SAN GORGONIO PASS WATER AGENCY MULTI-YEAR WATER TRANSFER

DRAFT INITIAL STUDY/NEGATIVE DECLARATION

OCTOBER 2022

PREPARED FOR:

San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AB ..... Assembly Bill
AF ..... Acre-Feet
AFY ..... Acre-Feet per Year
CAAQS ..... California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CARB ..... California Air Resources Board
CCAA ..... California Clean Air Act
CEQA ..... California Environmental Quality Act
CH_4 ..... Methane
CO ..... Carbone Monoxide
CO_2 ..... Carbon dioxide
$CO2_e$ ..... Carbon Dioxide-Equivalent
Contractor ..... State Water Contractor
DWR ..... Department of Water Resources
EIR ..... Environmental Impact Report
EPA ..... Environmental Protection Agency
FCGMA ..... Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency
GHG ..... Greenhouse Gas
GIS ..... Geographic Information System
GSA ..... Groundwater Sustainability Agency
GSP ..... Groundwater Sustainability Plan
HCP ..... Habitat Conservation Plan
IPCC ..... Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IS ..... Initial Study
IS/ND ..... Initial Study/ Negative Declaration
km ..... kilometers
lbs/day ..... pounds per day
MT/year ..... metric tons per year
NAAQS ..... National Ambient Air Quality Standards
N_2O ..... Nitrous Oxide
ND ..... Negative Declaration
NO_2 ..... Nitrogen Dioxide

NO_x ..... Nitrogen Oxides
O_3 ..... Ozone
Pb ..... Lead
PM_{10} ..... particulate matter 10 microns in size
$PM_{2.5}$ ..... particulate matter 2.5 microns in size
ppb ..... parts per billion
ppm ..... parts per million
PRC ..... Public Resource Code
Project ..... San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Multi-Year Water Transfer
ROG ..... Reactive Organic Gases
SBVMWD ..... San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
SCAB ..... South Coast Air Basin
SCAQMD ..... South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCE ..... Southern California Edison Company
SGMA ..... Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SGPWD ..... San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency
SJVAPCD ..... San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
SO_2 ..... Sulfur Dioxide
SoCalGas ..... Southern California Gas
SWP ..... State Water Project
TPY ..... tons per year
USEPA ..... United States Environmental Protection Agency
UWMP ..... Urban Water Management Plan
µg/m3 ..... micrograms per cubic meter
VCFCD ..... Ventura County Flood Control District
VCWPD ..... Ventura County Watershed Protection District
Ventura ..... City of San Buenaventura
WR-MSHCP ..... Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency ("SGPWA" or "Agency") has prepared this Initial Study and Negative Declaration (IS/ND) to address the potential environmental effects of the proposed San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Multi-Year Water Transfer (Project). This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq. The Agency is the CEQA lead agency for this Project.

The site and the Project are described in detail in Chapter 2 Project Description.

1.1 REGULATORY INFORMATION

An Initial Study (IS) is a document prepared by a lead agency to determine whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment. In accordance with California Code of Regulations Title 14 (Chapter 3, Section 15000, *et seq.*) (also known as the CEQA Guidelines) Section 15064 (a)(1) states that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared if there is substantial evidence in light of the whole record that the Project under review may have a significant effect on the environment and should be further analyzed to determine mitigation measures or project alternatives that might avoid or reduce project impacts to less than significant levels. A Negative Declaration (ND) may be prepared instead if the lead agency finds that there is no substantial evidence in light of the whole record that the project may have a significant effect on the environment. An ND is a written statement describing the reasons why a proposed Project, not otherwise exempt from CEQA, would not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, why it would not require the preparation of an EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15371). According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, a ND or Mitigated ND shall be prepared for a project subject to CEQA when either:

a. The IS shows there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed Project may have a significant effect on the environment, or
b. The IS identified potentially significant effects, but:
    1. Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by or agreed to by the applicant before the proposed ND and IS is released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, and
    2. There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the proposed Project as *revised* may have a significant effect on the environment.

1.2 DOCUMENT FORMAT

This IS/ND contains five chapters. Chapter 1 Introduction provides an overview of the Project and the CEQA process. Chapter 2 Project Description, provides a detailed description of proposed Project components and objectives. Chapter 3 Determination, contains the Lead Agency's determination based upon this initial evaluation. Chapter 4 Environmental Impact Analysis presents the CEQA checklist and environmental analysis for all impact areas, mandatory findings of significance, and feasible mitigation measures. If the Project does not have the potential to significantly impact a given issue area, the relevant section provides a brief discussion of the reasons why no impacts are expected. If the Project could have a potentially significant impact on a resource, the issue area discussion provides a description of potential impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures and/or permit requirements that would reduce those impacts to a less

than significant level. Chapter 5 References details the documents and reports this document relies upon to provide its analysis.

CHAPTER 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1.1 Project Title

San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency Multi-Year Water Transfer

2.1.2 Lead Agency Name and Address

San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA or Agency)
1210 Beaumont Avenue
Beaumont, CA 92223

2.1.3 Contact Person and Phone Number

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2.1.4 Project Location

The Project spans the respective jurisdictions of two agencies in California: SGPWA and the City of San Buenaventura (Ventura, within Ventura County). District boundaries of SGPWA and Ventura are illustrated in Figure 2-1. The initial point of diversion would begin in the California Aqueduct at Tehachapi Afterbay in Kern County, where the California Aqueduct bifurcates into the East Branch and West Branch. The transferred water will be conveyed each year through the California Aqueduct's East Branch in Kern County, Los Angeles County, and San Bernardino County to the East Branch Extension. The transferred water will then flow into the East Branch Extension from San Bernardino County into Riverside County where it will arrive at the Agency's service area. Once in SGPWA's service area, water will be diverted at SGPWA's Mountain View Turnout, Little San Gorgonio Creek Turnout, or Noble Creek Turnout. The transferred water would then reach its destination in either the SGPWA groundwater Recharge Facility or the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District groundwater Recharge Facility within the SGPWA service area.

The Agency is located near the cities of Banning, Beaumont, and Calimesa, and the unincorporated communities of Cabazon and Cherry Valley in Riverside County. Additionally, a small portion of SGPWA's service area overlaps San Bernardino County. The San Gorgonio Pass is the narrow east-west strip of land between the San Bernardino Valley to the West and the Palm Springs/Coachella Valley area to the East. The

region is bounded by mountains to both the north and south. The Agency's service area includes 225 square miles.

Ventura is a coastal city located in Ventura County, which is approximately 60 miles northwest of Los Angeles and 45 miles east of Santa Barbara. Ventura spans approximately 32 square miles.

2.2 DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

Ventura and SGPWA are contemplating entering a Multi-Year Water Transfer Agreement (Agreement) subject to the environmental analysis in this Initial Study. Under the Agreement, Ventura would transfer to SGPWA up to 10,000 acre-feet (AF), of Ventura's SWP Annual Table A Amount each year from 2022 through December 31, 2042, dependent on the status of the Contract Extension Amendment. The amount of Ventura's SWP water available for transfer each year is subject to the California Department of Water Resources' (DWR) annual SWP Table A Allocation that identifies a percentage of Ventura's SWP Maximum Annual Table A Amount that Ventura may receive that year. Ventura reserves the right to use in its service area the first 2,000 AF of its SWP Table A Allocation every year, when available, but will transfer the entire remaining portion of its SWP Table A Allocation to Agency, including any unused amount of its 2,000 acre-foot reservation.

The Project does not include any additional facilities or modifications to any land. The Project would utilize existing conveyance facilities. The Project would not alter the SWP's operational criteria beyond the existing SWP system design and function.

