

## 4.20 Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice

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This section evaluates the potential socioeconomic effects of the proposed project, including direct and indirect effects on economic activities, employment, tourism, research, and education. Environmental justice topics addressed include disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations. This section analyzes the distributional patterns of minority and low-income populations on a regional basis and characterizes the distribution of such populations as they relate to the proposed project. Please note that other related topics, including population and housing, are addressed in Section 4.19, and growth inducement is addressed in Section 6.3.

Under NEPA (42 United States Code [USC] § 4321 et seq.), a federal lead agency must consider social and economic effects if they are related to a proposed project’s natural or physical effects. The *CEQ Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act* (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508) defines “effects” to include economic and social factors, whether direct, indirect, or cumulative in nature (40 CFR 1508.8). Consequently, federal agencies must analyze a proposed project’s economic and social impacts resulting from any natural or physical effects on the environment. Furthermore, Executive Order (EO) 12898 (59 FR 7629; Feb. 16, 1994), *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low Income Populations*, requires federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.

As described in Section 4.20.2.2, below, a CEQA Lead Agency may use information about the economic or social impacts of a project to determine the significance of physical changes caused by the project, but the economic or social effects of a project are not treated as significant effects on the environment. Additionally, CEQA does not use the term “environmental justice” or require the evaluation of impacts on minority or low-income communities in the way required by EO 12898. The Office of the California Attorney General (OAG) has clarified that environmental justice concerns are relevant to the analysis of a project under CEQA, but has recommended that lead agencies address environmental justice by evaluating whether a project’s impacts would affect a community whose residents are particularly sensitive to the impact (i.e., sensitive receptors) and whether a project would have significant effects on communities when considered

together with any environmental burdens those communities already are bearing, or may bear from probable future projects (i.e., cumulative impacts) (OAG, 2012).

The impacts of this proposed project on sensitive receptors are analyzed where appropriate (e.g., in Section 4.10, Air Quality, and in Section 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials). The proposed project's impacts considered together with existing or foreseeable environmental burdens experienced by nearby communities are analyzed throughout Chapter 4 in the Cumulative Effects subsection of each resource section. Further, the OAG indicates that a lead agency must be clear and transparent in its Statement of Overriding Considerations about the balances it has struck in approving a project, such as whether the benefits of the project will be enjoyed widely, but the environmental burdens of a project will be felt particularly by the neighboring communities (OAG, 2012). The information presented in this section will inform such a statement if and when the proposed project is approved in the event that a significant unavoidable impact is identified under CEQA. Significance determinations in this section, however, do not apply to the CEQA analysis. Rather, the conclusions in this section are relevant only to the NEPA analysis of the proposed project.

## 4.20.1 Setting/Affected Environment

The proposed project would be located along the northern coast of Monterey County (see **Figure 3-2** in Chapter 3) and would provide water supplies for CalAm's Monterey District service area (Monterey District), which includes the cities of Carmel-by-the-Sea, Del Rey Oaks, Monterey, Pacific Grove, Sand City, and Seaside. The Monterey District also extends into unincorporated areas of northern Monterey County (the Carmel Highlands, Pebble Beach, Carmel Valley, and the Del Monte Forest) and the Monterey Regional Airport. Although the cities of Castroville and Marina are outside of the Monterey District, these cities could be affected by construction activities. Therefore, the study area includes these cities as well as the county and the analysis below presents demographics for all of the aforementioned cities.

### 4.20.1.1 Socioeconomics

#### *Employment*

Key employment data include the number of employable residents (i.e., the available labor force) and the number of job opportunities (i.e., employment) within a community. Indicators of economic health of the study area include both jobs and the unemployment rate. **Table 4.20-1** shows labor force and unemployment data for the potentially affected jurisdictions and **Table 4.20-2** shows projected employment growth for these areas in terms of number of jobs into the future.

As shown in **Table 4.20-1**, Monterey County's current unemployment rate is 2.7 percentage points higher than the statewide unemployment rate. The overall unemployment rate within the Monterey District is about one percentage point lower than the countywide rate, though unemployment rates within individual jurisdictions vary widely. The jurisdiction with the highest unemployment rate is Sand City, which has an unemployment rate more than double that of Monterey County.

**TABLE 4.20-1  
 LABOR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT FOR POTENTIALLY AFFECTED JURISDICTIONS  
 (2015 ANNUAL AVERAGE)**

Jurisdiction	Labor Force <sup>a</sup>	Unemployment Rate <sup>b</sup>
Carmel-by-the-Sea	1,800	3.6%
Del Rey Oaks	1,000	6.0%
Monterey	15,700	5.8%
Pacific Grove	9,000	5.1%
Sand City	200	16.1%
Seaside	18,400	8.3%
Unincorporated Area <sup>c</sup>	9,520	8.1% <sup>c</sup>
<b>Total for Monterey District<sup>d</sup></b>	<b>55,620</b>	<b>6.9%</b>
Marina	12,000	6.1%
Castroville CDP	3,200	13.4%
Monterey County	221,400	8.1%
State of California	19,100,900	5.4%

NOTES:

- <sup>a</sup> EDD provides rounded labor force numbers, but calculates the unemployment rate before rounding.
- <sup>b</sup> Not seasonally adjusted.
- <sup>c</sup> An estimated 4.3 percent of the countywide population resides in the unincorporated portions of the Monterey District service area. Because EDD reports local data only at the City or Census Designated Place (CDP) level, the labor force for the unincorporated portion of the Monterey District was estimated as 4.3 percent of the county total. The unemployment rate in the unincorporated portions of the Monterey District is assumed to be equivalent to the Monterey County rate.
- <sup>d</sup> Monterey District numbers are estimated based on the aggregate of EDD data for incorporated cities and estimates of unincorporated area data (see note c).

SOURCE: EDD, 2016

As shown in **Table 4.20-2**, 2010 employment data indicate that approximately 182,000 jobs were located in Monterey County. The largest proportion of these jobs was in the city of Monterey (approximately 15 percent). Seaside and Pacific Grove are also major employment centers in the Monterey District.

