Alternative Long-Term Water Supply, which consists of water supplied by PCWA from their Central Valley Project (CVP) American River water through a Folsom Reservoir diversion.

(RDEIR, p. 6-11.)

Each of the alternatives is described in more detail and analyzed below.

**NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE**

1. **Description**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(1) requires every EIR to include a “No Project Alternative.” “The purpose of describing and analyzing a no project alternative is to allow decisionmakers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project.” In general, this alternative should discuss “existing conditions…as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6(e)(2), emphasis added.) (RDEIR, pp. 6-11 to 6-12.)
The manner in which a No Project Alternative shall be composed depends on the nature of the project at issue. “When the project is the revision of an existing land use or regulatory plan, policy or ongoing operation, the ‘no project’ alternative will be the continuation of the existing plan, policy or operation into the future. Typically this is a situation where other projects initiated under the existing plan will continue while the new plan is developed. Thus, the projected impacts of the proposed plan or alternative plans would be compared to the impacts that would occur under the existing plan” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6(e)(3)(A).) (RDEIR, p. 6-12.)

In contrast, “[i]f the project is other than a land use or regulatory plan, for example a development project on identifiable property, the ‘no project’ alternative is the circumstance under which the project does not proceed. Here the discussion would compare the environmental effects of the property remaining in its existing state against environmental effects which would occur if the project is approved. If disapproval of the project under consideration would result in predictable actions by others, such as the proposal of some other project, this ‘no project’ consequence should be discussed. In certain instances, the no project alternative means ‘no build’ wherein the existing environmental setting is maintained. However, where failure to proceed with the project will not result in preservation of existing environmental conditions, the analysis should identify the practical result of the project’s non-approval and not create and analyze a set of artificial assumptions that would be required to preserve the existing physical environment” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6(e)(3)(B).) (RDEIR, p. 6-12.)

The proposed Placer Vineyards Specific Plan does not fit neatly into either of these two categories. Absent the project, “current plans,” defined as the Placer County General Plan and Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan, would continue to call for the creation of a specific plan and the ultimate urban development of the project area. In other words, if the current proposed Specific Plan were denied, another one would have to be prepared and ultimately approved. Absent amendments to the General Plan and Community Plan, the ultimate development pattern for the area would continue to be guided by Exhibit 1 to the Community Plan, adopted with the General Plan in 1994. That exhibit calls for development consistent with the currently proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-12.)

After considerable reflection, the County determined that, because a “No Project Alternative” that assumed future development consistent with Exhibit 1 to the Community Plan would result in impacts substantially the same as those of the project itself, there would be little practical value in evaluating such an alternative. Its impacts would be identical or very similar to those of the proposed project. Such analysis would be duplicative, and would be of little benefit to the public or County decisionmakers. The County has therefore chosen to equate “No Project” with “No Development” or “No Build.” This scenario is unrealistic in the long-term absent General Plan and Community Plan amendments, in the sense that the permanent preservation of status quo conditions is not consistent with either the General Plan or Community Plan as currently written. Still, such a No Project Alternative recognizes the limiting effects of current zoning and lack of infrastructure, and provides a useful benchmark against which to compare the impacts of the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, pp 6-12 to 6-13.)
2. Analysis of the No Project Alternative’s Ability to Reduce Significant Unavoidable Project Impacts

Adoption of the No Project Alternative would lessen most of the project’s significant and unavoidable impacts.

Land Use and Planning Policies

Under the No Project Alternative, existing land uses within the project site would remain the same. As reported in Section 4.1 of the Revised Draft EIR and Table 6-1, these existing uses are predominantly agricultural and rural residential (approximately 150 residences). (RDEIR, p. 6-13.)

Existing zoning for the project site is predominantly F (Farm) with combining designations. The rural residential areas located in the northwest and southwest portions of the Plan area are zoned RA (Residential-Agriculture) with a 10-acre minimum parcel size (see Figure 4.1-4). Under the No Project Alternative, building permits could still be issued for residential and agricultural structures, consistent with existing zoning and minimum parcel sizes. (RDEIR, p. 6-13.)

The Placer County General Plan and Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan both provide for the project site to be developed in accordance with a specific plan that meets certain goals, policies, standards and guidelines. Under the No Project Alternative, development of the project site would not occur as envisioned: a mixed-use community including residential, retail, commercial, and business/professional uses, as well as public facilities such as parks, schools, and open space. (RDEIR, p. 6-13.)

The loss of 4,225 acres of agricultural land, including 58 acres of Prime Farmland, 245 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance, 648 acres of Unique Farmland, and 3,189 acres of Farmland of Local Importance, and cessation of agricultural production within the Specific Plan area, Impacts 4.1-3 and 4.1-14 under the proposed project, would not occur under the No Project Alternative. These have been identified as significant, unavoidable and cumulative impacts of the proposed Specific Plan. Small conversions of agricultural lands to nonagricultural uses might occur due to issuance of building permits (as discussed above), but these conversions would not be of the magnitude that would result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Development of incompatible uses and/or creation of land use conflicts identified as having the potential to result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not occur. Similarly, creation of land use conflicts within the Specific Plan area due to existing power line easements would not occur. (RDEIR, pp. 6-13 to 6-14.)

Impact 4.1-12 suggests the acquisition of existing off-site structures and alternation of existing off-site land uses due to the widening of Baseline/Riego Road and Watt Avenue. No off-site infrastructure areas would result in a permanent or significant change in land use under the No Project Alternative; therefore, potential land use impacts associated with these corridors would not occur. (See RDEIR, p. 6-14.)
Standard 8 (Agricultural Water Supply) of Exhibit 1 of the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* states that “[d]evelopment within the Specific Plan area should assist in the provision of affordable agricultural water to surrounding agricultural lands. Sources of such agricultural water include reclaimed and retained water and newly developed surface water sources.” (RDEIR, p. 4.1-61.) The potential land use impacts resulting from compliance with Standard 8 (Impact 4.1-13) would not occur under the No Project Alternative.

**Visual Quality and Aesthetics**

In Section 4.2 of the Revised Draft EIR, the existing site characteristics are described and photographs are provided. Under the No Project Alternative, changes to the existing visual quality of the project site would be minimal over time. Those currently residing within the Specific Plan area will not experience the urbanized alteration of views outlined in Impact 4.2-2, although views from the project site could change over time if development of surrounding areas occurs. Visual qualities associated with the proposed Specific Plan, as described in Section 4.2, would not develop. (See RDEIR, p. 6-14.)

Under the No Project Alternative, alteration of views of the Specific Plan area from surrounding roadways and properties from its present rural residential/agricultural character to an urbanized character as described in Impact 4.2-1 would not occur. This change is identified in the Revised Draft EIR as a significant, unmitigable impact. Because development would not occur, the type and visual quality of development envisioned by Exhibit 1 of the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* would also not occur. As noted above, alteration of views for those residing within the Specific Plan area could still occur; however, impacts would be limited to residents of existing dwellings and would be substantially more limited. Introduction of new sources of light and glare within the project site would similarly be very limited. (RDEIR, p. 6-14.)

Under the No Project Alternative, alteration of views of the Specific Plan area from surrounding roadways and properties from its present rural residential/agricultural character to an urbanized character as described in Impact 4.2-1 would not occur. This change is identified in the Revised Draft EIR as a significant, unmitigable impact. Because development would not occur, the type and visual quality of development envisioned by Exhibit 1 of the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* would also not occur. As noted above, alteration of views for those residing within the Specific Plan area could still occur; however, impacts would be limited to residents of existing dwellings and would be substantially more limited. Introduction of new sources of light and glare within the project site would similarly be very limited. (RDEIR, p. 6-14.)

**Hydrology, Water Resources and Water Quality**

Section 4.3 of the Revised Draft EIR describe existing conditions on the project site with regard to surface waters, drainage sheds, flooding, groundwater, and water quality, as well as existing conditions related to the proposed Specific Plan water supply. (RDEIR, p. 6-14.)

Under the No Project Alternative, no new water supply (either initial or long-term) would be needed, and impacts related to water supply would not occur. However, if the area is not urbanized, groundwater extraction will continue for farming and limited domestic use. (RDEIR, p. 6-14.)

Increases in runoff quantity associated with urbanization of the Specific Plan area, which could contribute to both on-site and downstream flooding and erosion, would not occur under the No
Project Alternative. Similarly, surface water and groundwater quality impacts associated with construction within the project site and off-site infrastructure areas, and later impacts associated with site development and urban pollutants, would not occur, and the project site would not contribute to cumulatively considerable surface water quality impacts detailed in Impact 4.3.4-8 of the Revised Draft EIR, including increased treated effluent flows to Dry Creek from the DCWWTP. (RDEIR, pp. 6-14 to 6-15.)

Under the No Project Alternative, impacts associated with Specific Plan improvements to drainage swales and channels would not occur, and related water quality impacts would also not occur, including degradation of water quality downstream of the project site. (RDEIR, p. 6-15.)

**Biological Resources**

Section 4.4 of the Revised Draft EIR describes existing biological resources conditions and habitat types within the project site, including special-status species and sensitive habitats. The Specific Plan area was surveyed by Foothill Associates biologists between December 1999 and February 2000, with subsequent field work to delineate jurisdictional waters of the U.S. in the spring of 2000 as well as in the summer of 2001 for an additional 290-acre parcel bounded by Baseline Road on the north, Dyer Lane on the south, 14th Street on the west, and Tanwood Avenue on the east. Waters of the U.S. were mapped through a combination of the aerial photography and field survey, not utilizing Global Positioning System (GPS) standards that are now required to delineate waters of the U.S. by the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). Between 2002 and 2005, individual participating property owners have contracted with ECORP Consulting, Foothill Associates, and/or Gibson and Skordal to conduct on-site wetland delineations according to Corps’ standards. During 2005 and 2006, ECORP Consulting has conducted in-field wetland mapping (using aerial photography) to support impact analysis for the off-site infrastructure. (RDEIR, p. 6-15.)

As described in Section 4.4 (see Impacts 4.4-1, 4.4-2, 4.4-6, 4.4-10 and 4.4-11), development of the Specific Plan area would remove open space and could remove habitat for special-status species, including listed vernal pool invertebrates, Swainson’s hawk, and raptor nesting habitat. It may also result in removal of individual oak trees, and fill wetlands and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S. While a limited loss of habitat, oak trees and wetlands may still occur under the No Project Alternative due to agricultural and rural residential activities, it is anticipated that significant impacts to these resources would be avoided (or mitigation would be required under other permit processes). (RDEIR, p. 6-15.)

Impacts related to off-site infrastructure due to construction of the proposed Specific Plan, Impacts 4.4-15 through 4.4-19, and 4.4-21 through 4.4-29, would not occur. Impacts on biological resources associated with initial and long-term water supply would not occur under the No Project Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-15.)

Cumulative impacts related to the ongoing loss of natural undisturbed open space in the region, increased human intrusion and activity levels in proximity to habitat areas, and removal of potential habitat for federally- and State-listed and other special-status species, identified as Impact 4.4-59, a significant and unavoidable impact, would probably still occur due to urban
development in the surrounding area. However, under the No Project Alternative, the proposed Specific Plan would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to that impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-15.)

**Geology and Soils**

Section 4.5 of the Revised Draft EIR provides information on existing topography, regional and local geology, seismicity, mineral resources, other geologic hazards and soils for the project site. (RDEIR, p. 6-16.)

Section 4.5 of the Revised Draft EIR identifies a potentially significant impact related to ground shaking in the Specific Plan area, including damage to structures resulting from strong earthquakes generated along faults in the region. Under the No Project Alternative, damage to existing structures on the project site could still occur due to ground shaking; however, only very limited numbers of new structures and residents would be exposed to such impacts. Because of current Uniform Building Code requirements, new structures are typically less subject to earthquake damage. (RDEIR, p. 6-16.)

Similarly, soil-related impacts (e.g., ground instability, erosion, expansive soils, foundation instability) related to construction activities and new construction would be very limited under the No Project Alternative. Impacts related to off-site infrastructure construction would not occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-16.)

**Archaeological/Paleontological Resources**

Existing archaeological/paleontological conditions on the project site and within off-site infrastructure areas are identified in Section 4.6 of the Revised Draft EIR. The Specific Plan area and off-site infrastructure areas were the subject of a study that focused on defining the types of historical resources present through a records search, archival (map) research, field visits to potential historic building sites, and archaeological field reconnaissance. The Revised Draft EIR also identifies cultural resources associated with both the initial and long-term water supply. A preliminary paleontological survey was conducted at a reconnaissance level within the Specific Plan and off-site infrastructure areas. No paleontological resources were identified. (RDEIR, p. 6-16.)

Section 4.6 of the Revised Draft EIR identifies six known prehistoric archaeological sites, one historic archaeological site and two extant houses that are considered eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources within the Specific Plan area, and similar resources within off-site infrastructure areas. Additional unknown/undiscovered cultural and/or paleontological resources may exist within the project site and off-site infrastructure areas. Under the No Project Alternative, most potential impacts identified in Section 4.6, i.e., Impacts 4.6-1, 4.6-2, 4.6-14 and 4.6-19, would be avoided or would not occur. However, some impacts, primarily those related to the need to widen existing streets (Impacts 4.6-5 and 4.6-6), could occur as a result of other development projects in the study area. In addition, limited impacts could occur within the project site due to agricultural activities and individual remodeling or demolition of existing
residences and other structures. Impacts on cultural resources related to the initial and long-term water supply described in Impacts 4.6-7, 4.6-8 and 4.6-10, would not occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-16.)

Transportation and Circulation

Section 4.7 of the Revised Draft EIR describes existing roadway conditions in the vicinity of the Specific Plan area, including the service levels of affected roads and intersections in Placer County, the City of Roseville, Sacramento County and Sutter County. Existing transit service and bicycle facilities are also described. (RDEIR, pp. 6-16 to 6-17.)

Under the No Project Alternative, no additional traffic would originate in the Specific Plan area, so there would not be increases in congestion on local roadways or highways, or at existing intersections (Impacts 4.7-2 through 4.7-9). Similarly, there would be no increase in demand for transit services (Impact 4.7-10) or bicycle facilities (Impact 4.7-11). No construction would occur, so there would not be an increase in construction traffic (Impact 4.7-1). Because there would be no increase in traffic or transit demand, no mitigation measures would be required. Consequently, there would be no impacts due to redistribution of traffic or construction of mitigation (Impacts 4.7-21 and 4.7-22). (RDEIR, p. 6-17.)

Future No Project conditions are also characterized in Section 4.7 and Appendix I of the Revised Draft EIR. Initial Phase (2015) No Project roadway and land use assumptions are described in Appendix I. Cumulative (2025) No Project roadway and land use assumptions are described on Table 4.7-15 of the Revised Draft EIR. Roadway and intersection operations and volumes are shown in Tables 4.7-5 through 4.7-13 and Figures 4.7-3, 4.7-6, and 4.7-7. Because no new traffic would be generated by the Specific Plan area under the No Project Alternative, there would be no impacts under future conditions (Impacts 4.7-12 through 4.7-20). (RDEIR, p. 6-17.)

Air Quality

Existing climate and air quality within the project site and the region are described in Section 4.8 of the Revised Draft EIR. Section 4.8 includes the emissions inventory for Reactive Organic Gases (ROG), Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx), Carbon Monoxide (CO), and Respirable Particulate Matter (PM10) within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin portion of Placer, Sutter and Sacramento counties for the period 2002 through 2004, as well as recorded exceedances of criteria pollutant standards. (RDEIR, p. 6-17.)

Section 4.8 of the Revised Draft EIR identifies and, to the extent possible, quantifies air quality impacts of the proposed Specific Plan related to construction and future operations within the Specific Plan area and off-site infrastructure areas. Operations include both mobile and stationary source air pollutants. Significant and unavoidable air quality impacts include exhaust and fugitive dust emissions generated by construction; activities in the Specific Plan area, such as excavation and grading, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth; exhaust and fugitive dust emissions generated by construction activities in off-site infrastructure areas, such as excavation and grading, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth; activity within the Specific Plan area that generates both mobile and stationary source air pollutants, increasing total air pollution emissions; and increased volumes of
wastewater requiring treatment that could cause odors and air quality concerns related to wastewater treatment plant operations. (See Impacts 4.8-1 through 4.8-3, and 4.8-6.) (RDEIR, p. 6-17.)

Under the No Project Alternative, new air quality impacts associated with construction and operation of Specific Plan and off-site infrastructure improvements would not occur. Existing emissions associated with existing rural residential uses and agricultural operations would continue, but would not be expected to increase. Western Placer County, which includes the project site, currently exceeds State and federal standards for ozone and State standards for particulate matter without the additional development proposed in the Specific Plan. (RDEIR, pp. 6-16 to 6-17.)

Cumulative impacts related to regional air quality, identified as a significant impact (Impact 4.8-7), would probably still occur due to urban development in the surrounding area and the existing ambient air quality. However, under the No Project Alternative, the proposed Specific Plan would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to that impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-18.)

**Noise**

Background noise level measurements were conducted within and adjacent to the project site and are reported as existing conditions in Section 4.9 of the Revised Draft EIR. Existing traffic noise levels were calculated and are also presented in Section 4.9. (RDEIR, p. 6-18.)

Under the No Project Alternative, increased noise levels associated with commercial/business park uses and construction-related activities, including construction noise associated with off-site infrastructure, would not occur. Increased on-site and off-site noise levels due to traffic generated by Specific Plan development, Impact 4.9-5, would not occur, nor would unavoidable significant off-site traffic noise impacts. (RDEIR, p. 6-18.)

Cumulative impacts related to traffic noise levels described in Impact 4.9-7 could still occur due to urban development in the surrounding area. However, under the No Project Alternative, the proposed Specific Plan would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to that impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-18.)

**Population, Employment and Housing**

Section 4.10 of the Revised Draft EIR describes the existing population, employment and housing levels in Placer County and the Sacramento metropolitan region. With regard to population, Table 6-2 presents the number of dwelling units that would be developed under the Specific Plan, and estimates the additional population associated with that development. (RDEIR, p. 6-18.)

Buildout of the proposed Specific Plan could promote an imbalance of jobs and housing in both the regional and project-level context as outlined in Impact 4.10-3. However, under the No Project Alternative, no housing or jobs would be provided and the project would not contribute
to this effect. An imbalance, however, may still occur due to other activity in the area. (RDEIR, pp. 6-18 to 6-19.)

**Public Services/Infrastructure**

Existing levels of public services and infrastructure and that needed to serve the proposed Specific Plan area are identified in Section 4.11 of the Revised Draft EIR, including: sanitary sewer/wastewater, water supply, recycled water, solid waste disposal, electrical/natural gas service, telecommunications, cable television, fire protection, police protection, library services, drainage, schools, parks and recreation facilities, and general County facilities and services. (RDEIR, p. 6-19.)

Under the No Project Alternative, existing fire protection services would not change. New fire stations, equipment and personnel would not be needed. Additional fire hazards in large open space/natural areas and within corridors would not be created. Impacts on emergency response time would not occur. Increased demand for police protection services would not occur, and a new Sheriff’s substation, equipment and patrol vehicles would not be needed. Public safety impacts and impacts on emergency response time associated with the Specific Plan would not occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-19.)

Under the No Project Alternative, increased enrollment in schools and need for new/expanded school facilities would not occur. The proposed change in school district boundaries would not be pursued. (RDEIR, p. 6-19.)

Estimated increases in solid waste and impacts on the County Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and landfill related to residential and commercial development (Impact 4.11.5-4) would not occur under the No Project Alternative. Cumulative impacts of waste disposal on the MRF and landfill (Impact 4.11.5-4) could still occur due to urban development in the surrounding area. However, under the No Project Alternative, the proposed Specific Plan would have no potentially cumulatively considerable contribution to that impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-19.)

Under the No Project Alternative, no new wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system will be needed to serve the project site. No construction impacts will occur, either on-site or off-site. The project site would not contribute to cumulative impacts on the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD), the Dry Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (DCWWTP), and discharge to Dry Creek and/or the Sacramento River, which have been identified as significant unavoidable in Impact 4.11.6-6. Potential water quality impacts from construction and operation of the recycled water distribution system would not occur. The potential shortfall of recycled water supply to recycled water demand (Impact 4.11.8-2) also would not occur under the No Project Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-19.)

A new water supply to serve the project site would not be needed under the No Project Alternative. No new water treatment, conveyance and distribution facilities would need to be constructed. The project site would not contribute to the cumulative demand for potable water. However, without development of the Specific Plan, there will be no action to facilitate development of a surface water supply for agriculture, which is a policy of the Placer County
General Plan and the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan. If the area is not urbanized, groundwater extraction will continue for residential and agricultural purposes. (RDEIR, p. 6-19.)

Under the No Project Alternative, new drainage facilities would not be constructed to serve the project site, and no impacts would occur. Cumulative impacts on existing drainage systems could still occur due to upstream urban development. However, under the No Project Alternative, the proposed project site would not contribute to cumulative drainage impacts within the Dry Creek watershed. (RDEIR, p. 6-20.)

New electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications/cable television systems would not be needed to serve the project site under the No Project Alternative. Development that could affect existing facilities and systems would not occur. Cumulative impacts on electrical demand and telecommunications systems could still occur due to urban development in the surrounding area. However, under the No Project Alternative, the proposed Specific Plan would not contribute to that impact and no electrical substation would be built within the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 6-20.)

Under the No Project Alternative, new demand for library services and need for new library facilities would not occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-20.)

Section 4.11.13 of the Revised Draft EIR describes regional parks in the vicinity of the project site and new park facilities that would be created as part of the Specific Plan. Recreational facilities that are associated with the proposed initial and long-term water supply are also addressed. Under the No Project Alternative, no new parks and recreational facilities would be created. Impacts on regional parks and recreational programs in neighboring jurisdictions would not occur. However, areas proposed to be maintained as open space available for public use would remain in private ownership. Impacts on recreational facilities related to the proposed Specific Plan water supply would not occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-20.)

Under the No Project Alternative, no new demand for general County facilities and services would occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-20.)

Hazards

Section 4.12 of the Revised Draft EIR evaluates the potential for soil or groundwater contamination on the project site as a result of current or past land uses, and the potential for impacts from hazardous substances and/or waste contamination as a result of Specific Plan development. Phase I and Phase I Supplemental and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments were prepared for the Specific Plan area. The Phase I and Phase II ESAs, and subsequent work by the Placer County Environmental Health Services Division have identified areas where soil contamination has occurred, areas that require additional study, and additional hazards such as those associated with historic orchard use. (RDEIR, p. 6-20.)

Under the No Project Alternative, development that would require remediation of contaminated sites would not occur. However, if no development occurs, some potentially contaminated sites may not be remediated and remain in a hazardous condition. Unused wells and septic systems
which pose safety hazards may not be abandoned. Hazards related to commercial use of potentially hazardous materials would not occur under the No Project Alternative. Potential asbestos hazards related to demolition of older structures and hazards related to mosquitoes and other vectors could still occur, but the number of people who would potentially be exposed to these hazards would be small in comparison to the Specific Plan. The PG&E substation would not be constructed and few people would have the potential to be exposed to EMF from the existing power lines. (RDEIR, pp. 6-20 to 6-21.)

3. Feasibility of the No Project Alternative

As described earlier in these findings, the concept of “feasibility” encompasses the question of whether a particular alternative or mitigation measure promotes the underlying goals and objectives of a project. (City of Del Mar v. City of San Diego (1982) 133 Cal.App.3d 410, 417.) “‘[F]easibility’ under CEQA encompasses ‘desirability’ to the extent that desirability is based on a reasonable balancing of the relevant economic, environmental, social, and technological factors.” (Ibid.; see also Sequoyah Hills Homeowners Assn. v. City of Oakland (1993) 23 Cal.App.4th 704, 715.)

Under the No Project Alternative, the Specific Plan will not be approved, and the area will be developed under its existing zoning classification. Despite the fact that most, if not all, of the significant impacts associated with implementation of the project would be reduced in significance under this Alternative, the implementation of the No Project Alternative would fail to achieve any of the project objectives. The project is designed to be a self-sufficient community promoting a mixed use, compact development design linked to regional transportation systems. The Specific Plan also promotes a pedestrian friendly environment, supports a diversity of housing choices to accommodate all income levels, and provides a range of transportation choices (Draft Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, March 2006, page ii-1.) In sum, the No Project Alternative’s desirability is not on balance with the project in terms of its economic, environmental, social and technological elements. The project is the more desirable choice for the community and the region.

Further, the Board determines that the No Project Alternative is infeasible because, among other reasons, it is inconsistent with Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan. Concurrently with adoption of the Placer County General Plan in 1994, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 94-238 which amended the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan to include the West Placer Specific Plan area. This amendment, included as Exhibit 1 of the resolution (and included as Appendix D of the RDEIR) includes standards for development in the Specific Plan area.

Exhibit 1 states that the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area was identified in the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan as an area to be examined as part of the Countywide General Plan Update and that update resulted in this designation for the area. The West Placer Specific Plan area is identical to the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area. It was one of only two areas designated in the 1994 Placer County General Plan for large-scale development at increased densities to be considered through the specific plan process in the unincorporated area of Placer County. The Board of Supervisors engaged in the decision-making process that
identified suitable and feasible sites for large-scale specific plan development in 1994, and made the necessary findings to support that decision.

The Board further determines that the No Project Alternative is impractical and unrealistic in the long-term absent General Plan and Community Plan amendments, in the sense that the permanent preservation of status quo conditions is not consistent with either the General Plan or Community Plan as currently written.

The Board finds the No Project Alternative to be infeasible for the above reasons and rejects it as a viable alternative to the project.

**REDUCED DENSITY ALTERNATIVE (50% DENSITY REDUCTION))**

1. **Description**

This alternative consists of an approximate 50% reduction in proposed residential density and a substantial reduction (almost 40%) in nonresidential development. Table 6-3 in the Revised Draft EIR shows the density ranges, acreages, and dwelling units in this alternative. A maximum of 7,500 dwelling units is proposed. The amount of commercial square footage is reduced to 2,201,087, and the number of jobs decreases to 5,595. The number of schools would be reduced from nine to five (three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school). Figure 6-1 of the Revised Draft EIR shows conceptually how this might occur. The map was prepared by reducing proposed residential density by 50% and adding a Rural Density Residential category (one unit for two to five acres). The Reduced Density Alternative is intended to conserve natural resources and open space to a greater extent than the proposed project. In addition to larger lot sizes, open space is increased by 82%, from 714 acres to 1,310 acres, with much of the increase coming from the expansion of currently proposed open space areas (see Figure 3-12 for comparison). Although some quantification is available, generally this alternative is assessed qualitatively. (RDEIR, p. 6-21.)

2. **Analysis of the Reduced Density Alternative’s Ability to Reduce Significant Unavoidable Project Impacts**

Adoption of the Reduced Density Alternative would reduce many of the project’s significant and unavoidable impacts.

**Land Use and Planning Policies**

Under the Reduced Density Alternative (50% Density Reduction), the Very Low- and Low-Density Residential category would predominate within the Specific Plan area. Exhibit 1 of the *Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan* provides for up to two mixed pedestrian-oriented villages or towns and a larger town center. The Town Center in the 50% Reduced Density Alternative is similar to the one proposed in the Specific Plan, but the 50% Reduced Density Alternative does not specifically provide for mixed pedestrian-oriented villages. Reduced residential densities reduce the potential for effective transit service, bicycle and pedestrian movement, and continue to emphasize automobile use. (RDEIR, p. 6-21.)
Loss of Farmland and loss of all active agricultural production within the Specific Plan area (Impacts 4.1-3 and 4.1-14) would probably still occur, although it could be argued that some small “hobby” farms could survive in the Very Low-Density Residential area. This has been identified as a significant, unavoidable and cumulative impact of the proposed Specific Plan and would remain significant and unavoidable under the Reduced Density Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-22.)

Development of incompatible land uses and/or creation of land use conflicts identified as having the potential to result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could still occur. However, it is expected that impacts would be reduced because residential densities are lower and Very Low-Density Residential is used as a buffer. Further, the acreage designated for Commercial and Business Park use is reduced. Similarly, creation of land use conflicts within the Specific Plan area due to existing power line easements would be reduced because of lower residential densities in areas crossed by the easements. (RDEIR, p. 6-22.)

Conflicts with principles contained in the SACOG’s Preferred Blueprint Scenario (Blueprint Plan, Impact 4.1-8) would still occur under this alternative and would, in fact, be increased due to the lower densities that would encouraged by the 50% reduction in development potential. Off-site infrastructure would still be developed, and potential land use impacts associated with these improvements would be the same as the Specific Plan. (See Impacts 4.1-12 and 4.1-13.) (RDEIR, p. 6-22.)

**Visual Quality and Aesthetics**

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, alteration of views of the Specific Plan area from surrounding roadways and properties from its present rural residential/agricultural character to an urbanized character would still occur, although the resulting visual character would be somewhat different than the proposed Specific Plan. Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, views of the project site from Baseline Road would reveal a somewhat lower intensity of development (lower residential densities and less Business Park/Commercial development). Views from Walerga Road would reveal Rural Residential uses. Views from Pleasant Grove Road would be essentially the same. There is no road that forms the southerly Specific Plan area boundary; however, views from Sacramento County and Watt Avenue would reveal Rural Residential uses. A greater amount of open space would be retained and would be visible from Baseline Road, Watt Avenue and Walerga Road; however, the retained open space would exist in an altered condition within an urban, albeit less intensely developed, setting. (RDEIR, p. 6-22.)

Section 4.2 of the Revised Draft EIR concludes that alteration of views of the Specific Plan area will be significant and unmitigable (Impact 4.2-1). This conclusion would not change. Even though views from some vantage points would be of less intense development, the overall landscape would still change from rural open space to a more urbanized setting. (RDEIR, p. 6-22.)

Alteration of views for those residing within the Specific Plan area would still occur (Impact 4.2-2); however, because there would be approximately half the number of residents and lower
residential densities, those impacts would be reduced. Views from existing residences in the Riego area would change from urban density housing and other urban uses under the proposed Specific Plan to views of lower density residential development, similar to the existing development in the Riego area. (RDEIR, p. 6-22.)

Impacts of introduction of new sources of light and glare within the Specific Plan area would be reduced because of the lower residential densities and the reduction in Business Park, Office and Commercial uses. However, because the Specific Plan area is essentially devoid of light at the present time, this change will still be substantial.

Larger amounts of open space would be retained under his alternative, due to the greater amount of land set aside for this purpose and lower densities. There is also the likelihood that considerable amounts of land would remain unused on the larger residential lots. (RDEIR, p. 6-23.)

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, visual impacts associated with off-site infrastructure would still occur. Cumulative impacts related to alterations of views and light and glare, identified under Impacts 4.2-9 and 4.2-10 as significant and unmitigable, would still occur, although they would be less severe. (RDEIR, p. 6-23.)

**Hydrology, Water Resources and Water Quality**

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, a new water supply (both initial and long-term), including a backup groundwater system, would still be needed, although only about half the supply estimated to serve the proposed Specific Plan area would be required. This could reduce competition for the 10 MGD in pipeline capacity available to PCWA through the City of Roseville’s distribution system; however, the demand created by the 50% Reduced Density Alternative and other projects could still exceed 10 MGD. (RDEIR, p. 6-23.)

Increases in runoff quantity associated with urbanization of the Specific Plan area, which could contribute to both on-site and downstream flooding and erosion, could still occur under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, but at approximately half the volumes estimated for the proposed Specific Plan. Similarly, surface water and groundwater quality impacts associated with construction within the Specific Plan area (Impact 4.3.4-8) and off-site infrastructure areas, and later impacts associated with Specific Plan area development and urban pollutants, could still occur, but at proportionally reduced rates. The contribution of the project to cumulatively considerable surface water quality impacts would be reduced. (RDEIR, p. 6-23.)

It is assumed that the storm water drainage system would be similar to the Specific Plan (though reduced in overall size and capacity), with the use of culverts and altered channels. Runoff would also result in increased erosion, short-term construction water quality impacts, and significant, unavoidable long-term operational water quality impacts. However, in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan, impacts would be reduced. Cumulative impacts associated with increased runoff could still occur, and impacts associated with Specific Plan improvements to drainage swales and channels would still occur, but the impacts would be reduced. Improvements necessary to attenuate flows at Steelhead Creek may not be necessary under this
alternative. Increased flows of treated effluent to Dry Creek from the DCWWTP would be reduced by approximately 50% under this alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-23.)

**Biological Resources**

As described in Section 4.4 of the Revised Draft EIR (see Impacts 4.4-1, 4.4-2, and 4.4-6), development of the Specific Plan area may remove habitat for special-status species, including listed vernal pool invertebrates, burrowing owl, Swainson’s hawk, and raptor nesting habitat. It may also result in removal of individual oak trees, and fill wetlands and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S. (See Impacts 4.4-10 and 4.4-11.) The reduced densities and development intensities under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative would suggest that impacts might be reduced, and greater opportunities will exist to avoid resources such as wetlands and oak trees. This alternative would result in conversion of up to 2,924 acres of biological habitat, compared to 3,520 acres under the proposed project. It should be noted that development of rural residential uses does not necessarily protect biological resources, as residents may choose to disturb all or most of their parcels for landscaping, crops and other accessory uses. (RDEIR, p. 6-24.)

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, impacts within off-site infrastructure areas due to construction would still occur. (See Impacts 4.4-15 through 4.4-19, and 4.4-21 through 4.4-29.) Impacts on biological resources associated with the initial and long-term water supply would still occur, although impacts would be reduced proportionally to the reduced water demand. Under this alternative, a comparable amount of open space would be required for mitigation purposes. However, this would be less feasible due to the 50% reduction in density. (RDEIR, p. 6-24.)

Cumulative impacts related to the ongoing loss of natural undisturbed open space in the region, increased human intrusion and activity levels in proximity to habitat areas, and removal of potential habitat for federally- and State-listed and other special-status species, identified as Impact 4.4-59, a significant and unavoidable impact, would still occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-24.)

**Geology and Soils**

Section 4.5 of the Revised Draft EIR identifies a potentially significant impact related to ground shaking in the Specific Plan area, including damage to structures resulting from strong earthquakes generated along faults in the region. Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, damage to existing and new structures in the Specific Plan area could still occur due to ground shaking; however, the number of structures and residents exposed to such impacts would be proportionally reduced in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-24.)

Similarly, soil-related impacts (e.g., ground instability, erosion, expansive soils, foundation instability) related to construction activities and new construction would be reduced in comparison to the Specific Plan. Impacts related to construction within off-site infrastructure areas would still occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-24.)
Archaeological/Paleontological Resources

Existing archaeological/paleontological conditions on the project site and within off-site infrastructure areas are identified in Section 4.6 of the Revised Draft EIR. The Specific Plan area and off-site infrastructure areas were the subject of a study that focused on defining the types of historical resources present through a records search, archival (map) research, field visits to potential historic building sites, and archaeological field reconnaissance. The Revised Draft EIR also identifies cultural resources associated with both the initial and long-term water supply. A preliminary paleontological survey was conducted at a reconnaissance level within the Specific Plan and off-site infrastructure areas. No paleontological resources were identified. (RDEIR, pp. 6-24 to 6-25.)

Section 4.6 of the Revised Draft EIR identifies six known prehistoric archaeological sites, one historic archaeological site and two extant houses that are considered eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources within the Specific Plan area, and similar resources within off-site infrastructure areas. Additional unknown/undiscovered cultural and/or paleontological resources may exist within the project site and off-site infrastructure areas. (RDEIR, p. 6-25.)

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, most potential impacts identified in Section 4.6 of the Revised Draft EIR could still occur, even though densities will be lower and development would be less intense. (See Impacts 4.6-1, 4.6-2, 4.6-5 through 4.6-8, 4.6-10, 4.6-14, and 4.6-19.) However, the lower densities would provide greater opportunities for resources to be avoided. Impacts on cultural resources related to the initial and long-term water supply would still occur, but would be reduced proportionally in comparison to the Specific Plan, due primarily to the increase in open space. (RDEIR, p. 6-25.)

Transportation and Circulation

Table 6-4 in the Revised Draft EIR summarizes an estimated trip generation of the 50% Reduced Density Alternative. The trip generation rates used in this analysis reflect those contained in the Placer County Travel Demand Model. It was estimated that this alternative would generate about 118,000 vehicle trips on an average weekday at buildout. The proposed Specific Plan would generate about 233,000 daily vehicle trips. (RDEIR, p. 6-25.)

A significant portion of the vehicle trips shown in Table 6-4, however, would remain within the Specific Plan area (such as travel between the residential development and the retail, office and school uses). Summing up all the trips generated by the land uses within the Specific Plan area will double-count those trips that remain within the Specific Plan area. The Placer County Travel Demand Model used to evaluate the Specific Plan alternatives avoids the double-counting of these trips. (RDEIR, p. 6-25.)

Like the proposed Specific Plan, trips generated by the 50% Reduced Density Alternative would increase traffic volumes on most roadways in the vicinity of the project site with much of this traffic increase occurring on Baseline Road, Watt Avenue, Walerga Road, Fiddyment Road and Riego Road. Section 4.7 of the Revised Draft EIR shows the level of traffic increases that would result from buildout of Specific Plan over Existing Plus Project and Cumulative Plus Project.
conditions. (Impacts 4.7-4 through 4.7-6, 4.7-8, 4.7-9, 4.7-12 through 4.7-19, 4.7-21, and 4.7-22.) In general, the traffic increases on each roadway segment and intersection under 50% Reduced Density Alternative would likely be about 40% to 60% of the increases resulting from buildout of the Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-26.)

If the roadway improvements that are part of the proposed Specific Plan, such as the widening of Baseline Road to six lanes, are included with the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, there will likely be fewer significant traffic impacts from the 50% Reduced Density Alternative than would result from buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. However, a reduction in density would make the potential for transit service to be extended to the area less feasible. (RDEIR, p. 6-26.)

With less density, use of bicycles and pedestrian trails as a means of traveling to and from schools, shopping and other congregating points is less feasible. Although bicycle and pedestrian trails could still be constructed, usage would be reduced. (RDEIR, p. 6-26.)

**Air Quality**

Section 4.8 of the Revised Draft EIR identifies and, to the extent possible, quantifies air quality impacts of the proposed Specific Plan related to construction and future operations within the Specific Plan area and off-site infrastructure areas. (See Impacts 4.8-1 through 4.8-3 and 4.8-6.) Operations include both mobile and stationary source air pollutants. All of the impacts are considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-26.)

Air quality impacts associated with construction and operation of improvements under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative are presented in Table 6-5 of the Revised Draft EIR. Under this alternative, emissions in all land use categories would be reduced. However, emissions would still exceed standards of significance, and impacts would remain significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-26.)

Cumulative impacts related to regional air quality, identified as significant under Impact 4.8-7, would still occur due to urban development in the Specific Plan area and the surrounding area, and the existing ambient air quality. (RDEIR, p. 6-27.)

**Noise**

Background noise level measurements were conducted within and adjacent to the project site and are reported as existing conditions in Section 4.9 of the Revised Draft EIR. Existing traffic noise levels were calculated and are also presented in Section 4.9. (RDEIR, p. 6-27.)