2.2.1 State Water Project

The SWP diverts and carries long-term water supplies from northern California through a state-run water conveyance aqueduct (California Aqueduct) to southern California. Approximately 70 percent of the water is used for residential, municipal, and industrial uses and about 30 percent is used for agricultural irrigation purposes. It is the largest state financed water project ever built. SWP facilities deliver each year's available water through contracts between the DWR and the 29 State Water Contractors (Contractor), including Ventura County Watershed Protection District (VCWPD) and SGPWA. "The base contractual agreements concerning the City's annual entitlement to 10,000 AF of SWP are: (1) the 1963 State Water Supply Contract of 20,000 AF entitlement of SWP water between DWR and VCWPD known formerly as Ventura County Flood Control District (VCFCD); (2) the 1970 agreement between VCFCD and Casitas known formerly as the Ventura Municipal Water District that assigned the 20,000 AF entitlement to Casitas; and (3) the 1971 agreements between Casitas and the City providing the City with an annual entitlement of 10,000 AF and Casitas and United with an annual entitlement of 5,000 AF each."[1]

The Contractor contracts were initially structured to reflect anticipated population increases and water demand, estimated by DWR and the Contractors, and completion of SWP facilities. The SWP Maximum Annual Table A Amount[2] is specified in each Contractor's contract in a schedule that sets forth the maximum annual amount of water that may be requested to be delivered in any given year. Ventura

[1] (Ventura Water 2021)

[2] Table A allocations represent a portion or all of the annual Table A amount requested by SWP water contractors and approved for delivery by the Department of Water Resources. The Table A allocation differs each year and also may change over the course of the year. Beginning with an initial allocation that is based primarily on a conservative dry hydrology, current storage, and releases to be made through the year—to meet SWP contractual and regulatory obligations—the allocation may change over winter and through spring to reflect the actual and forecast water supply.

receives, via VCWPD, 10,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) of SWP water and SGPWA has a maximum annual Table A allocation amount of 17,300 AFY.

Whenever the available supply of Table A water is determined by DWR to be less than the total of all Contractors' requests, the available supply of Table A water is allocated among all Contractors in proportion to each Contractor's Maximum Annual Table A Amount relative to the cumulative total of Maximum Annual Table A Amounts pursuant to Article 18 of the SWP Water Supply Contracts. Article 18 outlines the reallocation of water among Contractors in years of temporary shortage. Table A water allocations vary and are subject to change year by year based on the availability of water throughout the State. For example, due to persistent dry conditions in California, DWR decreased all Table A allocations for 2022 from fifteen (15) to five (5) percent of Contractor requested Table A amounts in addition to any Human Health & Safety Needs (HH&S).[3]

2.2.2 Project Background and Purpose

For the past four years SGPWA and VCWPD on behalf of Ventura, have entered into a water transfer or exchange agreement. Prior agreements expressed an intent for SGPWA and Ventura to negotiate a separate long-term exchange or transfer of Table A Water for up to 20 years. In early 2021, DWR began implementing the Water Management Amendment to SWP Water Supply Contracts, which allowed for the long-term transfer or exchange of Table A supplies under certain conditions. Currently, Ventura does not have a physical water delivery connection to the SWP to receive its portion of the VCWPD's Table A allocation; local demand within its service area has historically been met through other sources of water supply. Ventura has plans to construct a physical connection to SWP facilities via the State Water Interconnection Project, which is anticipated to be constructed within the time frame of this Project.[4] A multi-year transfer of Table A water would allow Ventura to offset a portion of its SWP costs, while SGPWA can use the transferred water to augment its water supply to meet current and future water demand.

The Agency and Ventura propose a 20-year agreement under which VCWPD, on behalf of Ventura, would transfer to SGPWA up to 10,000 AFY of SWP water. Ventura's water allocation would be transferred to SGPWA for Agency use as an additional water supply. The transfer would use existing SWP and SGPWA facilities and turnouts (existing conveyance facilities) to receive the water and would not include any construction of new infrastructure, conveyance facilities, or alteration of lands. Existing facilities used in the transfer are shown in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Existing Conveyance Facilities

Existing Conveyance Facilities
California Aqueduct
East Branch Extension of the California Aqueduct
Mountain View Turnout
Little San Gorgonio Creek Turnout
Noble Creek Turnout
SGPWA Recharge Facility
Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District Recharge Facility

[3] (California Department of Water Resources 2022).
[4] The EIR to the City of San Buenaventura State Water Interconnection Project, adopted August 5, 2019, can be found at: Microsoft Word - !Environmental Impact Report_PUBLIC DRAFT.docx (ca.gov)

2.2.3 Water Transfer from Ventura to SGPWA

The Project would facilitate a 20-year transfer of VCWPD's, on behalf of Ventura, allocated Table A water to SGPWA. The Project is anticipated to start once the Project is approved by DWR, and will end on December 31, 2042. Each delivery year would commence on January 1, continuing for one calendar year, ending on December 31.

Until the State Water Interconnection Project is completed, SGPWA will have rights to up to 10,000 AF of the Ventura Table A Water allocation for each Delivery Year. Once the State Water Interconnection Project is completed, Ventura will have the priority right, but not the obligation, to take delivery of up to two thousand (2,000) acre feet of Table A Water (Priority Allocation) during the subsequent Delivery Year, provided that Ventura's Table A Water allocation from DWR is sufficient to provide the Priority Allocation. The Priority Allocation must be used within the geographical boundaries that are served by Ventura and may not be transferred or exchanged for use outside such boundaries.

With respect to Article 21 water,[5] Ventura retains the rights to any Article 21 water associated with its Table A Water allocation if such Article 21 water can be used directly by Ventura County Agencies within two weeks of the date of allocation. This transfer will be subject to DWR approval, as Article 21 transfers are currently only contractual rights for four specifically named SWP water contractors, not including VCWPD.

Term

Subject to DWR's approval, the term of the proposed long-term water transfer would begin on the effective date and end on December 31, 2042.

2.2.4 Water Supply and Use

San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA)

The Agency was established in 1961 by California State Legislature. The Agency boundaries extend through Calimesa, Beaumont, Banning and Cabazon. The East Branch Extension of the California Aqueduct, the pipeline that brings State Project Water into the SGPWA service area, was completed in 2003.

Supply

The Agency, one of 29 State Water Contractors, purchases water from the State of California and sells it to local retail water agencies. Water is imported into the service area by the California Aqueduct. The Agency's Table A water allotment is 17,300 AFY. SGPWA's Table A represents a maximum contract amount that could be available each year assuming that the SWP could deliver 100% contract supplies to all SWP contractors. The last 100% allocation year occurred in 2006. SGPWA's SWP Contract has numerous components that allow SGPWA to manage and control the annually available SWP water supplies. More often than not, actual SWP allocations are less than 100% of SGPWA's Table A Annual Amount. Annual SWP percentage Table A allocations fluctuate based upon hydrology, water storage, and regulatory criteria in the Delta. Table 2-2 below shows the SGPWA Table A Annual Amount from 2010 through 2020, the SWP allocation percentage, and the final available Table A allocation from 2010-2020. During this period, the SGPWA received on average 8,335 AF, or about 48% of the Table A contract amount.[6]

[5] Article 21 allows water contractors to take deliveries above approved and scheduled Table A amounts. Article 21 is sometimes called interruptible, unscheduled, or surplus water. It is offered predominantly in wet years.
[6] (Tully & Young 2021)

Table 2-2: SWP Table Allocations and Delivery in Acre Feet Per Year (AFY)