Between 2010 and 2035, AMBAG projects a countywide increase in employment of 22 percent. Substantial job growth is projected in all cities within the Monterey District service area. The long-term employment forecasts show more robust future growth. Note that the economic fluctuations experienced during the recession are typical of any economy, and the economic forecasting approaches employed by AMBAG account for such cyclical conditions.

***Regionally Important Economic Sectors***

The Monterey County Board of Supervisors has adopted four economic “pillars” as potential opportunities for the County Economic Opportunity Committee to facilitate economic and employment growth: agriculture, tourism, education, and research (Monterey County, 2016a).

**TABLE 4.20-2  
 PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT GROWTH FOR POTENTIALLY AFFECTED JURISDICTIONS  
 (2010 – 2035)**

Jurisdiction	Number of Jobs					% Growth (2010 – 2035)
	2010	2020	2025	2030	2035	
Carmel-by-the-Sea	2,282	2,645	2,716	2,793	2,875	26.0%
Del Rey Oaks	414	640	602	592	573	38.4%
Monterey	26,934	31,249	32,512	33,597	34,828	29.3%
Pacific Grove	8,792	10,161	10,499	10,827	11,194	27.3%
Sand City	1,561	1,839	1,873	1,908	2,500	60.2%
Seaside	7,790	8,828	9,092	9,344	9,628	23.6%
Unincorporated Area <sup>b</sup>	7,826	8,857	9,082	9,309	9,552	22.1% <sup>c</sup>
<b>Total for Monterey District</b>	<b>55,599</b>	<b>64,219</b>	<b>66,376</b>	<b>68,370</b>	<b>71,150</b>	<b>28.0%</b>
Marina	4,951	5,727	6,191	7,242	8,305	67.7%
Monterey County	182,000	205,977	211,218	216,486	222,137	22.1%

NOTES:

- <sup>a</sup> AMBAG does not provide data or estimates for unincorporated Castroville, and no other recent source of the estimated number of jobs in Castroville was identified. The 2007 Castroville Community Plan estimated that Castroville had 1,550 industrial jobs and anticipated that this number would double by 2027, a 3.3 percent annual growth rate. This document did not identify numbers of jobs or anticipated growth rates for other industries (Monterey County Housing and Redevelopment Office, 2007).
- <sup>b</sup> An estimated 4.3 percent of the countywide population inhabits the unincorporated portions of the Monterey District service area. As a result, projected employment growth for the unincorporated portion of the Monterey District was estimated as 4.3 percent of the county total.
- <sup>c</sup> The rate of current and future employment in the unincorporated portions of the Monterey District service area is assumed to be comparable to the Monterey County rate.

SOURCE: AMBAG, 2014

## Agriculture

The agriculture industry as a whole includes crop and animal production, forestry, fishing, and hunting. In 2015, the Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner reported that crop and animal production provided 23.7 percent of all jobs in the County and contributed 18.5 percent of the County’s direct economic output and \$8.1 billion in total economic output (Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner, 2015). Crop and animal production, the largest portion of the agriculture industry is discussed in Section 4.16, Agricultural Resources, and forestry is discussed and dismissed as a topic of relevance to the proposed project in Section 4.1.2.1.

Commercial fishing represents a substantially smaller portion of the agriculture industry, in 2012 providing about 450 full- and part-time jobs in Monterey County (0.2 percent of total County employment) and contributing \$55.9 million in total economic output (0.7 percent of the agricultural sector as a whole) (Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, 2014). No specific information on hunting as part of the agriculture sector is provided by Monterey County; however, like forestry, hunting is not expected to be a topic of concern for the proposed project, and is not discussed further in this section.

## **Tourism and Hospitality**

Tourism and hospitality is one of the major industries in Monterey County, contributing over \$2 billion per year in economic output and employing about 13 percent of workers in the County (Dean Runyan Associates, 2015; Monterey County, 2010). Recreational opportunities in Monterey County attract visitors. There are a variety of recreational resources throughout Monterey County—from federal preserves to state beaches and small neighborhood parks. These resources include Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS), along with designated parks, trails, and open spaces that provide for a diversity of active and passive recreational opportunities. Public access to the area’s unique natural resources is an important component of recreation in Monterey County. The Monterey Bay shoreline hosts one of the most significant and rare dune landforms on the west coast. Public access to beaches, dunes, and hiking trails is available from numerous locations along the coast. There are also several designated bikeways throughout the project area that serve as both recreational facilities and alternative transportation routes. Recreational resources are addressed in Section 4.8, Land Use, Land Use Planning, and Recreation.

## **Education**

Fourteen percent of the overall labor force in Monterey County works in education (Monterey County, 2010). Monterey Bay marine science institutions represent a large portion of the overall economy, supporting 2,343 jobs as of 2016 (Monterey County, 2016b). Examples of educational institutions that are located within or have programs in Monterey County include California State University Monterey Bay, Monterey Peninsula College, Hartnell College, Hopkins Marine Station (Stanford University), Marine Advanced Technology Education Center, Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, and the University of California Santa Cruz.

## **Research**

The Monterey Bay is home to numerous marine and environmental science experts and institutions concentrated in this region due in part to the unique ecosystem of the Bay (Monterey County, 2016c). Most of the educational institutions and programs listed above are focused on or provide research opportunities specific to the region’s ecology. MBNMS, in particular, collaborates with over 30 research institutions and is a leader in marine science. MBNMS addresses resource management needs for information, and oversees SIMoN, the Sanctuary Integrated Monitoring Network. In addition to MBNMS’ research program, there are numerous research activities conducted by a variety of agencies and organizations such as Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute and Hopkins Marine Station. As of 2016, Monterey Bay marine science institutions employ over 2,000 scientists and staff and have a combined annual budget of \$337 million (note that some of this employment and economic impact overlaps with the education sector described above) (Monterey County, 2016d).