Increased noise levels associated with commercial/business park uses and construction-related activities would still occur, including construction noise associated with off-site infrastructure areas (Impact 4.9-5), but impacts would be reduced because of reduced construction levels and larger residential lot sizes. Cumulative impacts related to off-site traffic noise levels, identified as a significant unavoidable impact (Impact 4.9-7), would still occur due to urban development of the Specific Plan area and surrounding areas. (RDEIR, p. 6-27.)
Population, Employment and Housing

Utilizing the same household assumptions that are used for the project, estimated population associated with the reduced level of residential development is approximately 18,775 persons, compared to 34,762 persons under the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-28.)

Section 4.10 of the Revised Draft EIR provides information on employment and housing for the greater Sacramento region and Placer County, and jobs/housing balance. It is estimated that at full buildout of the Specific Plan, the ratio of jobs to housing will be approximately 0.54 per dwelling unit (7,594 jobs to 14,132 dwelling units). Section 4.10 concludes that buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would promote an imbalance of jobs and housing in the short-term, and that this is significant and unavoidable (see Impact 4.10-3). Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, the jobs/housing balance would increase to 0.75 (5,595 jobs to 7,500 dwelling units) compared to the proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 6-28.)

Public Services/Infrastructure

Public services and infrastructure needed to serve the proposed Specific Plan area are identified in Section 4.11 of the Revised Draft EIR, including sanitary sewer/wastewater, water supply, recycled water, solid waste disposal, electrical/natural gas service, telecommunications, cable television, fire protection, police protection, library services, drainage services, schools, parks and recreation facilities, and general County facilities and services. (RDEIR, p. 6-28.)

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, fire protection services would need to be increased, but at reduced levels. New fire stations, equipment and personnel would still be needed, but at reduced levels. It is estimated in Section 4.11.2 that at full buildout, at least two new fully equipped fire stations will be needed to serve the Specific Plan area. Specific staffing and equipment needs are also discussed in Section 4.11.2. With a 50% reduction in density, that number may be reduced to one fire station; however, because the distances are not reduced, two fire stations may still be required to provide an adequate response time. With a reduced level of development contributing fees for capital facilities, fees might need to be increased to generate adequate revenues. (RDEIR, p. 6-28.)

Other impacts identified in Section 4.11.2 would still occur, including the potential for additional fire hazards in large open space/natural areas. The potential may be greater under this alternative for wildland fire hazards due to the potential abundance of open land in relation to density and intensity of use. Impacts on emergency response time could still occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-28.)

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, increased demand for police protection services would still occur, although demand would be reduced proportionally. Public safety impacts and impacts on emergency response time associated with the Specific Plan would still occur. It is estimated in Section 4.11.3 that at full buildout, one new Sheriff’s substation will be needed to serve the Specific Plan area. Staffing and equipment needs are also identified in Section 4.11.3. Although the number of businesses and residences served will be reduced under this alternative, the distance from the nearest existing Sheriff’s substation in Loomis would result in an inadequate response time, thus still requiring a substation to serve the Specific Plan area. With a
reduced level of development contributing fees for capital facilities, fees might need to be increased to generate adequate revenues. (RDEIR, pp. 6-28 to 6-29.)

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, a new wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system will still be needed to serve the Specific Plan area, and construction impacts will still occur. The Specific Plan area would contribute to cumulative impacts on SCRSD and/or the DCWWTP, and would discharge to Dry Creek and/or the Sacramento River (see Impact 4.11.6-6). Sacramento River discharges have been identified as a potentially significant unavoidable impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-29.)

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, increased enrollment in schools and need for new/expanded school facilities would still occur, although at proportionally lower levels. The proposed Specific Plan provides for development of six elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school located throughout the Specific Plan area. The 50% Reduced Density Alternative would likely require three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. It is assumed that the proposed change in school district boundaries would still be pursued. (RDEIR, p. 6-29.)

Impacts 4.11.5-1 and 4.11.5-4 concerning the County MRF and landfill would be reduced proportionally in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan. Cumulative impacts of waste disposal on the MRF and landfill would still occur, although at reduced levels. (RDEIR, p. 6-29.)

A new initial and long-term water supply to serve the Specific Plan area would still be needed under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, including construction of new water treatment, conveyance and distribution facilities and a backup groundwater supply system. The Specific Plan area will contribute to the cumulative demand for potable surface water and groundwater, although at a reduced rate under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-29.)

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, new drainage facilities would have to be constructed to serve the Specific Plan area. Cumulative impacts on existing drainage systems would still occur due to urban development. However, under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, the Specific Plan area would contribute proportionally less to degradation of surface water quality downstream of the Specific Plan area. Volumetric impacts on Dry Creek would be reduced and flow attenuation needs at Steelhead Creek would be reduced. (RDEIR, p. 6-29.)

New electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications/cable television systems would still be needed to serve the Specific Plan area under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative. Development that could affect existing facilities and systems would still occur. Cumulative impacts on electrical demand and telecommunications systems would still occur, but the contribution of the Specific Plan area would be proportionally reduced in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-29.)

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, new demand for library services and need for a new library would still occur, although demand would be reduced proportionally in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan. It is estimated in Section 4.11.12 that at full buildout, a permanent
13,905 square-foot community library facility will be needed to serve the Specific Plan area. With a 50% reduction in density, the size of the facility may be reduced; however, in order to serve the Specific Plan area, a facility will still be needed to provide service locally and avoid impacts on libraries in other jurisdictions. (RDEIR, pp. 6-29 to 6-30.)

Section 4.11.12 describes regional parks in the vicinity of the Specific Plan area and new park facilities that would be created as part of the Specific Plan. Recreational facilities that are associated with the proposed initial and long-term water supply are also addressed. Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, fewer parks and recreational facilities would be required and acreage devoted to parks could be reduced under County standards. Impacts on regional parks and recreational programs in neighboring jurisdictions may still occur. Impacts on recreational facilities related to the proposed Specific Plan water supply will still occur, although reduced proportionally in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan. With a reduced level of development contributing park fees, fees might need to be increased to generate adequate revenues. (RDEIR, p. 6-30.)

Hazards

Section 4.12 of the Revised Draft EIR evaluates the potential for soil or groundwater contamination in the Specific Plan area as a result of current or past land uses, and the potential for impacts from hazardous substances and/or waste contamination as a result of Specific Plan development. A Phase I and Phase I Supplemental and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments were prepared for the Specific Plan area. The Phase I and Phase II ESAs, and subsequent work by the Placer County Environmental Health Services Division have identified areas where soil contamination has occurred, areas that require additional study, and additional hazards such as those associated with historic orchard use. (RDEIR, p. 6-30.)

Under the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, development of the Specific Plan area would require remediation of contaminated sites and abandonment of unused wells and septic systems. Hazards related to commercial use of potentially hazardous materials could still occur under this alternative, but impacts would be reduced because fewer commercial and business park uses would be developed. Potential asbestos hazards related to demolition of older structures and hazards related to mosquitoes and other vectors could still occur, but the number of people who would potentially be exposed to these hazards would be proportionally reduced. Similarly, fewer people would potentially be exposed to EMF from existing power lines and it is less likely a PG&E substation would be required. (RDEIR, p. 6-30.)

### 3. Feasibility of the Reduced Density Alternative

CEQA requires that “public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen the significant environmental effects of such projects.” (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002, emphasis added.)

The Reduced Density Alternative would create fewer land use conflicts and would reduce the density of development, thereby reducing impacts. Agricultural and open space land would still
be converted to non-agricultural uses, albeit at lesser proportions. Infrastructure acquisition and construction would still occur under the Reduced Density Alternative, but the impacts from such activities would be lessened. (See RDEIR, pp. 6-21 to 6-22.)

Impacts from the alteration of views would not change under the Reduced Density Alternative. The urbanization of the Specific Plan area, although reduced by 50%, would still impact the project specific and cumulative views from surrounding roadways and properties. Additionally the introduction of new sources of light and glare would still be significant and unmitigable impacts, although they would be less severe than the full buildout of the proposed project. (See RDEIR, pp. 6-22 to 6-23.)

A stormwater drainage system for the Reduced Density Alternative would be similar to the proposed project. Increased flows of treated effluent to Dry Creek from the DCWWTP would be reduced by approximately 50% under this alternative. Although the cumulative affect of water quality due to urban pollutants would be reduced under this Alternative, the impact would still be significant and unavoidable. Additionally, impacts on archaeological and paleontological resources related to the initial and long-term water supply would still occur. Those impacts would be reduced proportionally, but not eliminated, in comparison to the Specific Plan, due primarily to the increase in open space. (See RDEIR, pp. 6-23, 6-25.)

The decrease in densities and development intensities under the Reduced Density Alternative would suggest that biological resources impacts might be reduced due to the avoidance of some resources such as wetlands and oak trees. This alternative would result in conversion of up to 2,924 acres of biological habitat, compared to 3,520 acres under the proposed project. Under this alternative, a comparable amount of open space would be required for mitigation purposes. However, this would be less feasible due to the 50% reduction in density. Development under this alternative would not substantially lessen the impacts to biological resources and therefore the impacts remain significant and unavoidable. (See RDEIR, p. 6-24.)

In general, the traffic increases on each roadway segment and intersection under the Reduced Density Alternative would likely be about 40% to 60% of the increases resulting from buildout of the Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-26.) Most of the transportation and circulation impacts determined to be significant and unavoidable under the Specific Plan fall under the jurisdictions of other responsible agencies:

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Trips generated by the Reduced Density Alternative would increase traffic volumes on most roadways in the project vicinity, with most of the increases occurring on Baseline Road, Watt Avenue, Walerga Road, Fiddyment Road and Riego Road. (RDEIR, p. 6-26.) If the roadway improvements that are part of the proposed Specific Plan, such as the widening of Baseline Road to six lanes, are included with the 50% Reduced Density Alternative, there will likely be fewer significant traffic impacts from the 50% Reduced Density Alternative than would result from buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. However, a reduction in density would make the potential for transit service to be extended to the area less feasible. (RDEIR, p. 6-26.)

Under this alternative, emissions in all land use categories would be reduced. However, emissions would still exceed standards of significance. Cumulative impacts related to regional air quality would still occur due to urban development in the Specific Plan area and the surrounding area, and the existing ambient air quality. (See RDEIR, pp. 6-26 to 6-27.) Air quality impacts would remain significant under the Reduced Density Alternative.

Increased noise levels associated with commercial/business park uses and construction-related activities would still occur with the Reduced Density Alternative, including construction noise associated with off-site infrastructure areas, but impacts would be reduced because of reduced construction levels and larger residential lot sizes. However, cumulative impacts related to off-site traffic noise levels, identified as a significant unavoidable impact under the Specific Plan, would remain significant and unavoidable under this alternative due to urban development of the Specific Plan area and surrounding areas. (See RDEIR, p. 6-27.)

It is estimated that at full buildout of the Specific Plan, the ratio of jobs to housing will be approximately 0.54 per dwelling unit (7,594 jobs to 14,132 dwelling units). Section 4.10 of the Revised Draft EIR concludes that buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would promote an imbalance of jobs and housing in the short-term, and that this is significant and unavoidable. SACOG recommends a jobs/housing ration of 0.49 for the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 4.10-26.) Under the Reduced Density Alternative, the jobs/housing balance would increase to 0.75 (5,595 jobs to 7,500 dwelling units) compared to the proposed project. The impact would be greater under this alternative (See RDEIR, p. 6-28.)

The Reduced Density Alternative would reduce impacts across all categories analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR, with the exception of Population, Employment, and Housing. This alternative would neither increase nor reduce impacts in this impact area. The Board finds that the Reduced Density Alternative is infeasible because it does not substantially lessen the impacts as required under CEQA (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002; see RDEIR, p. 6-171.)

Feasibility is also determined by an alternative’s ability to “attain most of the basic objectives of the project . . . .” (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6(a), emphasis added.) While the Reduced
Density Alternative can be said to meet the first project objective, namely protecting the natural features and resources of the site, and possibly the fourth objective, the development of a series of unique neighborhood areas, the Board finds that it does not attain the remaining two project objectives.

The 50% reduction in residential density and nearly 40% reduction in nonresidential development does not promote compact mixed-use development. The necessary infrastructure of roads, water, and other utilities, as well as public services, would still need to be provided, but the reduced land use density under the Alternative is not a compact development. (See Figure 6-1, RDEIR.) The number of schools would be reduced from nine to five. A reduction in density reduces the potential for transit service to be extended to the area. The regional jobs to housing balance exceeds that proposed by SACOG. (See RDEIR, pp. 4.10-26, 6-21, 6-26 and 6-28.)

The Reduced Density Alternative does not attain the project objective of establishing a pedestrian friendly community with access to a regional system of trails. Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan provides for up to two mixed pedestrian-oriented villages or towns and a larger town center. The Town Center in the Reduced Density Alternative is similar to the one proposed in the Specific Plan, but the Alternative does not specifically provide for mixed pedestrian-oriented villages. With less density, use of bicycles and pedestrian trails as a means of traveling to and from schools, shopping and other congregating points is less feasible. Although bicycle and pedestrian trails could still be constructed, usage would be reduced. Additionally, reduced residential densities reduce the potential for effective transit service, bicycle and pedestrian movement, and continue to emphasize automobile use. (See RDEIR, pp. 6.21, 6-26.) Finally, the Placer County General Plan requires the development of a bikeway system providing connections between the County’s urban areas and bikeway systems in other jurisdictions. In 2002, the County adopted the Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan providing guidelines for such a countywide network. (RDEIR, p. 4.7-28.) The Reduced Density Alternative does not meet most of the project objectives as required under CEQA. This alternative is also infeasible due to its inconsistency with the Placer County General Plan, the Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan, and the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6(f)(1).)

The Board also finds that the Reduced Density Alternative is infeasible for the reasons discussed in the Technical Memorandum prepared by Tim Youmans and Eric Nickell of Economic and Planning Systems (“EPS”) and submitted by the Project applicants. Mr. Youmans and Mr. Nickell analyzed the impacts of the Reduced Density Alternative from the standpoint of infrastructure and public facilities financing, and conclude that the adoption of the Reduced Density Alternative would have four notable effects.

The first would be a lack of improvement of the jobs-housing balance of the major job center of Placer County, which is the City of Roseville (“City”). As explained in the EPS Technical Memorandum, the Reduced Density Alternative offers the least change to the City’s current jobs-to-housing ratio. Currently, the City has 1.6 jobs for every housing unit. This alternative, combined with the City’s current jobs and housing counts, would drop the City’s ratio to 1.4 jobs per housing unit. These differences suggest that more workers will be needed from outside the
City and the Project area in the Reduced Density Alternative with adverse implications for regional transportation infrastructure.

Second, the Reduced Density Alternative does not provide for efficient use of the land in providing housing and employment sites, compared to the Base Plan and the Blueprint Alternative. While the Base Plan would accommodate 6.6 persons per acre and the Blueprint Alternative would accommodate 9.4 persons per acre, the Reduced Density Alternative limits its density to 3.4 persons per acre. The EPS Technical Memorandum concludes that the Reduced Density Alternative, in light of its inefficient land use, would be expected to worsen the following performance measures at buildout: (1) contiguous habitat and ecological function; (2) transportation choices; (3) business activity in employment and retail centers; (4) share of land area devoted to roads; and (5) general level of community activity in public places.

Third, the EPS Technical Memorandum concludes that the Reduced Density Alternative provides far less support for the town center, compared to the Base Plan and the Blueprint Alternative. This alternative has a resident population of 18,000 in the Plan area and a job base of 4,700 – nearly 50 percent less than the Base Plan’s density. The EPS memorandum concludes that to bring an equal number of visitors to the town center as the Base Plan, the Reduced Density Alternative would need to draw from a much wider area in southwest Placer County. Attracting an additional 20,000 visitors (either workers or residents from other plan areas) into the heart of the Placer Vineyards community in the Reduced Density Alternative could prove very difficult from a market perspective and would alter pedestrian usage patterns in the project, emphasizing parking for the visitor with less accessibility from neighborhoods contiguous to the town center.

Finally, as explained in the EPS Technical Memorandum, expanded transit service for the Specific Plan area at the levels recommended by Placer County is less feasible under the Reduced Density Alternative than under the Base Plan and the Blueprint Alternative. (See Exhibit 1, Table 6.) As shown in Table 6, the decrease in farebox-recovery ratio, or the percentage of total operating costs supported by passenger fares, is pronounced, with commuter service falling from 89 percent farebox recovery (Blueprint Alternative) to 32 percent (Reduced Density Alternative). For interregional plus typical suburban local service, farebox-recovery ratios fall from 27 percent (Blueprint Alternative) to 10 percent (Reduced Density Alternative). Notably, lower farebox-recovery ratios in the Reduced Density Alternative may constrain the transit agency in securing State and federal funding for expanded service.

For the reasons stated above, the Board finds the Reduced Density Alternative to be infeasible and rejects it as a viable alternative to the project.

**RURAL DENSITY ALTERNATIVE**

1. **Description**

The Rural Density Alternative consists of development of the Specific Plan area entirely with single family residential lots with a minimum parcel size of 10 acres, for a total of approximately 500 new dwelling units. Because approximately 150 rural residential dwelling units already
exist within the Specific Plan area, the total number of dwelling units would be approximately 650. This alternative has been evaluated qualitatively, rather than quantitatively. No map is available for this alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-30.)

2. Analysis of the Rural Density Alternative’s Ability to Reduce Significant Unavoidable Project Impacts

Adoption of the Rural Density Alternative would increase the project’s significant and unavoidable impacts.

Land Use and Planning Policies

Under the Rural Density Alternative, 500 new dwelling units would be developed, for a total of 650 units, compared to 14,132 under the proposed Specific Plan. All dwelling units would be developed at rural residential densities. This alternative includes no commercial, office, Town Center, open space, parks, or schools. No phasing has been identified, and no development pattern proposed. (RDEIR, p. 6-31.)

Loss of Farmland within the Specific Plan area could still occur. This has been identified as a significant, unavoidable and cumulative impact of the proposed Specific Plan. (See Impacts 4.1-3, 4.1-14.) While it can be argued that agricultural uses can be maintained on at least some of the 10-acre parcels, the types of agricultural uses existing or historically occurring in the Specific Plan area (e.g. grazing land, irrigated pasture, and rice) are not generally considered commercially viable on 10-acre parcels. Orchards have also existed on-site and would be more viable on smaller parcels, if soil and water conditions supported orchard use. (RDEIR, p. 6-31.)

Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan provides for up to two mixed pedestrian-oriented villages or towns and a larger town center in the Specific Plan area. The Rural Density Alternative does not provide for a Town Center, villages or any form of commercial, office or industrial development. Reduced residential densities reduce the potential for effective transit service, bicycle and pedestrian movement, and continue to emphasize automobile use. (RDEIR, p. 6-31.)

With the exception of the existing rural residential development on the site, the project site is currently designated for Agriculture (80-acre minimum parcel size), with small areas designated for Commercial, Industrial and Greenbelt and Open Space. Ten-acre parcels could, for the most part, not be created without an Amendment to the Placer County General Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-31.)

Development of incompatible uses and/or creation of land use conflicts identified as having the potential to result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would probably not occur, since there would be no commercial or industrial uses to cause land use conflicts with residential uses. Conflicts could still occur between agricultural uses and rural residential uses, although the large size of the rural residential lots would tend to reduce potential conflicts. Similarly, creation of land use conflicts within the Specific Plan area due to existing power line easements would be
reduced because of reduced residential densities in areas crossed by the easements. (RDEIR, p. 6-31.)

Off-site infrastructure would not be developed; it is assumed that there would be on-site septic systems. (See Impacts 4.1-12 and 4.1-13.) A community water system is normally considered economically infeasible for lots 10 acres and larger. It is likely that lots would rely on individual wells, although one or more small public systems, in accordance with County Code Section 13.08.030, could be permitted by the Placer County Environmental Health Services Division to serve several houses from a single well. (RDEIR, p. 6-31.)

**Visual Quality and Aesthetics**

Under the Rural Density Alternative, alteration of views of the Specific Plan area from surrounding roadways and properties from its present rural residential/agricultural character to an urbanized character would not occur. (See Impacts 4.2-1 and 4.2-9.) However, the resulting visual character would be somewhat different from existing conditions which, with the exception of existing rural residential development in the Riego area, consists largely of open views. Views of the Specific Plan area from all directions would be essentially the same: rural residential development. Applying the same standards of significance used in Section 4.2 of the Revised Draft EIR, the impact of this change would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-32.)

Alteration of views for those residing within the Specific Plan area would still occur; however, because there would be lower residential densities and only approximately 5% of the number of residents proposed in the Specific Plan, those impacts (Impact 4.2-2) would be greatly reduced. Views from existing residences in the Riego area would be of development similar to their own. (RDEIR, p. 6-32.)

Impacts of introduction of new sources of light and glare within the Specific Plan area would be greatly reduced because of the rural residential densities and lack of lighting associated with industrial, office and commercial uses. New lighting would consist primarily of occasional headlights and residential security lighting on large parcels. (RDEIR, p. 6-32.)

Under the Rural Density Alternative, the development form and appearance would be similar to rural residential development patterns that exist in the Riego area, rather than a village concept. The Rural Density Alternative does not include a Town Center, but does provide for more buffering through application of rural residential densities. No open space corridors or linkages or park areas are included in this alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-32.)

Under the Rural Density Alternative, visual impacts identified as associated with construction within off-site infrastructure would not occur. Cumulative impacts related to alterations of views and light and glare, identified as significant and unmitigable in Impact 4.2-10, could still occur due to urban development in the surrounding area, but development of the project site would not contribute to those impacts. (RDEIR, p. 6-32.)
**Hydrology, Water Resources and Water Quality**

Under the Rural Density Alternative, it would typically be assumed that the water supply would consist of on-site wells, since development of a community water supply to 10-acre parcels would normally be cost-prohibitive. However, it is possible that one or more small public systems could be constructed to serve several houses from a single well, if allowed under General Plan Policy 4.C.2. Any public system would have to be permitted by the Placer County Environmental Health Services Division in accordance with County Code Section 13.08.030. The groundwater quality and quantity impacts of as many as 500 new on-site sewage disposal systems and wells is not known. However, it is likely to be significant and unavoidable from a groundwater quality perspective, and could also have adverse effects on groundwater quantity because no surface water supply would be developed. Such impacts would potentially be greater than project groundwater quality and groundwater quantity impacts. (RDEIR, p. 6-32.)

Increases in runoff quantity associated with urbanization of the Specific Plan area, which could contribute to both on-site and downstream flooding and erosion, would be greatly reduced under the Rural Density Alternative. With 10-acre parcels, it is assumed that there would be no new municipal drainage system, although subdivisions and roads would need to be graded to facilitate drainage flows. Similarly, surface water and groundwater quality impacts associated with construction on the project site, and later impacts associated with project site development and urban pollutants, would be greatly reduced. (See Impact 4.3.4-8.) Surface water and groundwater quality impacts associated with construction of off-site infrastructure would not occur. The contribution of the project to surface water quality impacts would be substantially reduced. (RDEIR, p. 6-33.)

It is assumed that the drainage system would, for the most part, be one that functions by means of grading and use of natural drainage channels. Runoff would also result in increased erosion, short-term construction water quality impacts, and long-term operational water quality impacts. However, in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan, impacts would be greatly reduced. The number of roadways would be reduced, and there would be no large parking lots or other large impervious surfaces to generate large volumes of runoff and pollutants. (RDEIR, p. 6-33.)

**Biological Resources**

As described in Section 4.4 of the Revised Draft EIR, development of the project site may remove habitat for special-status species, including listed vernal pool invertebrates, burrowing owl, Swainson’s hawk, and raptor nesting habitat. (See Impacts 4.4-1, 4.4-2, 4.4-6.) It may also result in the removal of individual oak trees, and fill wetlands and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S. (Impacts 4.4-10, 4.4-11.) The need to comply with State and federal requirements regarding wetlands and special-status species, combined with greatly reduced densities that provide greater opportunities for avoidance of impacts, would reduce potential impacts. However, no public open space or wetland preserves are proposed under the Rural Density Alternative. Off-site mitigation would probably be infeasible due to the substantial reduction in density. Some forms of on-site mitigation may become more feasible due to greatly reduced density. (RDEIR, p. 6-33.)
Under the Rural Density Alternative, impacts within off-site utility infrastructure areas would not occur. (See Impacts 4.4-15 through 4.4-19, and 4.4-21 through 4.4-29.) Similarly, impacts on biological resources associated with the initial and long-term surface water supply would not occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-33.)

Cumulative impacts related to the ongoing loss of natural undisturbed open space in the region, increased human intrusion and activity levels in proximity to habitat areas, and removal of potential habitat for federally- and State-listed and other special-status species, identified as significant and unavoidable under Impact 4.4-59, would still occur, although the project would entail a smaller contribution to that impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-33.)

**Geology and Soils**

Section 4.5 of the Revised Draft EIR identifies a potentially significant impact related to ground shaking in the Specific Plan area, including damage to structures resulting from strong earthquakes generated along faults in the region. Under the Rural Density Alternative, damage to existing and new structures in the project site could still occur due to ground shaking; however, the number of structures and residents exposed to such impacts would be greatly reduced in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, pp. 6-33 to 6-34.)

Similarly, soil-related impacts (e.g., ground instability, erosion, expansive soils, foundation instability) related to construction activities and new construction would be reduced in comparison to the Specific Plan. The nature of new construction (i.e., no municipal sewer, water or drainage infrastructure, no large commercial or industrial structures or roadways) would result in fewer construction-related soil impacts. Impacts related to construction within off-site infrastructure areas would not occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-34.)

**Archaeological/Paleontological Resources**

Under the Rural Density Alternative, potential impacts identified in Section 4.6 of the Revised Draft EIR could still occur (Impacts 4.6-1, 4.6-2, 4.6-5 through 4.6-8, 4.6-10, 4.6-14, and 4.6-19, with the exception of off-site infrastructure), even though densities will be reduced and development would be less intense. However, the reduced densities would provide greater opportunities for resources to be avoided. Impacts on cultural resources related to the initial and long-term surface water supply would not occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-34.)

**Transportation and Circulation**

The Rural Density Alternative would add 500 single-family dwelling units to the Specific Plan area. At an average of about 9 daily vehicle trips per dwelling unit, this alternative would generate about 4,500 daily vehicle trips. The proposed Specific Plan would generate about 264,000 daily vehicle trips. (RDEIR, p. 6-34.)

The trips generated by the Rural Density Alternative would use several different roadways to reach a variety of destinations, especially east and south of the project site. While much of this traffic increase would use Baseline Road and Watt Avenue, no one segment of roadway would
receive more than 2,000 daily or 200 peak hour vehicle trips. The Rural Density Alternative would not include the roadway improvements that are part of the proposed Specific Plan, such as the widening of Baseline Road to six lanes. However, with its limited traffic increase, there may or may not be any significant traffic impacts from the Rural Density Alternative, and most if not all of the traffic impacts that would result from the proposed Specific Plan would likely not occur. (See Impacts 4.7-4 through 4.7-6, 4.7-8, 4.7-9, 4.7-12 through 4.7-19, 4.7-21, and 4.7-22.) (RDEIR, p. 6-34.)

**Air Quality**

Section 4.8 of the Revised Draft EIR identifies and, to the extent possible, quantifies air quality impacts of the proposed Specific Plan related to construction and future operations within the Specific Plan area and off-site infrastructure areas. (See Impacts 4.8-1 through 4.8-3, 4.8-6.) Operations include both mobile and stationary source air pollutants. Air quality impacts associated with construction and operation of improvements under the Rural Density Alternative would be reduced. Probable air emissions are shown on Table 6-6 of the Revised Draft EIR. Emissions would not exceed standards of significance, and direct impacts of the project would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-34.)

Cumulative impacts related to regional air quality, identified as significant under Impact 4.8-7, would still occur due to the contribution of development in the project site and the surrounding area and the existing ambient air quality. (RDEIR, p. 6-35.)

**Noise**

Increased noise levels associated with commercial/business park uses would not occur. Increased noise levels associated with construction-related activities would be anticipated to be less than significant due to substantially reduced construction levels and larger residential lot sizes. Construction noise associated with off-site infrastructure would not occur. Traffic-related noise impacts under the Rural Density Alternative would also be anticipated to be less than significant, compared to a significant and unavoidable impact under the Project (see Impact 4.9-5), due to the substantial reduction in traffic volumes estimated above. (RDEIR, p. 6-35.)

Cumulative impacts related to traffic noise levels, identified as a significant and unmitigable impact (Impact 4.9-7), could still occur due to development of the project site and urbanization of surrounding areas, but development of the project site would not contribute substantially to that impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-35.)

**Population, Employment and Housing**

It is noted above that 500 new dwelling units (a total of 650 dwelling units) would exist in the project area under the Rural Density Alternative. Estimated population associated with this alternative is a total of 1,755 persons (1,350 new persons), compared to 34,762 persons under the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-35.)
Section 4.10 of the Revised Draft EIR provides information on employment and housing for the greater Sacramento region and Placer County, and jobs/housing balance. It is estimated that at full buildout of the Specific Plan, the ratio of jobs to housing will be approximately 0.54 per dwelling unit (7,594 jobs to 14,132 dwelling units). Section 4.10 concludes that buildout of the proposed Specific Plan could create a short-term imbalance of jobs and housing. (See Impact 4.10-3.) Under the Rural Density Alternative, no new jobs would be created on the project site (with the exception of home-based businesses, which cannot be estimated), and the alternative would not produce a favorable jobs/housing ratio. However, the amount of housing would be greatly reduced in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan (500 new dwelling units compared to 14,132 new units). (RDEIR, p. 6-36.)

It would be very difficult to develop affordable single family housing units on 10-acre lots; the impact of the Rural Density Alternative on affordable housing that might otherwise be developed under the Specific Plan would be considered significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-36.)

**Public Services/Infrastructure**

Public services and infrastructure needed to serve the proposed Specific Plan area are identified in Section 4.11 of the Revised Draft EIR, including sanitary sewer/wastewater, water supply, recycled water, solid waste disposal, electrical/natural gas service, telecommunications, cable television, fire protection, police protection, library services, drainage services, schools, parks and recreation facilities, and general County facilities and services. (RDEIR, p. 6-36.)

Under the Rural Density Alternative, fire protection services would need to be increased, but at reduced levels. Equipment and personnel would still be needed over time, but at reduced levels. It is unlikely that an additional fire station could be justified based on the added development under this alternative. Using a strictly population-based standard, the Rural Density Alternative would generate a need for one additional firefighter. With a substantially reduced level of development contributing fees for capital facilities, fees may be inadequate to fund needed facilities. (RDEIR, p. 6-36.)

Other impacts identified in Section 4.11.2 would still occur. Although the potential for additional fire hazards in large open space/natural areas would not occur because these open space areas would not be created, large numbers of rural residential lots that are not completely landscaped and irrigated would provide additional fire hazards. Impacts on emergency response time could still occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-36.)

Under the Rural Density Alternative, increased demand for police protection services would still occur, although demand would be greatly reduced. Exclusion of commercial and industrial areas would reduce public safety demands. It is estimated in Section 4.11.3 that at full buildout of the Specific Plan, one new Sheriff’s substation will be needed to serve the area. Although there will be no commercial or industrial development and the number of residences served will be greatly reduced under this alternative, the distance from the nearest existing Sheriff’s substation in Loomis would result in an inadequate response time, thus still requiring a substation in the area to adequately serve the project site. With the reduced level of development contributing fees for capital facilities, fees may be inadequate to fund needed facilities. (RDEIR, p. 6-36.)
Under the Rural Density Alternative, no new municipal wastewater collection, treatment and disposal system is assumed to serve the project area. It is assumed that individual on-site septic systems will provide for wastewater disposal. Construction impacts would occur in association with construction of individual residences. The project site would not contribute to cumulative impacts on the SRCSD and/or the DCWWTP, and would not discharge to Dry Creek or the Sacramento River. Discharge to the Sacramento River has been identified as a significant unavoidable impact associated with the proposed Specific Plan and other alternatives, with the exception of the No Project Alternative; however, new impacts on groundwater quality could occur as a result of the increase in on-site septic systems. (RDEIR, p. 6-37.)

Under the Rural Density Alternative, increased enrollment in schools and need for new/expanded school facilities would still occur, although at greatly reduced levels. No acreage is specifically allocated for schools under this alternative. The proposed Specific Plan provides for development of six elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school located throughout the Specific Plan area. The Rural Density Alternative would not generate enough students to justify development of new schools at any level to serve only residents of the project site. It is assumed that the proposed change in school district boundaries would not be pursued under this alternative.

Impacts on the County MRF and landfill would be substantially reduced in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan. (See Impacts 4.11.5-1 and 4.11.5-4.) Cumulative impacts of waste disposal on the MRF and landfill would still occur, although at substantially reduced levels. (RDEIR, p. 6-37.)

A community water system is normally considered economically infeasible for lots 10 acres and larger. Because there is a potential conflict with County General Plan Policy 4.C.2 if the alternative were to rely on groundwater as a new domestic water supply, lack of an available water supply could be a significant unavoidable impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-37.)

Under the Rural Density Alternative, limited new drainage facilities would be designed to serve the project site. Cumulative water quality impacts on drainage systems could still occur (Impact 4.11.6-5.) However, under the Rural Density Alternative, the project site would contribute substantially less to that cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-37.)

New electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications/cable television systems would still be needed to serve the project site under the Rural Density Alternative. Development that could affect existing facilities and systems would still occur. Cumulative impacts on electrical demand and telecommunications systems would still occur, but the contribution of the project site would be substantially reduced in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-37.)

Under the Rural Density Alternative, new demand for library services and need for a new library would still occur, although demand would be substantially reduced in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan. It is estimated in Section 4.11.12 that at full buildout, a permanent 13,905 square-foot community library facility will be needed to serve the Specific Plan area. Under the Rural Density Alternative, a facility would still be needed to provide service locally to
avoid impacts on libraries in other jurisdictions. With a reduced level of development contributing fees for capital facilities, fees would be inadequate to fund needed capital facilities. (RDEIR, p. 6-37.)

Section 4.11.13 of the Revised Draft EIR describes regional parks in the vicinity of the Specific Plan area and new park facilities that would be created as part of the Specific Plan. Recreational facilities that are associated with the proposed initial and long-term water supply are also addressed. Under the Rural Density Alternative, no new parks and recreational facilities are proposed. Impacts on regional parks and recreational programs in neighboring jurisdictions are likely to occur since no new facilities are proposed on the project site. Impacts on recreational facilities related to the proposed Specific Plan surface water supply would not occur. With a substantially reduced level of development contributing park fees, fees would be inadequate to fund needed capital facilities on the project site. (RDEIR, p. 6-38.)

Under the Rural Density Alternative, new demand for general County facilities and services will still occur, although at substantially reduced levels in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-38.)

Hazards

Section 4.12 of the Revised Draft EIR evaluates the potential for soil or groundwater contamination in the Specific Plan area as a result of current or past land uses, and the potential for impacts from hazardous substances and/or waste contamination as a result of Specific Plan development. A Phase I and Phase I Supplemental and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments were prepared for the Specific Plan area and Phase 1, respectively. The Phase I and Phase II ESAs and subsequent work by the Placer County Environmental Health Services Division have identified areas where soil contamination has occurred, areas that require additional study, and additional hazards such as those associated with historic orchard use. (RDEIR, p. 6-38.)

Under the Rural Density Alternative, development of the Specific Plan area would require remediation of contaminated sites and abandonment of unused wells and septic systems. Hazards related to commercial use of potentially hazardous materials would not occur because no commercial or industrial uses are proposed to be developed. Potential asbestos hazards related to demolition of older structures and hazards related to mosquitoes and other vectors could still occur, but the number and proximity of people that would potentially be exposed to these hazards would be substantially reduced. EMF exposure could still occur due to power lines, but it is unlikely that the substation would be constructed. (RDEIR, p. 6-38.)

3. Feasibility of the Rural Density Alternative

As explained earlier, “public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen the significant environmental effects of such projects.” (Pub. Resources Code, § 21002, emphasis added.) The Rural Density Alternative does not substantially lessen the environmental impacts associated with the Specific Plan. Rather, this alternative increases the significance in the areas of Land Use, and Population, Employment, and Housing.
The Rural Density Alternative would develop 500 new dwelling units (a total of 650 dwelling units) compared to 14,132 new units under the Specific Plan. Estimated population associated with this alternative is a total of 1,755 persons (1,350 new persons), compared to 34,762 persons under the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-35.)

At full buildout of the Specific Plan, it is estimated that the ratio of jobs to housing will be approximately 0.54 per dwelling unit (7,594 jobs to 14,132 dwelling units), creating a short-term imbalance of jobs and housing as prescribed by the SACOG guidelines. Under the Rural Density Alternative, no new jobs would be created on the project site, and the alternative would not produce a favorable jobs/housing ratio. (See RDEIR, pp. 6-31, 6-35, 6-36.)

It is noted above that 500 new dwelling units (a total of 650 dwelling units) would exist in the project area under the Rural Density Alternative. Estimated population associated with this alternative is a total of 1,755 persons (1,350 new persons), compared to 34,762 persons under the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-35.)

Section 4.10 of the Revised Draft EIR provides information on employment and housing for the greater Sacramento region and Placer County, and jobs/housing balance. It is estimated that at full buildout of the Specific Plan, the ratio of jobs to housing will be approximately 0.54 per dwelling unit (7,594 jobs to 14,132 dwelling units). Section 4.10 concludes that buildout of the proposed Specific Plan could create a short-term imbalance of jobs and housing (see Impact 4.10-3). Under the Rural Density Alternative, no new jobs would be created on the project site (with the exception of home-based businesses, which cannot be estimated), and the alternative would not produce a favorable jobs/housing ratio. However, the amount of housing would be greatly reduced in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan (500 new dwelling units compared to 14,132 new units). (RDEIR, p. 6-36.)

The Board finds that the Rural Density Alternative is infeasible in light of the County’s commitment, in Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan, to carry out the General Plan objective of developing the Project area. As noted above, the Rural Density Alternative consists of development of the Specific Plan area entirely with single family residential lots with a minimum parcel size of 10 acres, for a total of approximately 500 new dwelling units. Since approximately 150 rural residential dwelling units already exist within the Specific Plan area, the total number of dwelling units would be approximately 650.

Thus, the Rural Density Alternative is inconsistent with Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan, which provides for up to two mixed pedestrian-oriented villages or towns and a larger town center in the Specific Plan area. Exhibit 1 prescribes three types of residential uses: 1)Village Residential (high-density single-family and multi-family), 2) Single-Family Residential (four to seven dwelling units per acre), and 3) Rural Residential. Under the Rural Density Alternative it would be difficult to develop affordable single family housing units (Village Residential) on 10-acre lots. Impact 4.1-1 under the Specific Plan was less than significant; the same impact under the Rural Density Alternative would be considered significant. (See RDEIR, pp. 4.1-47, 6-36.)
Not only is this type of low-density development not consistent with the County’s stated vision for the Specific Plan area, but the Board also finds that the Rural Density Alternative is infeasible because it is an inefficient use of land. Such low-density development provides significantly less housing and no jobs, while still causing a number of significant environmental impacts. (See RDEIR, pp. 6-30 to 6-38.) As such, this type of low-density residential development is undesirable, both from a marketability standpoint and from an environmental perspective.