Year	SWP Contract Table A	Percent Allocation	Allocation Amount
2010	17,300	50%	8,650
2011	17,300	80%	13,840
2012	17,300	65%	11,245
2013	17,300	35%	6,055
2014	17,300	5%	865
2015	17,300	20%	3,460
2016	17,300	60%	10,380
2017	17,300	85%	14,705
2018	17,300	35%	6,055
2019	17,300	75%	12,975
2020	17,300	20%	3,460

Source: (Tully & Young 2021)

In addition to SGPWA's Table A allotment from the State Water Project, SGPWA has acquired other sources of water. See below:

- The Agency is a signatory to the Yuba Accord, an agreement among many water districts in California and the Department of Water Resources that enables the signatories to obtain additional supplies from Yuba County in most years. SGPWA receives an average of 200-300 AFY from this source, enough water for 400-600 families.
- The Agency has signed an agreement with the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (SBMVWD). This agreement entitles SGPWA to purchase up to 5,000 AF of SWP entitlement each year with SBMVWD's express concurrence. The SBVMWD Agreement expires on December 31, 2032, and there is no right of renewal. SGPWA does anticipate renewing the contract through at least 2045.[7]
- The Agency has a contracted 20-year supply of 100% reliable water from the Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency. Its original source is a riparian right to Kern River water from Nickel Farms LLC. Since it originates south of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, it is 100% reliable. This water supply is 1,700 AFY. SGPWA has leased this water through 2036, with an option to extend the lease beyond that if desired.

Use

The Agency sells its SWP water to local water retailers to manage water supplies through conjunctive use. This means that SGPWA does not "earmark" water for specific development projects, but merely maintains a portfolio of potential water supplies that are sold or used to balance groundwater demand. Thus, SGPWA is always looking for ways to maintain and increase that portfolio's resiliency. Currently, SGPWA sell its water to the Yucaipa Valley Water District (the Calimesa area), the Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District (Beaumont and Cherry Valley), and the City of Banning.

The water proposed to be transferred to SGPWA would assist the Agency's goal to balance and add resilience to the Agency's portfolio and to help reduce reliance on the existing, basin. The additional transfer water would not provide a brand-new source of water that would encourage growth in the Agency area.

Conservation

The Agency does not provide water directly to the region's water users and does not have traditional distribution system metering. The Agency primary function is to eliminate groundwater overdraft by

[7] (Tully & Young 2021)

recharging imported SWP water at several locations throughout the service area. The SWP water is metered at the turnouts from where SGPWA receives the water into its service area. All retail water suppliers that are located in the SGPWA service area meter all of its customer connections.

The Agency recognizes the importance of public education and outreach for water resource conservation and works towards providing resources to its customers teaching them various methods to conserve water. These resources can be found on SGPWA's website free of charge for the benefit of its customers and the public. In addition, SGPWA is involved in a number of outreach programs.

City of San Buenaventura (Ventura)

Ventura's water supply sources includes local surface water and groundwater, and imported water. This section also discusses Ventura's water conservation and reclamation efforts.

Supply

Ventura currently relies on 100% local water sources. There are presently six distinct water sources providing water to the City water system.

- Casitas Municipal Water District (Casitas)
- Ventura River Foster Park Area (Foster Park)
- Mound Groundwater Basin (Mound Basin)
- Oxnard Plain Groundwater Basin (Oxnard Plain Basin)
- Santa Paula Groundwater Basin (Santa Paula Basin)
- Reclaimed water and reuse from the Ventura Water Reclamation Facility.

Ventura does not physically take SWP water because the city lacks the facilities to do so. However, since at least 1999, Ventura has sold, transferred, or exchanged the water to other SWP contractors. VCWPD, on behalf of Ventura, receives 10,000 AFY of SWP water.

It is anticipated that Ventura's State Water Interconnection project will be constructed within the time of this proposed water transfer agreement. The State Water Interconnection project will ultimately allow Ventura to receive SWP water directly. At that point, Ventura will retain the right to receive up to 2,000 AF of SWP water, while transferring the remaining 8,000 AF to SGPWA.

According to Ventura's UWMP, Ventura would have sufficient supplies to meet its projected demand through 2045.[8]

Use

Ventura's water system provides potable water to residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, and irrigation customers. Untreated water is provided to an industrial user and a few irrigation customers in the vicinity of the existing raw water pipeline system in the North Ventura Avenue area. Recycled water is provided for general irrigation of two golf courses, a City park, and landscape irrigation along the existing distribution alignment. Currently Ventura has approximately 32,285 service connections serving 113,500 people. .

Conservation

The Ventura Water 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP)[9] outlines the following Demand Management Measures Ventura has implemented since 2016 to meets its urban water use reduction targets:

[8] Ventura's UWMP can be found at: Microsoft Word - Ventura Water 2020 UWMP Draft_5_26-21.doc (ca.gov)
[9] (Ventura Water 2021)

- Water waste prevention ordinances
- Installation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure
- Conservation pricing
- Public education and outreach
- Programs to assess and manage distribution system real loss
- Water conservation program coordination and staffing support

Water Delivery

Delivery of Ventura Water to SGPWA

The water made available to SGPWA by Ventura would be delivered to SGPWA directly via existing SWP facilities. Figure 2-1 illustrates the SWP path the delivery of water would utilize. Table 2-1 lists the specific existing facilities that would be used for the Project.

2.2.5 Site and Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

Specific site and surrounding land use and settings are varied. The existing facilities used to deliver water are located within four counties: Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. Kern County, which is located within the San Joaquin Valley, is known for its relatively flat, irrigated farmland. Surrounding lands in the southern California region of the Project area (Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties) consists of sprawling open space, minor agricultural lands, rural shopping areas, urbanized areas, and rolling hills. Although the southern California region is known for its high density and urban character, the existing conveyance facilities within this region lie in the more rural parts.

The City of Ventura does not currently have a physical connection to the State Water Project for purposes of receiving direct-delivery of its allocations. Although the City may construct such a connection in the future pursuant to its previously certified State Water Interconnection Project EIR, actual construction activities are not yet under way.

2.2.6 Other Public Agencies Whose Approval May Be Required

- City of San Buenaventura
- California Department of Water Resources
- Ventura County Watershed Protection District

2.2.7 Consultation with California Native American Tribes

Public Resource Code (PRC) Section 21080.3.1, *et seq. (codification of Assembly Bill (AB) 52, 2013-14*) requires that a lead agency, within 14 days of determining that it will undertake a project, must notify in writing any California Native American Tribe traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project if that Tribe has previously requested notification about projects in that geographic area. The notice must briefly describe the project and inquire whether the Tribe wishes to request formal consultation. Tribes have 30 days from receipt of notification to request formal consultation. The lead agency then has 30 days to initiate the consultation, which then continues until the parties come to an agreement regarding necessary mitigation or agree that no mitigation is needed, or one or both parties determine that negotiation occurred in good faith, but no agreement will be made.

Although the Agency has not received written correspondence from any tribe pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1 requesting notification of the proposed Project, SGPWA did notify the Morongo Band of Mission Indians due to their good-standing working relationship with the tribe.