### **4.20.1.2 Environmental Justice**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” The purpose of the environmental justice analysis is to determine

whether the environmental and human health-related impacts of the proposed project and alternatives would disproportionately affect minority and low-income populations. To determine whether there would be any proposed project environmental impacts that could disproportionately affect communities of concern, all of the individual resource issue area analyses in EIR/EIS Sections 4.2 through 4.19 were evaluated. Both individual physical effects, cumulative effects, and potential aggregate or additive effects among different issue areas were reviewed. Only Section 4.10, Air Quality, described impacts that could result in a disproportionately high and adverse impact on minority and/or low-income populations.

This environmental justice section provides a discussion of environmental justice in accordance with EO 12898 and related CEQ guidance.

### ***Minority Populations***

According to the federal CEQ guidance for environmental justice analyses, “Minority populations should be identified where either: (a) the minority population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent; or (b) the minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the majority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis. . . . A minority population also exists if there is more than one minority group present and the minority percentage, as calculated by aggregating all minority persons, meets one of the above-stated thresholds” (CEQ, 1997). As explained in the following paragraphs, only the first threshold (greater than 50 percent) is relevant in determining whether the affected communities have minority populations because Monterey County has a minority population greater than 50 percent, and any minority population “meaningfully greater” than (in this case considered to be 1.5 times that of) the Monterey District’s 38.6 percent also would be greater than 50 percent.

**Table 4.20-3** presents the minority population for potentially affected areas of Monterey County. Consistent with the CEQ guidance cited in the previous paragraph, the minority population for a community consists of the aggregate of all non-white individuals as well as all Hispanic or Latino individuals (i.e., of both white and non-white racial origin).

Seaside, Marina, and Castroville have minority populations of more than 50 percent. Additionally, an analysis of minority population by census tract identified one census tract in Sand City (Census Tract 140) that has a minority population of 64.7 percent. These communities are therefore considered communities of concern for the environmental justice analysis.

### ***Low-Income Populations***

This analysis uses two methods for identifying communities of concern related to income levels, based on two sets of guidelines: CEQ guidance and California Regional Water Management Guidelines. Both of these methods are addressed below.

The CEQ environmental justice guidance states that “...low-income populations in an affected area should be identified with the annual statistical poverty thresholds from the Bureau of the Census’ Current Population Reports, Series P-60 on Income and Poverty” (CEQ, 1997, p. 25). USEPA guidance (1998) recommends the use of Census data on poverty income as one indicator,

**TABLE 4.20-3  
 MINORITY POPULATIONS OF POTENTIALLY AFFECTED GEOGRAPHIES (2010-2014)**

Geography	Total Population	Minority Population <sup>a</sup>	Minority Population Percentage
<b>Monterey District<sup>b</sup></b>			
Carmel-by-the-Sea	3,807	735	19.3%
Del Rey Oaks	1,727	478	27.7%
Monterey (city)	28,053	8,936	31.9%
Pacific Grove	15,365	3,572	23.3%
Sand City	355	156	43.9%
Seaside	33,729	23,197	68.8%
Del Monte Forest CDP	6,439	1,542	23.9%
Balance of District <sup>c</sup>	16,862	2,474	14.7%
<b>Total for Monterey District</b>	<b>106,337</b>	<b>41,090</b>	<b>38.6%</b>
<b>Other Geographies</b>			
Castroville CDP	6,226	5,984	96.1%
Marina	20,198	12,602	62.4%
Monterey County	424,927	289,164	68.1%
State of California	38,066,920	23,161,319	60.8%

NOTES

- <sup>a</sup> Includes all individuals other than non-Hispanic white. These values were calculated by subtracting the non-Hispanic white-only population from the total population for each jurisdiction/geography.
- <sup>b</sup> Not all cities in this list are located entirely within the Monterey District.
- <sup>c</sup> In the absence of more precise information, the balance of the Monterey District population is approximated by the populations of Census Tracts 107.02, 116.02, 116.04, 117, and 134. It is noted that these tracts include areas outside of the Monterey District.

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014c.

as well as other available data. Unlike the CEQ guidance on minority populations, none of the environmental justice guidance documents contain a quantitative definition of what proportion of low-income individuals defines a low-income population. The annual statistical poverty thresholds are based on family income. A threshold of 50 percent of individuals in families with incomes below the poverty threshold (similar to the 50 percent threshold used to identify a minority population) would be an overly restrictive threshold for identifying a low-income population due to the nature of the poverty thresholds, which are not adjusted for regional costs of living, and are below levels commonly considered low-income in many areas of California.<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this environmental justice analysis, the method of identifying low-income populations within the study area must account for regional costs of living. Therefore, this analysis uses a comparative approach and identifies a low-income population if the proportion of people with family incomes below the poverty threshold is meaningfully greater than that within the general population; in other words, if the percentage of such people in any of the communities

<sup>1</sup> Poverty thresholds vary according to a household's size and composition. The census poverty threshold for a two-parent household with two children was \$24,008 in 2014 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014e). By comparison, CalAm's Low-Income Ratepayer Assistance program defines the low-income threshold for a four-person household as \$48,500 (CalAm, 2015a). Only 110 of about 8,000 census tracts (just over 1 percent) in California had 50 percent or more individuals in families with incomes below the poverty threshold (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014f).

considered is 1.5 times (or more than) that of the general population. Both Monterey County and the Monterey District are considered in the context of the general population.

**Table 4.20-4** indicates that approximately 17.2 percent of people in Monterey County and 11.5 percent of people in the Monterey District had incomes below the federal poverty threshold. Therefore, based on the definition described above, a community with 17.3 percent (1.5 times 11.5 percent) or greater of people in families with incomes below the federal poverty threshold are identified as low-income populations for the purposes of this analysis. The Monterey District is used for this purpose because it provides a lower, and therefore more inclusive, threshold for defining a community as low-income. Using the county’s percentage for this purpose would exclude all of the communities from consideration as low-income communities of concern, and therefore would not provide a meaningful basis for comparing impacts on low-income communities and non-low-income communities. As shown in **Table 4.20-4**, Sand City, Seaside, and the Castroville CDP had greater than 17.3 percent of families with incomes below the poverty threshold.