Further, the Board finds that the Rural Density Alternative does not meet most of the project objectives. This alternative, like the Reduced Density Alternative, fails to promote compact mixed-use development and the establishment of a pedestrian friendly community. Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan provides for up to two mixed pedestrian-oriented villages or towns and a larger town center in the Specific Plan area. The Rural Density Alternative does not provide for a Town Center, villages or any form of commercial, office or industrial development. Reduced residential densities reduce the potential for effective transit service, bicycle and pedestrian movement, and continue to emphasize automobile use. (RDEIR, p. 6-31.) Additionally the Rural Density Alternative does not develop a series of neighborhood areas as outlined in the fourth of the Specific Plan objectives.

Finally, the Rural Density Alternative is not consistent with the Placer County General Plan nor the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan. In fact, this alternative would require an amendment to the General Plan to create the ten-acre parcels called for in the project description. (See RDEIR, p. 6-31.)

For the reasons set forth above, the Board finds the Rural Density Alternative to be infeasible and rejects it as a viable alternative to the project.

**BLUEPRINT ALTERNATIVE**

1. **Description**

To illustrate how development would occur under SACOG’s recommended development principles, an alternative Blueprint Alternative (see Figure 6-2 in the Revised Draft EIR) was developed by the project proponents for the Revised Draft EIR. In addition, a Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan text and graphics have been prepared and are available for review at the location specified in Section 2.9 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 6-38.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, densities for residential, commercial, and public/quasi-public land uses are more similar to the SACOG plan than the proposed project. While similar to the SACOG plan, the Blueprint Alternative analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR is different from the density and mix of development envisioned by SACOG, because the Blueprint Alternative is based on more precise information about developable land and assumes that development patterns in the Special Planning Area (SPA) do not change. For example, SACOG assumed no rural residential development in the Specific Plan area, while the Blueprint Alternative assumes that over 900 acres would remain rural residential, because the proposed project would not alter land uses in the SPA. (RDEIR, pp. 6-38 to 6-39.)
The Blueprint Alternative is based on the following principles adopted by SACOG in December, 2004:

1. **Transportation choices.** Developments should be designed to encourage people to sometimes walk, ride bicycles, ride the bus, ride light rail, take the train, or carpool as a way to reduce the number and length of auto trips.

2. **Mixed-use development.** Building homes and shops, entertainment, office and even light industrial uses near each other can create active, vital neighborhoods and also help reduce the number and length of auto trips.

3. **Compact development.** Creating environments that are more compactly built and use space in an efficient but aesthetic manner can encourage more walking, biking, and public transit use, and shorten auto trips.

4. **Housing choice and diversity.** Providing a variety of places where people can live – apartments, condominiums, townhouses, and single-family detached homes on varying lot sizes – creates opportunities for the variety of people who need them: singles, seniors, and people with special needs.

5. **Use of existing assets.** In urbanized areas, development on infill or vacant lands, intensification of the use of underused parcels or redevelopment can make better use of existing public infrastructure.

6. **Quality design.** The design details of any land use development – such as the relationship to the street, setbacks, placement of garages, sidewalks, landscaping, the aesthetics of building design, and the design of the public right-of-way – are all factors that can influence the attractiveness of living in a compact development and facilitate the ease of walking and biking to work or neighborhood services.

7. **Natural resources conservation.** This principle encourages the incorporation of public use open space (such as parks, town squares, trails, and greenbelts) within development projects, over and above state requirements; along with wildlife and plant habitat preservation, agricultural preservation and promotion of environment-friendly practices such as energy efficient design, water conservation, and stormwater management, and shade trees to reduce the ground temperatures in the summer.

(RDEIR, p. 6-39.)

The Blueprint Alternative would implement the above principles in part by increasing residential densities within the Specific Plan area. The Blueprint Alternative proposes construction of 21,631 residential dwelling units compared with 14,132 dwelling units under the proposed project (a 53% increase). Density in residential-only areas, excluding Commercial Mixed-Use development that includes residential dwelling units, would increase from 5.4 under the proposed project to 8.9 in the Blueprint Alternative. As with the proposed project, the Blueprint
Alternative would cluster most high-density residential uses around the Town and Neighborhood Centers. This clustering also aids in furthering the above principles by putting more residents within walking distance of mixed-use development and public transit. The increased densities would also further the economic viability of the Town and Neighborhood Centers by increasing the absolute number of residents within walking distance of these places. (RDEIR, pp. 6-39 to 6-40.)

Table 6-7 of the Revised Draft EIR compares the proposed project and the Blueprint Alternative in terms of densities, acreages and number of units for residential-only development. The Blueprint Alternative would increase density under all three categories of residential development – Low-Density Residential (LDR), Medium-Density Residential (MDR), and High-Density Residential (HDR) as well as under Commercial Mixed-use (CMU), which combines commercial with residential. In areas that are to be developed in residential-only and CMU land use designations (outside of the SPA, which would be unchanged), the Blueprint Alternative proposes development of 20,556 dwelling units on 2,184.5 acres (9.4 units per acre) compared with 13,607 dwelling units on 2,424 acres (5.6 units per acre) under the proposed project. The Blueprint Alternative would also substantially increase the acreage for Medium- and High-Density residential development, while reducing the amount of land designated Low-Density residential. Consequently, it is expected that the types of housing would change, with far fewer single-family homes under the Blueprint Alternative, and more attached units, such as duplexes, townhomes and condominiums. Measured by Floor Area Ratio (FAR), density significantly increases in land use categories where commercial (retail and office space) are mixed with residential units. In addition, the Blueprint Alternative nearly doubles the number of residential units within CMU land use designations from 844 to 1,732. Another difference is that the Blueprint Alternative increases the number of acres of CMU from 47 to 79. (RDEIR, p. 6-40.)

Table 6-8 compares the Blueprint Alternative with the proposed project for Commercial land uses. Retail and office uses would also increase in the CMU, due to an increase in the number of acres of CMU from 67 to 110 (the FARs would be the same as the proposed project). The number of acres of commercial-only development would also increase, from 262 acres to 281 acres. The resulting number of jobs would also increase, from 9,601 to 9,751. The jobs/housing ratio under the Blueprint Alternative would be 0.45, compared with 0.68 under the proposed project. The lower ratio for the Blueprint Alternative would be due to the substantial increase in housing with only a slight increase in employment-generating uses. (RDEIR, p. 6-41.)

Although the Blueprint Alternative would have a relatively low jobs/housing ratio, it would be in proximity to external jobs. According to SACOG, a distinct advantage of increasing densities in the Specific Plan area is its proximity to several major current and emerging employment centers, including Roseville, Rocklin, the former McClellan Air Force Base, the International Airport/Metro Air Park, and development proposed in south Sutter County (Mike McKeever, Executive Director, SACOG, pers. comm., January 5, 2005). By providing residences in proximity to these areas, the Blueprint Alternative (and the proposed project to a lesser extent) is expected to result in shorter average commute distances than would occur if housing were spread throughout the region. Therefore, on a regional level, the jobs/housing ratio may be more balanced under the Blueprint Alternative than it would be under the proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 6-41.)
For Public/Quasi-Public land uses (see Table 6-9 of the Revised Draft EIR), the Blueprint Alternative would increase acreage for religious facilities sites, schools and parks largely to serve the additional population. Park space would increase from 217 acres to 260.5 acres, with the addition of a large park in the center of the project area. However, the number of acres devoted to open space would be the same as the proposed project—711. Preservation of open space is related to certain physical features on the site that should, or must, be preserved, and is not influenced by increases in density. Similarly, the need for roads would be equivalent, because the same area would be developed. (RDEIR, p. 6-42.)

As discussed below, the increased density of the Blueprint Alternative addresses SACOG’s growth principles to a greater extent than the proposed project:

1. **Transportation choices.** Both the proposed project and the Blueprint Alternative provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the Specific Plan area, linking parks, homes, schools and other uses. Both also provide right-of-way for Bus Rapid Transit on Watt Avenue, a multi-modal transit center, bus service and park-and-ride lots. Therefore, both the proposed project and the Blueprint Alternative would be designed to encourage people to sometimes walk, ride bicycles, ride the bus, ride light rail, take the train, or carpool as a way to reduce the number and length of auto trips. However, the Blueprint Alternative would likely result in higher transit use because it provides for higher densities in proximity to the Transit Center and other potential transit hubs such as the Town Center. According to SACOG, the minimum residential density needed to support infrequent bus service is seven dwelling units per acre. Almost one-third of the housing in the Blueprint Alternative would be at or near this density, compared to less than 5% under the proposed project. Therefore, bus service and ridership would likely be increased under the Blueprint Alternative.

2. **Mixed-use development.** Both the proposed project and the Blueprint Alternative provide for a wide range of residential and non-residential development. The Blueprint Alternative would increase the population near the Town Center and Village Centers relative to the proposed project.

3. **Compact development.** Both the proposed project and the Blueprint Alternative provide for higher densities at the Town and Village Centers, with medium and lower density residential development occurring at greater distances from the centers. The Blueprint Alternative would be more compact because it would provide for more units per acre at every density and have more acreage designated Medium- and High-Density residential than the proposed project. Approximately one-third of residential development under the Blueprint Alternative would be at densities approaching or exceeding 10 units per acre, compared to less than 5% under the proposed project.

4. **Housing choice and diversity.** Both the proposed project and the Blueprint Alternative would provide for a wide range of densities and housing types and an age-restricted component. However, the Blueprint Alternative would have more variety, with densities ranging from 2 to 35, compared to 2 to 22 under the proposed project.
5. **Use of existing assets.** This principal does not apply to the Specific Plan area, because it is not developed at this time.

6. **Quality design.** The Blueprint Alternative, like the proposed project, would be subject to design guidelines and development standards intended to ensure that new development would be of high quality and compatible with surrounding land uses.

7. **Natural resources conservation.** The same areas would be preserved as Open Space under either the proposed project or Blueprint Alternative, including the Dry Creek and other drainage corridors and the oak woodland. Natural resources within these Open Space areas would be conserved and protected. The Blueprint Alternative has the potential to further protect natural resources by absorbing more demand for residential development. If, for example, the additional 7,499 units in the Blueprint Alternative were developed elsewhere in the region at average densities of 5.4 (like the proposed project) to 8.5 (like the Blueprint Alternative), an additional 882 to 1,389 acres would need to be converted to residential uses elsewhere in the region. Additional land would be needed for schools and parks for this population. Depending on the location of such development, additional agricultural and biological resources could be lost to urbanization.

(RDEIR, pp. 6-43 to 6-44.)

Both the proposed project and the Blueprint Alternative also provide for a network of parks and trails throughout the Specific Plan area, a town square, stormwater facilities, and landscaping that would provide shade. Because of its increased densities and smaller lots, per capita water use and stormwater runoff would be lower under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-44.)

Other differences between the Blueprint Alternative and the proposed project include the following:

- The Blueprint Alternative is designed for an anticipated population of approximately 52,000 (51,983) residents compared to approximately 34,750 (34,762) under the proposed project, increase of almost 50%.

- The Blueprint Alternative would provide 43 more acres of parks, including an additional large 50-acre central community park, one additional elementary school, one additional middle school, one additional high school, and four additional designated religious sites. It should be noted that these increases are necessary to serve the higher population, and would not increase per capita services. For example, there would be an additional 3,735 school children under the Blueprint Alternative.

- The Blueprint Alternative proposes a roadway network that is similar to the proposed project, but the traffic volumes would be substantially greater in and near the Specific Plan area due to the increased density.

- The Blueprint Alternative would have higher density concentrations along the Watt Avenue transit corridor and surrounding the Village Centers and commercial developments.
• The Town and Village Centers would be designed at higher densities that may require development of parking garages. In general, there would be less surface parking and more strategically located parking structures.

• Public infrastructure such as water distribution, sewers, drainage systems and retention basins would be resized and added to accommodate the increase in population. For example, the force mains from the lift station at the far west side of the project to the DCWWTP would be increased from 16 inches to 20 to 24 inches.

(RDEIR, pp. 6-44 to 6-45.)

The following topical sections evaluate the Blueprint Alternative at a project-level in a manner similar to the proposed Specific Plan. Where background, analysis, impacts and mitigation measures are the same for the Blueprint Alternative as for the project, this is described and impacts and applicable mitigation measures are listed by their corresponding number. Standards of Significance for judging the significance of impacts have not been modified and remain the same for both the Specific Plan and Blueprint Alternative. Where differences exist this is also described. Additional impact statements and mitigation measures are provided, as necessary. (RDEIR, p. 6-45.)

In order to evaluate the differences between the proposed project and the Blueprint Alternative, some of the information provided below is based on comparisons provided by SACOG based on work done for the SACOG Blueprint Plan. As discussed above, the Blueprint Alternative described in the Revised Draft EIR does differ somewhat from that plan. The “base case” developed by SACOG to quantify the amount and type of traditional development that could occur in the Specific Plan area also differs from the proposed project. Even with these differences, in some cases, the evaluation prepared by SACOG provides useful information regarding the relative effects of lower and higher density development. (RDEIR, p. 6-45.)

2. Analysis of the Blueprint Alternative’s Ability to Reduce Significant Unavoidable Project Impacts

Adoption of the Blueprint Alternative would lessen several of the project’s significant and unavoidable impacts; however, it would also increase the significance of impacts in eight out of the twelve impact areas analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR.

Land Use and Planning Policies

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The Blueprint Alternative, at 21,631 residential dwelling units, exceeds the maximum number of residential dwelling units (14,132) called for in the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan by 7,499 units and could lead to physical impacts on the environment, as described elsewhere in this alternatives analysis. Therefore, the inconsistency of the Blueprint Alternative with the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan (see Impact 4.1-1) constitutes a physical impact on the
environment remains potentially significant and no mitigation measures are available. However, the applicants have applied for an amendment to the Placer County General Plan that would delete the reference to a maximum of 14,132 dwelling units in Exhibit 1 to the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan and substitute the figure of 21,631 units instead in the event the Blueprint Alternative is adopted. The balance of the analysis under Impact 4.1-1 remains the same for the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-46.)

The Blueprint Alternative would be subject to the same Natural Community Conservation Planning Agreement signed on September 10, 2001 by Placer County, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries). Therefore, the impact from potential conflicts with a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan (Impact 4.1-2) would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-46.)

As with the proposed project, approximately 4,225 acres of agricultural land would be converted to non-agricultural uses (Impact 4.1-3) under the Blueprint Alternative, so this impact would remain significant and unavoidable even after implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-3. (RDEIR, p. 6-46.)

There are no parcels within the Specific Plan area that are currently under Williamson Act contract. Approximately 90 acres were subject to a Williamson Act contract that expired in January, 2005. However, the Placer County General Plan provides for agricultural buffers, as described in Section 4.1.4 of the Revised Draft EIR. Because an adjacent contracted Agricultural Preserve area may be used for rice production, the buffer should be 200 to 800 feet (and may be established anywhere within this range by a Specific Plan) and must include a 400-foot residential exclusion area. Under the Blueprint Alternative, the nearest residential use to the Preserve would be more than 400 feet away. (RDEIR, p. 6-46.)

In order to comply with the above buffer requirements, uses adjacent to the Agricultural Preserve (see Impact 4.1-7 discussion) should be set back a minimum of 200 feet from the Agricultural Preserve. Adoption of Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan Policy 3.29 will mitigate any potential impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-46.)

As discussed in Section 2.5 in Chapter Two of the Revised Draft EIR, the Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan would provide for a streamlined approval process for projects pursuant to Government Code Section 65457, Public Resources Code Section 21083.3 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15182 and 15183. Under these codes, projects may not be subject to further environmental review if County staff determines that the project is consistent with the Specific Plan and that the EIR addressed site-specific issues at a reasonable level of detail for the particular site at issue. This project streamlining also depends on how well the project has complied with mitigation requirements formulated and adopted in connection with Specific Plan approval. To assist with these determinations, the County has established a “subsequent conformity review process,” as described in Section 2.7.2 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, pp. 6-46 to 6-47.)
If the criteria are met, most subsequent projects will typically be subject only to approval of tentative and final subdivision maps, improvement plans, and design review by the County, prior to issuance of building permits, similar to the proposed project. As described in the Placer County Zoning Ordinance, the Design Review process is a ministerial rather than a discretionary process. Through this process, applications are approved, conditionally approved, or denied based on consistency with the design standards and guidelines established for each district and the Specific Plan area in general. (RDEIR, p. 6-47.)

The Blueprint Alternative provides for a mixed-use environment, which could lead to land use incompatibilities. However, the proposed Specific Plan contains a variety of techniques designed to ensure compatibility of uses and contains goals, policies and guidelines for this specific purpose such as: Goal 6.27 (Compatibility of adjoining land uses), Policy 6.28, (Compatibility of adjoining large lot rural and agricultural uses), Policy 6.29 (Compatibility of residential uses adjacent to commercial and employment uses), Policy 6.30, (Compatibility of uses adjacent to parks and open space), and the Design Guidelines included in Chapter VI of the Specific Plan. In addition, all proposed commercial and employment uses will be subject to Design Review, which will permit the County to review proposed uses for compatibility with adjacent existing and proposed land uses and impose compatibility requirements. Other sections of the Revised Draft EIR also contain discussions and proposed mitigation for potential incompatibilities. These include Mitigation Measure 4.2-6a related to alteration of views, Mitigation Measure 4.9-2 concerning control of stationary noise sources, and Mitigation Measure 4.9-4 designed to reduce traffic noise incompatibilities. Potential incompatibilities with existing power line easements within the Specific Plan area are also discussed under Impact 4.1-6 and agricultural conflicts are discussed under Impact 4.1-7 below. (RDEIR, p. 6-47.)

The concept of a mixed-use development is consistent with the goals and policies of the County’s General Plan. Based on Specific Plan content, the use of Design Review, and topic-specific mitigation contained in the Revised Draft EIR, the potential that incompatibility with surrounding development, or land use conflicts would result is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-47.)

Land use conflicts within the Specific Plan area due to existing power line easements (see Impact 4.1-6) would also remain less than significant under this alternative since the open space corridors surrounding the power line easements would be maintained under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-47.)

Land use conflicts within the Specific Plan area between current agricultural uses and proposed development (see Impact 4.1-7) would remain potentially significant under the Blueprint Alternative. Within the areas designated for urban development, the County’s Right-to-Farm laws are also still available to protect those continuing in agriculture and the State’s nuisance laws are also still available to protect homeowners and the County. For the SPA, where agriculture will continue, Specific Plan policy has been proposed that meets the standards prescribed by the General Plan. For properties designated Agriculture north of Baseline Road, land use conflicts are a less than significant with implementation of Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan Policy 3.29 (see discussion for Impact 4.1-4). (RDEIR, pp. 6-47 to 6-48.)
Conflicts with principles of the Blueprint Alternative (see Impact 4.1-8) would not occur since the Blueprint Alternative is based on those principles. Therefore, this impact, which would be significant and unavoidable under the proposed project, would not occur under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-48.)

Amendment of the County General Plan to allow project-specific buffers to be established with adoption of a Specific Plan could result in adverse environmental effects (see Impact 4.1-9). Because the proposed change would only become operative in association with a subsequent discretionary action, this is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-48.)

The impact from loss of Important Farmland due to installation of utilities in off-site infrastructure areas (see Impact 4.1-10) would remain less than significant. Under the Blueprint Alternative, land use conflicts could be created by expansion of existing wastewater treatment plants (see Impact 4.1-11). However, since mitigation measures are already provided in the Revised Draft EIR to address construction noise and air quality effects (see Mitigation Measures 4.8-1a-e and 4.9-3). The minor increases in footprint and activity at these existing facilities would have little, if any, affect related to land use conflict. This is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-48.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, acquisition of existing off-site structures and alteration of existing off-site land uses due to widening of Baseline/Riego Road and Watt Avenue (see Impact 4.1-12) would remain significant and unavoidable. Acquisition of additional parallel roadways north of Baseline Road may also be necessary under the Blueprint Alternative; however, no roadway alignments have been identified and any land use analysis would be purely speculative, although the addition of east-west roadways north of Baseline Road would have growth inducement implications. (RDEIR, p. 6-48.)

Impacts as a result of compliance with Standard 8 (Agricultural Water Supply) of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan (see Impact 4.1-13) would still occur under the Blueprint Alternative. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.1.1a-c would reduce the impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-48.)

Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The Blueprint Alternative would contribute to loss of farmland throughout Placer County, the region, and the State (see Impact 4.1-14) that is cumulatively considerable. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.1-14 would lessen the severity of the cumulative loss of farmland, but the impact would remain cumulatively considerable. However, it should be noted that the increased in dwelling units under the Blueprint Alternative could reduce the amount of agricultural land converted to residential development elsewhere in the region by helping the region to meeting the demand for housing caused by projected regional population growth. (RDEIR, p. 6-48.)
Visual Quality and Aesthetics

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Visual quality and aesthetics would not be significantly altered under the very similar form of development and development footprint proposed under the Blueprint Alternative. Alteration of views from surrounding roadways and properties (see Impact 4.2-1) as well as the views of residents living within the Specific Plan area (see Impact 4.2-2) will be similar under the Blueprint Alternative. Density increases in the form of more land designated as High-Density Residential and Commercial/Mixed-Use (two- to four-story structures) would occur in the interior of the project area and along the Watt Avenue transit corridor. Therefore, the increased number of multi-story structures (including parking garages) could be more noticeable from viewpoints along Watt Avenue and other view points. Although the effect could be more intense in nature, the conclusions regarding alteration of views remain the same and are significant and unmitigable. (RDEIR, p. 6-49.)

The Specific Plan proposes, as part of the water supply infrastructure, the construction of five water storage tanks and a recycled water storage tank. The proposed locations of these tanks are illustrated on Figures 3-14 and 3-18 in Chapter Three of the Revised Draft EIR. As shown on Figure 3-14, the water storage tanks will be located adjacent to proposed open space, park, or public/quasi-public land use areas. The recycled water tank will be located in an area shown for High-Density Residential development. Although the proposed Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan does not show additional water supply tanks, with an approximate 50% population increase under the Blueprint Alternative, it is likely that water storage tanks will need to be enlarged. It is anticipated that the enlarged water storage tanks will be composed of concrete or steel with a capacity of approximately 5 million gallons at each location (3.5 million gallons for the recycled water storage tank). The enlarged water storage tanks will be circular and will be a maximum 170 feet in diameter and 30 feet in height. If groundwater wells are developed on-site, it is possible that they could be collocated with one or more of the water storage tanks. However, wells, pumps and water treatment facilities would be subordinate in terms of visual impact, with the viewer’s eye drawn to the larger and taller water storage tank. (RDEIR, pp. 6-49 to 6-50.)

Construction of these storage tanks has the potential to result in the alteration of views of the Specific Plan area and from open space areas within the Specific Plan area (see Impact 4.2-3) to an even greater extent than under the proposed project. However, the water storage tanks will be in proximity to structures of similar height that will be allowed under the Specific Plan; therefore, they will not appear as prominent features when viewing the area. Additionally, the storage tanks will be constructed as part of an overall conversion of the area from rural open space to urban and suburban uses and will, therefore, be considered common and appropriate to the region by most viewers. Within the context of the proposed development, alteration of views of the Specific Plan area due to the presence of water and recycled water storage tanks is less than significant. However, because some of the proposed storage tanks are adjacent to open space areas, they have the potential to degrade the visual appearance of, and the views from within, open space areas. Based on the standards of significance, this is a potentially significant impact. However, implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.2-3 will reduce this impact to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-50.)
The approximate 50% increase in residential units under the Blueprint Alternative compared with the proposed project would increase the potential impact from new sources of light and glare introduced with buildout of the Specific Plan area (Impact 4.2-4). However, the Blueprint Alternative will conform to all adopted County policies and the detailed lighting and building material design guidelines in the Specific Plan that are intended to control light and glare. This impact will remain less than significant under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-50.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, potential conflicts with Placer County policies related to buffering to protect visual resources (see Impact 4.2-5) is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-50.)

Visual impacts from removal of vegetation during utility line construction due to off-site utility line and roadway construction (see Impact 4.2-6) would remain potentially significant under the Blueprint Alternative. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.2-6a and 4.2-6b along with the regulatory safeguards of other jurisdictions in which construction would take place would reduce this impact to a less than significant level under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-50.)

Alteration of views due to the expansion/improvement of off-site wastewater treatment facilities would remain less than significant under the Blueprint Alternative for the reasons set forth under Impact 4.2-7. New sources of light and glare that may be created due to off-site infrastructure construction (see Impact 4.2-8) would also be less than significant for the reasons set forth under Impact 4.2-8. (RDEIR, p. 6-50.)

**Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Cumulative impacts related to alteration of views (see Impact 4.2-9) would be the same under the Blueprint Alternative. Based on the standards of significance, the cumulative impacts of the project and related projects are significant, and the project’s incremental contribution to this impact is cumulatively considerable and thus significant. This impact cannot be mitigated to a less than cumulatively considerable level and thus is unavoidable. Similarly, with regard to cumulative light and glare impacts (see Impact 4.2-10), the cumulative impacts of the project and related projects are significant, and the project’s incremental contribution to this impact is itself cumulatively considerable and thus, significant. This impact, though substantially lessened through project-specific mitigation, cannot be mitigated to a less than cumulatively considerable level and thus, is unavoidable. (RDEIR, pp. 6-50 to 6-51.)

**Hydrology, Water Resources and Water Quality**

. **Hydrology and Flood Control**

**Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Under the Blueprint Alternative, increased density would result in a greater increase in impervious surface as compared to the proposed project (see Impact 4.3.2-1). An analysis by Civil Solutions found that during 100-year and 200-year storm events, increased run-off would
lead to potential impacts in the area between the Specific Plan area and Steelhead Creek due to increased volumes being discharged during the timing of peak flow from the Sankey Gap. The Placer Vineyards Blueprint Alternative Master Project Drainage Study recommends increases in the size of on-site detention facilities. In addition, it recommends an increase in pumping of 175 CFS at the pump station at the Natomas Main Drainage Canal to address flood volume increases downstream in the event of a Sankey Gap spill event. This impact is potentially significant.

With reference to the Placer Vineyards Blueprint Alternative Master Project Drainage Study and increases in runoff quantity, implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.2-1a, 4.3.2-1b, 4.3.2-1c-i will reduce this impact to a less than significant level. These mitigation measures will ensure that development applications within the Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan area will comply with the recommendations of the Blueprint Alternative Master Project Drainage Study, and will be accompanied by site-specific drainage reports. Development must also follow the requirements of the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual, including reducing post-development stormwater runoff volume to pre-development levels for the 2-, 10-, 25- and 100-year storm events through construction of regional retention and detention facilities. (RDEIR, p. 6-52.)

Urbanization and development of the Specific Plan area under the Blueprint Alternative could also increase runoff to existing and proposed culverts within and downstream of the Specific Plan area to a greater degree than under the proposed project (see Impact 4.3.2-2). This incrementally greater increase in flows conveyed to existing culverts could result in over-topping and flooding due to inadequate capacity for urbanized flow-rates and potential clogging from construction debris, sediment and/or vegetation. However, the analysis of differences in the Placer Vineyards Blueprint Alternative Master Project Drainage Study between the Blueprint Alternative and the proposed project in terms of this impact recommended no changes in culvert sizes. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.2-2a and 4.3.2-2b will reduce this impact to a less than significant level. These mitigation measures will ensure that development applications within the Specific Plan area will be accompanied by site-specific drainage reports, and that this new development will follow the requirements of the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual. (RDEIR, pp. 6-52 to 6-53.)

Development under the Blueprint Alternative would result in an incrementally greater increase in runoff compared to the proposed project due to urbanization and increase in impervious surface area. This would result in a correspondingly greater increase in water surface levels within channels, swales and other drainageways (see Impact 4.3.2-3). However, compliance with the recommendations contained in the Placer Vineyards Blueprint Alternative Master Project Drainage Study and implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.2-3a-f will reduce this impact to a less than significant level. These mitigation measures will ensure that development applications within the Specific Plan area will be accompanied by site-specific drainage reports, and that this new development will follow the requirements of the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual, including reducing post-development stormwater runoff volume to pre-development levels for the 2-, 10-, 25- and 100-year storm events through construction of regional retention and detention facilities. Urbanization and loss of open area could result in increased levels of flooding. Flooding, along with increased velocities, could lead to bank erosion, elevated flood levels and increased runoff. (RDEIR, p. 6-53.)
Development and urbanization of the Specific Plan area under the Blueprint Alternative may reduce pervious area, which in turn limits the percolation process (see Impact 4.3.2-4). Because of the increased density of this alternative, this reduction would be greater than under the proposed project. Groundwater recharge within Specific Plan area may be limited to open spaces and detention facilities provided. The most likely area for recharge to occur would be along Dry Creek within the Type A soils area; however, under the Blueprint Alternative, this area will remain in open space and its recharge potential will be unaffected by the proposed development. This impact is 

less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-53.)

The Blueprint Alternative will use the same approach to drainage management as the proposed project. Therefore, inconsistencies between the proposed Specific Plan and General Plan goals, objectives and policies related to increased runoff, erosion, and drainage infrastructure capacity (see Impact 4.3.2-5) would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-53.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, installation of off-site infrastructure may increase runoff volumes (see Impact 4.3.2-6). Installation of utilities to serve Specific Plan area development is distinct from site urbanization and is not anticipated to result in additional impervious surface area or an increase in runoff. Design and installation of pipelines in off-site infrastructure areas is anticipated to remove and replace existing conditions with similar or in-kind materials. This would include soil and other earthen materials, or replacement of pavement in the case of utility lines within existing roadways. This impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-53.)

Off-site utilities and roadways will encroach into areas that are within FEMA-designated 100-year flood zones (see Impact 4.3.2-7). However, under the Blueprint Alternative, off-site utilities will be buried and will be enclosed systems, so there will be no impact to the floodplain. (RDEIR, p. 6-54.)

There could be a reduction in the ability of facility operators to achieve and maintain reservoir flood control diagrams (see Impact 4.3.2-8). Under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, diversions from the American River would increase, thereby increasing demand on system reservoirs and indirectly providing a flood control benefit to the region. Therefore, persons and property within the area protected by these facilities and under the operation of the reservoir flood control diagrams would not experience any significant increase in exposure to flooding hazards, relative to the existing condition. This impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-54.)

Floodplain characteristics could be altered due to implementation of the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply (see Impact 4.3.2-9). Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, no specific changes to the characteristics of the floodplain would result. This impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-54.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, there could be an increase in lower American River levee stress (see Impact 4.3.2-10). Analysis of the proposed project found that there would be unchanging or slightly decreased flows below Nimbus dam, and there would no substantial change in hydraulic stress to lower American River levees. Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the
proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-54.)

Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Under the Blueprint Alternative urbanization within the Specific Plan area and up-gradient of the Specific Plan area can result in a cumulative increase in surface runoff (see Impact 4.3.2-11). Increased runoff may exceed design assumptions for proposed culverts, roadways, channels and other conveyance systems and result in overtopping and downstream flooding. Design assumptions for off-site improvements and/or existing conditions affect capacity for received flow within the Specific Plan area as well as downstream. Because the drainage system design for the Specific Plan area will limit post-project flows in the Curry and Natomas East Main Drainage Canal (NEMDC) drainage sheds consistent with the Placer County Storm Water Management Manual, this is a less than significant impact for those sheds. Within the Dry Creek Drainage shed, detention of flows is not currently recommended. The Specific Plan will, therefore, contribute to increased flows within this shed. Ultimate build-out assumptions for the affected watershed must be considered and incorporated into the design of the storm drain system for the Specific Plan area and downstream areas. When combined with potential up-gradient flow increases, this is a cumulatively considerable significant impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.2-11a and 4.3.2-11b will reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-54.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, there could be a cumulative effect on reservoir flood control diagrams, altered floodplain characteristics, lower American river levee stress, and river hydraulic processes (see Impact 4.3.2-12). Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, this impact would remain less than significant, and no mitigation is required. (RDEIR, pp. 6-54 to 6-55.)

Water Resources (Water Supply)

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The initial surface water supply could affect delivery allocations to CVP customers (see Impact 4.3.3-1). Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-55.)

The initial surface water supply could affect delivery allocations to State Water Project (SWP) customers (see Impact 4.3.3-2). Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-55.)
The initial surface water supply could affect gross hydropower generation (see Impact 4.3.3-3). Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-55.)

The initial water surface supply could affect gross hydropower capacity (see Impact 4.3.3-4). Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-55.)

The initial surface water supply could affect Folsom pumping energy requirements (see Impact 4.3.3-5). Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial water surface supply, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-55.)

The initial surface water supply could affect El Dorado Irrigation District (EID) pumping energy requirements (see Impact 4.3.3-6). Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-55.)

Use of groundwater as a redundant water source in the Specific Plan area would have a direct impact on the North American River groundwater subbasin (see Impact 4.3.3-7). PCWA is proposing that a backup groundwater component be developed in conjunction with the Specific Plan. This backup groundwater component would also apply to the Blueprint Alternative. In the highest groundwater use scenario analyzed in the PCWA Integrated Water Resources Plan (Scenario 2b), which includes the Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan, a groundwater supply of approximately 15,000 AFA would be necessary to meet dry-year supply requirements. Assuming worst case scenario (25% of average demand would be met by groundwater during an entire year), the Blueprint Alternative would require approximately 3,575 AFA from groundwater. Under this improbable scenario and as compared to the current use of groundwater in the Specific Plan area, the proposed project would use approximately 225 AFA of additional groundwater while the Blueprint Alternative would use about 1,175 additional AFA of groundwater. (RDEIR, pp. 6-55 to 6-56.)

The Western Placer County Groundwater Storage Study recommended a sustainable yield for the Placer County portion of the North American River subbasin of 95,000 AFA. Historical groundwater use in Placer County by individual homes, farms and businesses is estimated to be about 90,000 AFA. However, due to the removal of agricultural land from production, changes in cropping patterns and irrigation techniques, and introduction of surface water supplies to serve urban development, it is currently estimated that groundwater use is in the range of 65,000 AFA to 75,000 AFA in western Placer County (Maische, January, 2006). According to the Western Placer County Groundwater Storage Study, groundwater produced in PCWA Zone 5 (western Placer County) was 77,000 total acre feet in 1995. (RDEIR, p. 6-56.)
While groundwater resources are used for current water supply in the Specific Plan area, that groundwater use will be gradually displaced by surface water as the area builds out. Approximately 2,400 AFA would be required to meet current agricultural needs within the Specific Plan area. This requirement will be eliminated as the area builds out. This will have a positive effect on the regional groundwater basin. (RDEIR, p. 6-56.)

As urban development replaces historic groundwater-irrigated agriculture, there is an opportunity to develop groundwater for use in meeting urban, domestic and irrigation demands without adversely affecting groundwater levels or long-term groundwater reliability. As with the proposed project, a backup groundwater supply to serve the Specific Plan area under the Blueprint Alternative could be developed and maintained within the established sustainable yield of the groundwater basin with no adverse impact on supply. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-56.)

Any wells drilled on-site for purposes of a backup groundwater supply will have the potential to affect other wells in the area (see Impact 4.3.3-8). It may be necessary to drill additional wells on-site to provide the backup groundwater supply required by PCWA to serve development under the Blueprint Alternative. Since agricultural and residential users in the Specific Plan area rely on wells, additional wells drilled on-site could result in localized dynamic drawdown impacts to groundwater levels in the immediate vicinity of the wells (cones of depression), thereby increasing pumping (energy) costs for existing wells and potentially leaving existing wells dry; lowering these wells is expensive. This impact is considered potentially significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.3-8a-c will reduce this impact to a less than significant level by imposing performance standards and applying measures designed to protect area wells. Additional site-specific environmental review may be required prior to the actual physical construction of new wells. Thus, members of the public will have additional opportunities to comment on the exact location and footprint-type impacts associated with such construction. (RDEIR, p. 6-56.)

Any wells drilled on-site for purposes of a backup groundwater supply will have the potential to affect nearby surface water bodies and could affect associated riparian vegetation (see Impact 4.3.3-9). It may be necessary to drill wells on-site to provide the backup groundwater supply required by PCWA to serve development under the Blueprint Alternative. Historically, as groundwater levels in the basin dropped, the rate of induced recharge from surrounding rivers increased. While this induced recharge can be of benefit to the groundwater basin, it can negatively impact surface water levels, thereby reducing surface water supplies and potentially drying out associated riparian vegetation. Because groundwater pumping would be within the safe yield of the groundwater basin, any potential effects would be localized in nature. This localized impact is considered potentially significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.3.3-9 will reduce this impact to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 6-56 to 6-57.)

Any wells drilled on-site for purposes of backup groundwater supply will have the potential to cause noise impacts on nearby sensitive receptors (see Impact 4.3.3-10). It may be necessary to drill wells on-site to provide the backup groundwater supply required by PCWA to serve development under the Blueprint Alternative. Although it is assumed that pumps would be electrically driven, the pumps associated with these wells, which may be located adjacent to
sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, day care facilities, hospitals, schools), could generate noise levels that may be intrusive or even in excess of allowable noise thresholds. This impact is considered **potentially significant.** Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.3.3-10 will reduce this impact to a **less than significant level** by requiring compliance with established noise mitigation standards. (RDEIR, p. 6-57.)

Impacts 4.3.3-11, 4.3.3-12, 4.3.3-13 and 4.3.3-14 address the effects of the long-term surface water supply. Because the analysis performed for the Specific Plan (detailed in Section 4.3.3) assumed a maximum of 35,000 AFA, all of the impacts and conclusions remain the same for the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-57.)

**Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

The Blueprint Alternative could have a cumulative effect on groundwater supply due to use of groundwater as a redundant potable water source (see Impact 4.3.3-15). However, in the highest groundwater use scenario analyzed in the PCWA Integrated Water Resources Plan (Scenario 2b), which assumes cumulative development in PCWA’s service area, including the Blueprint Alternative, a groundwater supply of approximately 15,000 AFA would be necessary to meet dry-year supply requirements. (RDEIR, p. 6-57.)

Assuming worst case scenario (25% of average demand would be met by groundwater during an entire year), the Specific Plan area would require approximately 3,575 AFA from groundwater. (RDEIR, p. 6-57.)

PCWA’s Integrated Water Resources Plan contains several conclusions regarding the cumulative water supply demand that are relevant to the Specific Plan cumulative contribution:

- There is adequate water supply to meet all of the demands for each of the growth scenarios.
- Groundwater supplies are not needed to meet normal climate year demands.
- Dry-year water supplies must include groundwater to meet demands for Scenarios 2, 2b and 3.
- Reclaimed water supply is an important supply source and is required to meet Scenario 2 demands.

(RDEIR, pp. 6-57 to 6-58.)

Although the Blueprint Alternative’s incremental contribution to the cumulative condition is less than considerable based on cumulative demand and the safe yield of the groundwater basin (95,000 AFA), this conclusion assumes a significant amount of reclaimed (recycled) water will be available for use (12,000 to 15,000 AFA). Impact 4.11.8-2 discusses the potential for a significant amount of the wastewater to be treated by the SRCSD. In this event, recycled water may not be available to the Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan, which could increase demand for groundwater in a dry-year condition. Because of this uncertainty, this is a **potentially significant cumulative impact** to which the project’s contribution could be **cumulatively considerable (i.e., significant)**. It should be noted that if all wastewater is treated at the
DCWWTP, which is the preferred option, this potential impact would not occur. (RDEIR, p. 6-58.)