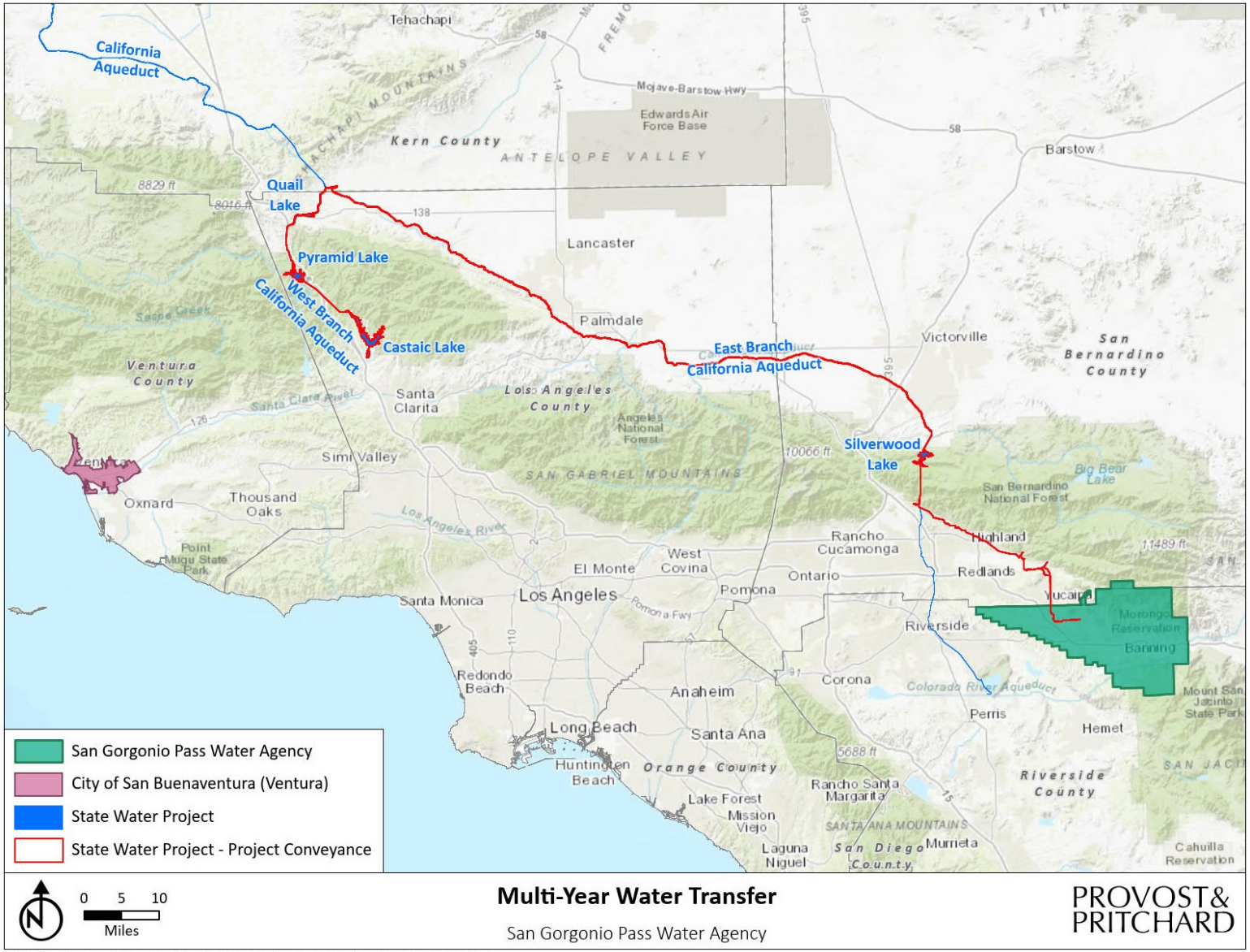


Figure 2-1: Regional Location Map

CHAPTER 3 DETERMINATION

3.1 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

As indicated by the discussions of baseline conditions, and impact analyses that follow in this Chapter, environmental factors not checked below would have no impacts or less than significant impacts resulting from the project. Environmental factors that are checked below would have potentially significant impacts resulting from the project. Mitigation measures are recommended for each of the potentially significant impacts that would reduce the impact to less than significant.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Energy
☐ Geology/Soils	☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Hazards and Hazardous Materials
☐ Hydrology / Water Quality	☐ Land Use/Planning	☐ Mineral Resources
☐ Noise	☐ Population/Housing	☐ Public Services
☐ Recreation	☐ Transportation	☐ Tribal Cultural Resources
☐ Utilities and Service Systems	☐ Wildfire	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

The analyses of environmental impacts in Chapter 4 Environmental Impact Analysis result in an impact statement, which shall have the following meanings.

Potentially Significant Impact. This category is applicable if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant, and no feasible mitigation measures can be identified to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated. This category applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce an effect from a "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measure(s), and briefly explain how they would reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from earlier analyses may be cross-referenced).

Less than Significant Impact. This category is identified when the proposed Project would result in impacts below the threshold of significance, and no mitigation measures are required.

No Impact. This category applies when a project would not create an impact in the specific environmental issue area. "No Impact" answers do not require a detailed explanation if they are adequately supported by the information sources cited by the lead agency, which show that the impact does not apply to the specific project (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

3.2 DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation (to be completed by the Lead Agency):

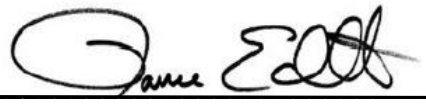
☒ I find that, in light of the whole record before it, the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.



Signature

10/13/2022
Date

Lance Eckhart, PG, CHG/General Manager, Chief Hydrogeologist
San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency

CHAPTER 4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

4.1 AESTHETICS

Table 4-1: Aesthetics Impacts

Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.1.1 Baseline Conditions

Although Ventura is involved in the Project, Ventura does not currently have a physical connection to the State Water Project for purposes of receiving direct-delivery of its SWP water allocations. The City may construct such a connection in the future pursuant to its previously certified State Water Interconnection Project EIR, though actual construction activities are not yet under way. The Project encompasses the SGPWA service area located within the San Gorgonio Pass region of Riverside County and portions of Kern, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino Counties. These counties are located within the southern region of California, with the northern half of Kern considered to be within Central California. The SGPWA service area is located in a mountainous region that includes varied topography, exposed rock formations, and various vegetation communities. To the north lies the San Gorgonio Mountains and the San Bernardino Mountains, with the sprawling San Jacinto Mountains to the southeast. Several urbanized areas derived from both incorporated and unincorporated communities are surrounded by the mountainous terrain. These urbanized areas include typical development such as residential, commercial, industrial, and open space. Where the Project runs through Los Angeles County, the surrounding area primarily consists of vast, flat open space. Vegetation is sparse and consists of chaparral, sage scrub, and other plant species

indicative of dry weather. The region of the Project that includes Kern County contains similar features of Los Angeles County, but with additional areas containing agricultural lands.

Various water conveyance infrastructure such as canals, turnouts, and pumps exist throughout the Project area. Said infrastructure assists in the transfer and transmission of water to areas in need.

4.1.2 Impact Analysis

a) Have substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

No Impact. The Project would not alter any existing landform or facility as no construction or earthmoving activities would take place. There would be no impact to any scenic vista.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

No Impact. Due to the lack of construction associated with implementation, the Project would not result in any temporary or permanent physical changes. There would be no impact.

c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

No Impact. Due to the lack of construction associated with the Project and the utilization of existing conveyance facilities, the Project would not involve any temporary or permanent physical changes to the existing viewsheds, nor would it conflict with any applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality within the Project area. There would be no impact.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

No Impact. Water flowing within existing conveyance facilities exposed to sunlight generates a reflection of light. The existing light reflection from water would remain the same and impacts would not be increased. Therefore, there would be no impact.

4.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Table 4-2: Agriculture and Forest Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.2.1 Baseline Conditions

The Agency, which is located within Riverside County and a portion of San Bernardino County, uses its water for groundwater recharge. The San Gorgonio Pass region is not an agricultural region; the water is primarily pumped for municipal functions.