**TABLE 4.20-4  
 INCOME CHARACTERISTICS FOR POTENTIALLY AFFECTED GEOGRAPHIES (2010-2014)**

Geography	Median Household Income <sup>a</sup>	Individuals with Family Income Below Poverty Threshold
<b>Monterey District<sup>a</sup></b>		
Carmel-by-the-Sea	\$62,460	7.9%
Del Rey Oaks	\$101,250	6.2%
Monterey (city)	\$64,772	9.9%
Pacific Grove	\$70,230	7.8%
Sand City	\$34,659	25.6%
Seaside	\$52,538	18.8%
Del Monte Forest CDP	\$102,396	8.1%
Balance of District <sup>b</sup>	\$106,826	5.5%
<b>Average for Monterey District<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>\$74,391</b>	<b>11.5%</b>
<b>Other Geographies</b>		
Castroville CDP	\$50,000	21.5%
Marina	\$53,828	16.7%
Monterey County	\$58,582	17.2%
State of California	\$61,489	16.4%

NOTES:

<sup>a</sup> Not all cities in this list are located entirely within the Monterey District.

<sup>b</sup> In the absence of more precise information, the balance of the Monterey District population is approximated by the populations of Census Tracts 107.02, 116.02, 116.04, 117, and 134. It is noted that these tracts include areas outside of the Monterey District.

<sup>c</sup> Income characteristics of Monterey District service area are assumed to be the average of communities found within this area (weighted average of individuals with incomes below poverty).

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014d.

Additionally, California’s Integrated Regional Water Management<sup>2</sup> guidelines provide criteria for identifying “disadvantaged communities” during water resources planning efforts. Under the California Water Code, a disadvantaged community is defined as one with an annual median household income that is less than 80 percent of the statewide median household income (California Water Code, Section 79505.5[a]).

As shown in **Table 4.20-4**, the State of California’s median household income as reported by the 2010-2014 American Community Survey was \$61,489. Therefore, communities with a median income of less than \$49,191 would be considered disadvantaged communities.

Among the geographies in Table 4.20-4 only Sand City had a median income of less than \$49,191, making it a disadvantaged community in accordance with the California Water Code definition. Additionally, an analysis of income level by census tract identified one census tract in the city of Monterey (downtown; Census Tract 127) that meets the state income criteria for disadvantaged communities.

For this environmental justice analysis, Sand City, Seaside, Castroville CDP, and the downtown Monterey census tract are considered to represent low-income communities of concern.

## 4.20.2 Regulatory Framework

### 4.20.2.1 Federal Regulations

#### ***Executive Order 12898: Environmental Justice***

As mentioned in the introduction to this section, EO 12898 (59 FR 7629; Feb. 16, 1994), *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low Income Populations*, directs federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.

Specifically, EO 12898 requires that:

Each Federal agency shall conduct its programs, policies, and activities that substantially affect human health or the environment, in a manner that ensures that such programs, policies, and activities do not have the effect of excluding persons (including populations) from participation in, denying persons (including populations) the benefits of, or subjecting persons (including populations) to discrimination under such programs, policies, and activities, because of their race, color, or national origin.

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<sup>2</sup> Integrated Regional Water Management is a collaborative effort to manage all aspects of water resources in a region. Integrated Regional Water Management crosses jurisdictional, watershed, and political boundaries; involves multiple agencies, stakeholders, individuals, and groups; and attempts to address the issues and differing perspectives of all the entities involved through mutually beneficial solutions.

### ***Council for Environmental Quality Environmental Justice Guidance***

The CEQ coordinates federal environmental efforts and works closely with agencies and other White House offices in the development of environmental policies and initiatives. The Presidential Memorandum accompanying EO 12898 stipulates that “each Federal Agency shall analyze the environmental effects, including health, economic and social effects, of federal actions, including effects on minority communities and low-income communities, when such analysis is required by NEPA.” Accordingly, the CEQ has developed guidance to assist federal agencies with their NEPA procedures so that environmental justice concerns are effectively identified and addressed. The CEQ’s *Environmental Justice Guidance under the National Environmental Policy Act* advises agencies to consider the composition of the affected area; determine whether minority populations, low-income populations, or Indian tribes are present in the area affected by the proposed project; and, if such populations exist, determine whether there may be disproportionately high and adverse environmental effects on these populations (CEQ, 1997).

### ***Executive Order 13045: Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks***

EO 13045 (62 FR 19885; Apr. 23, 1997), *Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks*, stipulates that to the extent permitted by law and consistent with the agency’s mission, each federal agency shall prioritize the identification and assessment of environmental health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children; and shall ensure that its policies, programs, activities, and standards address disproportionate risks to children that result from environmental health risks or safety risks. As EO 13045 notes:

A growing body of scientific knowledge demonstrates that children may suffer disproportionately from environmental health risks and safety risks. These risks arise because: children’s neurological, immunological, digestive, and other bodily systems are still developing; children eat more food, drink more fluids, and breathe more air in proportion to their body weight than adults; children’s size and weight may diminish their protection from standard safety features; and children’s behavior patterns may make them more susceptible to accidents because they are less able to protect themselves (§1-101).

This EIR/EIS assesses environmental health and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children in Sections 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and 4.10, Air Quality. Regarding whether the proposed project would emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school, see Impact 4.7-4 in Section 4.7. Schools are considered sensitive receptors for hazardous materials because children are more susceptible than adults to the effects of hazardous materials. See Table 4.7-2 in Section 4.7.1.5 for a list of schools within 0.25 mile of project components.

Regarding the proposed project’s potential to have adverse health risks that may disproportionately affect children, see Impacts 4.10-1 and 4.10-4 addressing criteria pollutant emissions during construction and operation, respectively, and Impacts 4.10-2 and 4.10-5 addressing exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations during construction and operation, respectively. For the purposes of air quality and public health assessments, sensitive receptors are generally defined as land uses with population concentrations

that would be particularly susceptible to disturbance from air pollutants associated with MPWSP's construction and/or operation and include children. Sensitive receptor land uses generally include schools, day care centers, hospitals, and residential areas. The analysis of the impact on sensitive receptors relied on the definition of cancer risk, which assumes a six-month exposure for sensitive receptors near the pump station site, with three months of exposure in the third trimester of pregnancy and three months in the 0- to 2-year category. For the ASR-5 and ASR-6 Wells, a 1-year DPM exposure period was used, with three months of exposure in the third trimester of pregnancy and nine months in the 0- to 2-year age category. Therefore, the evaluation of cancer risk takes the health of children into account.