Water Quality

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Under the Blueprint Alternative, surface water quality in the Specific Plan area could be degraded following site development by the introduction of urban pollutants including vehicle oils and greases, heavy metals on roads, parking lots, and driveways, fertilizers and pesticides used on site landscaping, and toxic compounds released from auto maintenance areas into surface runoff (see Impact 4.3.4-1). Since the Blueprint Alternative increases density and therefore possible sources for this runoff, the amount of these urban pollutants would be proportionately greater than under the proposed project. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-1a-g would ensure that this impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-58.)

As with the proposed project, construction under the Blueprint Alternative during both wet and dry weather would affect water quality with increased sedimentation, operation and maintenance of construction vehicles and storage of materials that could release contamination to surface waters (see Impact 4.3.4-2). However, implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-2a-c will ensure that this impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-58.)

As with the proposed project, under the Blueprint Alternative, improvements to drainage swales and channels could result in the removal of existing vegetation (see Impact 4.3.4-3). Loss of vegetation results in increased bank erosion, higher water velocities and water quality degradation. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-3a and 4.3.4-3b will ensure that this impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-58.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, groundwater quality in the Specific Plan area could be further degraded during construction and by the introduction of construction pollutants and urban pollutants, including vehicle oils and greases, heavy metals on roads, parking lots, and driveways, fertilizers and pesticides used on site landscaping, and toxic compounds released from auto maintenance areas (see Impact 4.3.4-4). However, implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.3.4-4 will ensure that this impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-58.)

The initial surface water supply could affect the concentration of contaminants in the lower American River, which could affect the quality of drinking water available at other locations in the CVP system (see Impact 4.3.4-5). Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial surface water supply, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 6-58 to 6-59.)

The initial surface water supply could affect Delta water quality (see Impact 4.3.4-6). Since the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project in terms of increased diversions of American River water under the proposed Specific Plan initial water supply, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-59.)
Under the Blueprint Alternative, construction of off-site infrastructure could affect water quality causing increased sedimentation; and operation and maintenance of construction vehicles and storage of materials that could release contamination to surface waters (see Impact 4.3.4-7). However, compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-7a-c will ensure that this impact is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-59.)

**Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Surface water quality downstream of the Specific Plan area could be degraded following site development through the introduction of urban pollutants including vehicle oils and greases, heavy metals on roads, parking lots, and driveways, fertilizers and pesticides used on site landscaping, and toxic compounds released from auto maintenance areas into surface runoff (see Impact 4.3.4-8). Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-1(a-h) will reduce the impact of cumulative long-term surface water quality degradation that would occur after the development of improvements in the Specific Plan area. However, because Placer County cannot assure that pollutant levels will be reduced to pre-development levels on an area-wide basis, long-term impacts will remain significant, cumulative and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-59.)

There could be cumulative effects on Dry Creek water quality, including additional erosion and sedimentation due to increased effluent discharge from the DCCWTP (see Impact 4.3.4-9). Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-9a-c (which appear in the 1996 DCWWTP Master Plan EIR) will reduce the impacts related to temperature change, introduction of trace metals and organics, and changes in dissolved oxygen to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-59.)

The Blueprint Alternative could contribute to cumulative degradation of Sacramento River water quality due to increased effluent discharge from the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) (see Impact 4.3.4-10). The SRWTP 2020 Master Plan EIR found all impacts associated with increased effluent discharge from SRWTP to the Sacramento to be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required. (RDEIR, p. 6-59.)

There could be cumulative effects resulting from increased diversions and changes in CVP operations that could result in reduced river flows and reservoir storage (see Impact 4.3.4-11). Since the proposed source of long-term water supply for the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-59.)

The proposed water supply could have a cumulative affect on Delta water quality (see Impact 4.3.4-12). Since the proposed source of long-term water supply for the Blueprint Alternative is identical to the proposed project, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-60.)
**Biological Resources**

**Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

A total of 3,520 acres of open space (i.e., agricultural land, wetlands, and riparian habitat) is estimated to be removed within the Specific Plan area (see Impact 4.4-1) under either the proposed project or Blueprint Alternative. The loss of this open space would reduce the amount of biological habitat. An increase in population and density within residential areas under the Blueprint Alternative will not, however, change the amount of designated open space acreage to be retained within the Specific Plan area. The impact to open space will remain **significant and unavoidable**, even with implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.4-1a-j. (RDEIR, p. 6-60.)

It is estimated that acreages of habitat types within the Blueprint Alternative area and special-status species within those habitats will be affected in a manner similar to the affects described in Chapter 4 for the proposed Specific Plan because the same land area would be disturbed. (RDEIR, p. 6-60.)

The loss and degradation of vernal pool habitat and vernal pool invertebrates (see Impact 4.4-2) will remain **significant** after Mitigation Measure 4.4-2 is implemented. Removal of nesting and foraging habitat in agricultural and non-native grassland for Swainson’s hawk (see Impact 4.4-6) and removal of nesting and foraging habitat in riparian areas for the tricolored blackbird (see Impact 4.4-7) will not be further affected by the Blueprint Alternative. Impact 4.4-6 will remain **significant and unavoidable** even after implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-6. Impact 4.4-7 will remain **less than significant**. The impact to nesting raptors (see Impact 4.4-8) will also remain **less than significant** after surveys are conducted prior to construction activities commencing (see Mitigation Measure 4.4-8). (RDEIR, p. 6-61.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, construction activities could remove habitat for valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a federally-listed species potentially occurring in the Specific Plan area (Impact 4.4-3). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-3 would reduce the loss or disturbance of Valley elderberry longhorn beetle habitat to a **less than significant level** on properties requiring more detailed resource identification. (RDEIR, p. 6-61.)

Construction activities could remove habitat for the western pond turtle, a special-status species potentially occurring in the Specific Plan area (see Impact 4.4-4). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-4 would reduce the loss of western pond turtle habitat to a **less than significant level**. The replacement of western pond turtle habitat required by this measure could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes areas appropriate for western pond turtle. (RDEIR, p. 6-61.)

Construction activities could destroy active nests or disturb nesting burrowing owls, a California Species of Special Concern (see Impact 4.4-5). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-5 would reduce impacts associated with disturbance of nesting burrowing owls to a **less than significant** level. The replacement of burrowing owl habitat required by this measure could be partially or entirely included within Mitigation Measure 4.4-1, to the extent that the mitigation area includes areas appropriate for burrowing owl. (RDEIR, p. 6-61.)
Development under the Blueprint Alternative could result in removal of nesting and foraging habitat for Swainson’s hawk, a State-listed species (see Impact 4.4-6). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-1 as it pertains to Swainson’s hawk foraging habitat and nesting trees (Mitigation Measure 4.4-6) will reduce the impact, but not to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-61.)

Development under the Blueprint Alternative could result in removal of nesting and foraging habitat for tricolored blackbird (see Impact 4.4-7). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-7 would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of tricolored blackbird nests to a level that is less than significant.

Construction activities could destroy active nests or disturb nesting raptors (see Impact 4.4-8). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-8 would reduce the potential disturbance of nesting raptors to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-61.)

Construction activities could destroy active roosts or disturb several species of bats (Impact 4.4-9). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-9 would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of bat roosts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-62.)

The loss of individual oak trees (see Impact 4.4-10) and different habitat types, including jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands (see Impact 4.4-11) and riparian habitat (see Impact 4.4-12) within the Specific Plan area will all be impacted similarly as described for the proposed project and will remain significant and unavoidable, even after mitigation (see Mitigation Measures 4.4-10a, 4.4-10b, 4.4-11a and 4.4-11b). The impact to riparian habitat and disturbed drainages will be reduced to a less than significant level with mitigation (Mitigation Measures 4.4-12a and 4.4-12b) under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-62.)

Development under the Blueprint Alternative could result in removal of nesting and foraging habitat for Loggerhead shrike (see Impact 4.4-13). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-13 would reduce the destruction and/or disturbance of Loggerhead shrike to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-62.)

The Blueprint Alternative may increase the strain on off-site infrastructure, including roads and utilities due to the increased population density within the Specific Plan area, but it will not increase the impact to habitat and special-status species within the off-site infrastructure areas because the amount of acreage developed will not be increased. The amount of open space developed for off-site infrastructure is minimal (see Impact 4.4-14) and the impact will remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-62.)

Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for special-status plant species potentially occurring there (see Impact 4.4-15). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-15 would substantially lessen the loss or disturbance of special-status plant habitat; however, the impact would remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-62.)
Impacts on special-status and sensitive species in the off-site infrastructure areas, including vernal pool invertebrates, valley elderberry longhorn beetle, western pond turtle, burrowing owl, tricolored blackbird, California horned lizard, and various species of bats, Giant Garter snake, and Loggerhead shrike (see Impacts 4.4-16, 4.4-17, 4.4-18, 4.4-19, 4.4-21, 4.4-23, 4.4-24, 4.4-28, and 4.4-29) will be reduced by mitigation (see Mitigation Measures 4.4-16, 4.4-17, 4.4-18, 4.4-19, 4.4-21, 4.4-23, 4.4-24, 4.4-28, and 4.4-29); however, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, these impacts will remain significant and unavoidable. Similarly, the destruction of active raptor nests or disturbance of nesting raptors in the off-site infrastructure areas (see Impact 4.4-22) would be lessened by mitigation (see Mitigation Measure 4.4-22) but would remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-62.)

Removal of foraging habitat in the off-site infrastructure areas for Swainson’s hawk (see Impact 4.4-20) would be temporary and the disturbance to the habitat would be minimal; therefore, the impact will remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-62.)

The loss of individual oak trees (see Impact 4.4-25), jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands (see Impact 4.4-26), and riparian habitat (see Impact 4.4-27) will remain significant and unavoidable under the Blueprint Alternative even after implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.4-25, 4.4-26, and 4.4-27. (RDEIR, p. 6-63.)

Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within and adjacent to Dry Creek could remove habitat for special-status fish species potentially occurring there (see Impact 4.4-30). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-30 will reduce this impact; however, it will remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-63.)

The initial water supply discussion (see Impacts 4.4-31 through 4.4-58), was conducted by SWRI, Inc. The impacts analyze how the proposed project will affect aquatic biological resources and water quality in Northern California. Under the proposed project analysis, these impacts result in a less than significant impact, and no mitigation is required. Under the Blueprint Alternative, these impacts would remain the same because the water supply evaluated will remain the same as that evaluated in the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 6-63.)

Other impacts associated with the initial surface water supply (see Impacts 4.4-27, 4.4-29) would remain significant and unavoidable under both the proposed project and under the Blueprint Alternative. Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within the off-site infrastructure areas could result in the loss of riparian habitat and disturbance of drainages (see Impact 4.4-27). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-27 would reduce the disturbance of riparian areas to a less than significant level. Placer County can and will require this measure of Specific Plan-related infrastructure within Placer County. However, some of the project infrastructure improvements would be located in and under the jurisdiction of Sutter County, Sacramento County, and/or the City of Roseville, and Placer County cannot compel these jurisdictions to adopt or implement mitigation measures. Therefore, for purposes of Placer County as the CEQA lead agency, the potential impact on riparian areas will have to be considered significant and unavoidable. Under the Blueprint Alternative, installation and maintenance of infrastructure
Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Cumulative development under the Blueprint Alternative would contribute to the ongoing loss of natural undisturbed open space in the region, increase human intrusion and activity levels in proximity to habitat areas, and would remove potential habitat for federally- and State-listed and other special-status species (see Impact 4.4-59). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.4-59 would substantially lessen the severity of the Specific Plan contribution to the cumulative loss of open space, but not to a less than significant level. Therefore, the impact would remain **significant and unavoidable**, and the project’s incremental contribution to this impact would itself be **cumulatively considerable (i.e., significant)**. (RDEIR, p. 6-63.)

Increased flows from the DCWWTP (see Impact 4.4-60) would remain **less than significant** because the analysis performed by Merritt Smith assumed the Blueprint Alternative (Appendix Q of the Revised Draft EIR). Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-9a, 4.3.4-9b, and 4.3.4-9c would be implemented to decrease the impact on water quality and aquatic biological resources in Dry Creek. It is unknown whether impacts to the SRWTP would remain less than significant without further analysis. This is a **potentially significant impact**. (RDEIR, pp. 6-63 to 6-64.)

Long-term water supply analysis (see Impacts 4.4-61 through 4.4-73) was conducted by SWRI, Inc. The impacts analyze how the proposed project will affect aquatic biological resources and water quality in Northern California on a cumulative level. Under the proposed project analysis, all of the impacts result in a **less than significant** impact. Under the Blueprint Alternative, the impacts would remain the same because the same 35,000 AFA water supply would be used that was the subject of the Revised Draft EIR analysis. (RDEIR, p. 6-64.)

As noted in the Introduction to Section 4.4, if the additional 7,499 units proposed under the Blueprint Alternative were developed elsewhere in the region at average densities of 5.4 (like the proposed project) to 8.5 per acre (like the Blueprint Alternative), an additional 882 to 1,389 acres would need to be converted to residential uses. Additional land would also be needed for schools and parks to serve this population. Depending on the location of such development, additional agricultural and biological resources could be lost to urbanization. (RDEIR, p. 6-64.)

**Geology and Soils**

**Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Geologic and soils effects would not be altered under the very similar form of development and development footprint proposed under the Blueprint Alternative. Proposed construction on soils with low strength, high shrink-swell potential, and corrosive characteristics may result in damage to structures, foundations, and roadways (see Impact 4.5-1) and would remain **potentially significant**. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.5-1a and 4.5-1b would reduce these impacts to a level that is **less than significant**. (RDEIR, p. 6-64.)
Under the Blueprint Alternative, potential ground shaking could damage structures during strong earthquakes generated along faults in the region (see Impact 4.5-2). However, this impact is less than significant, and no mitigation is required. As with the proposed project, there would be no impact from surface ground rupture (see Impact 4.5-3). Construction activities resulting in ground disturbance (topographic alteration) could create a moderate potential for ground instability and erosion (see Impact 4.5-4), and remains potentially significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.5-4a-f would reduce these impacts to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 6-64 to 6-65.)

Construction activities related to off-site infrastructure resulting in ground disturbance (topographic alteration) could create a potential for ground instability and soil erosion (see Impact 4.5-5) under the Blueprint Alternative. Impacts related to ground disturbance that could result from trench/pipeline construction within the off-site utility corridors, roadway widening, or expansion of wastewater treatment plant-related facilities are similar to those for proposed utility improvements and construction within the Specific Plan area. Those impacts include earthwork/grading or topographic alteration, and soil erosion, which are addressed under Impact 4.5-4 and Mitigation Measures 4.5-4a-f. Although some of the specific soils to be affected and the nature of construction are not yet known, Mitigation Measures 4.5-4a-f can reduce any potentially significant effects to a less than significant level. However, some of the project infrastructure would be located in another jurisdiction and not subject to Placer County oversight. (RDEIR, p. 6-65.)

Trenching and pipeline construction are temporary in nature. Once the utility is installed the surface is typically returned to its original condition. Most off-site utility lines will be placed in already disturbed roadway easements. Further, any construction will be subject to NPDES requirements, including submission of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP), as administered by the State Water Resources Control Board. In addition, any construction will be under the oversight of another public agency, and ultimate owner of the improvements (e.g., the Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD), PCWA, City of Roseville, and SRCSD). Each of these agencies has similar construction protocols to those administered by Placer County, and similar responsibilities and obligations under NPDES, and other provisions of the Clean Water Act. Based on these regulatory and institutional safeguards, any potentially significant geology and soils-related impacts that could occur within other jurisdictions from utility line and roadway construction would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-65.)

Although expansion of wastewater treatment plant-related facilities is permanent, any geology and soils-related impacts pertaining to expansion of the DCWWTP will be the same as those analyzed and described in the Roseville Regional Wastewater Treatment Service Area Master Plan EIR. Relevant impacts that were identified include Soil Disturbance, Erosion and Sedimentation, Topographic Alteration, Soil Instability and Seismic Hazards. These impacts were found to be less than significant with proposed mitigation. Mitigation measures included “Restore ground surface and topography” (see Mitigation Measure 5-1), “Require soil stockpiling and disposal standards” (see Mitigation Measure 5-3), “Prepare erosion and sedimentation control plan” (see Mitigation Measure 5-5), and “Implement recommendations of geotechnical report” (see Mitigation Measure 5-6). Additionally, the SRWTP 2020 Master Plan...
EIR identified exposure to hazards from abandoned natural gas well plugs from the former Freeport gas field as relevant to topographic alteration. The EIR identified “Consultation of Division of Oil and Gas records prior to excavation for excavation depths greater than 5 feet below the surface” as the appropriate mitigation to reduce the impact to a less than significant level (for additional discussion of the two wastewater treatment plants, see Section 4.1 of the Revised Draft EIR). (RDEIR, pp. 6-65 to 6-66.)

Because geology and soils mitigation measures have already been adopted by the City of Roseville and the SRCSD for wastewater treatment facility construction, and because those measures are similar and equivalent to those identified by Placer County for the Specific Plan area, potentially significant geology and soils impacts related to expansion of wastewater treatment plant-related facilities are less than significant with adoption of Mitigation Measures 4.5-4a-f, and 4.5.5a-e. (RDEIR, p. 6-66.)

Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Cumulative impacts from soil erosion/loss and off-site sedimentation could occur from this project and surrounding projects involving earthwork activities or topographic alteration (see Impact 4.5-6). The application and effectiveness of existing regulatory programs (see Section 4.5.3) when combined with Mitigation Measures 4.5-4a-f for the Specific Plan area would result in a less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., less than significant) impact from soil erosion, loss, and off-site sedimentation. (RDEIR, p. 6-66.)

Archaeological/Paleontological Resources

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impacts to known historic or unique archaeological resources and paleontological resources within the Specific Plan area (see Impact 4.6-1) could occur under the Blueprint Alternative. These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-1 would reduce this impact to unique archaeological sites to a less than significant level. However, the measure would still not reduce the impact to historical resources to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-66.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, development of the Specific Plan area could destroy or alter unknown historical and/or unique archaeological resources (see Impact 4.6-2). It is possible that cultural resources other than those described exist within the Specific Plan area. Since the Blueprint Alternative is denser than the proposed project, the risk that these unknown cultural resources could be encountered would increase. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.6-2a-h would reduce this impact to unique archaeological sites to a less than significant level. However, the measure will not reduce the impact to historical resources to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-67.)

Development of the Specific Plan area could destroy or alter unknown paleontological resources (see Impact 4.6-3). Since the Blueprint Alternative is denser than the proposed project, the risk...
that these unknown cultural resources could be destroyed would increase. However, implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.6-3a and 4-6-3b would reduce this impact to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-67.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, implementation of the Riego/Baseline Road intersection improvements within the off-site infrastructure areas could adversely affect the Reclamation District 1000 Rural Historic Landscape (see Impact 4.6-4). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. Reclamation District 1000 is a recognized historic landscape. The addition of improvements that would significantly modify this historic landscape or add new elements to the landscape is a potentially significant impact. However, because of its large size, it is doubtful that any impact to Reclamation District 1000 from intersection improvement would diminish its eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. Therefore, this is a less than significant impact and no mitigation is required. (RDEIR, p. 6-67.)

Implementation of the Baseline Road widening project within the off-site infrastructure areas could adversely affect the historic archaeological site of “Eagle House,” an early inn (see Impact 4.6-5). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. This historical archaeological site, if it exists, has not been identified in the field; its approximate location has been estimated from historic maps. If it exists, destruction or alteration of this building site is a potentially significant and unavoidable impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would ensure that any undiscovered historic resources are properly inspected and recorded. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-4 would reduce off-site historic and cultural resource impacts, but not to a less than significant level due to the potential for their destruction. The impact is, therefore, considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-67.)

Implementation of the Watt Avenue widening project could destroy or alter two prehistoric unique archaeological sites and a portion of one historic cemetery (see Impact 4.6-6). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce this impact to unique archaeological sites to a less than significant level. However, the measure will not reduce the impact to historical resources (Union Cemetery) to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. Mitigation Measure 4.4-6 is intended to address the reinterment of burials within the proposed road widening. (RDEIR, p. 6-67.)

Implementation of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply Sacramento River Alternative for an off-site water line could alter or destroy portions of two historic sites and one historic district (see Impact 4.6-7). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would not reduce the impact to historical resources to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-68.)

Implementation of a sewer force main along Watt Avenue and PFE Road could alter or destroy portions of three prehistoric unique archaeological sites and one historic cemetery (see Impact 4.6-8). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would
be disturbed. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce the impact to unique archaeological sites to a less than significant level. However, the measure will not reduce the impact to historical resources to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-68.)

Implementation of the alternative sewer force main along Cook Riolo Road and Dry Creek could alter or destroy portions of four prehistoric unique archaeological sites (see Impact 4.6-9). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce unique off-site cultural resource impacts related to the alternative sewer force main to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-68.)

Implementation of Sewer Line (SRCSD) Alternative “A” could alter or destroy a portion of two historic sites (see Impact 4.6-10). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-10 in conjunction with Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce impacts to the Sacramento Northern Railroad grade to a less than significant level. In addition, implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would assist in reducing impacts to Sorrento Road; however, it would not reduce Sorrento Road impacts to a less than significant level; therefore, the impact must remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-68.)

Implementation of the Watt Avenue to DCWWTP sewer connection project could damage or destroy portions of nine prehistoric unique archaeological sites (see Impact 4.6-11). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce unique archaeological off-site cultural resource impacts associated with the proposed sewer connection project to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-68.)

Implementation of the DCWWTP Off-Site Recycled Water Line project could damage or destroy portions of one prehistoric unique archaeological site and the location of two prehistoric isolated finds (see Impact 4.6-12). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-5 would reduce off-site cultural resource impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-68.)

Expansion of the DCWWTP and SRWTP may affect cultural resources (see Impact 4.6-13). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.6-13a-c appearing in the Roseville Regional Wastewater Treatment Service Area Master Plan EIR and SRWTP 2020 Master Plan EIR are incorporated herein and will reduce any impacts to cultural resources related to plant expansion to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, pp. 6-68 to 6-69.)

Impacts to undiscovered cultural resources may occur in unsurveyed areas (see Impact 4.6-14). These impacts would be the same as the proposed project because the same area would be disturbed. Although a number of off-site infrastructure sites and corridors were surveyed for the Specific Plan project, not all areas were accessible to project proponents. Several of those properties have been described during discussion of the above impacts. In addition, certain off-
site infrastructure has not yet been defined or precisely located, such as the Pleasant Grove Wastewater Treatment Plant (PGWWTP) recycled water line. Impacts to unique archaeological resources in areas where field surveys have not been performed are potentially significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.6-14 will reduce impacts to historic resources, but not to a level that is less than significant. These potential impacts remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-69.)

The off-site infrastructure areas could affect water surface elevations at Shasta and Trinity reservoirs (see Impact 4.6-15). Since the Blueprint Alternative relies on the same initial water supply both in quantity and source as the proposed project, impacts to cultural resources at Shasta and Trinity reservoirs resulting from changes in maximum and minimum water levels would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-69.)

The off-site infrastructure areas could affect changes in flows of the upper and lower Sacramento River/Delta (see Impact 4.6-16). Since the Blueprint Alternative relies on the same initial water supply both in quantity and source as the proposed project, impacts to cultural resources along the upper and lower Sacramento River from changes in river flows would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-69.)

The off-site infrastructure areas could affect water surface elevation at Folsom Reservoir (see Impact 4.6-17). Since the Blueprint Alternative relies on the same initial water supply as the proposed project both in quantity and source, impacts to cultural resources along the upper and lower Sacramento River from changes in river flows would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-69.)

The off-site infrastructure areas could affect flows of the lower American River (see Impact 4.6-18). Since the Blueprint Alternative relies on the same initial water supply as the proposed project both in quantity and source, impacts to cultural resources along the upper and lower Sacramento River from changes in river flows would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-69.)

**Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

The Blueprint Alternative could contribute to cumulative impacts on historic or prehistoric resources (see Impact 4.6-19). The project in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects would increase the density of development in the area and could further threaten significant cultural resources in the vicinity. Therefore, this cumulative impact is considered potentially significant. Professional archaeologists generally recognize that population growth increases the probability of vandalism and other purposeful and inadvertent acts that destroy significant archaeological resources. However, the degree of probability is unknown as such cumulative impacts, if any, would be difficult to measure. (RDEIR, pp. 6-69 to 6-70.)

There is no feasible mitigation for the indirect cumulative impacts related to an increased population in Placer County. Although implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.6-1, 4.6-2a-h, 4.6-3a, 4.6-3b, 4.6-4, and 4.6-10 would reduce impacts, such indirect cumulative impacts would remain significant and unavoidable and the project’s contribution, based on the project’s size
The off-site infrastructure areas could be affected by changes in flows in the lower American River, Sacramento River, and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and changes in water surface elevation at Shasta, Trinity and Folsom reservoirs (see Impact 4.6-20). Since the Blueprint Alternative relies on the same initial water supply as the proposed project, both in quantity and source, impacts to cultural resources along the upper and lower Sacramento River from changes in river flows would be less than significant. The Blueprint Alternative also relies on the same long-term water supply. As the long-term water supply would not contribute to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition, it would also have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the impacts that occur under the cumulative condition. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-70.)

It should be noted that there could be less disturbance of land regionally if the Blueprint Alternative is developed to the extent that residential development demands are reduced in other areas of the in the six-county Sacramento Region. Depending on the presence of significant archaeological and paleontological resources where such development would otherwise occur, impacts could be reduced under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-70.)

Transportation and Circulation

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Construction Impacts. The on-site construction within the Specific Plan area is expected to last for approximately 20 to 25 years, subject to economic conditions under either the Blueprint Alternative or the proposed Specific Plan (see Impact 4.7-1). Mitigation Measure 4.7-1 would reduce the impact to a less than significant level by requiring a construction traffic management plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-72.)

Existing Plus Blueprint Conditions. The approach to the Existing Plus Blueprint analysis is similar to the approach used to analyze the proposed project, and is described on page 4.7-30. The number of roadway lanes is depicted in Figure 6-4. (RDEIR, p. 6-72.)

• Placer County

Figure 6-5 of the Revised Draft EIR shows the average daily traffic volumes on unincorporated Placer County roadways within the study area under Existing and Existing Plus Blueprint conditions (see Impact 4.7-2). A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 6-11 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 6-72; PRRDEIR, p. 6-1.)

This analysis indicates that full development of the Blueprint Alternative under existing conditions would cause impacts on the following Placer County roadway segment:
a. **Level of Service on the segment of Walerga Road from Baseline Road to PFE Road would remain LOS “D” but the proposed project would increase the traffic volume and volume-to-capacity ratio on this segment.**

b. **Level of Service on the segment of Watt Avenue from Dyer Lane to PFE Road would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “D.”**

(RDEIR, p. 6-72.)

In contrast, the proposed Specific Plan would have an impact on the above Walerga Road segments, but not those on Watt Avenue. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.7-2b would result in LOS “A” under either the project or the Blueprint Alternative (with a V/C 0.44 for the latter). However, feasible mitigation measures have not been found for the segment of Watt Avenue from Dyer Lane to PFE Road. Therefore, this impact is **significant and unavoidable** for the Blueprint Alternative only. (RDEIR, pp. 6-72 to 6-73.)

The Blueprint Alternative would also increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County (see Impact 4.7-3). (RDEIR, p. 6-73.)

Based on a signal warrant analysis, the Blueprint Alternative would cause signal warrants to be met at the same intersections as the proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 6-73.)

Figure 4.7-4 shows the key study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County. Table 6-12 presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under Existing and Existing Plus Blueprint conditions. The traffic volumes and lane geometry at each intersection in Table 6-12 are shown in Appendix I of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 6-73.)

This analysis indicates that development of the Blueprint Alternative under existing conditions would cause impacts at the following intersections:

a. **Level of Service at the intersection of Baseline Road and Fiddyment Road/Walerga Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F.”**

b. **Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and PFE Road would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “D”**

c. **Level of Service at the intersection of Walerga Road and PFE Road would degrade from LOS “E” to LOS “F”.**

(RDEIR, p. 6-73.)

In comparison, the proposed Specific Plan would have impacts at Baseline Road/Fiddyment Road/Walerga Road and Walerga Road/PFE Road, but not the other intersection. (RDEIR, p. 6-73.)
Mitigation Measures 4.7-3a and 4.7-3b would be required to improve intersection operations under the Blueprint Alternative. In addition, with the implementation of Mitigation Measure 6.7-3c, the impact of the Blueprint Alternative would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-73.)

6.7-3c  Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, construct a westbound left turn lane to the intersection of Watt Avenue and PFE Road to improve operations from LOS “D” to LOS “B.” (RDEIR, p. 6-73.)

- City of Roseville

Under Existing Plus Blueprint conditions, no improvements to the City of Roseville intersections were assumed beyond existing conditions. Figure 6-6 of the Revised Draft EIR shows the daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in the City of Roseville under Existing Plus Blueprint conditions. Figure 4.7-5 shows the key study area intersections in the City of Roseville. Table 6-13 presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under the Existing Plus Blueprint conditions. The traffic volumes and lane geometry at each intersection in Table 6-13 are shown in Appendix I. This analysis indicates that development of the Blueprint Alternative under existing conditions would cause impacts on the following Roseville intersections within the study area (see Impact 4.7-4):

a. Level of Service at the intersection of Woodcreek Oaks Boulevard and Baseline Road would degrade from LOS “B” to LOS “D.”

b. Level of Service at the intersection of Foothills Boulevard and Baseline Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F.”

c. Level of Service at the intersection of Woodcreek Oaks Boulevard and Pleasant Grove Boulevard would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “E.”

(RDEIR, p. 6-77.)

In contrast, the proposed Specific Plan would have a significant impact, although less severe, on the above intersections and the Foothills Boulevard/Cirby Way intersection. (RDEIR, p. 6-77.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.7-4a and 4.7-4b would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. With these measures, intersection operations would improve as follows:

- Woodcreek Oaks Boulevard and Baseline Road: LOS “B” (V/C 0.63),
- Foothills Boulevard and Baseline Road: LOS “D” (V/C 0.86), and
- Woodcreek Oaks Boulevard and Pleasant Grove Boulevard: LOS “C” (V/C 0.70).

(RDEIR, p. 6-77.)

As discussed on page 4.7-43 of the Revised Draft EIR, implementation of these mitigation measures is within the jurisdiction the City of Roseville. If the identified improvements are not
made, the roadway segments would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable.** (RDEIR, p. 6-77.)

- **Sacramento County**

The Blueprint Alternative would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sacramento County (see Impact 4.7-5). Figure 6-7 shows the average daily traffic volumes on Sacramento County roadways within the study area under Existing Plus Blueprint conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 6-14. This analysis indicates that development of the Blueprint Alternative under existing conditions would cause impacts on the following Sacramento County roadway segments:

a. **Level of Service on the two-lane segment of Elverta Road from 16th Street to Rio Linda Boulevard would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “F.”**

b. **Level of Service on the two- to four-lane segment of Watt Avenue from the Placer County line to Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “F.”**

c. **Level of Service on the segment of Watt Avenue from Elverta Road to Antelope Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F.”**

d. **Level of Service on the segment of Watt Avenue from Antelope Road to Elkhorn Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.**

e. **Level of Service on the segment of Watt Avenue from Elkhorn Boulevard to Don Julio Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.**

f. **Level of Service on Walerga Road from the Elverta Road to Antelope Road would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.**

g. **Level of Service on the segment of Elkhorn Boulevard from Walerga Road to I-80 would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.**

(RDEIR, pp. 6-77 to 6-78; PRRDEIR, pp. 6-2 to 6-6.)

Implementation of the following additional mitigation measures and Mitigation Measures 4.7-5a and 4.7-5b would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. The mitigated Level of Service of Watt Avenue between the Placer County line and Elverta Road is LOS “E” (V/C 0.93), between Elverta Road and Antelope Road is “E” (V/C 0.92), between Antelope Road and Elkhorn Boulevard is “E” (V/C 0.94), and between Elkhorn Boulevard and Don Julio Boulevard is “E” (V/C 0.93). As discussed on page 4.7-45, implementation of these mitigation measures is
within the jurisdiction of the County of Sacramento. If the identified improvements are not made, the roadway segments would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable.** (RDEIR, p. 6-78.)

**6.7-5c**  
Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, widen Elverta Road to four lanes from 16th Street to Rio Linda Boulevard to provide LOS “A” (V/C 0.51) (RDEIR, p. 6-78.)

**6.7-5d**  
Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, widen Walerga Road to six lanes from Elverta Road to Antelope Road to provide LOS “C” (V/C 0.79) (RDEIR, p. 6-78.)

Under Existing Plus Blueprint conditions, no improvements were assumed for Sacramento County intersections in the study area beyond existing conditions. Figure 4.7-8 shows the key study area intersections in Sacramento County. Tables 6-15 and 6-16 present the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the a.m. and p.m. peak hour under Existing Plus Project conditions (Impact 4.7-6). The traffic volumes and lane geometry at each intersection in Revised Tables 6-15 and 6-16 are shown in Appendix I. (RDEIR, pp. 6-78 to 6-79; PRRDEIR, p. 6-6.)

This analysis indicates that development of the Blueprint Alternative under existing conditions would cause impacts at the following intersections:

a. Level of Service at the intersection of Elwyn Avenue and Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “F” during the a.m. peak hour and from LOS “E” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

b. Level of Service at the intersection of 16th Street and Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “F” during the a.m. peak hour and from LOS “A” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

c. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Antelope Road would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

d. Level of Service at the intersection of Walerga Road and Elkhorn Boulevard would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

e. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Don Julio Boulevard would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

f. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Air Base Drive would degrade from LOS “B” to LOS “F” in the a.m. peak and LOS “E” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

g. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Roseville Road would remain LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour, and would degrade further.

(RDEIR, p. 6-79; PRRDEIR, p. 6-9.)
The above impacts would be similar to those of the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-79.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.7-6(a) through (b), as revised, would reduce this impact to a **less than significant level.** The mitigated a.m. LOS of the intersection of Elwyn Avenue/Elverta Road is “E” (V/C 0.96), p.m. LOS of the intersection of Elwyn Avenue/Elverta Road is “E” (V/C 0.94), a.m. LOS of the intersection of 16th Street/Elverta Road is “E” (V/C 0.95), p.m. LOS of the intersection of 16th Street/Elverta Road is “E” (V/C 0.97), p.m. LOS of the intersection of Watt Avenue/Antelope Road is “E” (V/C 1.00), Walerga Road/Elkhorn Blvd. is “D” (V/C 0.85), Watt Avenue/Don Julio Blvd. is “C” (V/C 0.80), Watt Avenue/Air Base Drive is “E” (V/C 1.05), and Watt Avenue/Roseville Road is LOS “E” (V/C 0.93). As discussed on page 4.7-48, implementation of these mitigation measures is within the jurisdiction of the County of Sacramento. If the identified improvements are not made, the intersections would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable.** (RDEIR, p. 6-79; PRRDEIR, p. 6-9.)

- **Sutter County**

The Blueprint Alternative would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sutter County (see Impact 4.7-7). Figure 6-7 shows the average daily traffic volumes on Sutter County roadways within the study area under Existing Plus Blueprint conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 6-17. This analysis indicates that development of the Blueprint Alternative under existing conditions would not cause impacts on any Sutter County roadway segments; nor would the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-84.)

The Blueprint Alternative would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sutter County (see Impact 4.7-8). Under Existing Plus Project conditions, no improvements were assumed for Sutter County intersections in the study area beyond existing conditions. Figure 4.7-8 shows the key study area intersections in Sutter County. Table 6-18 presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under Existing Plus Project conditions. The traffic volumes and lane geometry at each intersection in Table 6-18 are shown in Appendix I. This analysis indicates that development of the Blueprint Alternative under existing conditions would cause impacts at the following intersections:

a. **Level of Service at the intersection of Riego Road and Natomas Road would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “F.”**

b. **Level of Service at the intersection of Pleasant Grove Boulevard (North) and Riego Road would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS “F.”**

c. **Level of Service at the intersection of Pleasant Grove Boulevard (South) and Riego Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F.”**

(RDEIR, p. 6-84.)
The proposed Specific Plan would have significant impacts at the same intersections. (RDEIR, p. 6-84.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.7-8a and 4.7-8b would reduce this impact. The mitigated level of service of the intersection of Riego Road/Natomas Road would be LOS “D” (V/C 0.87), Riego Road/Pleasant Grove Road (North) would be LOS “D” (V/C 0.87), and Riego Road/Pleasant Grove Road (South) would be LOS “E” (V/C 0.93). As discussed on page 4.7-50, implementation of these mitigation measures is within the jurisdiction of the Sutter County. If the identified improvements are not made, the intersections would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-84.)

- State Highways

The Blueprint Alternative would increase daily traffic volumes on state highways (see Impact 4.7-9). Figure 6-7 shows the average daily traffic volumes on state highways within the study area under Existing Plus Blueprint conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Table 6-19. This analysis indicates that development of the Blueprint Alternative under existing conditions would cause impacts on the following state highway segments:

a. Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Hwy 65 from Blue Oaks Boulevard to Galleria Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

b. Level of Service on the eight-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Antelope Road to Riverside Avenue would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

c. Level of Service on the six-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Riverside Avenue to Douglas Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

d. Level of Service on the six-lane segment of Business 80 from Fulton Avenue to Watt Avenue would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.

e. Level of Service on the twelve-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Auburn Boulevard to Madison Avenue would continue to operate at LOS “F” and the volume would increase.

(RDEIR, p. 6-86.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.7-9a and 4.7-9b would reduce this impact. The mitigated level of service on Hwy 65 is LOS “D”, on Interstate 80 is LOS “F”, on Business 80 is LOS “E”. As discussed on page 4.7-52, implementation of this mitigation measure is within the
jurisdiction of Caltrans. If the identified improvements are not made, this impact would remain *significant and unavoidable.* (RDEIR, p. 6-86.)

Volumes are provided for several interchange ramps in Table 6-20. Level of service calculations for ramp merge, diverge and weaving sections were not preformed. (RDEIR, p. 6-86.)

Figure 4.7-8 of the Revised Draft EIR shows the key study area intersections under Caltrans jurisdiction. Table 6-21 presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under Existing Plus Blueprint conditions. As shown in Table 6-33, no intersections would operate at unacceptable levels (LOS “E” or “F”) under Existing Plus Blueprint conditions. Similarly, the proposed project would increase congestion at these intersections, but they would continue to operate at an acceptable level. (RDEIR, p. 6-86.)

**Transit**

The Blueprint Alternative would generate a demand for transit services and may result in unmet transit needs (see Impact 4.7-10). (RDEIR, p. 6-89.)