According to the 2019 Los Angeles County Annual Crop and Livestock Report, the total gross value of agricultural crops and commodities produced in Los Angeles County during 2019 was $177,612,300. Agricultural products, overall, realized a slight increase in sales by 4%. Nursery plant production continues to be the leading commodity at $98,440,000, an increase of 6% from 2018.[10]

Agricultural lands associated with the Project are predominantly located within Kern County. According to the 2020 Kern County Annual Crop and Livestock Report, the top five commodities are grapes, citrus, almonds, pistachios, and milk. These items account for $5.5 billion which accounts for 72% of the gross value of all agricultural commodities produced in Kern County in 2020.[11]

[10] (County of Los Angeles Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights & Measures 2019)
[11] (Kern County Department of Agriculture and Measurement Standards 2020)

4.2.2 Impact Analysis

a) 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?

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

a-b) No Impact. While Ventura does not have a physical connection to SWP facilities; therefore, lacking the potential for any impacts, the Agency currently uses its existing SWP water to recharge the underlying groundwater basin. The transfer water would follow suit and be used for groundwater recharge within the SGPWA service area, which overlaps Riverside County and a small portion of San Bernardino County. The Project would not have a direct impact to zoning or agricultural land preservation. The Project would not involve any change of land use or any physical changes to the land itself. There would be no potential for farmland conversion or any potential conflict with an existing Williamson Act contract as there would be no change to the existing land uses. There would be no impact.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact. The movement of water would not result in the loss of forest land, as the Project would not change the existing land uses. The transfer of surface water from Ventura to SGPWA would not conflict with any zoning of forest land or timberland. There would be no impact.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. As discussed above in "Impact c", the movement of water would not result in the loss of forest land, as the Project would not change the existing land use. There would be no impact.

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. The Project would not involve any changes in the existing environment and no land conversion would take place within boundaries of the two participating agencies. There would be no impact.

4.3 AIR QUALITY

Table 4-3: Air Quality Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.3.1 Baseline Conditions

Air quality is influenced by a variety of factors, including topography, local, and regional meteorology. The Project is located within the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) and the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin. The SCAB is within the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and the SJVAB is within the jurisdiction of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD). SJVAPCD and SCAQMD monitor ambient air quality on a real-time basis throughout their respective counties.[12] The existing conveyance facilities associated with the Project generate emissions. During years of full allocation of SWP water, emissions are at its peak.

4.3.2 Regulatory Attainment Designations

Under the California Clean Air Act (CCAA), the California Air Resources Board (CARB) is required to designate areas of the State as attainment, nonattainment, or unclassified with respect to applicable standards. An "attainment" designation for an area signifies that pollutant concentrations did not violate the applicable standard in that area. A "nonattainment" designation indicates that a pollutant concentration violated the applicable standard at least once, excluding those occasions when a violation was caused by an exceptional event, as defined in the criteria. Depending on the frequency and severity of pollutants exceeding applicable standards, the nonattainment designation can be further classified as serious nonattainment, severe nonattainment, or extreme nonattainment, with extreme nonattainment being the most severe of the classifications. An "unclassified" designation signifies that the data does not support either an attainment or nonattainment designation. The CCAA divides districts into moderate, serious, and severe air pollution categories, with increasingly stringent control requirements mandated for each category.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) designates areas for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) as "*does not meet the primary standards*", "*cannot be classified*", or "*better than national standards*". For sulfur dioxide (SO_2), areas are designated the same but also has an

[12] (California Air Resources Board 2022)

additional designation "*does not meet the secondary standards*". However, CARB terminology of "*attainment*, *nonattainment*, and *unclassified"* is more frequently used. The USEPA uses the same sub-categories for nonattainment status: *serious, severe, and extreme*. In 1991, the USEPA assigned new nonattainment designations to areas that had previously been classified as Group I, II, or III for particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10}) based on the likelihood that they would violate national PM_{10} standards. All other areas are designated "unclassified."

Table 4-4, Table 4-5, and Table 4-6 that follow, set forth the summary of ambient air quality standards and attainment designations, and criteria pollutant thresholds for the SJVAPCD and SCAQMD, respectively.

Table 4-4: Summary of Ambient Air Quality Standards and Attainment Designation

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards*		National Standards*	
		Concentration*	Attainment Status	Primary	Attainment Status
Ozone (O_3)	1-hour	0.09 ppm	Non-Attainment/ Severe	–	No Federal Standard
	8-hour	0.070 ppm		0.075 ppm	Non-Attainment (Extreme)**
Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	AAM	20 µg/m³	Non-Attainment	–	Attainment
	24-hour	50 µg/m³		150 µg/m³	
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	AAM	12 µg/m³	Non-Attainment	12 µg/m³	Non-Attainment
	24-hour	No Standard		35 µg/m³	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1-hour	20 ppm	Attainment/ Unclassified	35 ppm	Attainment/ Maintenance
	8-hour	9 ppm		9 ppm	
	8-hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm		–	
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	AAM	0.030 ppm	Attainment	0.053 ppm	Attainment/ Unclassified
	1-hour	0.18 ppm		0.100 ppb	
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	AAM	–	Attainment	0.03 ppm	Attainment/ Unclassified
	24-hour	0.04 ppm		0.14 ppm	
	3-hour	–		--	
	1-hour	0.25 ppm		75 ppb	
Lead	30-day Average	1.5 µg/m³	Attainment	–	No Designation/ Classification
	Calendar Quarter	–		1.5 µg/m³	
	Rolling 3-Month Average	–		0.15 µg/m³	
Sulfates	24-hour	25 µg/m³	Attainment	No Federal Standards	
Hydrogen Sulfide	1-hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m³)	Unclassified		
Vinyl Chloride	24-hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m³)	Attainment		
Visibility-Reducing Particle Matter	8-hour	Extinction coefficient: 0.23/km-visibility of 10 miles or more (0.07-30 miles or more for Lake Tahoe) due to particles when the relative humidity is less than 70%.	Unclassified		

** For more information on standards visit: https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/aaqs2.pdf*
*** No Federal 1-hour standard. Reclassified extreme nonattainment for the Federal 8-hour standard [2022]}].*
****Secondary Standard*
Source: CARB 2015; SJVAPCD 2015

Table 4-5: SCAQMD Summary of Ambient Air Quality Standards and Attainment Designation

Summary of Ambient Air Quality Standards & Attainment Designation	
Pollutant	**Concentration Needed or Attainment Determination**
NO_2 1-hour average annual arithmetic mean	South Coast AQMD is in attainment; project is significant if it causes or contributes to an exceedance of the following attainment standards: 0.18 ppm (state) 0.03 ppm (state) and 0.0534 ppm (federal)
PM_{10} 24-hour average annual average	10.4 µg/m3 (construction) & 2.5 µg/m3 (operation) 1.0 µg/m3
$PM_{2.5}$ 24-hour average	10.4 µg/m3 (construction) & 2.5 µg/m3 (operation)
SO_2 1-hour average 24-hour average	0.25 ppm (state) & 0.075 ppm (federal – 99th percentile) 0.04 ppm (state)
Sulfate 24-hour average	25 µg/m3 (state)
CO 1-hour average 8-hour average	South Coast AQMD is in attainment; project is significant if it causes or contributes to an exceedance of the following attainment standards: 20 ppm (state) and 35 ppm (federal) 9.0 ppm (state/federal)
Pb 30-day Average Rolling 3-month average	1.5 µg/m3 (state) 0.15 µg/m3 (federal)