Because Sections 4.7 and 4.10 provide assessments of environmental health and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children, this topic is not addressed further in this section.

### **4.20.2.2 State Regulations**

#### ***California Government Code***

While there is no legal requirement to address environmental justice issues under CEQA, the State of California—following the adoption of EO 12898—passed a series of environmental justice regulations. California Government Code Section 65040.12 defines environmental justice as the “fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”

Legislative and executive actions related to environmental justice in California have been largely procedural, including but not limited to the formation of environmental justice advisory committees and the assignment of coordinating roles and responsibilities to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and the California Environmental Protection Agency.

#### ***California Environmental Quality Act***

Per CEQA guidelines Section 15131, “Economic or social information may be included in an EIR or may be presented in whatever form the agency desires.” The section continues:

- a) Economic or social effects of a project shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment. An EIR may trace a chain of cause and effect from a proposed decision on a project through anticipated economic or social changes resulting from the project to physical changes caused in turn by the economic or social changes. The intermediate economic or social changes need not be analyzed in any detail greater than necessary to trace the chain of cause and effect. The focus of the analysis shall be on the physical changes.
- b) Economic or social effects of a project may be used to determine the significance of physical changes caused by the project. [...] Where an EIR uses economic or social effects to determine that a physical change is significant, the EIR shall explain the reason for determining that the effect is significant.
- c) Economic, social, and particularly housing factors shall be considered by public agencies together with technological and environmental factors in deciding whether changes in a project are feasible to reduce or avoid the significant effects on the environment identified in the EIR. [...]

### ***Senate Bill No. 936, Chapter 482***

Under existing law, the CPUC has regulatory authority over public utilities, including water corporations. Existing law authorizes the CPUC to fix just and reasonable rates and charges. The existing Monterey Peninsula Water Management District Law establishes the MPWMD and provides for its powers and purposes.

SB 936 authorizes the CPUC to issue financing orders to facilitate the recovery, financing, or refinancing of water supply costs, defined to mean reasonable and necessary costs incurred or expected to be incurred by a qualifying water utility. This bill authorizes the MPWMD to issue water rate relief bonds if the CPUC finds that the bonds will provide savings to water customers on the Monterey Peninsula. Savings from these bonds would result from the lower interest rates that would apply to this financing compared to market-rate financing.

#### **4.20.2.3 Local Regulations**

##### ***Settlement Agreement on MPWSP Desalination Plant Return Water***

On June 14, 2016, a settlement agreement was reached between Cal Am and several parties to the proceeding before the CPUC (CalAm et al., 2016). Under this agreement, the Castroville Community Services District (CCSD) will purchase water at a discounted cost pursuant to Item 4, Payment Provisions:

- (a) CCSD shall pay a rate intended to represent its avoided cost to produce groundwater to meet customer demand, currently estimated to be \$110 per acre-foot, which will be the rate as of the beginning of the Delivery Term, for Return Water made available for delivery to meet the Annual Return Water Obligation. CCSD plans to continue operation of its existing wells so they may be available in emergency circumstances. This continuing operation will enable CCSD to provide future updates to the avoided cost of pumping to CalAm upon CalAm's reasonable request, but not more than once per year.

#### **4.20.3 Evaluation Criteria**

Implementation of the proposed project would have a significant impact related to socioeconomics and environmental justice if it would:

- Substantially reduce the rate of employment or the total income or business activity in Monterey County; or
- Change any social, economic, physical, environmental, or health conditions so as to result in a disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority or low-income populations.

Significance determinations in this section apply to the NEPA analysis only.

As described above, OAG indicates that a CEQA lead agency must be clear and transparent in its Statement of Overriding Considerations about the balances it has struck in approving a project, such as whether the benefits of the project will be enjoyed widely, but the environmental burdens of a project will be felt particularly by the neighboring communities (OAG, 2012). The

information presented in this section will inform such a statement if and when the proposed project is approved.

## 4.20.4 Approach to Analysis

### 4.20.4.1 Socioeconomics

The CEQ's regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508; reprinted in CEQ, 2005) provide standards for addressing social and economic impacts in preparing an environmental impact statement. Consistent with these regulations, this analysis examines potential impacts with respect to employment and local economic conditions. Generally, effects that result in greater employment or income, or that otherwise improve the quality of life for the local population, are considered beneficial socioeconomic impacts. This analysis considers the short-term socioeconomic effects that could occur in the project area during the MPWSP's construction period, and the long-term effects that could occur in the Monterey District service area associated with the MPWSP's future operations and debt repayment.

### 4.20.4.2 Environmental Justice

The USEPA guidance states that the analysis of environmental justice should determine if the affected area of minority population and/or low-income population is subject to "disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects" from the proposed project. The guidance suggests that a comparative analysis be performed of potential impacts on the affected population and a reference population to determine the type of high and adverse impacts and the extent of disproportionality (USEPA, 1988).

For purposes of this analysis, the potential for disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations was assessed applying USEPA's Guidance for Incorporating Environmental Justice Concerns in USEPA's NEPA Compliance Analysis.

Whether an adverse effect is "disproportionately high" on minority and low-income populations depends on whether that effect is (1) predominantly borne by an environmental justice population, or (2) will be suffered by the environmental justice population and is appreciably more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect that will be suffered by the non-environmental justice population. It is important to note that determinations of disproportionately high and adverse effects take into consideration the mitigation measures that are identified for the proposed project.