The 21,631 residential units and a substantial amount of non-residential uses under the Blueprint Alternative would generate a significant demand for new transit services and a higher demand for transit services than the proposed Specific Plan, which has 14,132 residential units. The higher densities on portions of the Specific Plan area under the Blueprint Alternative should make it easier to serve the Specific Plan area with transit services and make transit more successful in attracting ridership. For example, according to SACOG, the minimum residential density required to support light rail services is 15 dwelling units per acre. The Blueprint Alternative would more than double the number of units constructed at an average density of 15 or more units per acre (from 3,696 units, or 26% under the proposed project to 7,487 units, or 35% under the Blueprint Alternative). The Blueprint Alternative would also increase the maximum allowable density from 22 to 35 units per acre. (RDEIR, p. 6-89.)

If significant transit services are not provided to the project area, an unmet transit need would likely be identified prior to buildout of the Blueprint Alternative. Such unmet transit needs are defined by Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA) and are reviewed on a regular basis. (RDEIR, p. 6-89.)

Like the proposed project, the Blueprint Alternative would provide dedicated bus rapid transit lanes on Watt Avenue, an internal transit system, ADA dial-a-ride service, commuter service to downtown Sacramento, park and ride lots and right-of-way for a street trolley system, and would participate in regional connections to light rail service. (RDEIR, p. 6-89.)

The on-going operating cost for such a transit system would be substantial and the amount of funding that would be available for transit operations with the proposed Blueprint Alternative is uncertain. The higher densities under Blueprint Alternative should make it easier to serve the project area with transit services and make transit more successful in attracting ridership than the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-90.)
To meet a potential unmet transit need, Placer County would need to provide a reasonable amount of transit service to the project area, comparable to transit service provided in nearby communities in Roseville and Sacramento County. The recommended transit services that could mitigate potential transit needs are described under Impact 4.7-10. (RDEIR, p. 6-90.)

Such services would be relatively costly due to the trip lengths involved. Placer County would receive some additional funding for transit services through its key existing funding source, Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds due to buildout of the Blueprint Alternative because these funds are based on population. However, the additional TDA funds would only allow limited transit service to the project area. (RDEIR, p. 6-90.)

As noted above, it is likely that economies of scale could be achieved by contracting with other providers for transit services. For example, Sacramento Regional Transit (RT) could be approached to extend either Route 19 or Route 84 1.5 miles north to the Specific Plan area. These routes currently provide a connection to the Watt I-80 Light Rail station. (RDEIR, p. 6.90.)

In the General Plan, the County has designated some transit corridors where high capacity transit service may be possible. The designation of these transit corridors is intended to promote transit use through land use and design standards that enhance transit accessibility. In the vicinity of the Specific Plan area, the County has designated Watt Avenue as an arterial transit corridor. Ongoing planning for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in western Placer County envisions a BRT route that continues north of Baseline Road. In Sacramento County, Watt Avenue has been designated as a BRT corridor in the MTP. Due to these designations, adequate right-of-way should be provided along Watt Avenue through the Specific Plan area for a potential exclusive BRT facility. The Blueprint Alternative provides right-of-way for exclusive 10- to 12-foot BRT lanes in each direction on Watt Avenue from Baseline Road to the Dyer Lane intersection just north of Dry Creek. (RDEIR, p. 6.90.)

The potential for inadequate funding for unmet transit needs is considered a potentially significant impact. As with the proposed Specific Plan, Mitigation Measure 4.7-10a and 4.7-10b of would reduce the Blueprint Alternative impact on transit to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-90.)

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation**

The Blueprint Alternative would increase the demand for recreational and transportation related bicycle trips (see Impact 4.7-11). The proposed Blueprint Alternative, with its 21,631 residential units would generate a substantial demand for safe and convenient bicycle facilities, especially for recreational experiences. Like the proposed Specific Plan, the Blueprint Alternative would provide a substantial amount of Class I off-street bike trails as well as Class II on-street bike lanes within the right-of-way of arterial and collector roadways. Like the proposed bikeway system for the Specific Plan, the bikeway system for the Blueprint Alternative appears to meet the intent of the General Plan policies. This impact would be less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 6-90 to 6-91.)
Cumulative Plus Blueprint Conditions

Cumulative conditions were based on the best estimates of 2025 market levels of development throughout the region, as discussed on pages 4.7-54 through 4.7-55 of the Revised Draft EIR. The “cumulative without project assumptions” and method of analysis were the same as conducted for the proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 6-91.)

The methodological assumptions used to analyze the Blueprint Alternative were similar to those used for the proposed project. For example, the percentage of individuals using transit was assumed to be the same in both cases. As discussed above, the Blueprint Alternative has much higher residential densities than the proposed project, so it is more conducive to increased transit ridership. If funding is available for the transit improvements and services discussed above, then the percentage of commuters using transit rather than driving would likely increase. SACOG estimates that transit trips in western Placer County would increase from approximately 0.5% under the proposed project to approximately 1.3% under the Blueprint Alternative. This increase in ridership would reduce the number of vehicle trips that would occur under the Blueprint Alternative. Therefore, the impacts described below are conservative. That is, the actual impacts may not be as severe as indicated here. (RDEIR, p. 6-91.)

As demonstrated in the following analysis, the Blueprint Alternative would increase congestion in the vicinity of the Specific Plan area, because dwelling units would increase by about 50%. If these units were not constructed in the Specific Plan area, they would likely be constructed elsewhere in the region and would increase traffic levels elsewhere. The exact location of these units under the proposed project is not known, so it cannot be subjected to traffic modeling. Nonetheless, it is likely that some roadway improvements would be necessary to accommodate the 7,000 units if they were to be constructed elsewhere in the region. This analysis can only describe the improvements that would be needed in the Specific Plan area vicinity. (RDEIR, p. 6-91.)

Finally, there are a number of measurable traffic conditions that are not typically reported or analyzed in an EIR traffic analysis, which is focused on roadway and intersection operation and the need for roadway improvements to maintain and/or achieve service level standards. SACOG has evaluated some of these measures, comparing a base case similar to the proposed project and a Blueprint Plan similar to the Blueprint Alternative. Some of the traffic-related findings of this analysis include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Base Case</th>
<th>Blueprint Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transit Share</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Miles per Day per Household</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Time in Heavy Congestion</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(RDEIR, p. 6-91.)
• Placer County

Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in unincorporated Placer County (see Impact 4.7-12). Figure 6-8 shows the roadway lanes on unincorporated Placer County roadways within the study area under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions. Figure 6-9 shows the average daily traffic volumes on unincorporated Placer County roadways within the study area under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 6-22 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 6-92; PRRDEIR, p. 6-11.)

Under the Cumulative No Project condition, the four-lane segment of Baseline Road from the Sutter County line to Watt Avenue would operate at LOS “E” or “F” conditions. Under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions, this segment of Baseline Road would be widened to six lanes and would operate at LOS “D” to “E” conditions. While the Level of Service on Baseline Road under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions does not meet the County’s General Plan standard, this is not considered a significant impact since the operations would be better or equal to the Cumulative No Project condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-92.)

This analysis indicates that full development of the Blueprint Alternative under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would substantially increase congestion on the following Placer County roadway segments:

a. Level of Service on the segment of Baseline Road from Watt Avenue to East Dyer Lane would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “E.”

b. Level of Service on the segment of Baseline Road from East Dyer Lane to Fiddyment Road would degrade from LOS “B” to LOS “E.”

c. Level of Service on the segment of Locust Road north of the county line would degrade from LOS “B” to LOS “F.”

d. Level of Service on the segment of Palladay Road north of the county line would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “E.”

e. Level of Service on the new segment of Dyer Lane from Tanwood Road to Watt Avenue would operate at LOS “E.”

f. Level of Service on the new segment of Dyer Lane (East) from Baseline Road to A Street would operate at LOS “F.”

(RDEIR, p. 6-92; PRRDEIR, pp. 6-11 to 6-12.)

The proposed Specific Plan would also substantially affect roadways a., c., d., and f., but the impact would be more severe under the Blueprint Alternative. The proposed Specific Plan
would not substantially degrade operations on the segment of roadways b. or d. (RDEIR, p. 6-92; PRRDEIR, p. 6-12.)

Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a would reduce the above impacts by requiring the Blueprint Alternative to provide its fair share of costs for roadway improvements through a number of fee mechanisms. As discussed on pages 4.7-16 through 4.7-22 of the Revised Draft EIR, those fees could fund a number of transportation improvements that, in various combinations, could help reduce anticipated congestion levels on major roadways within or near the Specific Plan area. Some of these improvements, such as Placer Parkway, would be under another agency’s jurisdiction, so Placer County cannot guarantee that they would be constructed. Therefore, this impact would be **significant and unavoidable** under either the proposed project or the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, pp. 6-92 to 6-93; PRRDEIR, p. 6-12.)

A general evaluation of these improvements was conducted to determine the extent to which a set of identified improvements could reduce traffic congestion. These improvements make up the Mitigated Transportation Network and are summarized on pages 4.7-16 through 4.7-22. Figure 6-10 shows the roadway lanes on the Mitigated Transportation Network under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions. (RDEIR, p. 6-93; PRRDEIR, p. 6-16.)

A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for Baseline Road based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 6-23 in the Revised Draft EIR. Placer Parkway would decrease the traffic volume on Baseline Road between Fiddyment Road and the County line. Figure 6-11 shows the average daily traffic volumes on the Mitigated Transportation Network under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions. The Level of Service on segments of Walerga Road south of Baseline Road under the Cumulative Plus Blueprint with Mitigated Transportation Network scenario would be LOS “F”, which does not meet the County’s General Plan standard. However, operations would be better than under Cumulative No Project conditions. (RDEIR, p. 6-93; PRRDEIR, p. 6-16.)

As Revised Table 6-23 shows, the Mitigated Transportation Network would substantially reduce traffic congestion on affected roadways, in some cases below No Project conditions. (RDEIR, p. 6-93; PRRDEIR, p. 6-16.)

A different set of improvements would have similar effects, but increases and decreases in level of service conditions on specific segments would differ. (RDEIR, p. 6-93.)

The Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County (Impact 4.7-13). (RDEIR, p. 6-93.)

Based on a signal warrant analysis, the Blueprint Alternative would cause signal warrants to be met at the same intersections as the proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 6-93.)

Figure 4.7-4 shows the key study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County. Table 6-24 presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. The traffic volumes and lane geometry at each intersection in Revised Table 6-24 are shown in Appendix I. This analysis indicates that the
Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions would substantially increase congestion at the following intersections:

a. Level of Service at the intersection of Walerga Road and PFE Road would degrade from LOS “F” to LOS “F”

b. The new intersection of 12th Street and Baseline Road would operate at LOS “E”.

c. The new intersection of 11th Street and Baseline Road would operate at LOS “E”.

d. Level of Service at the intersection of East Dyer Lane (Westside Drive) and Baseline Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F” in both the a.m. and p.m. peak hour under the assumed geometry.

e. The new intersection of Walerga Road and East Town Center Drive would operate at LOS “F” in both the a.m. and p.m. peak hour conditions under the assumed geometry.

f. The new intersection of Watt Avenue and Dyer Lane would operate at LOS “F” conditions in both the a.m. and p.m. peak hour under the assumed geometry.

g. Level of Service at the intersection of Fiddyment Road (Walerga Road) and Baseline Road would operate at LOS “F” and the volume to capacity ratio would increase by five percent in the a.m. peak hour.

(RDEIR, p. 6-98; PRRDEIR, pp. 6-16 to 6-17; SPPRDEIR, p. 4.7-11.)

This is considered a significant impact. The proposed Specific Plan would also have significant impacts at intersections a., d., e., and f. (RDEIR, p. 6-98; PRRDEIR, p. 6-17.)

Mitigation Measures 4.7-13a and 4.7-13b would reduce the Blueprint Alternative’s contribution to cumulative traffic impacts by providing funding for intersection improvements. However, because some of these improvements could be outside of Placer County’s jurisdiction, the impact would remain significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-98.)

As discussed above, the Mitigated Transportation Network includes construction of Placer Parkway, widening of some existing or planned roadways and intersections and improvements to transit service. As Revised Table 6-25 shows, the Mitigated Transportation Network would reduce the number of intersections with significant impacts and would reduce the severity of the impacts at other locations. Mitigation Measure 4.7-13(b) would improve conditions at the intersections of Walerga Road/PFE Road to LOS “F” (V/C 1.03) in the p.m. peak hour, Walerga Road/Town Center Drive to LOS “B” (V/C 0.67) in the a.m. peak and LOS “C” (V/C 0.74) in the p.m. peak, East Dyer Lane with Baseline Road to LOS “E” (V/C 0.94) in the a.m. peak hour and Watt Avenue/Dyer Lane to LOS “E” (V/C 1.00) in the a.m. peak and LOS “F” (V/C 1.06) in the p.m. peak. Fiddyment/Baseline would operate at LOS “F” (V/C 1.26) in the a.m. peak hour. However, no mitigation has been identified to improve five intersections to a less than significant level. Therefore, the Blueprint Alternative’s contribution to cumulative traffic conditions at
Placer County intersections is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-98; SPRRDEIR, p. 4.7-12.)

Further, regardless of which improvements are implemented under Mitigation Measure 4.7-14(a), feasible mitigation measures have not been found at the five intersections with significant impacts under the Cumulative Plus Blueprint Project with Mitigated Transportation Network scenario. Therefore, the Blueprint Alternative’s contribution to this cumulative impact is significant and unavoidable. (PRRDEIR, p. 6-17.)

Mitigation Measures 4.7-13(b) through (d) would improve conditions at the intersections of Walerga Road/PFE Road LOS “F” (V/C 1.00), and Walerga Road/Town Center Drive LOS “C” (V/C 0.75), and Watt Avenue/Dyer Street LOS “F” (V/C 1.06). However, no mitigation has been identified to improve all of the intersections to acceptable levels. Therefore, the Blueprint Alternative’s contribution to cumulative traffic conditions at Placer County intersections is considered significant and unavoidable. (PRRDEIR, p. 6-17.)

- City of Roseville

Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in the City of Roseville (Impact 4.7-14). (RDEIR, p. 6-103.)

The City of Roseville has requested that the analysis of the traffic impacts related to the proposed Placer Vineyards project on Roseville’s roadway system be based on the same assumptions used by the City of Roseville for their Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The assumptions used in this analysis are described under Impact 4.7-14 of the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 6-103.)

Figure 6-12 of the Revised Draft EIR shows the daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in the City of Roseville under the Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions. Table 6-26 shows the twelve intersections that would degrade from an acceptable to unacceptable Level of Service or that already operate at LOS “D” or worse and would degrade further. This is considered a significant impact. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.14a and 4.7-14b would improve conditions at the intersection of Fiddyment Road and Baseline Road to LOS “D”, but no feasible measures were identified for the remaining twelve intersections. Furthermore, Placer County cannot compel the City of Roseville to implement Mitigation Measure 4.7-14b. For these reasons, the Blueprint Alternative’s contribution to cumulative traffic congestion in the City of Roseville would be a significant and unavoidable impact. The proposed project’s contribution to cumulative traffic congestion in the City of Roseville would also be significant and unavoidable, but only seven intersections would be affected. (RDEIR, p. 6-103.)

It should be noted that the City of Roseville’s CIP assumes development of about 7,800 dwelling units in the proposed Placer Vineyards project. Therefore, at some intersections, the LOS “D,” “E” and “F” conditions under the Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions are the same conditions as the City of Roseville’s CIP. (RDEIR, p. 6-104.)

Table 6-27 in the Revised Draft EIR shows the number and percentage of intersections that would operate at LOS “C” or better under both Cumulative Plus Project and Cumulative Plus
Blueprint conditions, assuming no additional roadway improvements beyond the current City of Roseville CIP program. Under No Project conditions, 121 of the 159 total intersections would operate at LOS “C” or better. This represents 75.5% of the total signalized intersections citywide. Addition of the proposed project would result in 117 (or 73.6%) of the total signalized intersections operating at LOS “C” or better. Addition of the Blueprint Alternative would result in 115 (or 72.3%) of the total signalized intersections operating at LOS “C” or better. Therefore, the City’s policy of maintaining an LOS “C” standard at 70% of all signalized intersections would be met even with full development of the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-104.)

The City’s Level of Service policy allows City Council to take an action to accept degradation in the Level of Service of one or more of its signalized intersections from the levels identified in the CIP as long as 70% or more of the total signalized intersections in the City would operate at LOS “C” or better. With or without the recommended intersection mitigation measure, more than 70% of the City’s signalized intersections would operate at LOS “C” or better under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions. However, since no feasible improvements were found to mitigate significant impacts on Levels of Service at twelve intersections, the proposed project would have a significant and unavoidable impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-104.)

- Sacramento County

Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sacramento County (see Impact 4.7-15). Figure 6-13 shows the average daily traffic volumes on Sacramento County roadways within the study area under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 6-28. (RDEIR, p. 6-104; PRRDEIR, p. 6-25.)

This analysis indicates that full development of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase congestion by more than 5% on the following segments in Sacramento County:

a. Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Watt Avenue from the Placer County line to Antelope Road would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

b. Level of Service on the six-lane segment of Watt Avenue from the Antelope Road to Don Julio Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

c. Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Walerga Road from the Placer County line to Antelope Road would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and, compared to Cumulative No Project conditions, the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.
d. Level of Service on the 2-lane segment of Sorenco Road from the Placer County line to Elverta Road would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

e. Level of Service on the two-lane segment of Elwyn Avenue from the Placer County line to Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “E” to LOS “F.”

f. Level of Service on the 2-lane segment of 16th Street from the Placer County line to Elverta Road would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “F.”

g. Level of Service on the two-lane segment of Dry Creek Road from U Street to Ascot Avenue would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

h. Level of Service on the six-lane segment of Elkhorn Boulevard from Walerga Road to I-80 would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.

(RDEIR, p. 6-105; PRRDEIR, p. 6-25.)

The proposed Specific Plan would substantially increase congestion on segments (a) and (b). (RDEIR, p. 6-105; PRRDEIR, p. 6-26.)

Implementation of the following additional mitigation measures and Mitigation Measures 4.7-15a and 4.7-15b would reduce the Blueprint Alternative’s contribution to cumulative traffic on Sacramento County roadways. The mitigated level of service on Watt Avenue north of Elverta Road would be LOS “F” (V/C reduced from 1.79 to 1.19), Watt Avenue north of Elkhorn Boulevard would be LOS “E” (V/C 0.97), Sorenco Road north of Elverta Road would be LOS “A” (V/C 0.56), Elwyn Road north of Elverta Road would be LOS “A” (V/C 0.58), 16th Street north of Elverta Road would be LOS “B” (V/C 0.64), and Dry Creek Road would be LOS “C” (V/C 0.75). As discussed on page 4.7-79, implementation of these mitigation measures is within Sacramento County. If the identified improvements are not made, the roadway segments would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable.

6.7-15a Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, construct Watt Avenue to eight lanes (or a one-way couplet) from Antelope Road to Don Julio Boulevard, to provide LOS “D” (V/C 0.90). (RDEIR, p. 6-106; PRRDEIR, p. 6-27.)

6.7-15b Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, construct Elkhorn Blvd to eight lanes from Walerga Road to I-80, to provide LOS “F” (V/C 1.13). (PRRDEIR, p. 6-27.)

Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sacramento County (see Impact 4.7-16). (RDEIR, p. 6-106.)
Figure 4.7-8 of the Revised Draft EIR shows the key study area intersections in Sacramento County. Revised Tables 6-29 and 6-30 present the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under Cumulative Plus Project conditions. The traffic volumes and lane geometry at each intersection in Revised Tables 6-29 and 6-30 are shown in Appendix I. This analysis indicates that development of the Blueprint Alternative would substantially contribute to congestion at the following study area intersections in Sacramento County:

a. **Level of Service at the intersection of Sorento Road and Elverta Road** would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.13) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.21) during the a.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

b. **Level of Service at the intersection of Elwyn Avenue and Elverta Road** would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.01) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.16) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

c. **Level of Service at the intersection of Palladay Road and Elverta Road** would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.16) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.43) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

d. **Level of Service at the intersection of 16th Street and Elverta Road** would degrade from LOS “B” (V/C 0.64) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.07) during the a.m. peak hour and LOS “D” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

e. **Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Elverta Road** would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.11) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.31) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

f. **Level of Service at the intersection of Walerga Road and Elverta Road** would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.33) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.39) during the a.m. peak hour and LOS “F” (V/C 1.30) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.37) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

g. **Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Antelope Road** would degrade from LOS “E” (V/C 0.92) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.05) during the a.m. peak hour, and LOS “E” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.

h. **Level of Service at the intersection of Dry Creek Road and Elkhorn Boulevard** would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.25) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.39) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.

i. **Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Elkhorn Boulevard** would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.02) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.10) during the a.m. peak hour and LOS “F” (V/C 1.22) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.33) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by more than 0.05.
j. Level of Service at the intersection of Watt Avenue and Air Base Drive would degrade from LOS “F” (V/C 1.31) to LOS “F” (V/C 1.38) during the p.m. peak hour, which increases the volume-to-capacity ratio by 0.05.

(RDEIR, pp. 6-106 to 6-107; PRRDEIR, pp. 6-24 to 6-27.)

The proposed project would have similar (although generally less severe) impacts on all of the above intersections, except Walerga Road / Elkhorn Boulevard in the p.m. peak hour. (RDEIR, p. 6-107; PRRDEIR, p. 6-27.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.7-16a and 4.7-16b would reduce the Blueprint Alternative’s contribution to cumulative traffic congestion at Sacramento County intersections. The mitigated level of service at the intersection of Sorento Road and Elverta Road is “F” (V/C 1.07) a.m. peak hour, Elwyn Avenue and Elverta Road is “E” (V/C 0.95) p.m. peak hour, Palladay Road and Elverta Road is LOS “F” (V/C 1.11) p.m. peak hour, 16th Street and Elverta Road is “B” (V/C 0.69) a.m. peak hour and LOS “C” (V/C 0.78) p.m. peak hour, Watt Avenue and Elverta Road is LOS “F” (V/C 1.14) p.m. peak hour, Walerga Road and Elverta Road is LOS “F” (V/C 1.16) a.m. peak hour, and LOS “F” (V/C 1.08) p.m. peak hour, Watt Avenue and Antelope Road is LOS “C” (V/C 0.71) a.m. peak hour and LOS “D” (V/C 0.80) p.m. peak hour, Dry Creek Road and Elkhorn Boulevard is LOS “F” (V/C 1.00) p.m. peak hour, Watt Avenue and Elkhorn Boulevard is LOS “E” (V/C 0.97) a.m. and LOS “F” (V/C 1.19) p.m. peak hour, and Watt Avenue and Air Base Drive is LOS “E” (V/C 0.93) p.m. peak hour. As discussed on page 4.7-82, implementation of these mitigation measures is within the jurisdiction of Sacramento County. If the identified improvements are not made, the intersections would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-107; PRRDEIR, p. 6-31.)

6.7-16c Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, construct a second left turn lane on the westbound approach at the Walerga Road and Elkhorn Boulevard intersection to provide LOS “E” conditions (V/C 0.92) during the p.m. peak hour.

(RDEIR, p. 6-107.)

• Sutter County

Buildout of the Blueprint Alternative would contribute to cumulative increases in peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways and intersections in Sutter County (see Impacts 4.7-17 and 4.7-18). (RDEIR, p. 6-110.)

Figure 4.7-22 of the Revised Draft EIR shows the average daily traffic volumes on Sutter County roadways within the study area under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions. A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 6-31. (RDEIR, p. 6-110.)
This analysis indicates that full development of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase congestion by more than 5% on the following segments in Sutter County:

a. **Level of Service on the two-lane segment of Pleasant Grove Road from Baseline Road to the Sacramento County line would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume-to-capacity ratio would increase by more than 0.05.**

(PRREIR, p. 6-31.)

Implementation of the Mitigation Measures 4.7-17a and 4.7-17b would reduce the Blueprint Alternative’s contribution to cumulative traffic on Sutter County roadways. The mitigated level of service on Pleasant Grove Road from Riego Road to the county line would be LOS “A”.

Implementation of these mitigation measures is within the jurisdiction of Sutter County. Placer County cannot compel Sutter County to construct the improvements. If the identified improvements are not made, the roadway segments would continue to operate at an unacceptable level. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable.** (RDEIR, p. 6-110; PRREIR, p. 6-32.)

Figure 4.7-8 shows the key study area intersections in Sutter County. Table 6-32 presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at these intersections for the p.m. peak hour under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions. The traffic volumes and lane geometry at each intersection in Table 6-32 are shown in Appendix I. (RDEIR, p. 6-110.)

The Blueprint Alternative would substantially increase traffic congestion at the following intersection.

a. **Level of Service at the intersection of Pleasant Grove Road (North) and Riego Road would degrade from LOS “E” to LOS “F” during the p.m. peak hour.**

b. **Level of Service at the intersection of Pleasant Grove Road (South) and Riego Road would degrade from LOS “D” to LOS “F” in the a.m. peak.**

(RDEIR, p. 6-110.)

The proposed Specific Plan would have a similar but less severe effect on Sutter County intersections. No other Sutter County intersections would experience significant impacts. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.7-18a and 4.7-18b would reduce this impact. The mitigated LOS at the intersection of Pleasant Grove Road (North) and Riego Road would be LOS “D” (V/C 0.86) and Pleasant Grove Road (South) with Riego Road would be LOS “D” (V/C 0.85).

- **State Highways**

Figure 4.7-22 of the Revised Draft EIR shows the average daily traffic volumes on Caltrans freeways and ramps within the study area under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions (see
Impacts 4.7-19 and 4.7-20). A roadway segment Level of Service analysis for these roadways based on these daily traffic volumes is presented in Revised Table 6-33. This analysis indicates that full development of the Blueprint Alternative would contribute considerably to traffic congestion on the following state highway segments:

a. **Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Hwy 70/99 from Riego Road to Elkhorn Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.**

b. **Level of Service on the four-lane segment of Hwy 65 from Blue Oaks Boulevard to Galleria Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.**

c. **Level of Service on the ten-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Longview Drive to Watt Avenue would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.**

d. **Level of Service on the eight-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Antelope Road to Douglas Boulevard would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.**

e. **Level of Service on the twelve-lane segment of Interstate 80 from Auburn Boulevard to Madison Avenue would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.**

f. **Level of Service on the six-lane segment of Business 80 from Fulton Avenue to Watt Avenue would continue to operate at LOS “F” conditions and the volume would increase.**

(RDEIR, p. 6-112; PRRDEIR, pp. 6-32 to 6-33.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.7-19a and 4.7-19b would reduce the Blueprint Alternative’s contribution to traffic congestion on state highways to a *less than significant level*. The mitigated level of service on Hwy 70/99 north of Riego Road would be LOS “C”, Hwy 70/99 north of Elverta Road is LOS “D”, Hwy 70/99 north of Elkhorn Boulevard would be LOS “E”, Hwy 65 would be LOS “F”, Interstate 80 west of Watt Avenue would be LOS “D”, Interstate 80 east of Antelope Road would be LOS “F”. As discussed on page 4.7-87, implementation of these mitigation measures is within the jurisdiction of Caltrans. If the identified improvements are not made, this impact would remain *significant and unavoidable*. (RDEIR, p. 6-112; PRRDEIR, p. 6-33.)

6.7-16a **Consistent with Mitigation Measure 4.7-2a, widen Business 80 from six lanes to eight lanes from Watt Avenue to Fulton Avenue, to provide LOS “F”.** (PRRDEIR, p. 6-33.)
Volumes are provided for several interchange ramps in Table 6-34. Level of service calculations for ramp merge, diverge and weaving sections were not preformed. (RDEIR, p. 6-112.)

Table 6-35 presents the intersection Level of Service analysis at the key study area intersections under Caltrans jurisdiction for the p.m. peak hour under Cumulative Plus Blueprint conditions. (RDEIR, p. 6-112.)

Compared to Cumulative Plus Project conditions, this analysis indicates that development of the Blueprint Alternative under Cumulative conditions would not cause any additional impacts at a study area intersection. Therefore, as with the proposed project, the contribution to traffic congestion at intersections with state highway ramps would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-115.)

**Impacts of Traffic Mitigation**

As discussed in Impacts 4.7-21 and 4.7-22, the mitigation measures needed to reduce traffic impacts could have adverse traffic impacts on other jurisdictions and on the environment. Most of the traffic mitigation measures involve roadway widening, construction of new roads, and/or intersection improvements. These activities could result in the degradation and/or loss of agricultural, biological and cultural resources, as well as changes in visual character, increased potential for flooding, temporary generation of air emissions and noise, and exposure of construction workers to hazardous materials. New and expanded roadways could also increase traffic congestion in certain areas of other jurisdictions, depending on the actual improvements that are constructed. These impacts would be more severe under the Blueprint Alternative, because it requires more mitigation than the proposed project. However, as discussed previously, the Blueprint Alternative could avoid impacts other areas in the region. (RDEIR, p. 6-115.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.7-21 would reduce the impacts of traffic mitigation, but not to a less than significant level because implementation would occur outside of Placer County’s jurisdiction. Therefore, these impacts would be significant and unavoidable under either the Blueprint Alternative or proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 6-115.)

**Air Quality**

**Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

The methods described in Section 4.8.4 of the Revised Draft EIR were used to evaluate the impacts of the Blueprint Alternative on air quality. Area emissions from mobile and stationary sources were estimated using URBEMIS 2002 Version 8.7 for Windows for different phases of the Blueprint Alternative for both construction and operations. A screening form of CALINE-4 computer simulation model was applied to intersections within and near the Specific Plan area to predict worst-case concentrations of CO at different phases of the Blueprint Alternative. For a detailed discussion of these models and assumptions, please see Section 4.8.4. Estimated emissions for the Blueprint Alternative are shown in Table 6-40. (RDEIR, p. 6-116.)
Under the Blueprint Alternative, exhaust and fugitive dust emissions will be generated by construction activities in the Specific Plan area such as excavation and grading, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth (see Impact 4.8-1). Table 6-36 presents estimated emissions for maximum construction activity level under the Blueprint Alternative. Under the Blueprint Alternative, construction related impacts would be greater than those identified under Impact 4.8-1. Mitigation Measures 4.8-1a-e would reduce construction emissions, but not below Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD) thresholds. Therefore, the direct air quality impacts of construction would be significant and unavoidable under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, pp. 6-116 to 6-117.)

Because the same infrastructure and footprint would be required for the Blueprint Alternative, construction impacts and infrastructure mitigation measures associated with off-site infrastructure would also remain the same as under the proposed project (see Impact 4.8-2). The direct air quality impacts of construction of off-site infrastructure would be significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, p. 6-117.)

The Blueprint Alternative would result in the generation of both mobile and stationary source air pollutants, increasing total air pollution emissions (see Impact 4.8-3). Table 6-36 shows emissions associated with Blueprint Alternative land uses at buildout. Motor vehicles would be a primary source of emissions, along with residential gas heaters, residential fireplaces, residential landscaping equipment, and commercial landscape maintenance equipment. Other area source emissions would include those from residential barbecues and consumer product use; however, emissions from these sources would be small. As shown in Table 6-40, these emissions would exceed PCAPCD standards. Total Blueprint Alternative emissions for ROG, NOx and PM10 would be approximately 16%, 27% and 36% higher, respectively, than the proposed Specific Plan, based on current modeling practices, and assumption that the Specific Plan area would be the only development consistent with SACOG’s Blueprint Plan. These emissions exceed the PCAPCD thresholds of significance and would be significant. Mitigation measures for operational impacts identified for Impact 4.8-3 would also apply to the Blueprint Alternative, but would not reduce emissions below the PCAPCD thresholds. Therefore, operational impacts of the Blueprint Alternative would be significant and unavoidable. (RDEIR, pp. 6-117 to 6-118.)

The Blueprint Alternative would result in increased levels of carbon monoxide along roads within and near the project site. The microscale impacts that could result from the Blueprint Alternative were calculated using the air quality model CALINE-4 (Caltrans, 1989). Table 6-37 shows predicted worst-case carbon monoxide for five intersections chosen as worst-case locations based on total traffic and congestion levels under buildout of the Blueprint Alternative. The results show that the Blueprint Alternative would have a negligible effect on CO concentrations in the project area. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-118.)

Odor and air quality concerns related to expanded wastewater treatment plant operations (see Impact 4.8-6) would be similar for the Blueprint Alternative; however, because there would be additional volume of wastewater, an incremental increase in a potentially significant and
unavoidable impact could occur. Mitigation Measures 4.8-5a-c will substantially reduce this impact, but it will remain *potentially significant and unavoidable*. (RDEIR, p. 6-118.)

**Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Implementation of the Blueprint Alternative would allow for substantially greater development in the Specific Plan area than currently exists within the Specific Plan area. The amount of mobile and stationary emissions would be substantially greater than what would be generated under existing conditions. Consequently, the Blueprint Alternative would have a significant adverse incremental effect on the region’s ability to attain air quality standards (see Impact 4.8-7), and would be considered *cumulatively considerable*. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.8-1a-e, 4.8-3a-k, and 4.8-6a-b would reduce cumulative impacts but they would remain *cumulatively considerable* and therefore *significant*. (RDEIR, pp. 6-118 to 6-119.)

The Specific Plan was found to have a negligible effect on cumulative CO concentrations (see Impact 4.8-7). In fact, predicted concentrations in 2025 are below current concentrations, and Existing Plus Project predicted concentrations. This is due to the overall reduction in vehicle emissions in future years. Although the Blueprint Alternative is expected to add incrementally to this impact, the addition would remain *less than cumulatively considerable* and therefore *less than significant* on a cumulative basis. (RDEIR, p. 6-119.)

It should be noted that implementation of the Blueprint Alternative would help the region reduce overall air emissions given the same regional population growth because it is designed to decrease the length of vehicle trips and increase use of public transit. Although the proposed project will also increase transit use compared to more traditional development patterns, the Blueprint Alternative would result in higher transit use because it provides for higher densities in proximity to the Transit Center and other potential transit hubs, such as the Town Center. According to SACOG, the minimum residential density needed to support infrequent bus service is seven dwelling units per acre. Almost one-third of the housing in the Blueprint Alternative would be at or near this density, compared to less than 5% under the proposed project. Therefore, bus service and ridership would likely be increased under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-119.)

**Noise**

**Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

The methods described in Section 4.9.4 were used to estimate noise levels within and outside of the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 6-120.)

The Specific Plan area is outside of the McClellan Park 60 dB DNL noise contours for noise exposure for 2009 and 2022 (see Impact 4.9-1). Therefore, aircraft noise levels within the Plan area will be acceptable for all uses, and impacts due to possible future McClellan Park activities will be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-120.)
Like the proposed Specific Plan, the Blueprint Alternative would place residential and other sensitive uses in proximity to commercial and industrial uses, which could contain sources of noise, such as air conditioning units, trash compactors, fans, compressors, and truck deliveries (see Impact 4.9-2). The Blueprint Alternative would increase the number of residents who could be exposed to such noise sources, although the number of sources would be similar to the proposed Specific Plan, because the amount of commercial and industrial development would be similar. Mitigation Measure 4.9-2 would ensure that these noise sources do not exceed noise standards by requiring noise studies, as needed, to determine the most effective and practical means of achieving adopted noise standards. With mitigation, this impact would be \textit{less than significant} under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-120.)

Sensitive receptors in the Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan area could also be subjected to construction noise and in off-site infrastructure areas during development of the Blueprint Alternative (see Impact 4.9-3). The number of sensitive receptors and the amount of construction would increase under the Blueprint Alternative. However, the impact would remain \textit{less than significant} with implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.9-3, which requires hours of construction to comply with Placer County’s “Standard Construction Noise Conditions of Approval,” and requires effective mufflers to reduce noise produced by construction equipment. (RDEIR, p. 6-120.)

Table 6-38 of the Revised Draft EIR shows that traffic noise levels within the Specific Plan area that would exceed 60 dB DNL under the Blueprint Alternative along study segments at 75 feet from the centerline (see Impact 4.9-4). Table 6-36 also shows the distance to the 60 and 70 dB DNL noise contours from road centers. Under the Blueprint Alternative, most of these roadway segments would be fronted by non-residential uses, which would be subject to noise levels in excess of the Specific Plan standard for such uses (70 dB DNL). Residential uses would be located along the easternmost segment of Baseline Road, and along Walerga Road and Watt Avenue, similar to the proposed Specific Plan. Commercial/Mixed-Use designations, which could include a residential component, would also be located along Baseline Road. Noise levels in these areas would exceed the County standard by 2 to 12 dB DNL under the Blueprint Alternative, and would be the same or 1 dB DNL greater than noise on the same segments under the proposed Specific Plan. The Blueprint Alternative requires noise studies in areas that could be exposed to noise levels above County or Specific Plan standards, and appropriate design and construction techniques to achieve the interior noise standards for residential uses. These measures, in combination with Mitigation Measure 4.9-4 would reduce this impact to a \textit{less than significant} level. (RDEIR, p. 6-120.)

The Blueprint Alternative would also increase noise levels outside of the Specific Plan area by increasing traffic volumes on roadways in the region (see Impact 4.9-5). Table 6-39 shows predicted Existing and Existing Plus Blueprint Alternative noise levels. As shown in the table, the Blueprint Alternative would result in traffic noise increases of 0 to 16 dB DNL. In comparison, the proposed Specific Plan would increase noise levels by 0 to 15 dB DNL. As discussed under Impact 4.9-5 feasible mitigation measures are not available in some of the areas that would be affected by the increase in traffic noise. Therefore, off-site noise impacts along this road segment would be significant and unavoidable under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-121.)
**Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

The Blueprint Alternative would contribute to cumulative noise increases in the Specific Plan area due to the increase in traffic (see Impact 4.9-6). Table 6-40 shows traffic noise levels for the year 2025 Plus Project conditions within the Specific Plan area and the distances to the 60 and 70 dB DNL contours from road centers. With one exception, noise levels are projected to exceed 70 dB DNL along the study segments. Consequently, residential and non-residential development along these roadways could be exposed to unacceptable noise levels. Mitigation Measure 4.9-4 would reduce this impact to a less than significant level by ensuring that development would achieve the applicable noise standards. (RDEIR, p. 6-122.)

The Blueprint Alternative would also contribute to increases in traffic noise outside of the Specific Plan area (see Impact 4.9-7). A comparison of Tables 4.9-6 and 6-41 shows that even without the Blueprint Alternative or the proposed Specific Plan, noise levels on study roadways would increase by 1 to 15 dB DNL. The Blueprint Alternative would increase noise levels by an additional 1 to 3 dB DNL along some roadways, including 16th Street, which is projected to experience an increase from 49 dB DNL under existing conditions to 67 dB DNL under Cumulative Plus Blueprint Alternative conditions. Because feasible mitigation is not available, as discussed above, this cumulative impact would be cumulatively considerable (i.e., significant and unavoidable) under the Blueprint Alternative. A comparison of Table 4.9-8 in Section 4.9 and Table 6-43 shows that the impact would be very similar under either the proposed Specific Plan or the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-122.)