Source: (South Coast Air Quality Management District 2016)

Table 4-6: SJVAPCD and SVAQMD Daily Emissions Standards

Source	Daily Emissions (in Pounds)					
	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
SJVAPCD Significance Thresholds	100	100	100	100	100	100
SCAQMD Significance Thresholds	75	100	550	150	150	155

Source: (San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District 2015); (South Coast Air Quality Management District 2016)

4.3.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

No Impact. The Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the SJVAPCD or SCAQMD air quality plans. No physical change in the environment would result in the implementation of this Project. Water transferred to SGPWA would not require any excess pumping and would not substantially increase any hazards identified in the air quality plan. Therefore, there would be no impact.

b) Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

No Impact. The Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. No physical change in the environment would result from the implementation of this Project. Water transferred to SGPWA would not require any excess pumping and would not substantially increase any hazards identified in the SJVAPCD or SCAQMD air quality plans.

c) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

No Impact. The Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. No physical change in the environment would result from the implementation of this Project. Due to a lack

of construction and additional emissions such as source odors, naturally occurring asbestos, or fugitive dust, there would be no potential to expose any sensitive receptors to hazardous pollutant concentrations. Therefore, there would be no impact.

d) Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

No Impact. The Project would not result in other emissions adversely affecting a substantial amount of people. No physical change in the environment would result from the implementation of this Project. Due to a lack of construction and additional emissions such as source odors, naturally occurring asbestos, or fugitive dust, there would be no potential to expose any substantial number of people to hazardous emissions. Therefore, there would be no impact.

4.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Table 4-7: Biological Resources Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) 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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) 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, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.4.1 Baseline Conditions

Kern, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties contain a variety of biological communities and wildlife habitats that contribute to the overall functionality of their ecosystems. The San Joaquin Valley, which contains Kern County, has the San Joaquin Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Open Space Plan, Los Angeles County has the Oak Woodlands Conservation Management Plan, San Bernardino and Riverside County have the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Habitat Conservation Plan, and Riverside County has the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WR-MSHCP). These plans are developed to conserve and protect habitats in their respective regions.

Various segments of existing canal and other water conveyance facilities are surrounded by fences for safety and exclusion of foreign objects. In addition, it is common for canals to act as a water source for shoreline birds in the area.

4.4.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project 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, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact. The Project involves the transfer of water from Ventura to SGPWA through existing facilities. Construction or land alterations are not part of Project activities. SGPWA and Ventura propose a 20-year agreement under which Ventura would transfer to SGPWA up to 10,000 AFY of SWP water annually. Ventura's water allocation would be left within the SWP facilities and transferred to SGPWA for district use as an additional water supply to meet existing demand. Ultimately, the transfer would use existing SWP and SGPWA facilities, and turnouts to receive the water and would not include any new infrastructure, conveyance facilities, construction, or alteration of lands.

The Project would not directly change the land use patterns of the cultivated or fallowed fields within the districts' boundaries. Although Delta smelt, a special status fish species could be found within the participating agencies' service areas near the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, implementation of the Project would not change existing conditions, such as stream flows. Because no increased natural stream course or additional surface water pumping would occur, there would be no additional impacts from Project activities. There would be no impact to Delta smelt or any other species identified as candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

b) Would the project 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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

c) Would the project 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, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

b and c) No Impact. Riparian habitats typically occur adjacent to waterways. The Project area contains numerous waterways; however, there would be no new construction or ground disturbance associated with the Project and no proposed change in land uses. The Project would not conflict with the San Joaquin Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Open Space Plan, the Los Angeles County Oak Woodlands Conservation Management Plan, the San Bernardino and Riverside County Upper Santa Ana River Wash Habitat Conservation Plan, or the Riverside County WR-MSHCP.

Because there would be no new construction or ground disturbance associated with the Project, and stream conditions would remain the same as existing conditions, there would be no impact to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities. No construction or earthmoving activities would take place as a part of the Project including the trimming or removal of any vegetation. As such, there would be no impacts to federally protected waters or wetlands.

d) Would the project 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?

No Impact. The Project would not involve any grading or expansion of the existing water conveyance facilities. There would be no construction of any buildings or facilities that would impede migratory wildlife. Protection measures such as fish screens can be found prior to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and fencing along the canals already exists for the conveyance facilities being utilized for the Project. There would be no impacts that would interfere with the movement of any wildlife species or the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No Impact. The Project would not involve tree removal, grading or expansion of the existing facilities and would not conflict with any existing or proposed preservation policies or ordinances. The Project proposes to transfer water through existing conveyance facilities. Implementation of the Project would not result in conflicts with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. There would be no impact.

f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

No Impact. Although there are multiple adopted conservation-related plans (see Section 4.4.1 Baseline Conditions for said plans) that overlap the participating agencies' service areas, Project activities would not trigger notification or conflict with existing plans and policies as the Project would not involve any construction or ground disturbing activities. There would be no conflicts with any adopted conservation plans. There would be no impact.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Table 4-8: Cultural Resources Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to in § 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.5.1 Baseline Conditions

The prehistoric population of the SGPWA service area includes the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. The Morongo Band of Mission Indians are a mixture of several different small groups of California Indians, including the Serrano, Cahuilla, and Cupeno. The territories occupied by these tribes contain various resources that are protected today. The Morongo Indian Reservation spans more than 35,000 acres located at the foot of the San Gorgonio and San Jacinto Mountains. The prehistoric populations of Kern, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino counties included the Tachi-Yokuts, the Ventureños, the Gabrieleños, the Fernandeños, the Serranos, the Vanyumes, the Mohaves, and the Chemehuevis. Resources may currently be known, but there is potential for many others to be unknown and undiscovered. Other cultural resources in the area may include buildings and structures, historic landscapes, archaeological sites, artifacts, and documents that collectively represent California's rich and diverse cultural history.

4.5.2 Thresholds

Significant Historical Resources under CEQA Guidelines. In completing an analysis of a project under CEQA, it must first be determined if the project site possesses a historical resource. A site may qualify as a historical resource if it falls within at least one of four categories listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a). The four categories are:

1. A resource listed in, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (PRC Section 5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4850 et seq.).
2. A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in Section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1 (g) of the Public Resources Code, shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.
3. Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California may be

considered to be an historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (PRC SS5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4852) including the following:

a) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
b) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
c) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction; represents the work of an important creative individual; or possesses high artistic values; or
d) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

4. The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, not included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the PRC), or identified in an historical resources survey (meeting the criteria in section 5024.1(g) of the PRC) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be an historical resource as defined in Pub. Resources Code sections 5020.1(j) or 5024.1.

A lead agency must consider a resource that has been listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register (Category 1) as a historical resource for CEQA purposes. In general, a resource that meets any of the other three criteria listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) is also considered to be a historical resource unless "the preponderance of evidence demonstrates" that the resource is not historically or culturally significant.

4.5.3 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

c) Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

a-c) No Impact. The Project would not require nor induce any new surface disturbing activities such as construction or any other earthmoving activities. Although some of the existing conveyance facilities used for the water transfer may be considered a historical resource, its historic use would continue to be used with the same purpose and no alterations would be required as part of the Project. Therefore, substantial adverse changes in the significance of historical or archeological resources as defined in CEQA Guidelines in Section 15064.5 would not occur as a result of the Project. Additionally, the Project would have no impact on the disturbance of any human remains. As such, there would be no impact to cultural resources.

4.6 ENERGY

Table 4-9: Energy Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.6.1 Baseline Conditions

Southern California Gas (SoCalGas) and Southern California Edison Company (SCE) are the predominant providers of natural gas and electricity to the Project areas. SCE obtains its power through hydroelectric, natural gas, and eligible renewable sources. Energy associated with the Project is used for the operation of automated gates, screens, various pumps to move water, treatment plants, and office buildings.