## 4.20.5 Direct and Indirect Effects of the Proposed Project

**TABLE 4.20-5  
 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS – SOCIOECONOMICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

Impacts	Significance Determinations
<b>Impact 4.20-1:</b> Reductions in the rate of employment, total income, or business activity in Monterey County.	LSM
<b>Impact 4.20-2:</b> Disproportionately high and adverse effects on low-income or minority populations.	LS
<b>Impact 4.20-C:</b> Cumulative impacts related to socioeconomics and environmental justice.	LSM

**NOTES:**

LS = Less than Significant impact, no mitigation proposed  
 LSM = Less than Significant with implementation of mitigation

### 4.20.5.1 Socioeconomics

#### **Impact 4.20-1: Reductions in the rate of employment, total income, or business activity in Monterey County. (*Less than significant with mitigation*)**

##### **Project Construction**

MPWSP construction activities and spending would result in temporary new local employment opportunities and increased spending on construction materials, equipment, and services. The extent to which the construction spending would benefit Monterey County’s economy would depend on the proportion of employment, goods, and services procured from local residents and businesses. The greater the proportion of construction labor, materials, and equipment sourced from the project area, the greater the local benefits of the increased economic activity. Conversely, if most of the labor and materials were imported from outside of Monterey County, then project-related construction spending would have a relatively minor benefit on the regional economy.

CalAm’s construction spending would represent a net gain to the Monterey County economy. In addition, State Revolving Fund debt and public financing would represent a net gain to the economy in the short term. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a direct, minor, beneficial economic impact on the Monterey County economy.

In addition to the direct effects identified above, secondary economic effects could also result from subsequent “re-spending” by construction companies and materials suppliers that occurs when these companies spend their earnings from the projects at other businesses (i.e., a multiplier effect), and re-spending by employees of those companies. This re-spending would also affect local businesses. The magnitude of the MPWSP construction’s indirect economic benefits would depend on the proportion of the labor, materials, and services sourced from the local economy. If a large proportion of the materials and equipment is highly specialized (and must be obtained from suppliers outside of Monterey County), then the construction spending would primarily benefit other economies. The magnitude of the induced economic benefits from construction would depend on the extent to which the workers and businesses in Monterey County that perform the

construction activities in turn spend their earnings at other local businesses. As acknowledged in Section 4.19, Population and Housing, some construction workers are expected to commute to the project area from outside of Monterey County. Accordingly, the employment and re-spending benefits related to those workers primarily would be experienced in their home counties.

A formal input-output analysis to estimate the indirect and induced economic impacts was not performed. However, given the relatively specialized nature of the desalination technology and other related water conveyance facilities, it is expected that a relatively small proportion of the highly technical project components would be sourced from within Monterey County. Common materials, such as pipes, grading materials, and excavation equipment, would primarily be sourced from the regional area of Monterey County. As described in Section 4.19, Population and Housing, furthermore, the majority of construction labor would be drawn from the local and regional labor pool. During the construction period up to 370 construction workers would be employed. The indirect and induced economic benefits for Monterey County would be relatively minor, but would represent an indirect beneficial economic impact on the Monterey County economy.

Construction of the proposed project would not have adverse effects on the tourism, research, and education industries in Monterey County. While shifts in spending would potentially affect the retail and hospitality industries, visitors to Monterey County would not be deterred from visiting because construction would be temporary in nature, and impacts would be less than significant. Access for tourists to businesses like retail and dining as well as recreational opportunities may be temporarily impacted by pipeline construction, which would temporarily affect access to streets, parking spaces, and trails. Although pipeline construction would proceed at a rate of 150 to 250 feet per day, the total duration of disturbance at any one location would generally be 1 to 2 weeks. This could result in a significant impact on some individual businesses in the affected locations. However, implementation of **Mitigation Measure 4.9-1 (Traffic Control and Safety Assurance Plan)**, would reduce this potential impact by requiring implementation of circulation and detour plans to minimize impacts on local streets, implementing a public information program to provide advance notice to businesses, residents, and visitors, and restoring roads and streets to normal operation by covering trenches with steel plates outside of normal work hours or when work is not in progress. This measure would reduce this impact to less than significant.

No offshore construction is proposed and construction of the project components would not interfere with any research activities being conducted along the coast. MBNMS oversees the operation of numerous monitoring activities with the sanctuary, but no monitoring was identified as occurring close enough to project construction for these activities to be affected (SIMoN, 2016). As described in Section 4.13, Public Services and Utilities, no impact on educational facilities would occur.

### **Operational and Facility Siting Impacts**

The total capital cost to build proposed project components is estimated to be \$337.9 million. These costs would be covered by CalAm equity, State Revolving Fund debt, surcharge on water users, and financing through water rate relief bonds as described under Senate Bill 936 in Section 4.20.2.2. Implementation of the MPWSP would double the current water rates for ratepayers within CalAm's Monterey District (Truong, 2016). This increase would be phased in over a period of several years.

While the savings achieved by the water rate relief bonds in-lieu of market-rate financing would reduce the overall costs to ratepayers compared to other financing mechanisms, such a utility cost increase could represent an adverse economic impact on the spending power of some ratepayers in Monterey District. Although these consumers could spend less at Monterey County businesses as a result of the increased water rates, such an incremental reduction in spending would not be large enough to constitute a significant adverse effect on overall employment or business activity in Monterey County. The potential impact of this proposed rate increase on low-income individuals and communities is analyzed under Impact 4.20-2 (environmental justice).

Operation of the proposed project would not affect access to tourism, education and research industries. Tourism relies on the recreation, retail and travel sectors, and would not be impacted by the proposed project. Access to research environments would not change as a result of the project. Instead, the project would support the long-term economic stability of these industries in Monterey County. It would improve water conveyance infrastructure and water supply in the CalAm Monterey District. This would increase reliability of water supply for all economic sectors in Monterey County. Overall, impacts of operation would be less than significant.