**Population, Employment and Housing**

**Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

Development of the proposed Specific Plan area would increase the population of western Placer County (see Impact 4.10-1). Under the Blueprint Alternative, 21,631 residential units would be constructed in the Specific Plan area. As noted in Table 6-42 the projected increase in population in the Specific Plan area based on the Specific Plan projections is 49,416. This increase is not consistent with the Placer County General Plan. The Placer County General Plan EIR assumed a population of approximately 35,000 for the Specific Plan area, and a population forecast for the total unincorporated area of 142,235 by 2010, which would be an increase of 37,546 above the County’s 2005 population. The buildout of the Specific Plan is likely to occur some time beyond 2025 under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-124.)

The 1994 Placer County General Plan EIR acknowledged that an increase in population would not, by itself, directly result in adverse environmental impacts. The General Plan EIR pointed to policies and standards in the General Plan that would help to minimize potential population-related impacts by providing a comprehensive framework for the preparation of individual specific plans, as considered here. (RDEIR, p. 6-125.)

CEQA does not identify a population increase as a significant environmental impact in and of itself. The additional number of residents in the Specific Plan area resulting from the
development of the Specific Plan could, however, contribute to other environmental effects such as increased traffic, air quality degradation, and additional demands for public services and infrastructure. Impacts indirectly attributable to population growth, including air quality, traffic, public services and other issues are addressed in individual sections of this Blueprint Alternative impacts analysis. (RDEIR, p. 6-125.)

As noted above, the increase in population that would result from full buildout of the Blueprint Alternative is not consistent with the Placer County General Plan and is contrary to existing locally adopted policy. The population increases that would result from development pursuant to the Blueprint Alternative would, however, promote the preferred land use scenario for the region as currently preferred by SACOG and several of its member organizations. By concentrating population closer to the core of the region, a number of environmental and lifestyle benefits would accrue, including shorter commutes, greater potential use of transit, cleaner air and less open space lost to suburban sprawl. However, the proposed projected population is inconsistent with the current General Plan. This is a significant and unavoidable impact. However, the applicants have applied for an amendment to the Placer County General Plan that would delete the reference to a maximum of 14,132 dwelling units in Exhibit 1 to the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan and substitute the figure of 21,631 units instead in the event the Blueprint Alternative is adopted. If the Board of Supervisors adopts the proposed General Plan amendment raising the number of dwelling units that would be allowed, the above conclusion would no longer apply. (RDEIR, p. 6-125.)

Buildout of the proposed Blueprint Alternative could promote an imbalance of jobs and housing in both the regional and project-level context (see Impact 4.10-3). At full buildout of the Blueprint Alternative, the ratio of jobs to housing will be approximately 0.38 jobs per dwelling unit (21,631 dwellings; 8,163 jobs). At the regional level, SACOG has suggested during its Blueprint Plan planning process that the Specific Plan area be planned so as to supply housing for those employed beyond the Specific Plan boundaries. The SACOG recommended jobs/housing ratio is 0.49 for the Specific Plan area. (RDEIR, p. 6-125.)

Because the data indicate that dwellings usually house more than one worker, there would be a substantially higher number of dwellings built than will be needed to respond to the housing demand created by new employment. The jobs/housing balance inquiry is useful in assessing the need for housing in a community, the source of the housing demand, and the possible impact of creation of new jobs on the housing market. The analysis is affected by many complex economic factors, including the economic characteristics of surrounding communities, the health of the local and national economies, and the changing desires and attitudes of individuals in the marketplace. According to U.S. Census 2004 estimates, there are approximately 1.24 wage earners per household in Placer County. This would indicate that the number of jobs to be generated on-site will be insufficient to maintain a healthy jobs/housing balance. However, given the nature of the inquiry and the context (a project adjacent to significant existing and proposed employment centers in three counties), the long-term impact of the proposed Specific Plan on the jobs/housing balance is not so substantial that it would clearly affect the physical environment by generating new and substantial demand for jobs that are not otherwise planned. In addition, SACOG recognizes that the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan area can play a significant role in meeting regional housing needs that are generated by significant job growth
beyond the boundaries of the Specific Plan area. The long-term impact would, therefore, be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-126.)

Development of the Blueprint Alternative area will create a demand for affordable housing (see Impact 4.10-4). For the purposes of this impact analysis, it is assumed that the Blueprint Alternative would include 2,120 units of affordable housing, which is necessary to fulfill the requirement set forth in Policy 2.A.11 of the Placer County General Plan. As with the proposed project, the Board of Supervisors would determine whether the Specific Plan provisions satisfy the goals and policies of the current General Plan as they relate to the minimum provision for affordable housing in the Specific Plan, including the number and affordability of such units, as well as the location and general design of the units. All new residential development in Placer County will be required to comply with Placer County Housing Element policies. This impact is therefore considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-126.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, existing housing units may be lost due to Specific Plan development (Impact 4.10-5). No housing units within the Riego area would be lost due to implementation of the Blueprint Alternative; however, there are some scattered farmsteads/rural residences in the balance of the project area that may ultimately be removed as the project builds out, including those affected by widening of roads. It is estimated that fewer than ten residences would require removal. The Blueprint Alternative would add more than 21,000 housing units, a portion of which will be constructed in compliance with Placer County affordable housing goals. This is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-126.)

Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Development under the Blueprint Alternative would contribute to cumulative impacts of increased population in Placer, Sutter, and Sacramento counties (see Impact 4.10-2). According to SACOG projections, 535,020 additional persons are projected to reside in the Placer, Sutter, and Sacramento region by 2025, of which approximately 34,762 (6.5% of the projected regional growth) would reside in the Specific Plan area. The population increase under the Blueprint Alternative would be 49,416, which would represent approximately 9.2% of the 535,020 additional persons projected to reside in the Placer, Sutter, and Sacramento region by 2025. (RDEIR, p. 6-127.)

CEQA does not identify a population increase as a significant environmental impact in and of itself. The population increase is within the planned regional population projection and would have beneficial impacts at the regional level due to the ability to concentrate population near jobs and services. Impacts directly attributable to population growth, including air quality, traffic, public services and other issues are addressed in individual sections of this Chapter. Therefore, the cumulative impact of population increases resulting from this and other developments are considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-127.)

The Blueprint Alternative could promote a cumulative imbalance of jobs and housing in the regional context (see Impact 4.10-6). Based on 25 jobs per commercial acre, 40 jobs per office acre, and 15 jobs per industrial acre, additional jobs as reported under Impact 4.10-6, could total approximately 117,931. Total jobs in the same area, including the Placer Vineyards project
developed under the Blueprint Alternative, would be approximately 118,499. (RDEIR, p. 6-127.)

When considering the total number of dwelling units projected for the above-described projects and the Blueprint Alternative, the approximate number of jobs per household ratio is 1.23 (118,499 jobs/96,526 total dwelling units). This ratio would imply that there will be a similar number of jobs per household in the region as exists today. However, this is an incomplete and artificial picture that does not provide for all potential future housing within the region. Based on the current information, the cumulative impact of the long-term ratio of jobs to housing under the Blueprint Alternative is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-127.)

Although the Blueprint Alternative would have a relatively low jobs/housing ratio (.37 jobs per dwelling unit), it would be in proximity to external jobs, and consistent with SACOG expectations. As described above, a distinct advantage of increasing densities in the Specific Plan area is its proximity to several major current and emerging employment centers, including Roseville, Rocklin, the former McClellan Air Force Base, the International Airport/Metro Air Park, and development proposed in south Sutter County. By providing residences in proximity to these areas, the Blueprint Alternative is expected to result in shorter average commute distances than would occur if housing were spread throughout the region. Therefore, on a regional level, the jobs/housing ratio may be more balanced under the Blueprint Alternative than it would be under the proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 6-127.)

Public Services and Infrastructure

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Fire

The Blueprint Alternative would consist of 21,631 residential units and 49,416 residents which represent a 53% and 50% increase over the proposed project, respectively. This significant increase in residential units and population would create a greater need for new fire department staffing (see Impact 4.11.2-1). Based on the level of service standards provided by Placer County (see Table 4.11-1), the Blueprint Alternative would require between 45.2 and 57.7 additional firefighters and between 4.2 and 10.4 additional support/planning personnel. This impact is potentially significant; however, implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.11.2-1 would reduce the impact to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-128.)

Similar to the proposed project, the Blueprint Alternative would require additional fire protection facilities and equipment to service the Specific Plan area (see Impact 4.11.2-2), and Mitigation Measures 4.11.2-2a-c would apply. Since the population will increase by approximately 50%, increasing traffic congestion at some intersections, it is possible that a three-minute response time cannot be met with just the two proposed fire stations. This impact is potentially significant. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 6.11.2-2d will reduce this impact to a level that is less than significant.
As a condition of Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan approval, the applicants shall demonstrate to the County that a three-minute fire service response-time can be met for the project area. If this cannot be demonstrated, additional circulation or other infrastructure improvements shall be provided, including potential construction of a third fire station. The appropriate mix of improvements needed to meet the three-minute response time shall be determined by Placer County.

(RDEIR, p. 6-128.)

The Blueprint Alternative would have the same potential to create additional fire hazards by limiting access for suppression activities and by locating large open space areas near urban development (see Impact 4.11.2-3). This impact is potentially significant; however, implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.11.2-3a-c would reduce the impact to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-129.)

Potential environmental impacts related to the construction of new fire protection facilities are analyzed in each topical area contained in the Revised Draft EIR (see Impact 4.11.2-4). No additional impacts related to facility construction have been identified. This impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-129.)

Impacts on fire protection related to the construction of off-site infrastructure (see Impact 4.11.2-5) would be same as for the project. None of the improvements will pose a fire hazard or permanently block access. The impact remains less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-129.)

Implementation of General Plan fire safety policies and identified level of service standards would ensure that cumulative impacts to fire protection services (see Impact 4.11.2-6) under the Blueprint Alternative would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-129.)

Police

As discussed above, the Blueprint Alternative would consist of a 53% increase in residential units and a 50% increase in residents and would therefore require additional police staffing to service the Specific Plan area (see Impact 4.11.3-1). Based on level of service standards provided by Placer County (see Table 4.11-2), this alternative would require a total of between 57.2 and 73.8 sworn officers, 3.3 non-sworn officers, and 2.9 to 4.3 support staff. This impact is potentially significant; however, implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.11.3-1 at ratios consistent with Blueprint Alternative characteristics would reduce this impact to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-129.)

Similar to the proposed project, the Blueprint Alternative would require the construction of a new Sheriff’s substation and the purchase of new vehicles and equipment (see Impact 4.11.3-2). However, because additional officers would be needed under this alternative, additional vehicles and equipment would also be needed. A larger substation may also be required in order to adequately service the greater population. This impact is potentially significant; however, implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.11.3-2a and 4.11.3-2b consistent with Blueprint
Alternative characteristics would reduce this impact to a level that is less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-129.)

The impact to public safety related to adequate project design (see Impact 4.11.3-3) would be identical to the project and remain less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.11.3-3. (RDEIR, p. 6-129.)

Potential environmental impacts related to the construction of a new Sheriff’s substation are analyzed in each topical area contained in the Revised Draft EIR (see Impact 4.11.3-4). Although a larger facility may be constructed under the Blueprint Alternative, no additional impacts related to facility construction have been identified. This impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-129.)

Impacts on police protection related to the construction in off-site infrastructure areas (see Impact 4.11.3-5) would be identical to the project and would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-130.)

Consistency with the County’s General Plan and identified level of service standards would ensure that cumulative impacts to police protection services (see Impact 4.11.3-6) under the Blueprint Alternative would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-130.)

Public Schools

The Blueprint Alternative would substantially increase the Specific Plan area’s current public school student population beyond local school capacities and beyond that of the proposed project (see Impact 4.11.4-1). Table 6-43 below details the projected student population of this alternative based on student generation rates of the Center Unified School District. (RDEIR, p. 6-130.)

The Blueprint Alternative would result in the addition of approximately 11,971 public school students in the Specific Plan area representing a 43% increase over the proposed project. The project description for this alternative includes the development of one additional elementary school, one additional middle school, and one additional high school to service these added students. Payment of school impact fees would reduce impacts to the local school districts to a level of insignificance. Since Proposition 1A was passed by the voters and SB 50 was passed by the Legislature, school fees generated by new development are currently deemed sufficient mitigation of any impacts based on generation of students on school facilities. Because of the passage of Proposition 1A and SB 50, County General Plan Policy 4.J.13, described above, may be unenforceable. The impact is considered less than significant, provided school impact fees are collected pursuant to State law. (RDEIR, p. 6-130.)

Impacts related to the proposed changes to school district boundaries (see Impact 4.11.4-2) would be identical to the project and remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-130.)

Impacts related to the construction of school facilities (see Impact 4.11.4-3) would be greater than the project because of the greater number of schools needed to meet population projections.
but remain **less than significant**, for the same reasons set forth under Impact 4.11.4-3. (RDEIR, p. 6-131.)

Impacts to public schools related to the construction in off-site infrastructure areas (see Impact 4.11.4-4) would be identical to the project and would remain **less than significant**. (RDEIR, p. 6-131.)

**Solid Waste**

Development under the Blueprint Alternative would consist of 21,631 residential units and approximately 3,696,611 square feet of commercial space. These homes and commercial facilities will significantly increase the solid waste stream transported to the MRF and disposed of at the Western Regional Landfill (see Impact 4.11.5-1). Table 6-44 details the solid waste projected to be generated within the Specific Plan area at full buildout. (RDEIR, p. 6-131.)

As shown in Table 6-44, the Blueprint Alternative would result in the generation of approximately 34,808 tons of solid waste annually. Of that amount, 11.9% (4,142 tons) will go directly to the landfill, while the remaining 88.1% (30,666 tons) will go to the MRF for processing. The diversion rate at the MRF is approximately 63.1%; therefore, of the 30,666 tons per year that would be brought to the MRF for processing, 19,350 tons will be disposed of at the landfill. Similar to the proposed project, this increase in solid waste stream represents a significant impact and could reduce the life of the landfill by two or more years. Mitigation Measures 4.11.5-1a-c would reduce this impact; however, it would remain a **significant impact**. (RDEIR, p. 6-131.)

Impacts to solid waste services related to the construction of off-site infrastructure (see Impact 4.11.5-2) are identical to the project and would remain **less than significant**. (RDEIR, p. 6-132.)

At buildout, the Blueprint Alternative may generate as many as 30 trips a day to transport solid waste (see Impact 4.11.5-3). It is anticipated that trucks would use Baseline Road, Fiddyment Road, Blue Oaks Boulevard, Industrial Avenue, and Athens Avenue when traveling to and from the landfill. Roadways within the City of Roseville are designated as truck routes which means they have been designed to accommodate the anticipated truck traffic. The County does not identify specific truck routes, but the subject roadways contain signage indicating that they are to be used for landfill access and contain no weight-restricted bridges. Fiddyment Road and Blue Oaks Boulevard are “California Legal Routes,” while Baseline Road is an “STAA Federal Route.” (RDEIR, p. 6-132.)

Although the addition of 10 trips per day under the Blueprint Alternative compared to the proposed project would generate additional noise and roadway maintenance effects, these effects would have been anticipated when the routes were designated to be truck routes, and subsequent planning would have taken this designation into consideration when roadways were constructed, sound walls erected, and building orientation and setbacks established. This impact would remain a **less than significant impact**. (RDEIR, p. 6-132.)
Wastewater

The Blueprint Alternative would result in a significant increase in the wastewater production of the Specific Plan area. The applicants have prepared a separate Placer Vineyards Specific Plan Blueprint Alternative Sewer Master Plan (Blueprint Sewer Master Plan) to document flow projections. (RDEIR, p. 6-132.)

As discussed in previous sections, the DCWWTP facility is presently being analyzed by the South Placer Wastewater Authority (SPWA) to determine current and possible future capacity (RMC Technical Memoranda, Appendix R of the Revised Draft EIR) RMC assumes that the Specific Plan would build out in a manner similar to the Blueprint Alternative, with approximately 21,000 dwelling units. (RDEIR, p. 6-132.)

Wastewater flows were determined using the same empirical data and calculation process that is used in Section 4.11.6. The resulting average dry weather flow (ADWF) would be 3.91 MGD as shown in Table 6-45 and Table 6-46 (This is almost identical to the 3.89 MGD in flows predicted by RMC [Appendix R] for the Blueprint Alternative). This would be a 28% increase in average daily wastewater production over the proposed Specific Plan project wastewater production of 2.79 MGD. The greater volume of wastewater will require larger conveyance facilities and related infrastructure and an intensive project management and programming plan with regard to the use of the SRCSD treatment facility and/or the DCWWTP. (RDEIR, pp. 6-132 to 6-133.)

It appears that the Blueprint Alternative could direct all of its wastewater to the DCWWTP. The conveyance to deliver wastewater to the DCWWTP would include construction of a gravity system delivering wastewater to the western end of the Specific Plan area, a lift station, and a force main to pump wastewater easterly to the DCWWTP. This concept is illustrated on Figure 3-7 and Figure 3-17A in Chapter Three of this RDEIR. (RDEIR, p. 6-134.)

As with the proposed project, the Blueprint Alternative would require timely, new and reliable wastewater collection facilities including an on-site collection system and an off-site conveyance system (see Impact 4.11.6-1). This impact would be considered potentially significant. The implementation of the Mitigation Measures 4.11.6-1a-g would reduce this impact to a less than significant level (RDEIR, p. 6-134.)

The development of the Specific Plan under the Blueprint Alternative would require expanded wastewater treatment facilities (see Impact 4.11.6-2). Table 6-44 shows flows broken down by shed. The eastern 890± acres (Shed B) of the Specific Plan area are proposed to be treated at the DCWWTP. This portion of the Specific Plan area is within the service area of the DCWWTP. However, the Roseville Regional Wastewater System Master Plan (1996) indicates that current flows planned in the DCWWTP are based on the Dry Creek/West Placer Sewer Master Plan, which planned for a flow of 0.307 MGD for the 890±-acre area. According to the Placer Vineyards Sewer Master Plan, the projected total flow at buildout under the Blueprint Alternative for Shed B is 0.75 MGD (RMC predicts a flow of 0.85). (RDEIR, pp. 6-134 to 6-135.)
The additional flow and conflict with the adopted *Dry Creek/West Placer Sewer Master Plan* is considered a *potentially significant impact*. However, the current DCWWTP may have the capacity to serve additional areas because actual flows have been less than projected due primarily to a 27% reduction in flow factors for the residential units and a 20% overall reduction in development densities (as compared to the 1996 Master Plan). These reductions are outlined in the Technical Memoranda prepared by RMC (Appendix R). In addition, the treatment plant is currently constructed to treat 18 MGD, but can be expanded to treat 24 MGD under the current Master Plan. (RDEIR, p. 6-135.)

Although the western 4,340 acres (Shed A) is not in the present service area, the applicants’ preferred plan would be to direct all wastewater flows from the Specific Plan area to the DCWWTP. RMC has determined that the “Ultimate SPWA Service Area” (see Figure 4.11-3), which includes all of the Blueprint Alternative area, will generate cumulative dry weather flows of 42.7 MGD (this assumes the Blueprint Alternative for the Specific Plan). Of that amount, 19.3 MGD would flow to the DCWWTP. This exceeds the current constructed capacity of 18 MGD, but is well within the Master Plan capacity of 24 MGD. At buildout, the Specific Plan would contribute approximately 3.91 MGD flow to the DCWWTP for treatment and discharge. This is almost the same as that predicted by RMC, and is well within the Master Plan capacity (24 MGD) of the DCWWTP. (RDEIR, p. 6-135.)

The DCWWTP would need to be expanded to accommodate the additional flows, and the current NPDES waste discharge requirements would need to be amended. This is a *potentially significant impact*. (RDEIR, p. 6-135.)

As described above, the westerly portion of the Blueprint Alternative area is not within the service area of any wastewater treatment district. Flows from the Specific Plan area have been referenced by SRCSD in planning documents, but reference has been to the 14,132 units contemplated in the Specific Plan. If Blueprint Alternative flows were eventually accepted and treated by the SRCSD facility, the additional 3.16 MGD (see Table 4.11-7, Shed A) in flows would contribute to the need to expand the capacity of the plant. The Blueprint Alternative area has not been included in formal planning and projections for the future of the SRCSD plant, and the magnitude of the impact is difficult to determine, but it is clear the impact will be substantial in terms of planning effort, design, construction and maintenance. (RDEIR, p. 6-135.)

In the event the Specific Plan proponents are not successful in implementing the proposed wastewater treatment proposals, the Specific Plan area would be without a means of treating wastewater generated by Specific Plan development. (RDEIR, p. 6-135.)

Mitigation measures will ensure that an adequate system to treat wastewater flows generated by the proposed Blueprint Alternative will be identified and constructed. There are substantial agreements that must be reached, and planning, engineering and financing requirements that must be completed successfully in order to implement the proposal, and there is no assurance these will occur. However, General Plan Policy 4.D.2 requires proponents of new development to provide written certification from a service provider that either existing services are available or needed improvements will be made prior to project occupancy. Although *potentially significant* because the County has adopted policy ensuring that service be provided, impacts
associated with expansion of treatment capacity, even in the absence of such agreements are less than significant with inclusion of Mitigation Measures 4.11.6-2a-c. (RDEIR, pp. 6-135 to 6-136.)

The Blueprint Alternative would also require the conveyance infrastructure to cross the Dry Creek channel and jack and bore construction technique is proposed by the developers to avoid any direct impact to the creek area. This crossing could result in an accidental discharge into the Dry Creek drainage shed or other drainage sheds within or downstream of the Specific Plan area and adversely affect adjacent ecosystems including plant and animal species and their habitat (see Impact 4.11.6-3). The impact is potentially significant and the only difference between the Blueprint Alternative and the proposed project is the likelihood that the pipe would be conveying a larger quantity of wastewater flow. However, Mitigation Measures 4.11.6-3a and 4.11.6-3b would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-136.)

Off-site infrastructure impacts (see Impact 4.11.6-4) would be the same for the Blueprint Alternative as for the project. All of these potential effects are considered under other sections of the Revised Draft EIR. The discussions under Impacts 4.11.6-1 and 4.11.6-3, and Mitigation Measures 4.11.6-3a and 4.11.6-3b apply to off-site infrastructure. The construction and maintenance of utilities in off-site infrastructure areas would not result in additional generation of wastewater. This is a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-136.)

The cumulative context for wastewater services includes service areas of the SPWA, and more particularly the DCWWTP, and the service area of the SRCSD (see Impact 4.11.6-5). (RDEIR, p. 6-136.)

On behalf of the SPWA, RMC has prepared a Technical Memorandum (Dry Weather Flow Projection for the Ultimate SPWA Service Area [Including Urban Growth Areas]) (EIR Appendix R), which establishes the cumulative wastewater condition for western Placer County. The “Ultimate SPWA Service Area” is shown on Figure 4.11-3. Assuming all wastewater is treated in Placer County and none is conveyed to SRCSD, at buildout western Placer County will generate cumulative dry weather flows of 42.7 MGD. Of that amount, 19.3 MGD would flow to the DCWWTP. At buildout, the Specific Plan area would contribute approximately 3.91 MGD of the 19.3 MGD flowing to the DCWWTP for treatment and discharge. Table 6-47 shows the contributions to the SPWA system from development within the current (2005) service boundary. Table 6-48 shows projected buildout contributions to the “Ultimate SPWA Service Area,” including contributions from the 2005 service area. Flows are separated by the two SPWA treatment plants (PGWWTP and DCWWTP). (RDEIR, p. 6-136.)

**Water Supply**

The increase in population density under the Blueprint Alternative would result in an increase in water demand to approximately 12.98 MGD or 14,453 AFA as shown in Table 6-49. This water demand quantity is a 20% increase compared to the proposed project water demand of 11,500 AFA. The resulting water demand will require additional water supply, water conveyance and infrastructure facilities as analyzed in Section 4.11.7. (RDEIR, p. 6-139.)
The Blueprint Alternative could potentially exceed the water supply available for the Specific Plan area, similar to the proposed project (see Impact 4.11.7-1), and would be considered a potentially significant impact. In addition, as discussed under Impact 4.3.3-11, the water demand under the Blueprint Alternative has been estimated to be 14,453 AFA. This exceeds the long-term water allocation of 11,500 AFA assumed for the Specific Plan by 2,953 AFA. The long-term water supply is to be provided by PCWA from CVP contract water diverted from the Sacramento River. Under the Blueprint Alternative, unless the project’s share of the total 35,000 AFA that PCWA is expected to be able to contract from the CVP is increased to 14,453 AFA, or consumption is reduced to 11,500 AFA, this impact would be potentially significant because the water supply would be inadequate to serve the project at buildout. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.11.7-1a-c, this impact (Impact 4.11.7-1) would less than significant under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-140.)

Recycled Water

Recycled water demand for the Blueprint Alternative is anticipated to be similar to demand under the project (averaging 1.39 MGD). Park acreage would increase from 217 acres to 260.5 acres; however, the County and City of Roseville could decide to use other sources than recycled water for the increased demand. Water use calculations for the project and the Blueprint Alternative do not assume use of recycled water and are conservative in that respect. RMC (Market Assessment for Recycled Water Distribution System, November 2005) assumed that Specific Plan area under the Blueprint Alternative would generate 3.89 MGD of wastewater flow (the Sewer Master Plan for the project predicts that wastewater production will be approximately 3.91 MGD). Given this, RMC has concluded that there is adequate recycled water to serve the project. However, as described in Impact 4.11.8-2, unless all wastewater is directed to the DCWWTP, an inadequate amount of recycled water could result. This remains a potentially significant and unavoidable impact under the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-141.)

Impacts related to inconsistencies with recycled water treatment requirements, goals, policies and regulations (see Impact 4.11.8-1) would remain the same and are less than significant. Impacts related to construction and operation of the recycled water supply system would remain the same (see Impact 4.11.8-3). The same system would be constructed. This impact is less than significant with adoption of Mitigation Measures 4.11.8-3a-c related to recycled water storage facilities. (RDEIR, p. 6-141.)

Drainage

Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.11.9-1a-e would ensure that adequate drainage reports are submitted at subsequent steps in the process, consistent with the approved Master Project Drainage Study. A separate Master Project Drainage Study has been prepared for the Blueprint Alternative and is available for review at the location shown in Section 2.9 of the Revised Draft EIR. Therefore, this impact (Impact 4.11.9-1) would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-141.)
With implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.11.9-2, adequate funding would be provided for the maintenance of drainage facilities and this impact (Impact 4.11.9-2) would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-142.)

Environmental impacts related to the construction of drainage systems within the Specific Plan area are analyzed in each topical area contained in the Revised Draft EIR (see Impact 4.11.9-3). Under this Blueprint Alternative this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-142.)

**Electrical and Natural Gas Service**

The Blueprint Alternative contains 53% more residential units and approximately 100,000 square feet more of commercial development than the proposed project. Consequently, this alternative would create a greater demand for electricity and natural gas (see Impact 4.11.10-1). Electric and natural gas demands are shown in Table 6-50 below. (RDEIR, p. 6-142.)

Although more energy will be required, PG&E and SMUD have indicated that they have sufficient supplies to service the Specific Plan area; therefore, this impact would remain less than significant. With implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.11.10-1a and 4.11.10-1b, impacts related to timing of installation of utilities would also remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-142.)

Development within the Specific Plan area may impede access to PG&E and SMUD facilities (see Impact 4.11.10-2); however, the identical condition will exist under the Blueprint Alternative with regard to utility corridors and access as with the project. Implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.11.10-2a and 4.11.10-2b would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-142.)

**Telecommunications/Cable Television**

No additional impacts have been identified. The impact of increased demand for both telephone and cable television service (see Impact 4.11.11-1) would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-143.)

**Library Services**

Implementation of the Blueprint Alternative could result in inadequate library facilities. According to Placer County level of service standards for libraries, this development would require 20,784 square feet of library facilities, 114,312 volumes, 52 computer stations, 156 reader seats, and 104 meeting room seats. With implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.11.12-1a-c this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-143.)

No additional construction-related impacts (see Impact 4.11.12-2) have been identified. This impact remains less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-143.)
Parks and Recreation

The Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan contains the same Parks and Open Space policies as the proposed Specific Plan, with the exception of a change under Policy 7.6, in which the specification for total acres of neighborhood parks is increased from 108 acres to 125 acres, and the acreage for joint-use parks has increased from 48 acres to 61.5 acres. (RDEIR, p. 6-143.)

Implementation of the Blueprint Alternative could result in inadequate parkland (see Impact 4.11.13-1). Table 6-51 in the Revised Draft EIR shows the amount of each type of parkland required in the Specific Plan area under this alternative based on standards contained in the Placer County General Plan. This impact is potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-143.)

Mitigation Measure

The following Mitigation Measure would be required to reduce this impact to a less than significant level. Note that this Mitigation Measure replaces and is identical to Mitigation Measure 4.11.13-1 for the proposed Specific Plan with the exception of specific numbers and acreages.

6.11.13-1 Project developers in the Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan area shall comply with the requirements of the General Plan by dedication and improvement of a minimum of 260 acres of active parkland and 260 acres of passive parkland. Project developers shall be responsible for dedicating and fully developing parks and or portions thereof, concurrent with demand and in accordance with County levels of service. The County may require oversizing of neighborhood and larger type recreation parks, trails and facilities on a subdivision basis when it is deemed necessary and practical to serve the needs of future residents. In such cases, the County will enter into reimbursement agreements whereby future development shall pay initial developers for oversizing. Regardless of providing such recreation amenities concurrent with demand, project applicants will be required to adhere to the following process:

- Prior to County approval of the final subdivision map creating the 500th residential lot, a community park (10± acres) shall be constructed and accepted as complete, and the park site shall be granted to the managing agency.

- Concurrent with the construction of the community parks, project developers shall construct a park maintenance building and yard and provide maintenance equipment. The design and building materials, location and quantity of equipment shall be subject to the approval of the Department of Facility Services.

- Prior to County approval of the final subdivision map creating the 5,000th residential lot, a second community park (18± acres) shall be constructed and
accepted as complete, and the park site shall be granted to the managing agency.

- All plans and specifications shall be approved by the Department of Facility Services and/or the managing agency prior to the recording of the final subdivision map. A procedure or agreement to govern the acquisition of parklands and completed park improvements acceptable to the County and/or managing agency, and in compliance with applicable General Plan standards and policies, shall be in place prior to recording of the first final subdivision map.

- The specific park plans shall be submitted to the County for approval prior to the final decision as to the number and location of facilities.

(RDEIR, pp. 6-144 to 6-145.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 6.11.13-1 shown above would ensure that the Specific Plan area has adequate parkland to service its population. Therefore, impacts to park facilities and services in neighboring jurisdictions (see Impact 4.11.13-2) would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-145.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.11.13-3 would ensure that adequate funding is provided for the maintenance of parks within the Specific Plan area (see Impact 4.11.13-3). Therefore, this impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-145.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 6.11.13-4 would ensure that adequate community recreation facilities are provided within the Specific Plan area when needed (see Impact 4.11.13-4). Therefore, this impact would remain less than significant. Mitigation Measure 6.11.14-3 replaces project Mitigation Measure 4.11.13-4 and is identical, with the exception of the reference to “Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan.”

6.11.13-4 As a condition of the Blueprint Alternative Specific Plan approval, proponents shall submit a phased schedule for providing community recreation facilities for approval by the County Parks Division. This phasing plan shall comply with County levels of service for parks and recreation facilities. Funding for construction, operation and maintenance of these improvements shall be provided in accordance with Mitigation Measure 4.11.13-1.

(RDEIR, p. 6-145.)

The initial surface water supply for the Specific Plan area is identical under the proposed project and this alternative. Therefore, all impacts to recreation on regional water bodies related to this initial surface water supply (see Impacts 4.11.13-5 through 4.11.13-17) would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-145.)
General County Facilities and Services

Similar to the proposed project, public and capital facilities required under the Blueprint Alternative would be funded via the County’s Capital Facilities Fee program. This impact (see Impact 4.11.14-1) would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-146.)

Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.11.14-2 would ensure that total revenues generated by development under the Blueprint Alternative would be adequate to fund all required new public services (see Impact 4.11.14-2). This impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-146.)

Development under the Blueprint Alternative would generate demand for new public facilities. Once these specific public facilities are identified by Placer County for the Blueprint Alternative, implementation of Mitigation Measure 6.11.14-3 would reduce this impact to less than significant. Mitigation Measure 6.11.14-3 replaces project Mitigation Measure 4.11.14-3.

6.11.14-3 Upon identification of required facilities by Placer County, the Specific Plan proponents shall submit a phased schedule for providing the facilities for approval by the County Executive Office. Funding for construction, operation and maintenance of these improvements shall be provided in accordance with Mitigation Measure 4.11.14-2.

(RDEIR, p. 6-146.)

Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Fire

No cumulative impacts.

Police

No cumulative impacts.

Public Schools

Under the Blueprint Alternative, development of the proposed Specific Plan area, in conjunction with other planned residential development in the vicinity, would increase the demand for school services and facilities in the Center Unified School District, the Grant Joint Union High School District and the Elverta Joint Elementary School District (see Impact 4.11.4-5). New residential development within these districts would be required to pay school impact fees to the appropriate school district(s) to offset the capital costs of constructing new schools. Based on the discussion in Impact 4.11.4-1, this impact is less than cumulatively considerable (i.e., less than significant). (RDEIR, p. 6-131.)
Solid Waste

The Blueprint Alternative would contribute to cumulative increases in the waste stream that would be delivered to the MRF and disposed of at the Western Regional Landfill (see Impact 4.11.5-4). Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.11.5-4 would reduce cumulative impacts to solid waste services, but not to a level of insignificance. This impact would therefore remain potentially significant and cumulatively considerable. (RDEIR, p. 6-132.)

Wastewater

The DCWWTP was designed to serve proposed development that would occur in a geographic area that includes the eastern 890± acres of the Specific Plan area (Shed B). Service to this area was planned, and the wastewater facilities designed and constructed in anticipation of such service. However, the Roseville Regional Wastewater System Master Plan indicates flows planned in the DCWWTP are based on the Dry Creek/West Placer Sewer Master Plan, which planned for a flow of 0.307 MGD for the 890±-acre area. The projected average day flow, however, to the DCWWTP at buildout is 0.75. While, as previously discussed, plant capacity currently exists to accommodate these flows, the increase represents a potentially significant unavoidable cumulative impact as the service area builds out. Further, there is uncertainty as to whether planned conveyance facilities (Lift Station #2 and the existing 16-inch forcemain) will have sufficient capacity to handle Shed B flows at buildout. (RDEIR, p. 6-138.)

The western portion of the Specific Plan area was not included in the 1996 Wastewater Master Plan or 2005 service area of the DCWWTP. Extending wastewater treatment service at the DCWWTP to the western portion of the Specific Plan area would require additional capacity to be constructed to meet the cumulative condition in western Placer County. However, this area is included in the cumulative buildout condition (at Blueprint Alternative densities) described by RMC. This is considered a potentially significant unavoidable cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-138.)

The project applicants have also identified long-term wastewater conveyance and treatment method identified in the Project Description is utilization of the SRCSD interceptor system, with treatment of project wastewater at the SRCSD SRWTP as an alternative to SPWA service for the western 4,330 acres of the project site (Shed A). While SRCSD has identified the Specific Plan area as a potential service area, the capacity at the SRCSD facility has not previously included consideration of the Blueprint Alternative. Treatment at the SRCSD facility would accelerate the need for eventual expansion of treatment facilities, and construction of interceptor infrastructure, as described above. This is considered a potentially significant unavoidable cumulative impact. (RDEIR, pp. 6-138 to 6-139.)

Analysis prepared by RMC has shown that wastewater infrastructure operated by the SPWA can feasibly be expanded to accommodate projected urban growth areas. Mechanisms are in place for accomplishing the expansion of the SPWA service area, and implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.11.6-1a-g, and 4.11.6-2a-c would ensure that the Specific Plan area’s contribution to cumulative impacts would be less than considerable (i.e., less than significant.) (RDEIR, p. 6-139.)
Development of the Specific Plan area, whether according to the proposed project or the Blueprint Alternative, will contribute to increased discharge of treated effluent to Dry Creek and/or the Sacramento River (see Impact 4.11.6-6), depending on which wastewater treatment plant or plants ultimately accepts flows from the Specific Plan area. The 28% increase in wastewater flow resulting from the Blueprint Alternative is significant when compared to the estimated wastewater production under the proposed project, but not necessarily significant when compared to anticipated capacity of 24 MGD under the Master Plan. However, despite increasingly stringent waste discharge requirements for discharge of treated effluent into surface waters, this represents a potentially significant, unavoidable cumulative impact. Based on the work of Merritt Smith, impacts to Dry Creek would appear to be capable of being reduced to a less than significant level under the Blueprint Alternative with implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3.4-9a-c. (RDEIR, p. 6-139.)

Should expansion of the SRCSD treatment plant be pursued to serve the Specific Plan area, a Master Plan Update will be needed and additional analysis of water quality impacts on the Sacramento River will be required in a cumulative context. This analysis will need to be performed in a manner similar to and at the same level of detail as the analysis contained in the EIR for the current Master Plan. Because the results of that analysis are not currently known, this is a potentially significant and unavoidable cumulative impact. Mitigation Measure 4.11.6-6 will potentially reduce impacts related to water quality and the Sacramento River at the SRWTP, but not to a less than significant level. This impact would remain a potentially significant and unavoidable cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-139.)

Water Supply

The 20% increase in potable water demand would result in a significant increase in the contribution to the cumulative demand for potable water (see Impact 4.11.7-3). However, Section 4.3 of the Revised Draft EIR identifies cumulative impacts related to the water supply, including the Sacramento diversion. These individual impacts are also listed under Impact 4.11.7-2. Because the full 35,000 AFA diversion was modeled and analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR, this impact would still be considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-141.)

Recycled Water

Cumulative impacts were examined by RMC and reported under Impact 4.11.8-4. Because RMC assumed the Blueprint Alternative in its calculations, the conclusions remain the same. This is a less than considerable cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-141.)

Drainage

Cumulative impacts related to drainage are analyzed under the Hydrology, Water Resources and Water Quality section of the Blueprint Alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-142.)
Electrical Natural Gas Service

An increment of demand will be added to the cumulative demand for electrical and natural gas service (see Impact 4.11.10-3). However PG&E, SMUD and Roseville Electric build and/or contract for additional capacity on a continuing basis as development planning occurs in an area. This would remain a less than significant impact. (RDEIR, pp. 6-142 to 6-143.)

Telecommunications/Cable Television

No additional cumulative impacts to telecommunications/cable television (see Impact 4.11.11-2) have been identified and the impact would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-143.)

Library Services

Cumulative impacts to library services (see Impact 4.11.12-3) would remain less than significant with the mitigation measures proposed under Impact 4.11.12-1. (RDEIR, p. 6-143.)

Parks and Recreation

Long-term surface water supply for the Specific Plan area, under both the proposed project and this Blueprint Alternative, would be provided by the PCWA’s CVP allocation of 35,000 AFA. At buildout under this alternative, the total water demand is projected to be 14,453 AFA, which represents a 20% increase over the proposed project (11,500 AFA). Although long-term water demand would increase, it would not exceed the 35,000 AFA diversion evaluated in the Revised Draft EIR. Therefore, cumulative impacts to recreation related to long-term surface water supply (see Impacts 4.11.13-18 through 4.11.13-22) would remain less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 6-145 to 6-146.)