#### **4.20.5.2 Environmental Justice**

##### **Impact 4.20-2: Disproportionately high and adverse effects on low-income or minority populations. (*Less than significant*)**

##### **Project Construction**

Low-income and minority populations are defined in Section 4.20.1.4 and include all or portions of Sand City, Seaside, Castroville, Monterey (downtown), and Marina. To determine whether there were any proposed project environmental impacts that could disproportionately affect these communities of concern, all of the individual resource issue area analyses in Sections 4.2 through 4.19 of this EIR/EIS were evaluated. In reviewing each of these sections, this environmental justice analysis considers potential impacts and mitigation measures and whether a “disproportionately high and adverse” (CEQ, 1997) impact would result for the minority or low-income populations identified. Only Section 4.10, Air Quality, described impacts that could result in a disproportionately high and adverse impact on minority and/or low-income populations. The review of the impact analysis in Chapter 4 also considered the potential for resource impacts to aggregate or combine to create disproportionately high effects on communities of concern. The analysis determined that the temporary, localized, and low-level (less than significant) characteristics of impacts related to environmental health or environmental burdens other than air quality would not result in a substantial aggregation of effects or a disproportionately high and adverse effect disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations.

Health effects resulting from decreased air quality, specifically on minority or low-income populations, are location-based and dependent on the varying components of the proposed project. **Table 4.20-6** provides the estimated maximum daily construction emissions of ROG, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> that would potentially result from MPWSP components that would be located closest to the communities of concern. These components are displayed on **Figure 3-2** and listed in **Table 4.10-5**, Estimated Maximum Daily Construction Emissions.

**TABLE 4.20-6  
 MAXIMUM DAILY CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS SCENARIOS IN STUDY AREA COMMUNITIES  
 (pounds/day)**

Location	Nearby Project Components in Maximum Daily Emissions Scenario	Estimated Maximum Daily Emissions				
		ROG	NOx	CO	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>
<b>Minority and Low-Income Communities</b>						
Monterey, Sand City	None	--	--	--	--	--
Seaside	ASR Pipelines ASR Injection/Extraction Wells	3.92	51.1	29.83	2	1.65
Castroville	Castroville Pipeline	2.39	27.59	17.61	1.19	1.06
Marina	Subsurface Slant Wells Source Water Pipeline New Desalinated Water Pipeline	8.80	113.20	61.84	4.59	3.93
<b>Other Communities in Study Area</b>						
Carmel-by-the-Sea, Pacific Grove	None	--	--	--	--	--
Del Rey Oaks/ Unincorporated County	Ryan Ranch-Bishop Interconnection Improvements	2.34	26.99	17.21	1.18	1.04
<b>MBUAPCD Significance Thresholds</b>		<b>137</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>55</b>

SOURCE: See Appendix G; MBUAPCD, 2016.

As shown in Table 4.20-6, none of the maximum daily emissions scenarios near each of these communities would exceed the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD) significance thresholds (described in detail in Section 4.10). However, of the communities with identified low-income and minority populations, Seaside and Marina would experience emissions more than twice as high as those that would occur in Del Rey Oaks and the unincorporated Ryan Ranch area. If these emissions near minority and low-income populations resulted in an adverse effect, this would have the potential to be a disproportionately high and adverse impact compared to the impact on non-minority or low-income populations.

**Table 4.10-1**, Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Summary (2011–2015), shows that existing pollutant concentrations have been relatively low compared to existing standards. Although **Table 4.10-5** shows that total project construction emissions would exceed applicable regulatory thresholds, those total emissions would be distributed across the various project components located in different parts of the project area, as illustrated by Table 4.20-6, and would not be concentrated in one location at any time. The site-specific emissions that would result from construction in any given location would be well below project-specific thresholds and would not substantially contribute to localized concentrations of criteria pollutants such that localized exceedances of standards would occur. Construction emissions would be temporary in nature and would not raise ambient air pollutant concentrations over time. Although several of the identified minority and low-income communities would experience higher emissions than would other communities (due to the amount of construction contributing to the estimate of maximum daily emissions near each community), emissions from construction would not result in substantial adverse health effects because they would be temporary and would not exceed applicable thresholds. Therefore, because construction of project components would not result in substantial adverse effects, the project would

not result in a disproportionately high and adverse impact on minority and/or low-income communities, and the impact would be less than significant. Additionally, implementation of **Mitigation Measures 4.10-1a** through **4.10-1e** would reduce project construction emissions further.

### **Operational and Facility Siting Impacts**

As is the case with construction, air quality is the only issue area that could result in a disproportionately high and adverse impact on minority and/or low-income communities. However, as described in Impact 4.10-4, combined operational emissions of the MPWSP Desalination Plant, Carmel Valley Pump Station, and the slant wells would not exceed any of the thresholds derived from applicable air quality plans; therefore, operational emissions would not be expected to adversely affect the communities' health.

As discussed above, development and operation of the proposed project would result in higher water rates for most ratepayers within CalAm's Monterey District, which includes the identified low-income populations in Sand City, Seaside, and downtown Monterey. Such increases could have an adverse impact on low-income populations, and because low-income ratepayers may be less able to absorb price increases compared to non-low-income ratepayers, this adverse impact could be disproportionately high, and thus significant. However, under CalAm's Help to Others (H<sub>2</sub>O) program, low-income water customers within the CalAm service area can apply to receive water rates that are discounted by approximately 20 percent for the meter rate and for the first two tiers of residential quantity rates (CalAm, 2015a, b, 2016a). This program is expected to continue and would help offset impacts on low-income ratepayers from future water rate increases resulting from implementation of the proposed project. Further, CalAm provides assistance through payment arrangements to customers who cannot pay bills by the due date, as well as water conservation assistance including: "water wise" house calls for homeowners and renters to identify water conservation opportunities, free water-saving devices (e.g., showerheads, faucet aerators), landscape water audits and budgets, and rebates for purchasing and installing water-saving devices (CalAm 2016a, b, c). These customer assistance programs are consistent with USEPA's recommendation to water and wastewater utilities to provide such programs to address the economic needs of low-income customers (USEPA, 2016). These programs would reduce the burden of increased prices on low-income households in the Monterey District to the extent practicable. CPUC jurisdiction over CalAm's water rates includes oversight by the Office of Ratepayer Advocates, whose statutory mission pursuant to California Public Utilities Code Section 309.5 is to obtain the lowest possible rate for service consistent with reliable and safe service levels, and to consider primarily the interests of residential and small commercial customers. For these reasons, this impact is would be less than significant.