General County Facilities and Services

Development of the Blueprint Alternative would have a direct impact on General Fund and proprietary funds (i.e. Public Safety, Library and Road Funds) revenues and the costs incurred by the County in providing additional services. While other pending and proposed development in the region would also have an impact on the revenues and costs of Placer County, the assessment of revenue neutrality would require evaluation not only of the project components, but their timing and market conditions in the future. Due to such factors, the assessment of the exact nature of the impact would require speculation, and is not possible at this time. (RDEIR, p. 6-146.)

Hazards

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Because the Blueprint Alternative would occupy the same site as the proposed project, impacts related to site clean-up would remain the same (see Impacts 4.12-1, 4.12-2, 4.12-3, 4.12-4, 4.12-5, 4.12-6, 4.12-7, 4.12-8, 4.12-9, 4.12-10, 4.12-11, 4.12-12, 4.12-13, 4.12-14, 4.12-15, 4.12-16,
These impacts would remain less than significant after implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.12-1, 4.12-2, 4.12-3, 4.12-4, 4.12-5, 4.12-6a, 4.12-6b, 4.12-7a, 4.12-7b, 4.12-8, 4.12-9, 4.12-10, 4.12-11a-c, 4.12-12a, 4.12-12b, 4.12-13, 4.12-14a, 4.12-14b, 4.12-15, 4.12-16, and 4.12-17. (RDEIR, p. 6-147.)

Because the Blueprint Alternative would have the same types of land uses as the proposed project, impacts associated with use of potentially hazardous materials (see Impact 4.12-18) would remain less than significant. Schools and dwellings would remain at identical distances from utility lines and the substation as with the Specific Plan. Because the location of the substation would not change and the location of the utility line corridors would not change, Impact 4.12-19 would remain less than significant after implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.12-19a-g. (RDEIR, p. 6-147.)

Hazards related to the existence of hazardous materials at sites in the Specific Plan area would not change and would remain less than significant. Other impacts associated with off-site infrastructure (see Impacts 4.12-21 and 4.12-22) would also not change and would remain less than significant after implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.12-21a-f. Operational hazards due to expansion of wastewater treatment facilities at the DCWWTP and SRWTP and use of recycled water within the Specific Plan area would not change and would remain less than significant under the Blueprint Alternative (see Impact 4.12-22). (RDEIR, p. 6-147.)

Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Hazards identified within the Blueprint Alternative area are local in nature and have no potential to contribute to cumulative hazardous conditions. By its very nature, the project will correct the current hazards conditions by cleaning up identified hazardous materials prior to construction, as required by regulation and the above mitigation measures. Future development and land uses will be subject to contemporary safety and hazardous materials controls, as set forth in the numerous regulations that control the use of potentially hazardous materials. No cumulative impacts or mitigation measures are identified under this alternative. (RDEIR, p. 6-147.)

3. Feasibility of the Blueprint Alternative

The Board finds that the Blueprint Alternative is environmentally inferior to the Proposed Project. Table 6-52 of the Revised Draft EIR shows that the SACOG Blueprint Alternative will have a greater significance of environmental effects compared to the Proposed Project in eight out of the twelve impact categories analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR. (See RDEIR, p. 6-170.) Besides an increase in the significance of existing unmitigable impacts, several impacts found previously to be less than significant under the Proposed Project are deemed significant under the Blueprint Alternative.

At 21,631 residential dwelling units, the Blueprint Alternative exceeds the maximum number of residential dwelling units (14,132) called for in the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan by 7,499 units and could lead to physical impacts on the environment. The inconsistency of the Blueprint Alternative with the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan constitutes a physical
impact on the environment. Impact 4.1-1, previously determined to be less than significant and requiring no mitigation measures under the Proposed Project, remains potentially significant under the Blueprint Alternative and no mitigation measures are available. The applicants have applied for an amendment to the Placer County General Plan that would delete the reference to a maximum of 14,132 dwelling units in Exhibit 1 to the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan and substitute the figure of 21,631 units instead in the event the Blueprint Alternative is adopted by the Board. (RDEIR, p.6-46.)

Impact 4.4-60 was found to be less than significant under the Proposed Project, thus requiring no mitigation. Increased flows from the DCWWTP would remain less than significant under the Blueprint Alternative. However, it is unknown whether impacts to the SRWTP would remain less than significant without further analysis. This is a potentially significant impact under the Blueprint Alternative. (See RDEIR, pp. 6-63 to 6-64.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, development of the Specific Plan area could destroy or alter unknown historical and/or unique archaeological resources. Impact 4.6-2, determined to be significant and unavoidable under the Propose Project, would be just as significant, if not more so, under the Blueprint Alternative. Since the Blueprint Alternative is denser than the proposed project, the risk that these unknown cultural resources could be encountered would increase. The impact to historical resources would remain significant and unavoidable under this Alternative. (See RDEIR, p. 6-67.)

Full development of the Blueprint Alternative under existing conditions would cause transportation and circulation impacts on the following Placer County roadway segments:

a. Level of Service on the segment of Walerga Road from Baseline Road to PFE Road would remain LOS “D” but the proposed project would increase the traffic volume and volume-to-capacity ratio on this segment.

b. Level of Service on the segment of Watt Avenue from Dyer Lane to PFE Road would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “D.”

(See RDEIR, Figure 6-5, Table 6-11, pp. 6-72, 6-74 to 6-75; PRRDEIR, p. 6-1.)

The proposed Specific Plan would have an impact on the Walerga Road segments, but not those on Watt Avenue. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.7-2b would result in LOS “A” under either the project or the Blueprint Alternative; however, feasible mitigation measures have not been found for the segment of Watt Avenue from Dyer Lane to PFE Road. Therefore, this impact is significant and unavoidable for the Blueprint Alternative only. (RDEIR, pp. 6-72 to 6-73.)

The Blueprint Alternative would have a more severe effect on area intersections compared to the Proposed Project. In addition to intersection impacts under the Proposed Project, the level of service under the Blueprint Alternative would degrade at these additional intersections:

- Watt Avenue and PFE Road would degrade from LOS “C” to LOS”D (Impacts 4.7-4.)
• Baseline Road from East Dyer Lane to Fiddyment Road would degrade from LOS “B” to LOS “E” (Impact 4.7-12.)

• Palladay Road north of the county line would degrade from LOS “A” to LOS “E” (Impact 4.7-12.)

• The new intersection of 12th Street and Baseline Road would operate at LOS “E” (Impact 4.7-13.)

• The new intersection of 11th Street and Baseline Road would operate at LOS “E” (Impact 4.7-13.)

(See RDEIR, pp. 6-73, 6-92; PRRDEIR, p. 6-12.)

Traffic impacts under both the Proposed Project and the Blueprint Alternative involve roadway widening, construction of new roads, and/or intersection improvements as mitigation measures. These activities could result in the degradation and/or loss of agricultural, biological and cultural resources, as well as changes in visual character, increased potential for flooding, temporary generation of air emissions and noise, and exposure of construction workers to hazardous materials. New and expanded roadways could also increase traffic congestion in certain areas of other jurisdictions, depending on the actual improvements that are constructed. These impacts would be more severe under the Blueprint Alternative, because it requires more mitigation than the Proposed Project. (See RDEIR, p. 6-115.)

Construction related impacts under the Blueprint Alternative would be greater than those identified under Impact 4.8-1 for the Proposed Project. The Blueprint Alternative would result in the generation of both mobile and stationary source air pollutants, increasing total air pollution emissions, and exceeding PCAPCD thresholds of significance, thereby adversely effecting the region’s ability to attain air quality standards. (See Impacts 4.8-3 and 4.8-7; see also Tables 6-36 and 6-40 in the Revised Draft EIR.) Total Blueprint Alternative emissions for ROG, NOx and PM10 would be approximately 16%, 27% and 36% higher, respectively, than the proposed Specific Plan. Mitigation measures for operational impacts identified for Impact 4.8-3 would also apply to the Blueprint Alternative, but would not reduce emissions below the PCAPCD thresholds. (See RDEIR, pp. 6-116 to 6-119.)

Under the Blueprint Alternative, 21,631 residential units would be constructed in the Specific Plan area with a projected population of 49,416. (Table 6-42 in the Revised Draft EIR.) This increase is not consistent with the Placer County General Plan. The Placer County General Plan EIR assumed a population of approximately 35,000 for the Specific Plan area, and a population forecast for the total unincorporated area of 142,235 by 2010, which would be an increase of 37,546 above the County’s 2005 population. The buildout of the Specific Plan is likely to occur some time beyond 2025 under the Blueprint Alternative. CEQA does not identify a population increase as a significant environmental impact in and of itself. The additional number of residents in the Specific Plan area resulting from the development of the Specific Plan could, however, contribute to other environmental effects such as increased traffic, air quality...
degradation, and additional demands for public services and infrastructure. Impact 4.10-1, found to be less than significant and requiring no mitigation under the Proposed Project, would be **significant and unavoidable** under the Blueprint Alternative. (See RDEIR, pp. 6-124 to 6-125.)

For the reasons stated above, the Board finds the Blueprint Alternative to be infeasible and rejects it as a viable alternative to the project.

*Utilities Alternatives*

In addition to the land use alternatives analyzed above, two alternatives related to utilities are addressed in the Revised Draft EIR. The Off-Site Utility Corridor and Long-Term Surface Water Supply alternatives represent additional infrastructure options to be chosen by the County, regardless of whether the Board selects the Project or one of the Alternatives analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR. (See RDEIR, p. 6-148.)

**Alternative Off-Site Utility Corridor**

1. **Description**

This alternative consists of an alternative water line to connect to the alternative long-term surface water supply. This alternative consists of three PCWA Zone 1 transmission mains: one to connect the Penryn Water Storage Reservoir to the Sunset Water Treatment Plant; one to connect the Sunset Water Treatment Plant to the Roseville intertie; and one to connect the Roseville intertie to Baseline Road. This alternative is illustrated in Figure 6-14. (RDEIR, p. 6-148.)

Loss of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Farmland of Local Importance has the potential to occur. However, because construction would occur within the utility easement, and the area of surface disturbance or loss of agricultural use of the surface soil due to construction in utility infrastructure areas would be temporary in nature, potential impacts associated with utility line construction are considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-148.)

Because water lines will be placed underground, visual impacts will be related to the period of construction and revegetation, with the potential exception of utility line access points and areas where some portion of the utility facilities may be visible above ground. Although impacts during construction are considered less than significant, impacts related to revegetation and permanent above ground structures are potentially significant. Mitigation measures included in the Revised Draft EIR can reduce those impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-148.)

Light and glare impacts related to construction would be temporary in nature, and nighttime construction activity would be restricted by mitigation measures included in the Revised Draft EIR. Potential impacts are considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-148.)
Installation of utilities in off-site infrastructure areas will not result in additional impervious surface area or an increase in runoff. Design and installation of pipelines in off-site infrastructure areas is anticipated to remove and replace existing conditions with similar or in-kind materials. Specific areas at intersections, crossings, or an unforeseen encountered condition may require impervious cover and result in slightly higher impervious surface areas; however, these areas are considered minimal. These impacts are considered less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-148.)

Installation of utilities in off-site infrastructure areas could result in water quality degradation over the duration of construction. Grading operations result in a loss of vegetation, exposing the soils to erosion, particularly in steep areas. The exposed soils could be carried by storm runoff during the rainy season to downstream waters, resulting in sediment transport. These increased sediment loads could substantially degrade water quality in downstream drains, especially over the construction duration and buildout of off-site infrastructure areas. In addition, the operation and maintenance of construction vehicles and equipment, the loading and unloading of construction materials, and construction waste could release contaminants to the site that would be washed off by stormwater discharges. This increase in sediment loads and turbidity in local drains would be considered a significant short-term water quality impact. Mitigation measures included in the Revised Draft EIR can reduce those impacts although, not to a less than significant level, due to the involvement of other jurisdictions. Dry season water degradation is anticipated to be less than significant. (RDEIR, pp. 6-148 to 6-149.)

Potential biological resources constraints within the off-site infrastructure areas were evaluated by Foothill Associates biologists primarily in-office, using interpretation of aerial photography along with a literature review. Field visits were conducted at select locations to ensure that the aerial photos were interpreted accurately. Potentially significant impacts related to construction in off-site infrastructure areas include potential removal of habitat for special-status plant species, potential removal of habitat for listed vernal pool invertebrates, potential removal of habitat for Valley elderberry longhorn beetle, potential removal of habitat for western pond turtle, potential removal of burrows that are considered suitable burrowing owl nesting habitat, potential removal of nesting habitat for tricolored blackbird, potential removal of nesting trees that provide suitable raptor nesting habitat, potential removal of individual oak trees, and potential fill of wetlands and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S. Under this alternative, off-site utility corridors potentially cross several drainages and listed fish species could occur in these features. Riparian habitat may be affected by utility installation. Other special-status wildlife species that could occur, and therefore, an impact on a listed species may occur. Mitigation measures included in the Revised Draft EIR for off-site infrastructure (the Open Space and Biological Resources Mitigation and Management Plan) would reduce these impacts, although not to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-149.)

Impacts related to geology and soils that could result from trench/pipeline construction within the alternative off-site utility corridor are similar to those for proposed utility improvements within the Specific Plan area. Those impacts include earthwork/grading or topographic alteration and erosion control impacts. These impacts can be mitigated to a less than significant level by mitigation measures included in the Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, p. 6-149.)
As reported by Ric Windmiller, Consulting Archaeologist, (November, 2000), 35% of the 9.45 square-mile alternative water line corridor has been previously surveyed for cultural resources. Forty-two archaeological sites were recorded within this previously surveyed area. Of these 42 sites, 12 sites are on or adjacent to the centerline of the corridor. No field inspection was conducted of this corridor for the Revised Draft EIR. The corridor was the subject of a records search by the appropriate information center of the California Historical Resources Information System. A one-quarter mile area on each side of the route was included in the records search; however, only those cultural resources located on the centerline of the corridor are described. (RDEIR, p. 6-149.)

Three of the twelve identified sites are prehistoric Native American sites (two lithic scatters and a bedrock mortars site), and the remaining nine sites are historic resources. (RDEIR, p. 6-149.)

**P-31-1: Prehistoric Lithic Scatter.** This site consists of a thin cluster of fire cracked rocks and battered stone and ground stone artifacts found near a vernal pool. The site was originally recorded in 1978 and at the time of recordation the archaeologists noted that the site was badly damaged by the construction of Scow Road, the railroad and Industrial Way (Old Highway 65). Based on the 1978 description of the site, it may be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 4 (information potential). The archaeologists who recorded the site stated that the potential for data collected from the site might be low but will contribute to a previously unknown use of vernal pools (Roop 1978:3). (RDEIR, pp. 6-149 to 6-150.)

**CA-PLA-147: Prehistoric Lithic Scatter.** This site consists of a possible housepit, fire fractured rock, a bowl mortar, manos, obsidian waste flakes and various other debitage. It was originally considered “significant.” Based on this description, the site may be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 4 (information potential). (RDEIR, p. 6-150.)

**CA-PLA-607: Bedrock Mortars.** This site consists of ten bedrock mortar cups on three separate boulders situated along Pleasant Grove Creek on the former Placer Ranch. It was originally recorded in 1986. While bedrock sites are ubiquitous in the foothills of western Placer County and, by themselves, usually not eligible for the California Register, it is possible that the site may have a previously undetected cultural deposit. For this reason, the site is potentially eligible for the California Register under Criterion 4 (information potential). (RDEIR, p. 6-150.)

**CA-PLA-730-H: School Foundation.** This site consists of the possible foundation stones for the old Pleasant Grove School with a possible privy pit located seven feet south. When it was originally recorded in 1989, the archaeologists commented that the site had “little of significant research value.” Based on this comment, the site does not appear important under the CEQA Guidelines current at the time. However, the site may be eligible for the California Register under current CEQA statutes and guidelines. (RDEIR, p. 6-150.)

**CA-PLA-638-H: Historic Artifact Scatter.** This site was originally recorded in 1975 and revisited in 1982. When it was revisited, the archaeologist described the site as “an historic debris scatter with corrugated metal, boards, glass, nails, pottery and tin cans present.” There were also two open refuse pits on the site. At the time the site was originally recorded, the archaeologist noted that it was an early Chinese settlement where Chinese laborers for the
Whitney Ranch resided. Based on this statement, the site could be eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3 because the artifacts in the refuse pile could add insight into the living conditions of Chinese ranch laborers in the 1860s. (RDEIR, p. 6-150.)

**CA-PLA-604-H: Historic Ranch Site.** This site was recorded in 1986 when the archaeologists described it as a sheep ranch complex including a foundation for a square barn structure, adjacent concrete pad, and “sheep dip” trough made of concrete. A light scatter of wire nails, sheet metal, fired brick rubble and a two-inch iron water pipe surrounded the concrete features. Criterion 4 (information potential) would be the most applicable criterion for California Register eligibility. However, it appears that a case for eligibility under Criterion 4 would be weak. (RDEIR, p. 6-150.)

**CA-PLA-639-H: Historic Homestead Site.** This site was originally recorded in 1978 and was revisited in 1982. When it was revisited in 1982, the archaeologist described the site as “an extensive homestead or settlement location with foundations present.” The foundations include granite and concrete ruins of stone retaining walls and a concrete cistern. The most applicable criterion for eligibility for this site would be Criterion 4 (information potential). However, it appears that a case for eligibility under Criterion 4 would be weak. (RDEIR, p. 6-150.)

**CA-PLA-844-H: Antelope Canal.** The Antelope Canal draws water from the Lower Fiddler Green Canal in the Dutch Ravine drainage. The Antelope “ditch” was illustrated on J.G. Whitney’s map of the Citrus Colony (Gittings 1996:136). A history of the Placer County canal system compiled by PG&E indicates that the Antelope Ditch was purchased in 1859 by the Bear River and Auburn Water and Mining Company (PG&E n.d.:6-7). In time, the Antelope Ditch became one of many peripheral ditches owned by the Bear River and Auburn Water and Mining Company, which was bought by George W. Reamer in 1986. Reamer extended the ditch system during his seven-year ownership. In 1875, Reamer sold the system to Birdsall who focused on building an irrigation business in the fruit growing region from Clipper Gap to Penryn. Fifteen years later, in 1890, Birdsall sold the water system to the South Yuba Water Company (Pacific Gas and Electric Company n.d.:7-8). (RDEIR, p. 6-151.)

A segment of the canal was evaluated for the National Register of Historic Places in 1998. In this evaluation, the archaeologist stated, “While the Antelope Canal has ties to Placer County mining and agriculture, it was not one of the principal canals nor one of the best known laterals in the Bear River system” (Windmiller and others 1998:21). The Bear River and Gold Hill Canal was the first canal of importance in the region. Completed in 1853, the Bear River and Gold Hill Canal promoted mining in the Gold Hill, Virginia and neighboring localities (Steel and others 1861:49). The Boardman Canal, also part of the Bear River canal system, was built in 1893, and carried water from Lake Theodore to the vicinity of Roseville (Coleman 1952:98). There were many laterals along its route. The major branches were: the Auburn, Freeman, Shirland, Newcastle, Greeley, Rock Springs, Red Ravine, Perry and Baughman ditches (Cooper 1913:268). (RDEIR, p. 6-151.)

According to the evaluation, the most applicable criterion of eligibility for the National Register would be Criterion C (Criterion 3 for the California Register). “However, the Antelope Canal does not illustrate, in the opinion of the consultants, a particularly important example or
significant change in farming or mining technologies. The canal illustrates neither significant
design nor engineering innovation. Therefore, it is the consultants’ opinion that the canal is not
eligible for the National Register” (Windmiller and others 1998:21). (RDEIR, p. 6-151.)

While some sections of a canal system are ineligible, it is possible for other parts of a linear
feature such as a canal to be eligible if those eligible sections are examples of local unique or
significant engineering design or innovation. Since the segment described here has not been
evaluated for California Register eligibility, it is potentially eligible for the Register. (RDEIR, p.
6-151.)

CA-PLA-690-H: California Central Railroad. The proposed water line route crosses an
unrecorded section of the California Central Railroad, recorded in other parts of Placer County as
CA-PLA-690-H. Service along the ill-fated California Central Railroad began in 1861. The
route from Roseville to Lincoln was sold in foreclosure in 1868 to one of the “Big Four,” C.P.
Huntington. That same year, Huntington sold the California Central Railroad to the California
and Oregon Railroad, which had just been incorporated by Leland Stanford, Charles Crocker,
Mark Hopkins and C.P. Huntington. The Central Pacific Railroad absorbed the Roseville-to-
Lincoln route in 1870 (Windmiller 1994b:7). (RDEIR, p. 6-151.)

One segment of the original route was evaluated in 1994, prior to the new 1998 regulations. At
that time it was determined that, “While the line is associated with important events and
personages in California history, the segment (of concern) is overlain with the modern Southern
Pacific rail line. Therefore that portion of the original California Central Line…lacks integrity”
(Windmiller 1993b:8). (RDEIR, p. 6-152.)

Like the Antelope Canal, the California Central Railroad line is a linear feature. It is possible for
segments of linear features to be eligible while other segments are not. It is possible that the
segment of the line that the water corridor crosses is eligible if it is an example of a local unique
or significant engineering design or innovation. Therefore, the segment of railroad route
described here may be eligible for the California Register. (RDEIR, p. 6-152.)

Penryn Canal. The proposed water line route crosses a segment of the Penryn Canal. Four
segments of the Penryn Canal were recorded in 1999, but a trinomial has not been assigned by
the information center. The Penryn Canal is a segment of the Antelope Canal and is still in use
by PCWA. It is possible that segments of the Penryn Canal are eligible for the California
Register under Criterion 3, as an example of a local unique or significant engineering design or
innovation. Therefore, the canal may be eligible for the California Register. (RDEIR, p. 6-152.)

PCWA-A: Citrus Colony Historic Landscape. This site was recorded in 1999 as an alignment
of fan palms planted in the nineteenth century under the direction of J.P. Whitney. The palm
trees mark Whitney’s attempted development of the Placer County Citrus Colony. The
alignment is potentially eligible for the California Register under Criterion 1 because of its
association with the rise to dominance of western Placer County agriculture, particularly fruit
production. (RDEIR, p. 6-152.)
PCWA-C: Historic Culvert. This site, consisting of the remnant of a culvert that allows Antelope Creek to flow under English Colony Way was recorded in 1999. According to the site record, most of the culvert has been replaced by modern corrugated metal pipe that is held in place by broken rock fill. The culvert’s head wall is engraved “WPA 1940.” The culvert can only be judged on Criterion 1 for eligibility for the California Register. The “WPA 1940” marking indicates that the culvert is associated with the Works Project Administration (WPA). The Works Project Administration was a product of the Great Depression, and made significant contributions to the broad patterns of local, regional and national history. Despite its association with the WPA and the Great Depression, the culvert played too minor a role in WPA operations to provide an important link with the social programs administered by the federal government. Its insignificance becomes especially clear when it is compared to the larger federal projects such as the construction of Hoover Dam. The culvert fails to meet the other eligibility criteria because it is not directly associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history. It does not have any distinct characteristics of type, period or region, nor does it represent the work of a master. The culvert also has not yielded nor does it have the potential to yield information important to the history of the local area, California or the nation. The culvert does not appear eligible for the California Register. (RDEIR, p. 6-152.)

Bridge 19C0046: Washington Avenue at Pleasant Grove Creek. The Caltrans Local Bridge Survey lists the bridge as not appearing to meet the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places. It is unlikely that the bridge would meet California Register criteria of eligibility, as well. (RDEIR, p. 6-152.)

The only traffic-related impacts are those associated with construction. Construction-related impacts would be temporary in nature and are addressed under the discussion of Public Services/Infrastructure. (RDEIR, p. 6-153.)

Exhaust and fugitive dust emissions would be generated by construction activities in the off-site utility corridor, such as excavation and grading, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth. The degree of activity is unknown at this time, so average daily construction emissions have not been estimated for off-site infrastructure areas. During maximum construction activity, the primary emissions would be dust from earthmoving activities and NOx from construction vehicle exhaust. The direct air quality impacts of construction in the alternative off-site utility corridor is considered significant and unavoidable. No operational air quality impacts have been identified related to installation and maintenance of utilities in off-site infrastructure areas. (RDEIR, p. 6-153.)

The only noise impact associated with the alternative off-site utility corridor is construction-related noise, which may affect adjacent noise-sensitive uses. Construction activities would be temporary in nature and would most likely occur only during the daytime hours. Construction noise impacts could result in annoyance or sleep disruption for nearby residents if nighttime operations were to occur, or if equipment is not properly muffled or maintained. These impacts are considered potentially significant, but mitigation measures included in the Revised Draft EIR would reduce impacts to a less than significant level. (RDEIR, p. 6-153.)
Construction activity related to installation of pipelines in the alternative off-site utility corridor could present an obstacle to movement which affects emergency response times for police and fire protection, access to schools, and interference with solid waste collection. However, this impact is considered less than significant because it would be temporary and subject to control through standard traffic control and access procedures. (RDEIR, p. 6-153.)

The off-site utility corridor was not surveyed or assessed for hazards. (RDEIR, p. 6-153.)

**ALTERNATIVE LONG-TERM SURFACE WATER SUPPLY**

1. **Description**

This alternative consists of a long-term surface water supply provided by PCWA from their CVP American River water through a Folsom Reservoir diversion and would be an alternative to the 11,500 AFA described in the Project Description that would be furnished by PCWA from the Sacramento River. The *American River Basin Cumulative Report* (Cumulative Report) was prepared by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) in August 2001 as part of the *PCWA Pump Station Project EIS/EIR*. In part, it is intended to serve as an integral component of NEPA, CEQA, and ESA compliance documentation for Reclamation’s CVP American River Division actions identified as reasonably foreseeable. The evaluation includes an assessment of the diversion-related and service area impacts of past and future water diversions, CVP facility operations affecting those diversions, and land-based resources of the American River watershed. The Cumulative Report is incorporated by reference in its entirety (PCWA and Reclamation, 2002), although a summary is provided in the Revised Draft EIR. The alternative water supply analysis for the Revised Draft EIR relies on the analyses and conclusions of the Cumulative Report, recognizing its collaboratively-based acceptance and recent updates to include all known Reclamation American River Division actions, including the proposed Specific Plan. (RDEIR, pp. 6-153 to 6-154.)

The following consists of two parts: (1) an analysis to determine the effect of the proposed Specific Plan surface water supply project in combination with all past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects (cumulative analysis) (this is the same as the *American River Basin Cumulative Report* analysis that was prepared by Reclamation in September 2002 as part of the *PCWA Pump Station Project EIS/EIR*); and (2) if a significant cumulative impact was found, an analysis to determine the incremental contribution of the long-term surface water supply to the cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-154.)

**Lower American River Recreation Impacts**

For recreation flow ranges, the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would result in 18 fewer months in which lower American River flows at Nimbus Dam would be in the minimum to maximum flow range (1,750 CFS to 6,000 CFS), relative to 255 months within this range under the existing condition, and 24 fewer months within the optimum flow range (3,000 CFS to 6,000 CFS), relative to 165 months within this range under the existing condition (Template Output F-44). Such flow reductions under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion
condition would be considered a significant impact to lower American River recreation opportunities. (RDEIR, p. 6-154.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion, however, would not contribute significantly to any reductions in the frequency in which flows are within either the minimum to maximum or optimum recreational flow ranges (Template Output J-44). The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute 6 months to the 243 months in which lower American River flows at Nimbus Dam would be within the minimum to maximum flow range, and would contribute 5 months to the 146 months in which flows at Nimbus Dam would be within the optimum flow range. Therefore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to significant reductions in lower American River flows, and hence would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant lower American River recreational impacts that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-154.)

**Folsom Reservoir Boating.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, Folsom Reservoir elevation levels during the March through September recreational use period would be above the elevation required for use of all boat ramps (420 feet MSL) in 42 fewer months, relative to 330 months available under the existing condition. Reservoir elevations would fall below 412 feet MSL, the elevation required for the use of marina wet slips, in 44 additional months, relative to 368 months available under the existing condition (Template Output F-47). Such reductions in reservoir elevation would be considered to significantly reduce Folsom Reservoir boating opportunities under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-154.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute 5 months to the 42 fewer months and 7 months to the 44 additional months of the reductions in usability of either boat ramps or marina wet slips in any month of the March through September period (Template Output J-47). Consequently, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would result in a significant cumulatively considerable contribution to the significant Folsom Reservoir boating impacts that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, pp. 6-154 to 6-155.)

**Folsom Reservoir Swimming.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, Folsom Reservoir water levels would be within the usable swimming range (420 to 455 feet MSL) during the peak May through September swimming season in 28 fewer months, relative to 144 usable months under the existing condition. For the optimum use elevation range (435 to 455 feet MSL), there would be 16 fewer usable months under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to 73 usable months within the range under the existing condition (Template Output F-47). Such changes in reservoir water levels under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would significantly limit swimming opportunities at Folsom Reservoir, relating to the existing condition, and would therefore be considered a significant impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-155.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute 2 months to the 28 fewer months for usable beaches and 1 month to
the 16 fewer months for optimal elevation ranges for swimming at Folsom Reservoir in any month of the May through September period (Template Output J-47). Accordingly, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to impacts to Folsom Reservoir swimming under the future cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-155.)

**Water Supply Impacts**

The cumulative modeling results indicated that there were no reductions in delivery allocations to CVP settlement and exchange contractors, relative to the existing condition, and thus, no impact to CVP settlement and exchange contractors (Technical Appendix E-573 and E-577). Implementation of the future actions evaluated in the Cumulative Report, however, would result in potentially significant or significant cumulative impacts to SWP Delta service area customers and CVP water service contractors. These impacts are summarized below. (RDEIR, p. 6-155.)

**Deliveries to SWP Customers.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, delivery reductions to SWP customers would range from 5% to 45%, relative to the existing condition, in 42 of the 70 years modeled (Technical Appendix E-579). Such reductions under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would occur with sufficient frequency and magnitude to significantly impact deliveries to SWP customers. (RDEIR, p. 6-155.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion, however, would not contribute in either frequency or magnitude to any anticipated future SWP customer delivery reductions (Technical Appendix I-579). Thus, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future significant impacts to deliveries to SWP customers that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-155.)

**Deliveries to CVP Customers.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, CVP water service contractors would experience significant reductions in deliveries, relative to the existing condition. CVP M&I contractors both north and south of the Delta would experience delivery reductions of 5% to 20%, relative to the existing condition, in 24 of the 70 years modeled. CVP agricultural contractors north of the Delta would experience reductions of 5% to 25%, relative to the existing condition, in 42 of the 70 years modeled, and agricultural contractors south of the Delta would experience reductions of 5% to 20% in 35 of the 70 years modeled (Technical Appendix E-571 to E-572 and E-575 to E-576). Reductions to CVP customers both north and south of the Delta would occur with sufficient frequency and magnitude to be considered cumulatively significant impacts. (RDEIR, p. 6-156.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute a 5% reduction in delivery to CVP agricultural contractors north of the Delta in 1 of the 70 years modeled. However, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute in either frequency or magnitude to additional reductions in delivery to any CVP contractor, either north or south of the Delta (Technical Appendix I-571 to I-572 and I-575 to I-576). Therefore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable
contribution to the significant impacts to deliveries to CVP customers that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-156.)

*Water Quality Impacts*

**Increased Diversions and Changes in CVP Operations that Could Result in Reduced River Flows and Reservoir Elevations.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, substantially reduced storage levels in Folsom, Shasta, and Trinity reservoirs, and substantially reduced flows in the lower American and Sacramento rivers, relative to existing conditions are expected. For Folsom Reservoir storage, the 70-year mean monthly flows would be generally lower (up to 12% less), for Shasta Reservoir storage, the 70-year mean monthly flows would also be lower (up to 7% less), and for Trinity Reservoir storage, the 70-year mean monthly flows would be lower as well (up to 5% less), relative to the existing condition. Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, the 70-year mean monthly flows for the lower American River at Nimbus Dam would be reduced by up to 17%, relative to the existing condition. Similarly, the 70-year mean monthly flows for upper Sacramento River would be reduced by up to 9% and the lower Sacramento River 70-year mean monthly flows would be reduced by up to 9%, relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-105 to F-111). The greatest reductions in storage and flows would be from September through November, when existing flows are already low. Such reductions in storage and flow rates would be expected to significantly increase the concentration of contaminants that are of concern. Increases in constituent concentrations that may occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition could be sufficiently large to cause State or federal water quality criteria or standards to be exceeded, while such standards are not exceeded under the existing condition. Therefore, impacts to water quality under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would be potentially significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-156.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute up to 19% (or 3 months of the 16 months) of the cumulative reductions in Folsom Reservoir storage for any given month (Template Output J-105). The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute up to 13% (or 1 month of the 8 months) of the cumulative reductions at Trinity Reservoir and up to 2% (or 3 months of the 160 months) at Shasta Reservoir for any given month (Template Output J-106 and J-107). Therefore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant water quality impacts to CVP reservoirs that could occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, pp. 6-156 to 6-157.)

The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute up to 41% (or 35 months of the 85 months) of the cumulative reductions in lower American River flows (Template Output J-108 and J-109). For the upper Sacramento River, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute up to 2% (or 2 months of the 82 months) of the cumulative reductions and up to 5% (or 33 months of the 708 months) of the cumulative reductions for the lower Sacramento River (Template Output J-110 to J-111). The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not have a cumulatively considerable contribution to flow reductions in the upper or lower Sacramento rivers that could impact water quality impacts. The Folsom Reservoir diversion would, however, have a cumulatively
considerable contribution to significant cumulative water quality impacts to the lower American River. (RDEIR, p. 6-157.)

**Delta Water Quality.** Similar to the Cumulative Report, reductions in long-term average Delta outflow of up to approximately 8% would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-413). Monthly reductions of 5% or more (up to 42%), relative to the existing condition, would occur in 234 of the 840 months analyzed throughout the 70-year period of hydrologic record. Such reductions would occur with significant frequency and magnitude to result in potentially significant cumulative impacts to water quality. (RDEIR, p. 6-157.)

Similar to the Cumulative Report, the long-term average position of X2 would move upstream less than one kilometer under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition. However, there would be 146 occurrences, of the 840 months included in the analysis, in which the position of X2 would shift upstream by one km or more, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix E-13 to E-24). Such shifts would be of significant magnitude to result in potentially significant impacts to water quality parameters that are dependent upon the position of X2. (RDEIR, p. 6-157.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute 3 months to the 234 months of outflow reductions. The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to shifts in the position of X2 of more than one km (Technical Appendix I-13 to I-24). Therefore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the potentially significant cumulative reductions in Delta outflow or shifts in the position of X2 that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-157.)

**Flood Control Impacts**

Similar to the Cumulative Report, increased diversions from the CVP system that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would result in no change or increased reservoir storage capacity (up to 1,307 CFS release from Keswick), and hence would provide positive benefits to flood control relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-97). (RDEIR, pp. 6-157 to 6-158.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** Accordingly, there would be no significant impact to flood control under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition. The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute 64 CFS to the total cumulative increase in the release from Keswick (Template Output J-97). Therefore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative positive benefits to flood control. (RDEIR, p. 6-158.)

**Hydropower Impacts**

**CVP Gross Hydropower Generation and Gross Dependable Capacity.** Changes in the future operations of CVP facilities would result in an estimated annual reduction in gross annual CVP
hydropower generation of 365 GWh, or 7%, relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-10). For nearly every month of the 840 months modeled under the 70-year period of hydrologic record, the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would result in reductions in gross CVP hydropower generation, relative to the existing condition, with maximum reductions of up to 316 GWh in individual months. While such increases would not be expected to result in significant direct environmental impacts, they would be expected to result in significant economic impacts that would be passed on to CVP customers. (RDEIR, p. 6-158.)

There would be significant reductions in gross CVP dependable capacity under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition. Gross CVP dependable capacity would be reduced in nearly every month of the 840 months included in the analysis, with average monthly reductions ranging from 1.3% to 10.5% of existing dependable capacity, and maximum reductions of up to 570 MW (October), relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix E-493 to E-504). (RDEIR, p. 6-158.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute substantially to monthly reductions in hydropower generation, with the greatest monthly reduction of 63 GWh (Technical Appendix I-505 to I-517). The Folsom Reservoir diversion would, in individual months, result in significant cost impacts to CVP customers. The Folsom Reservoir diversion would, in individual months, result in a minor contribution to the economic impacts that would occur under the future cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. This alternative would result in average decreases in dependable capacity of up to six MW in any given month, and benefits or no impact to monthly long-term average dependable capacity (Technical Appendix I-493 to I-504). Thus, while this is a minor contribution to significant increases in dependable capacity that would occur under the cumulative condition, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would still result in direct cost impacts that would be passed on to CVP customers. (RDEIR, p. 6-158.)

**Folsom and EID Pumping Requirements.** The energy requirement under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would be more than doubled at the Folsom Pumping Plant and six times greater at the EID Pumping Plant (more than 11,000 MWh and 18,000 MWh annual increases, respectively), relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-12 to F-13). This significant cumulative economic impact would be passed on to water users who rely on pumping at Folsom Reservoir, but would not result in direct environmental impacts. (RDEIR, pp. 6-158 to 6-159.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute significantly to the total increase in pumping requirements that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. For the Folsom Pumping Plant, the greatest increase in long-term average pumping requirements contributed by this alternative would be 540 MWh, and the greatest contribution to monthly increases at the EID Pumping Plant would be 6 MWh (Template Output J-12 to J-13). While these are minor contributions, relative to the overall increase in pumping requirements under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, the economic impacts would be passed on directly to water users. (RDEIR, p. 6-159.)
Terrestrial Resources Impacts

Lower American River Riparian Vegetation and Special-Status Species Dependent upon Riparian and Open Water Habitats. Changes in lower American River flows under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would result in more frequent reductions of flows above the indices for cottonwood growth and terrace inundation, relative to the existing condition. Under the existing condition, flows below Nimbus Dam would be above the index for maintenance of radial growth (i.e., greater than or equal to 1,765 CFS) in 61% to 86% of the 560 months simulated for the March through October period (Technical Appendix F-88). Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, flows would be above the index for maintenance of radial growth in 50% to 89% of the months simulated for the March through October period. Therefore, the absolute difference between the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition and the existing condition would range from increases of 3% and reductions of 3% to 14%. (RDEIR, p. 6-159.)

Flows below Nimbus Dam would be above the index for maintenance of some growth (i.e., greater than or equal to 2,000 CFS) in 57% to 86% of the months simulated for the March through October period under the existing condition (Technical Appendix F-88). Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, flows would be above the index for maintenance of some growth in 43% to 86% of the months simulated for the March through October period. Therefore, the absolute difference between the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition and the existing condition would range from reductions of 3% to 14%. (RDEIR, p. 6-159.)

Under the existing condition, flows below Nimbus Dam would be above the index for maintenance of maximum growth (i.e., greater than or equal to 3,000 CFS) in 4% to 69% of the months simulated for the March through October period (Technical Appendix F-88). Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, flows would be above the index for maintenance of maximum growth in 23% to 71% of the months simulated for the March through October period. Therefore, the absolute difference between the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition and the existing condition would range from increases of 3% and reductions of 1% to 20%. (RDEIR, p. 6-159.)