The Castroville Community Services District (CCSD), which serves nearly 2,000 water connections (including government, industrial, commercial, and residential customers) in Castroville, a disadvantaged community and identified low-income community outside of CalAm's Monterey District, currently relies on about 780 acre-feet per year of SVGB groundwater to meet Castroville's water demands, with all of its three domestic water production wells in the 400-Foot aquifer (CCSD, 2017). CCSD increasingly has experienced water supply challenges due to water quality degradation primarily from increased salinity, as illustrated in Figure 4.10-11 (CalAm et al., 2016).

As described in Section 4.20.2.3, above, the settlement agreement would allow CalAm to deliver desalinated water to CCSD at a rate equal to the avoided cost of pumping the same amount of water. Therefore, CCSD would benefit from the proposed project because it would receive higher-quality water for the same price that pumping degraded water otherwise would cost. This would be a minor beneficial effect for a disadvantaged community.

## 4.20.6 Cumulative Effects of the Proposed Project

The cumulative scenario and cumulative impacts methodology are described in Section 4.1.7. Table 4.1-2 lists potential cumulative projects.

### **Impact 4.20-C: Cumulative impacts related to socioeconomics and/or environmental justice. (*Less than significant with mitigation*)**

#### **Socioeconomics**

The geographic scope for the cumulative impact analysis of socioeconomics encompasses Monterey County.

As described in Impact 4.20-1, project construction would economically benefit the communities in the project area. No communities in the vicinity of the project area would experience negative socioeconomic impacts resulting from construction. Access for consumers to some businesses may be temporarily affected. Potential disruptions would last a maximum of 2 weeks at any given location, and none of the linear projects in Table 4.1-2 that could have similarly disruptive construction effects would overlap in time and location with proposed project construction. Therefore, no cumulative impact is anticipated, and the impact of the proposed project alone would be as described above, less than significant with mitigation.

Construction projects listed in Table 4.1-2 and MPWSP construction activities and spending would result in temporary new local employment opportunities and increased spending on construction materials, equipment, and services. Consequently, the proposed project and other projects in the cumulative scenario would have a net positive economic and employment effect on the communities benefitting from proposed project construction. As acknowledged in Section 4.19, Population and Housing, some construction workers are expected to commute to the project area from outside of Monterey County. Accordingly, the employment and re-spending benefits related to those workers primarily would be experienced in their home counties, and would combine with cumulative impacts affecting those counties. The proposed project would have a beneficial contribution to such cumulative impacts outside the geographic scope for this analysis.

#### **Environmental Justice**

The geographic scope for the cumulative impact analysis of environmental justice includes the minority and low-income communities identified in Section 4.20.1.2: Seaside, Marina, Castroville, and Sand City, and one census tract in downtown Monterey.

Project construction would occur in Seaside, Marina, and Castroville. Ambient air quality in this area, as described in Section 4.10.1.5, reflects the past and ongoing contributions of criteria air pollutant emissions from numerous sources, including the CEMEX sand mining facility, existing Monterey Regional Water Pollution Control Agency (MRWPCA) facilities, existing Monterey Peninsula Regional Waste Management District (MPWMD) facilities, and livestock ranching and other agricultural activities. Section 4.10.1.5 describes baseline criteria air pollutant concentrations based on data from the nearest ambient air quality monitoring station, which has not recorded any violations of the state or federal criteria air pollutant standards from 2011 through 2015. Although localized project emissions in these communities would not exceed significance thresholds, four other projects have the potential to be under construction near proposed project components in these communities at the same time. As described in Table 4.1-2, these are the remaining retail and housing components of The Dunes on Monterey Bay in Marina (No. 7), the Marina Downtown Vitalization Specific Plan (No. 10), Marina Station (No. 12), and the Main Gate Specific Plan in Seaside (No. 18). The construction schedules for these projects are unknown, but if construction of these projects were to overlap with the construction of the proposed project, the cumulative localized emissions could be increased compared to the proposed project alone. Although cumulative impacts could be significant if other projects resulted in emissions that exceeded significance thresholds, the proposed project's localized emissions as shown in Table 4.20-6 would not be significant. Therefore, for the same reasons described in the air quality analysis in Section 4.10.6, the proposed project's contribution to cumulative impacts at these locations would be less than significant. With regard to operational effects, as discussed in Impact 4.10-6, such emissions would be negligible. (*Less than significant*)

Implementation of the MPWSP would result in a long-term increase in water rates for ratepayers within CalAm's Monterey District that would be phased in over a period of several years. However, CalAm is proposing in their current General Rate Case (A.16-07-002) to increase rates by 15 percent for its Monterey District. The implementation of the MPWSP would double the current water rates for ratepayers within CalAm's Monterey District (Truong, 2016). Although the Monterey Pipeline and Pump Station are identified as a separate project in the cumulative scenario (No. 60 in Table 4.1-2), this estimate of doubling the rates is based on CalAm's Amended Application, which assumed the cost of these facilities to be included (ESA, 2016). Therefore, no additional increase would occur as a result of implementation of the Monterey Pipeline and Pump Station project. Additionally, it is assumed that the GWR Project (No. 59) will not move forward in the full project buildout, and therefore is not included in the cumulative scenario for the proposed project. No other projects in Table 4.1-2 would result in additional rate increases because they would be carried out and funded by organizations other than CalAm. The cumulative impact in the Monterey District from the MPWSP and general rate case proceeding is an increase in rates of approximately 115 percent. This could have a disproportionate impact on low-income ratepayers, but for the same reasons described for the proposed project in Section 4.20.5.2, this impact is considered to be less than significant. Additionally, no other projects are expected to affect water supply to or prices paid by the CCSD, so a cumulative analysis is not relevant to the project's benefits on CCSD.

As discussed above, individual physical effects, cumulative effects, and potential aggregate or additive effects among different issue areas were reviewed. The analysis throughout the issue areas determined that the temporary, localized, and low-level (less than significant) characteristics of impacts related to environmental health or environmental burdens other than air quality would not result in a substantial aggregation of effects or a disproportionately high and adverse effect on minority or low-income populations. As described in this section, the proposed project's contribution to cumulative environmental justice impacts within the geographic scope of analysis would be less than significant.

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