Reduced flows under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would result in seven and nine additional occurrences of two or more consecutive months above the index for maintenance of radial growth at Nimbus Dam and the H Street Bridge, respectively (Technical Appendix F-496 and F-499). Reduced flows under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would result in six and four additional occurrences of two or more consecutive months above the same growth index at Nimbus Dam and the H Street Bridge, respectively (Technical Appendix F-497 and F-500). Reduced flows under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would result in five and two additional occurrences of two or more consecutive months above the maximum growth index at the Nimbus Dam and the H Street Bridge, respectively (Technical Appendix F-498 and F-501). However, none of the consecutive flow reductions would occur during the critical growing period of April through July. Overall, such flow reductions are not considered to be of sufficient magnitude and/or frequency to have long-term
effects on the population and growth of cottonwoods/riparian vegetation, relative to the existing condition. Furthermore, given that flow reductions would not result in long-term adverse effects on cottonwoods or riparian vegetation, future impacts to special-status species that depend on lower American River riparian vegetation would also be less than significant, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, pp. 6-159 to 6-160.)

**Lower American River Backwater Ponds and Special-Status Species Dependent on Backwater Pond/Marsh Habitats (Including Elderberry Shrubs and VELB).** Modeling results indicate that recharge of lower American River backwater ponds would not be significantly altered under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition. Under the existing condition, monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam would be above 2,700 CFS, the minimum flow required for recharge of ponds closest to the river, in 4% to 73% of the 560 months simulated (Technical Appendix F-94). Flows under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, would be above 2,700 CFS in 3% to 73% of the months simulated. Therefore, the absolute difference between the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition and the existing condition would range from reductions of 1% to 19%. (RDEIR, p. 6-160.)

Under the existing condition, monthly mean flows below Nimbus Dam would be above 4,000 CFS, the flow value required for recharge of off-river ponds, in 7% to 43% of the months simulated (Technical Appendix F-94). Flows under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, would be above 4,000 CFS in 4% to 39% of the months simulated. Therefore, the absolute difference between the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition and the existing condition would range from reductions of 1% to 21%. (RDEIR, p. 6-160.)

Given that adequate recharge of both adjacent and off-river ponds would occur with sufficient frequency under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, such reductions were considered less than significant, relative to the existing condition. Furthermore, special-status species dependent upon recharge of backwater pond/marsh habitats, including elderberry shrubs and VELB, would not be adversely affected by future reductions in flow that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, and consequently, impacts to these special-status species would be less than significant. (RDEIR, p. 6-160.)

**Folsom, Trinity, and Shasta Reservoir Vegetation.** Long-term average end-of-month water surface elevations for Folsom, Trinity, and Shasta reservoirs would be reduced, relative to the existing condition, with reductions ranging from 3 to 11 feet during growing season months of March through September (Template Output F-485, F-487 and F-489). Weedy vegetation, rather than vegetation that would provide quality wildlife habitat, establishes in the drawdown zone under existing conditions due to constant changes in reservoir elevation that result from reservoir drawdown patterns. Consequently, reductions in reservoir elevations that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would not affect areas of high and consistent habitat value that are available for species associated with the Reservoir under the existing condition. (RDEIR, pp. 6-160 to 6-161.)

**Upper Sacramento River Riparian Vegetation.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, upper Sacramento River long-term average flows at Keswick Dam during
the March through October growing season would be reduced, relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-141). Such decreases would range from approximately 82 to 836 CFS, relative to the existing condition. However, such decreases would be small, considering the monthly mean flow range under the existing condition of over 5,000 CFS to over 13,000 CFS. Thus, anticipated flow reductions that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would not be of sufficient magnitude and/or frequency to significantly alter upper Sacramento River riparian vegetation and related species, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-161.)

**Lower Sacramento River Riparian Vegetation.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, reductions in long-term average flows on the lower Sacramento River at Freeport would range from approximately 385 CFS to 835 CFS during most months, with increases ranging from 41CFS to 451 CFS in early spring and mid-summer months, relative to the existing condition. However, the greatest reduction in long-term average flow under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would be less than 6% of existing flows for any month of the growing season, relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-147). Furthermore, the frequency and magnitude of flow reductions that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would be small, considering the existing monthly mean flow range of over 11,000 CFS to over 33,000 CFS during the growing season months. Therefore, adverse effects to riparian habitats of the lower Sacramento River would not be expected under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-161.)

**Delta Riparian Vegetation and Special-Status Species.** Long-term average reductions in lower Sacramento River flow would not be expected to alter the riparian habitat of the Delta. Potential shifts in the long-term average position of X2 of up to 0.7 km would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-429). Such shifts, however, would be considered minor and would not adversely affect Delta vegetation (which is adapted to changes in salinity) or special-status species dependent upon Delta habitats. (RDEIR, p. 6-161.)

In summary, there would be no potentially significant impact to terrestrial resources and vegetation associated with the implementation of future actions under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition. Therefore, as no significant impacts are anticipated to terrestrial resources under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future impacts to riparian resources. (RDEIR, p. 6-161.)

**Fisheries and Aquatic Habitat Impacts**

The cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition was evaluated for the potential to cause future impacts to fisheries and aquatic habitat associated with the lower American River, Sacramento River, and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, as well as the fisheries resources of Folsom, Shasta and Trinity reservoirs. The results of this analysis indicated there would be no significant adverse cumulative effects to the following resources:
- Folsom Reservoir Coldwater Fisheries
- Nimbus Fish Hatchery Operations and Fish Production
- Lower American River American Shad
- Lower American River Striped Bass Fishery
- Lower American River Splittail (temperature-related)
- Shasta Reservoir Coldwater Fisheries
- Trinity Reservoir Coldwater Fisheries
- Trinity Reservoir Warm water Fisheries
- Upper Sacramento River Fisheries (flow-related)
- Lower Sacramento River Fisheries (flow-related)

(RDEIR, p. 6-162.)

The potentially significant cumulative impacts identified in the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition are summarized below. Each discussion is followed by an evaluation of the potential for the proposed Folsom Reservoir diversion to result in a considerable contribution to the identified cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-162.)

**Folsom Reservoir Warm water Fisheries.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, long-term average end-of-month water surface elevations would be reduced in Folsom Reservoir by up to 9 feet MSL, relative to the existing condition, during the March through September period, when warm water fish spawning and initial rearing occur. On a monthly basis, reservoir elevations would be reduced by 5 to 36 feet MSL in 199 months of the 490 months included throughout the March through September period (Technical Appendix E-198 to E-204.) Future changes in water surface elevation would result in reductions in the long-term average amount of available littoral habitat from 6% to 34% (119 to 306 acres), with reductions in individual months of up to 1,998 acres, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix E-294 to E-300). Such reductions in habitat availability could, in turn, lead to increased predation on young of the year warm water fish, thereby reducing the long-term initial year-class strength of the population. Unless willows and other near-shore vegetation, in response to seasonal reductions in water levels, become established at lower reservoir elevations in the future, long-term year-class production of warm water fisheries could be reduced. Consequently, seasonal reductions in littoral habitat availability represent a potentially significant cumulative impact to Folsom Reservoir warm water fisheries. Potential nest-dewatering events in Folsom Reservoir could occur more frequently under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition. Modeling results indicate that the greatest increase would occur during June, with 27 nest-dewatering events (out of 70 years), relative to 17 events under the existing condition. The frequency with which potential nest-dewatering events could occur in Folsom Reservoir would also increase in the remaining months of the March through July warm water fish-spawning period, and consequently impacts to warm water fish nesting success, may be cumulatively significant. (RDEIR, pp. 6-162 to 6-163.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute substantially to reductions under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. This diversion would contribute 90 months to the total cumulative reservoir
elevation reductions, although these reductions would range from 1 foot to 3 feet MSL (Technical Appendix I-198 to I-204). In individual months, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would result in both increases and decreases in the amount of littoral habitat, with reductions up to 222 acres (Technical Appendix I-294 to I-300). Such reductions in magnitude would constitute a cumulatively considerable contribution to significant reductions in littoral habitat availability that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to increases in the frequency of potential nest-dewatering events in any month of the 490 months included in the analysis (Template Output J-486). Therefore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the frequency of nest dewatering events that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-163.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Lower American River Fall-Run Chinook Salmon Spawning and Incubation (October through February). The long-term average flow below Nimbus Dam under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would be up to approximately 15% less (329 CFS, October) than the flow under the existing condition during all months of the October through February fall-run Chinook salmon spawning and incubation period. Similarly, changes in long-term average flows at Watt Avenue would be up to 16% less (338 CFS, October) during the October through February period. Differences in flows in the lower flow ranges are of particular concern. In October, November and December, when the existing condition flow would be 2,500 CFS or less, the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would result in flow reductions of up to 750 CFS nearly 50% of the time (Technical Appendix E-313 to E-317). (RDEIR, p. 6-163.)

Such reductions in flows would reduce the amount of available Chinook spawning habitat, which could result in increased redd superimposition during years when adult returns are high enough for spawning habitat to be limiting. These reductions in flow are of sufficient magnitude and occur with enough frequency to represent a potentially significant impact to long-term initial year-class strength of lower American River fall-run Chinook salmon. (RDEIR, p. 6-163.)

Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion. The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute significantly to future cumulative lower American River flow reductions at either Nimbus Dam or Watt Avenue. The maximum reduction in long-term average flow would be 46 CFS (November) at both locations, or 1.7% of the total cumulative reduction in flows (Template Output J-117 and J-123). Thus, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would not provide a cumulatively considerable contribution to reductions in lower American River flows that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-163.)

Flow-Related Impacts to Lower American River Fall-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Juvenile Rearing (March Through June). Relatively small differences in long-term average flows would occur between the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition and the existing condition during the March through June juvenile fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead rearing period, with the largest reduction at Watt Avenue of 6.9%, relative to the existing condition (272 CFS, May) (Template Output F-123). However, flows in individual months would be reduced, by up to 71%, relative to the existing condition, in 178 of the 280
months included in the analyses throughout the March through June rearing period. These differences in flow may adversely affect long-term juvenile fall-run Chinook salmon or steelhead rearing habitat availability, and therefore represent a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, pp. 6-163 to 6-164.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute to substantial lower American River flow reductions that would occur during the March through June rearing period. The diversion alternative would contribute up to 55CFS (June), or 35%, to reductions in the long-term average flow at Watt Avenue (Template Output J-123). Furthermore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute 69 months to the total cumulative reduction in flows (Technical Appendix I-330 to I-333). Consequently, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to future potentially significant flow-related impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead rearing on the lower American River. (RDEIR, p. 6-164.)

**Temperature-Related Impacts to Lower American River Fall-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Juvenile Rearing (March through June).** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, there would be four additional occurrences during the March through June period in which water temperatures at Watt Avenue would be above 65°F, relative to the existing condition. However, long-term average water temperature at Watt Avenue would not change by more than 0.3°F during any month of the March through June period, compared to the existing condition. Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, water temperature increases of greater than 0.3°F, relative to the existing condition, would occur during the March through June period in 59 months of the 276 months modeled (Technical Appendix E-426 to E-429). Such frequent increases in water temperature represent a potentially significant cumulative impact to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead juvenile rearing. (RDEIR, p. 6-164.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to potentially significant impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead juvenile rearing. This alternative diversion would not contribute to the 59 occurrences of temperature increases of 0.3°F or more that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition (Technical Appendix I-426 to I-429). Thus, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to increases in lower American River water temperatures at Watt Avenue under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, and consequently would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to potentially significant impacts to fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead juvenile rearing. (RDEIR, p. 6-164.)

**Flow-Related Impacts to Lower American River Steelhead Rearing (July through September).** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, the long-term average flow below Nimbus Dam would decrease by approximately 9% to 17% (up to 418 CFS) throughout the July through September period, relative to the existing condition. At Watt Avenue, the long-term average flow would decrease by approximately ten to 18% (up to 430 CFS), relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-117 and F-123). Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, flows below Nimbus Dam would be reduced by 1% to 69% in 151 months of the 210 months included in the analysis. Such reductions would
be up to 2,695 CFS in magnitude, relative to flows under the existing condition. Watt Avenue flows under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would be reduced by 1% to 76% in 157 months of the 210 months included in the analysis, over the 70-year period of hydrologic record. Such flow reductions would be up to 2,695 CFS in magnitude relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix E-322 to E-324 and E-334 to E-336). The flow reductions that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition are of sufficient magnitude and occur with enough frequency to reduce juvenile steelhead summer rearing habitat, relative to the amount available under the existing condition. Consequently, reductions in flow associated with the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition may adversely affect long-term rearing success of juvenile steelhead, and therefore represent a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, pp. 6-164 to 6-165.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to the substantial flow reductions that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. For flows below Nimbus Dam, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute 14 months, or 9% of the total reductions under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. Such reductions would range from 6 CFS to 556 CFS (Technical Appendix I-322 to I-324). However, these decreases would be small considering the monthly mean flows under the existing condition range from 383 CFS to 6,187 CFS. Similarly, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute 20 months of flow reductions at Watt Avenue, or 12% of the total reductions under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, with reductions ranging from one CFS to 549 CFS (Technical Appendix I-334 to I-336). However, these decreases would be small considering the monthly mean flows under the existing condition range from 292 CFS to 6,075 CFS. Such flow reductions would not occur with sufficient magnitude or frequency to result in changes to long-term average flows at either Nimbus Dam or Watt Avenue. The Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to potential significant impacts to steelhead rearing that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-165.)

**Temperature-Related Impacts to Lower American River Steelhead Rearing (July through September).** During the July through September steelhead rearing period, water temperatures under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would be higher than those under the existing condition when temperatures would already be relatively warm. In 42 months of the 207 months included in the analysis, water temperatures at Watt Avenue would increase by more than 0.3°F, relative to the existing condition, with increases up to 5°F when temperatures under the existing condition are at 70°F or greater (Technical Appendix E-430 to E-432). Such water temperature increases represent a potentially significant cumulative impact to juvenile steelhead summer rearing. (RDEIR, p. 6-165.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not significantly contribute to the substantial changes in water temperature that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. This diversion alternative would not result in increases in the frequency with which water temperatures at Watt Avenue would be above 65°F in any month of the July through September period (Template Output J-289). Furthermore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to the long-term average water temperature increases that would occur under the cumulative Folsom
Reservoir diversion condition, and would only contribute nine months, or 5%, to the number of months in which temperatures under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would increase by greater than 0.3°F, relative to the existing condition (Template Output J-286 and Technical Appendix I-430 to I-432). Thus, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to increases in lower American River temperatures at Watt Avenue during July through September. (RDEIR, pp. 6-165 to 6-166.)

**Lower American River Splittail.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, the long-term average flow at Watt Avenue during February through May would decrease by approximately 2.5% to 7%, relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-123). These flow reductions correspond to reductions in usable habitat of up to 3.9 acres, or 100% of the habitat available in individual years under the existing condition. While in many years riparian vegetation would not be inundated throughout this period under either the cumulative or existing condition, reductions in inundated riparian habitat would occur virtually every month during the February through May period in those years when habitat would be inundated under the existing condition. However, relatively little splittail habitat is available under either the cumulative or existing condition. Given the uncertainty regarding the magnitude and extent of splittail spawning habitat in the lower American River, and the actual amount of potential spawning habitat available at specific flow rates throughout the river, the effects of flow reductions during the February through May period are also uncertain, and therefore represent a potentially significant cumulative impact to this federally threatened species. (RDEIR, p. 6-166.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute measurably to potentially significant cumulative impacts to lower American River splittail. This diversion would not result in changes in the long-term average amount of habitat available (Technical Appendix I-558 to I-561). Specifically, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would result in changes (one increase of 0.2 acres, one decrease of 0.5 acres) in the amount of habitat in 2 months of the 280 months included in the analysis throughout the February through May period. Thus, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to significant reductions in splittail habitat under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, and therefore would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future potential impacts to lower American River splittail. (RDEIR, p. 6-166.)

**Shasta Reservoir Warm water Fisheries.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, long-term average end-of-month water surface elevation at Shasta Reservoir would decline during the March through September period, when warm water fish spawning and initial rearing may be expected. In 276 months of the 490 months included in the analysis, the water surface elevation of Shasta Reservoir during the spawning and rearing period would be reduced by 2 to 54 feet MSL, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix E-186 to E-192). Long-term average elevation levels would be reduced up to 11 feet MSL, relative to the existing condition. In addition, the long-term average amount of littoral habitat potentially available to warm water fish for spawning and/or rearing under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would decrease by 6% to 23% over the March through September period, relative to the existing condition (Template Output I-494). Overall, potential impacts to Shasta Reservoir warm water fisheries due to reductions in reservoir elevation and decreases in littoral habitat...
under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition represent a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, pp. 6-166 to 6-167.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute substantially to future impacts to Shasta Reservoir warm water fisheries. This diversion would not contribute to reductions in long-term average reservoir elevation, and would only contribute to elevation decreases in 6 months of the 490 months included in the analysis (Template Output J-487 and Technical Appendix I-186 to I-192). Furthermore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would not result in future increases in the frequency of potential nest-dewatering events, and would not result in any additional reductions in littoral habitat (Template Output I-488 and I-494). Thus, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to significant reductions in reservoir elevation or available littoral habitat, or increases in potential nest-dewatering events under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-167.)

**Upper Sacramento River Fisheries (temperature-related).** The cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would result in changes in the long-term average water temperatures (both increases and decreases) at Keswick Dam and Bend Bridge, relative to the existing condition. There would be several additional months in the simulation in which temperatures would exceed 56°F or 60°F at either Keswick Dam or Bend Bridge. For example, there would be 22 additional occurrences where the 56°F index would be exceeded, and eight more occurrences where the 60°F index would be exceeded at Keswick Dam, relative to the existing condition. At Bend Bridge, there would be 29 additional occurrences where the 56°F index would be exceeded, and seven more occurrences where the 60°F index would be exceeded, relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-303 and F-310). Thus, the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would result in a significant increase in the frequency of exceedance of temperature criteria identified in the NOAA Fisheries Biological Opinion for winter-run Chinook salmon. (RDEIR, p. 6-167.)

Absolute long-term average early lifestage survival of fall-run Chinook salmon would decrease by more than 10% in 10 of the 70 years modeled under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, relative to the existing condition. For winter-run Chinook salmon, absolute long-term average early lifestage survival would decrease by more than 10% in 4 of the 70 years modeled, relative to the existing condition. No decreases of more than 10% are expected for late-fall-run Chinook salmon, and actual increases in survival are expected for spring-run Chinook salmon, relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix E-566 to E-570). However, based on the increase in the frequency of exceedance of the temperature criteria identified in the NOAA Fisheries Biological Opinion for winter-run Chinook salmon, and the decreases in absolute long-term early lifestage survival of fall-run Chinook salmon and winter-run Chinook salmon, temperature-related impacts to upper Sacramento River fisheries represent a significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-167.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to significant upper Sacramento River temperature-related fisheries impacts that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. For water temperatures below Keswick Dam and Bend Bridge, the Folsom Reservoir diversion
would not contribute to increases in long-term average water temperatures under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition (Template Output J-300 and J-307). Similarly, there would be no contribution to the increase in the frequency of exceedance of the 56°F and 60°F temperature criteria at either Keswick Dam or Bend Bridge (Template J-303 and J-310). Furthermore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to future decreases in survival for any salmon run on the Sacramento River (Template Output J-469). Thus, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to the potentially significant temperature-related impacts to fisheries of the upper Sacramento River that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, pp. 6-167 to 6-168.)

**Lower Sacramento River Fisheries (temperature-related).** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, the long-term average water temperature at Freeport on the lower Sacramento River would not change more than 0.3°F during any month of the year, relative to the existing condition. However, the number of years that temperatures at this location would exceed 56°F, 60°F, and 70°F would be greater (i.e., 2 more occurrences for the 56°F index, 11 more occurrences for the 60°F index, and 9 more occurrences for the 70°F index), relative to the existing condition, during the March through November period (Template Output F-321 and F-324). In addition, water temperature at Freeport would increase by 0.3°F or more, relative to the existing condition, in 117 months out of the 621 months included in the analysis (Technical Appendix E-481 to E-492). Based on these findings, potential water temperature-related impacts to fish species within the lower Sacramento River represent a potentially significant cumulative impact. (RDEIR, p. 6-168.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute substantially to the frequent temperature increases that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. This diversion alternative would not contribute to increases in long-term average water temperatures at Freeport on the lower Sacramento River, and would not contribute to increases in the frequency of temperature criteria exceedance that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition (Template Output J-321 and J-324). Furthermore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to increases in water temperature of 0.3°F or more in any month of the 828 months included the analysis (Technical Appendix I-481 to I-492). Thus, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to future significant water temperature increases on the lower Sacramento River, and consequently, would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to impacts to lower Sacramento River fisheries under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. (RDEIR, p. 6-168.)

**Delta Fish Populations.** Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, there would be a potentially significant impact to Delta outflow, relative to the existing condition. In 44 of the 350 months modeled throughout the February through June period, Delta outflow would decrease by 10% or more, relative to the existing condition, with the greatest long-term reduction in long-term average Delta outflow at 4.5% (June) (Technical Appendix E-5 to E-9 and Template Output F-413). (RDEIR, p. 6-168.)

Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, the long-term average position of X2 would move upstream less than one km, relative to the existing condition, in any given month.
of the year. However, during the February through June period considered important for providing appropriate spawning and rearing conditions and downstream transport flows for various fish species, the upstream shift in the position of X2 under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would exceed one km 11% of the time (throughout the 350 months included in the analysis), relative to the existing condition (Technical Appendix E-17 to E-21). (RDEIR, p. 6-169.)

The model simulations conducted for the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition included conformance with X2 requirements set forth in the SWRCB Interim Water Quality Control Plan. Furthermore, Delta export-to-inflow ratios under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would not exceed the maximum export ratio as set by the SWRCB Interim Water Quality Control Plan. Although the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition would not cause X2 or Delta outflow standards to be violated, there would be a decrease in long-term average outflow and an upstream shift in the position of X2, relative to the existing condition. Such changes to the Delta system would be considered to result in potentially significant cumulative impacts to Delta fisheries. (RDEIR, p. 6-169.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not result in a future significant contribution to Delta fisheries impacts under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition. The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to increases of Delta outflow of 10% or more; in fact, the greatest single reduction, at 435 CFS (February 1925), would be considered small considering modeled flows of 57,424 CFS for that month and year (Technical Appendix I-5 to I-9). Furthermore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would contribute to future shifts in the long-term average position of X2 (Template Output J-429). Based on 350 months modeled throughout the February through June period, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would result in shifts in the position of X2 of up to 0.2 km in 35 months (Technical Appendix I-17 through I-21). The Folsom Reservoir diversion would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future reductions in Delta outflow. It could, however, have a cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative shift in X2. (RDEIR, p. 6-169.)

**Cultural Resources Impacts**

Under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition, there would not be significant increases in maximum monthly reservoir elevation, relative to the existing condition, throughout the 70-year period of simulation for Folsom, Shasta, and Trinity reservoirs. However, with regard to maximum drawdown, a comparison of the minimum end-of-month elevations between the cumulative and existing conditions at Shasta Reservoir indicates that the minimum water surface elevation for each month would be from 7 to 46 feet MSL lower, relative to the existing condition (Template Output F-66). This would result in increased exposure of cultural resources and represents a potentially significant cumulative impact to cultural resources at Shasta Reservoir. (RDEIR, p. 6-169.)

**Incremental Contribution of the Folsom Reservoir Diversion.** The Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to the reductions in minimum reservoir elevation that would occur under the cumulative Folsom Reservoir diversion condition in any month of the year (Template Output J-66). Therefore, the Folsom Reservoir diversion would not contribute to
increases in the exposure of cultural resources at Shasta Reservoir, and hence would have no cumulatively considerable contribution to future significant impacts to Shasta Reservoir cultural resources. (RDEIR, pp. 6-169 to 6-170.)

C. ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

1. **Basis for Identifying Environmentally Superior Alternative**

An EIR is required to identify the environmentally superior alternative from among the range of reasonable alternatives that are evaluated. Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an environmentally superior alternative be designated, and states that “if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.” Table 6-52 in the Revised Draft EIR compares the four alternatives to the proposed project in terms of the 12 impact areas that were analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR. The conclusions contained in the table are subjective and required that judgments be made on emphasis in some areas of analysis. (RDEIR, p. 6-170.)

2. **Analysis of Environmentally Superior Alternative’s Ability to Reduce Significant Unavoidable Project Impacts**

Based on a review of the alternatives evaluated in this chapter, the No Project Alternative would result in the fewest impacts on the environment. The No Project Alternative, which consists of maintaining existing conditions, would not result in impacts related to land use or land use conflicts, loss of agricultural land, aesthetic or visual quality impacts, new sources of light and glare, impacts on hydrology, need for a new surface water supply, impacts on water quality, impacts on biological resources, impacts on soils and geology, impacts on archaeological or paleontological resources, impacts on transportation and circulation, air quality impacts, noise impacts, impacts on population, impacts on housing and employment, impacts on public services and infrastructure, or creation of new hazards. However, the No Project Alternative would not address or remediate existing hazards (e.g., soil contamination, potentially hazardous property conditions). While it would result in fewer impacts on the environment, the No Project Alternative is not consistent with the policies and provisions of the 1994 Placer County General Plan and Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan, which have designated the project site for urban development and established guidelines for that development. This alternative also would not meet the applicant’s project objectives, as identified in Chapter Three Revised Draft EIR. (RDEIR, pp. 6-170 to 6-171.)

The 50% Density Reduction Alternative and the Rural Density Alternative are similar in terms of their level of impact compared to the proposed project. Both alternatives would lead to fewer land use conflicts in the Specific Plan area. Because these alternatives would reduce the density of development, they also would reduce impacts in the other impact areas, with the exception of Population, Employment, and Housing. The 50% Density Alternative would neither increase nor reduce impacts in this impact area. The Rural Density Alternative would increase impacts in Population, Employment, and Housing since the lack of new jobs created would worsen the jobs/housing balance compared to the proposed project. (RDEIR, p. 6-171.)
Because it increases the density of development and therefore the number of structures and residents in the Specific Plan area, the Blueprint Alternative would increase impacts in Visual Quality and Aesthetics; Hydrology, Water Resources, and Water Quality; Archaeological/Paleontological Resources; Transportation and Circulation; Air Quality; Noise; and Public Services/Infrastructure. Because overall population would increase, a new significant and unavoidable impact arises: Development under the Blueprint Alternative would exceed the current long-term water allocation of 11,500 AFA assumed for the Specific Plan area. Impacts in Biological Resources; Geology, Soils and Hazards; Population, Employment and Housing; and Hazards would remain unchanged. Net impacts in Land Use and Planning Policies would be greater because the Blueprint Alternative is not consistent with the current County General Plan. Although the conflict with the principles of SACOG’s Blueprint Plan would be eliminated, the increased population of this alternative could lead to physical impacts on the environment. (RDEIR, p. 6-171.)

Apart from the No Project Alternative, the 50% Density Reduction Alternative would be the Environmentally Superior alternative. It would reduce impacts in all of the areas analyzed in the Revised Draft EIR, with the exception of Population, Employment, and Housing, where it would be similar to the proposed project in terms of impacts to the environment. (RDEIR, p. 6-171.)

Although viewing impacts in a CEQA-related context leads to the conclusion that the Blueprint Alternative is the least desirable from an environmental perspective, as described elsewhere in the Revised Draft EIR, the Alternative could have superior long-term regional environmental benefits. Those, however, will likely only occur to their fullest possible extent if a similar regional approach to growth is pursued by all affected jurisdictions. However, even in the absence of similar planning commitments by other jurisdictions, approval by Placer County of the Blueprint Alternative could, by reducing per capita consumption of various resources, as well as by reducing per capita air pollution and vehicle miles traveled, have the effect of reducing the extent to which population growth and development, with their attendant environmental impacts, would occur elsewhere in the region. (RDEIR, pp. 6-171 to 6-172.)

### XIII.

**STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS**

As set forth in the preceding sections, the Placer County Board of Supervisors’ approval of the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan Project will result in significant adverse environmental effects that cannot be avoided even with the adoption of all feasible mitigation measures, and there are no feasible project alternatives which would mitigate or substantially lessen the impacts. Despite the occurrence of these effects, however, the Board chooses to approve the project because, in its view, the economic, social, and other benefits that the project will produce will render the significant effects acceptable.

In making this Statement of Overriding Considerations in support of the findings of fact and the project, the Board of Supervisors has considered the information contained in the FEIR for the project as well as the public testimony and record in proceedings in which the project was considered. The Board has balanced the project’s benefits against the unavoidable adverse
impacts identified in the FEIR. The Board hereby determines that the project’s benefits outweigh the significant unmitigated adverse impacts.

A. SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

As discussed in Section XI.A.1, supra, the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan project will result in the following significant and unavoidable impacts, even with the implementation of all feasible mitigation:

- Agricultural land, including “Important Farmland” would be converted to non-agricultural uses.
- Acquisition of existing off-site structures and alteration of existing off-site land uses would occur due to the widening of Baseline/Riego Road and Watt Avenue.
- Potential impacts may occur as a result of compliance with Standard 8 (Agricultural Water Supply) of Exhibit 1 of the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan.
- The Specific Plan will contribute to the loss of agricultural and open space land throughout Placer County, the region and the state.
- Urbanization of the Specific Plan area will alter views from surrounding roadways and properties.
- Urbanization of the Specific Plan area will alter views for those currently residing within the Specific Plan area.
- The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative alteration of views in rural west Placer County.
- Cumulative impacts may occur that are related to introduction of new sources of light and glare.
- The Specific Plan area could contribute to the cumulative affect of water quality due to the introduction of urban pollutants including vehicle oils and greases; heavy metals on roads, parking lots, and driveways; fertilizers and pesticides used on site landscaping; and toxic compounds released from auto maintenance areas into surface runoff.
- Development will remove the majority of open space in the Specific Plan area.
- Development could remove habitat for potentially occurring listed vernal pool invertebrates.
- Development could result in removal of nesting and foraging habitat for Swainson’s hawk, a state-listed species.
- Development could result in removal of individual oak trees.
• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for special-status plant species potentially occurring there.

• Development would fill jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands, and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for special-status plant species potentially occurring there.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could result in removal of habitat for listed vernal pool invertebrates potentially occurring there.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for valley elderberry longhorn beetle, a federally-listed species.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for western pond turtle, a special-status species potentially occurring there.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active nests or disturb burrowing owls.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove habitat for tricolored blackbird.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active raptor nests or disturb nesting raptors.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could harm or destroy the California horned lizard.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could destroy active roosts or disturb several species of bats.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could result in removal of oak trees.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within the off-site infrastructure areas could fill jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional wetlands and other jurisdictional waters of the U.S.

• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within the off-site infrastructure areas could result in the loss of riparian habitat and disturbance of drainages.

• Installation of infrastructure within the Natomas Basin could affect Giant Garter snake habitat and/or individual snakes.
• Installation and maintenance of infrastructure within off-site infrastructure areas could remove nesting habitat for Loggerhead shrike.

• Cumulative development would contribute to the ongoing loss of natural undisturbed open space in the region, increase human intrusion and activity levels in proximity to habitat areas, and would remove potential habitat for federally and state listed and other special-status species.

• Development of the Specific Plan Area could destroy or alter known historic or unique archaeological resources.

• Development of the Specific Plan Area could destroy or alter unknown historical and/or unique archaeological resources.

• Implementation of the Baseline Road widening project could adversely affect the historic archaeological site of “Eagle House,” an early inn.

• Implementation of the Watt Avenue widening project could destroy or alter two unique archaeological sites and a portion of one historic cemetery.

• Implementation of the Long-Term Surface Water Supply line could alter or destroy portions of two historic sites and one historic district.

• Implementation of a sewer force main along Watt Avenue and PFE Road could alter or destroy portions of three unique archaeological sites and one historic cemetery.

• Implementation of Sewer Line (SRCSD) Alternative “A” could alter or destroy a portion of two historic sites.

• Impacts to undiscovered cultural resources may occur in unsurveyed areas.

• The proposed Specific Plan could contribute to cumulative impacts on historic or prehistoric resources.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in the city of Roseville.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sacramento County.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sacramento County.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan area would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sutter County.
• Buildout of the Specific Plan would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways and intersections that are part of the state highway system.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase daily traffic volumes on roadways in unincorporated Placer County.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in unincorporated Placer County.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in the City of Roseville.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase daily traffic volumes on study area roadways in Sacramento County.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sacramento County.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area intersections in Sutter County.

• Buildout of the Specific Plan under Cumulative Plus Project conditions would increase peak hour traffic volumes on study area roadways that are part of the state highway system.

• Mitigation measures implemented to reduce traffic impacts could adversely affect traffic in other jurisdictions.

• Mitigation measures implemented to reduce traffic impacts could adversely affect the environment.

• Exhaust and fugitive dust emissions will be generated by construction activities in the Specific Plan area, such as excavation and grading, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth.

• Exhaust and fugitive dust emissions will be generated by construction activities in off-site infrastructure areas, such as excavation and grading, construction vehicle traffic, and wind blowing over exposed earth.

• Activity within the Specific Plan area would result in the generation of both mobile and stationary source air pollutants, increasing total air pollution emissions.

• Increased volumes of wastewater requiring treatment could cause odors and air quality degradation due to pump station and wastewater treatment plant operations.

• Cumulative air quality impacts would result from Specific Plan development.
• Off-site noise levels due to traffic generated by development of the Specific Plan area could be substantial resulting in noise levels that adversely affect sensitive receptors at one or more locations.

• The proposed Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative increases in off-site noise levels due to traffic.

• Buildout of the proposed Specific Plan could promote an imbalance of jobs and housing in both the regional and project level context.

• Residential and commercial development in the Specific Plan area will increase the waste stream that would be delivered to the MRF and disposed of at the Western Regional Landfill.

• The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative increases in the waste stream that would be delivered to the MRF and disposed of at the Western Regional Landfill.

• The Specific Plan would contribute to cumulative water quality degradation due to increased discharge of treated effluent to Dry Creek and/or the Sacramento River.

• The recycled water demand could exceed available recycled water supply for the Specific Plan area.

• Development of the Specific Plan will create a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change.

• The long-term surface water supplies for the Project could yield less water than is projected, resulting in a permanent curtailment of development in western Placer County.

(RDEIR, pp. 5-95 to 5-99, 6-5 to 6-9; SPRRDEIR, pp. 4.3-39, 4.13-17.)

B. OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

In the Board’s judgment, the proposed project and its benefits outweigh its unavoidable significant effects. The following statement identifies the reasons why, in the Board's judgment, the benefits of the project as approved outweigh its unavoidable significant effects. Any one of these reasons is sufficient to justify approval of the project. Thus, even if a court were to conclude that not every reason is supported by substantial evidence, the Board would stand by its determination that each individual reason is sufficient. The substantial evidence supporting the various benefits can be found in the preceding findings, which are incorporated by reference into this section (XIII), and in the documents found in the Record of Proceedings, as defined in section VI.

The project provides a unique opportunity for the County to achieve a variety of important goals that will benefit both the County and the region. It serves as an example of a self-sufficient urban community, combining a mix of residential, employment, school, and recreational uses.
The project also reflects the extensive involvement of a community to actively debate and work together in creating a balanced, comprehensive vision.

Some of the project benefits include the following principles:

1. **Promote a mixed use, compact development pattern linked to regional transportation systems.**

   Placer Vineyards is planned to accommodate the long term growth needs of the County by establishing a series of concentrated urban centers and a mix of residential neighborhood developments, uniquely situated around public amenities, employment, housing, shopping, recreational uses and multiple transportation options. The Specific Plan area will be connected through a regional bus rapid transit system and transfer station and a system of on- and off-street trails, linked to the regional trail system.

2. **Create a livable, pedestrian friendly environment with a distinct community identity and sense of place. Create safe and accessible links between neighborhoods, centers and districts within the Plan Area and the surrounding community.**

   Placer Vineyards is designed to provide schools, parks, public facilities, and urban centers as focal points for its neighborhoods and communities, with emphasis on pedestrian access and activity at these facilities. Homes within the Specific Plan area are encouraged to front onto pedestrian sidewalks, and retail areas are encouraged to extend into the pedestrian realm to create vital environments.

   A town center, two village centers and several neighborhood centers provide a mix of uses, designed to complement the needs of and activities within the community. A large regional commercial corridor is strategically located along Baseline Road for maximum visibility and to provide buffers to residential developments to the south.

3. **Provide a diversity of housing choices – types, styles, densities and costs.**

   The Specific Plan encourages the provision of a range of housing choices, types, styles and densities to accommodate all income levels. Development standards are flexible to accommodate a wide array of housing types. The goal is to encourage new and creative development forms, especially in high density residential areas and mixed-use centers.

4. **Provide a range of transportation choices including streets, paths and trails, with links to local and regional transportation systems.**

   Placer Vineyards is designed to be a transit-friendly community with easy access from residential neighborhoods to a range of transportation facilities, including a community transit center linked to the regional bus rapid transit system; a grid of streets; and a continuous network of shaded sidewalks and bikeway trails that loop through neighborhood centers, schools, and parks, and provide access to other modes of transit.
5. The Project will provide both construction jobs and permanent jobs to residents of Placer County and surrounding areas.

Both during the construction period and after full build-out, Placer Vineyards will provide a wide variety of employment opportunities for residents of Placer County and surrounding areas. Such jobs will include construction-related jobs, as well as jobs in the portions of the Specific Plan area devoted to various retail, office, and other job-generating uses. These jobs will range from relatively low-paid entry level jobs to relatively high paid professional jobs.

6. The Project will facilitate the construction of a new high school and a number of middle schools and elementary schools.

The Specific Plan area will ultimately contain a new high school, two middle schools, and six elementary schools. These facilities will provide education to residents in the project area.

7. The Project will facilitate the construction of new transportation infrastructure and the provision of new public facilities that will serve the residents of south Placer County.

The Project will provide, or contribute its fair share to the provision of, all public facilities and services necessary to meet the needs of development within the Specific Plan area. The Development Agreement provides for payments towards, the dedication of, or the accelerated construction of local and regional transportation infrastructure, parks, and other public facilities which are over and above the measures required to mitigate for the impacts of the Project.

C. CONCLUSION

The Board has balanced these benefits and considerations against the potentially significant unavoidable environmental effects of the project and has concluded that the impacts are outweighed by these benefits, among others. After balancing environmental costs against project benefits, the Board has concluded that the benefits the County will derive from the project, as compared to existing and planned future conditions, outweigh the risks. The Board believes the project benefits outlined above override the significant and unavoidable environmental costs associated with the project.

In sum, the Board adopts the mitigation measures in the final Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, attached to and incorporated by reference into the Placer Vineyards Specific Plan, and finds that any residual or remaining effects on the environment resulting from the project, identified as significant and unavoidable in the preceding Findings of Fact, are acceptable due to the benefits set forth in this Statement of Overriding Considerations.