4.6.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Less than Significant Impact. As a result of the Project, there would be a net increase in energy consumption of 2.4 GWh per year, assuming actual deliveries of 3,000 AFY per year.[13] The DWR's CAP states that individual projects that add 15 GWh per year of additional load could negatively affect DWR's ability to achieve GHG emission reduction goals. As the Project does not add 15GWh per year of additional load, it can be determined that the Project would not result in a significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. The additional water would require increased energy for pumping purposes, but the increase would not be significant. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

No Impact. The movement of water through SWP facilities, which currently takes place, would continue to be consistent with state and local plans regulating renewable energy and energy efficiency. Implementation of the Project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. There would be no impact.

[13] This is based on the calculated average of SWP allocations between 2015 and 2022. Over this span, the average annual allocation was set at 30%.

4.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Table 4-10: Geology and Soils Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	☐	☐	☐	☒
i. 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? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv. Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994) creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.7.1 Baseline Conditions

Geology and Soils

The Project is located in portions of Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. Part of the Project is south of the San Bernardino Mountains, within the San Jacinto Mountains of the Peninsular Ranges geomorphic province of California. The region surrounding the City is a geologically complex area, in part due to movement along faults such as the San Andreas Fault, Banning Fault, and San Gorgonio

Fault.[14] The Project is also located in proximity to the Transverse Ranges in Los Angeles County, and the Southern Coast and Sierra Nevada Ranges in Kern County.

Faults and Seismicity

The greatest potential for seismic activity in the Project area is posed by the San Andreas Fault. The San Andreas Fault marks the junction between the North American and Pacific Plates. The fault is 1300 km long, extends to at least 25 km in depth, and has a northwest-southeast trend. It is classified as a right lateral (dextral) strike-slip fault. Other faults in the region are the San Jacinto Fault, the Banning Fault, the San Gorgonio Pass Fault, the Cherry Valley Fault, and the Beaumont Plain Fault.

Liquefaction

Liquefaction takes place when loosely packed, water-logged sediments at or near the ground surface lose their strength in response to strong ground shaking. Liquefaction occurring beneath buildings and other structures can cause major damage during earthquakes. According to the California Department of Conservation's Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation map, no portions of the Project are located in areas susceptible to liquefaction.[15]

Land Subsidence

Subsidence occurs when a large land area settles due to over-saturation or extensive withdrawal of ground water, oil, or natural gas. These areas are typically composed of open-textured soils, high in silt or clay content, which become saturated. There are various locations throughout the span of the Project, specifically in Kern County, which are affected by land subsidence.[16]

4.7.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i. 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? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

ii. Strong seismic ground shaking

iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

iv. Landslides?

a-i - a-iv) No Impact. The Project would not require any construction or alterations to existing facilities/structures. Therefore, there would be no direct or indirect effects resulting in loss, injury, or death as a result of the Project. There would be no impact.

b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

[14] (Albert A. Webb Associates 2020)
[15] (California Department of Conservation 2021)
[16] (United States Geological Survey Science Explorer 2020)

c) Would the project 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?

d) Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

e) Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

b-e) No Impact. The Project would not involve new construction or any ground disturbing activities and is limited to the operation of existing conveyance facilities. Therefore, the Project would have no impacts related to soil erosion, geologic hazards, or soil stability.

f) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature?

No Impact. The Project would not involve any new construction or ground disturbance; therefore, there would not be potential to uncover any historical, paleontological, or cultural resources. There would be no impact.

4.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Table 4-11: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.8.1 Baseline Conditions

Greenhouse Gases

GHGs are gases that absorb and emit radiation within the thermal infrared range, trapping heat in the earth's atmosphere. There are no "attainment" concentration standards established by the Federal or State government for greenhouse gases. In fact, GHGs are not generally thought of as traditional air pollutants because greenhouse gases, and their impacts, are global in nature, while air pollutants affect the health of people and other living things at ground level in the general region of their release to the atmosphere. Some GHGs naturally and are emitted into the atmosphere through both natural processes and human activities. Other GHGs are created and emitted solely through human activities. The principal greenhouse gases that enter the atmosphere because of human activities are carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), and fluorinated carbons.

DWR's Climate Action Plan Phase 1: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan

In 1990, DWR GHG emissions were nearly 3.5 million metric tons, which is roughly equivalent to the number of emissions produced by 700,000 passenger cars. Typically, most of DWR's emissions are associated with energy purchased to move water through the SWP, which DWR owns, operates, and maintains. The DWR Climate Action Plan Phase 1: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan (GGERP)[17] covers, among other components, operation of the SWP, which involves GHG emissions associated with the electricity that is used to operate the SWP. GHG emissions are generated by the SGPWA as a result of using pumps to move water throughout the existing conveyance facilities. For the past four years, SGPWA has been receiving Ventura's SWP allocations via one year water transfer agreements.

4.8.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

[17] The GGERP can be found here: Climate Action Plan Phase 1: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan Update 2020 (ca.gov).

b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

a and b) No Impact. The Project will use SWP facilities to convey the transferred SWP water. The energy associated with the operation of these facilities will likely result in the emission of GHGs. In 2012, DWR developed the GGERP as the first phase of its Climate Action Plan to guide decision making related to DWR's energy use and GHG emissions. The primary purpose of the GGERP is to monitor and develop measures to reduce GHG emissions related to DWR's activities including operation of the SWP, typical construction, maintenance, and general business practices. DWR also adopted the Initial Study/Negative Declaration prepared for the GGERP in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines review and public process. In 2020, after preparing an Addendum to the 2012 Initial Study/Negative Declaration, DWR approved Update 2020 to the GGERP to update its strategies for further GHG reductions consistent with the latest legislative and regulatory goals and policies.

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15183.5, DWR's GGERP can be used to streamline cumulative GHG impacts analyses in later project-specific environmental documents. As part of the analysis provided in the GGERP, DWR has fully described and analyzed the potential for GHG emissions from operations associated with water transfers and other water wheeling activities using SWP facilities and has committed to overall near-term and long-term GHG emissions reductions that will ensure that no significant environmental impact will occur as a result of such emissions. Based on the analysis provided in the DWR GGERP, GHG emissions associated with the movement of water through the SWP will not constitute a cumulatively considerable contribution to atmospheric levels of GHG emissions and are therefore less than significant.

4.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Table 4-12 Hazards and Hazardous Materials Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) 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 it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.9.1 Baseline Conditions

Hazardous Materials

There are a number of federal and State databases that provide information regarding facilities or sites identified as meeting the Cortese List requirements. These databases provide the past and present businesses that have had or are currently experiencing a hazardous material release within the Counties. These include Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System, GeoTracker, EnviroStor, the Toxic Release Inventory, and the List of Active Cease and Desist Orders and Cleanup and Abatement Orders. According to GeoTracker and EnviroStor, there are many facilities and/or

sites throughout Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties that have been identified as meeting the Cortese List requirements.[18]

Airports

There are several airports throughout Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties.

- Kern County: There are 27 airports in Kern County, California.[19]
- Los Angeles: There are 49 airports in Los Angeles County, California.[20]
- Riverside: There are 16 airports in Riverside County, California.[21]
- San Bernardino: There are 34 airports in Kern County, California.[22]

Emergency Response Plans

Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties all have Emergency Response and/or Emergency Operations and/or Emergency Preparedness Plans. Said plans outline standard localized protocol in the instance of an emergency.

Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors are people or other organisms that may have a significantly increased sensitivity or exposure to contaminants by virtue of their age and health (e.g., schools, day care centers, hospitals, nursing homes), status (e.g., sensitive or endangered species), proximity to the contamination, dwelling construction (e.g., basement), or the facilities they use (e.g., water supply well). The location of sensitive receptors must be identified in order to evaluate the potential impact of the contamination on public health and the environment. Due to the Project's large area coverage, it can be assumed that various sensitive receptors exist in the Project's vicinity.

4.9.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

No Impact. The Project would not involve the transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials. As such, there would be no impact to the public or the environment.

b) Would the project 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?

No Impact. The Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment as the Project would not discharge hazardous materials into the environment. As such, there would be no impact to the environment.

[18] (State of California 2020); (California Department of Toxic Substances Control 2020)
[19] (County Office 2022)
[20] (County Office 2022)
[21] (County Office 2022)
[22] (County Office 2022)

c) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No Impact. The Project would not include activities that would emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous materials or substances. As such, there would be no impact of hazardous emissions, materials, or substances, to any schools along the existing Project path.

d) Would the project 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 it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No Impact. As the Project would not include any construction or placement of habitable structures, there is nothing applicable to any hazardous materials with the Project. Therefore, there would be no impact to the public or the environment.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?

No Impact. No new construction or alterations of the existing facilities are planned as part of the Project. Therefore, the Project area would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area related to public airport activities. There would be no impact from safety hazards to people residing or working in the area.

f) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No Impact. The Project would utilize existing conveyance facilities and involves no construction activities. It would not interfere with the emergency response and evacuation procedures outlined in any of the surrounding cities or counties. There would be no impact.

g) Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

No Impact. The Project consists of moving water within existing conveyance facilities. No construction would occur. As such, the Project would not directly or indirectly expose people or structures, to wildland fire risks.

4.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Table 4-13: Hydrology and Water Quality Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	☐	☐	☐	☒
i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii. 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; or	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv. impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.10.1 Baseline Conditions

Like most of California, the San Joaquin Valley experiences a Mediterranean climate. Warm, dry summers are followed by cool, moist winters. Summer temperatures often reach above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, and the humidity is generally low. Winter temperatures are often below 60 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and rarely exceed 70 degrees. On average, the San Joaquin Valley receive approximately 12-15 inches of precipitation in the form of rainfall yearly, most of which occurs between October and March.

Los Angeles County has a milder climate with an average summer high of 84 degrees Fahrenheit and an average winter low of 46 degrees Fahrenheit. The County receives about 16 inches of rain per year and has approximately 283 sunny days.

Riverside County experiences a semi-arid climate with hot, dry summers and mild, relatively wet winters. Summer temperatures break 90 degrees Fahrenheit and winter averages 55 degrees Fahrenheit. The County receives about 9 inches of rain annually.

San Bernardino County experiences hot and arid summers and the winters are cool. Over the course of the year, the temperature typically varies from 42°F to 96°F and is rarely below 35 degrees Fahrenheit or above 104 degrees Fahrenheit. The County receives about 13 inches of rain annually.

The SWP is a water storage and delivery system of reservoirs, aqueducts, power plants and pumping plants extending more than 700 miles—two-thirds the length of California. Planned, constructed, and operated by the DWR, the SWP is the nation's largest state-built, multi-purpose, user-financed water project. It supplies water to more than 27 million people in northern California, the Bay Area, the San Joaquin Valley, the Central Coast and southern California. SWP water also irrigates about 750,000 acres of farmland, mainly in the San Joaquin Valley.

The primary purpose of the SWP is water supply. SWP was designed to deliver nearly 4.2 million acre-feet of water per year, although the current reliability annually averages about 2.1 million AF. Water is received by 29 long-term SWP Contractors, including VCWPD and SGPWA, who distribute it to farms, homes, and industry. Water supply depends on rainfall, snowpack, runoff, water in storage facilities, and pumping capacity from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, as well as operational constraints for fish and wildlife protection, water quality, and environmental and legal restrictions.

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was enacted in 2014 to provide for the management of groundwater resources in California, particularly in groundwater basins that are adjudicated. Under SGMA, new local agencies, known as Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs), were given authority to regulate groundwater subject to stakeholder input. GSAs are mandated to develop a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for approval by the DWR.

The goals of SGMA are to:

- Develop regulations to revise groundwater basin boundaries;
- Adopt regulations for evaluating and implementing GSPs;
- Identify basins subject to critical conditions and overdraft;
- Identify water available for groundwater replenishment; and
- Publish best management practices for the sustainable management of groundwater.

Groundwater users are required to report their water use, which may be unwelcomed by some water users. A balancing act is at play between data collection, groundwater management and the burden of providing data to local and state governments.

SGPWA is a part of four GSAs: The San Timoteo Subbasin GSA, the Yucaipa Basin GSA, the San Gorgonio Pass Subbasin GSA, the Verbenia GSA, and the Desert Water GSA. The Yucaipa Basin GSA prepared its own GSP. The San Gorgonio Pass Subbasin GSA, Verbenia GSA, and the Desert Water Agency GSA jointly prepared a GSP.

Ventura is a part of two GSAs. The Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA), which is the GSA for the Oxnard Plain Groundwater Basin and the Mound Basin Groundwater GSA (MBGSA). They each have developed their own GSP.

4.10.2 **Impact Analysis**

a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

No Impact. The Project consists of moving water through existing conveyance facilities and would not involve any new construction, earthmoving activities or change in land use. The Project would not include the transfer of any groundwater. Although groundwater would not be transferred, SGPWA would recharge the transferred Table A water within its service area which is located in Riverside County and a small portion of San Bernardino County, as they currently do with their existing contracted Table A Water. Table A water is monitored for its water quality, maintaining regulatory standards.[23] Therefore, the Project would not violate any water or groundwater quality standards, nor would it impact waste discharge requirements. As such, there would be no impact.

b) Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

No Impact. The City of Ventura does not currently have the capability to receive its SWP allocation, so transferring it to SGPWA would not decrease groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. Once the City of Ventura has the capability to receive SWP water, it would receive the first 2,000 AF and continue to transfer the remaining 8,000 AF to SGPWA. The City of Ventura's UWMP assumes that groundwater supplies will be equal or less than the allocations from the Groundwater Sustainability Plans for the three groundwater basins it extracts from and assumes that it will not receive more than 2,000 AF of SWP water in a given year. The UWMP concluded that the City of Ventura's demands will not exceed its supplies (even in a multi-year drought) through the planning period of 2045. There would be no impact.

c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:

i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;

ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;

iii. 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; or

iv. impede or redirect flood flows?

c-i – civ) No Impact. Grading or construction activities would not be part of the Project. Therefore, drainage patterns would not be altered and there would be no surface runoff adding sources of pollutants or impediments of water flows as a result of transferring water through existing waterways. As such, there would be no impact.

d) Would the project in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundations?

No Impact. The Project would use existing conveyance facilities and no new construction would occur. As such, there would be no impacts due to flood hazards, tsunamis or seiche zones.

[23] (California Department of Water Resources 2022)

e) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

No Impact. The Project would assist with water delivery during drought years to help with reducing the need for excessive groundwater reliance in the SGPWA service area. As mentioned above in impact statement "b", Ventura does not currently have the capability to receive its SWP allocation and SGPWA would utilize the transferred water to recharge the underlying basin. Once the City of Ventura has the capability to receive SWP water, it will receive the first 2,000 AF. As such, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plans, and there would be no impacts.

4.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

Table 4-14: Land Use and Planning Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.11.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project spans four counties: Kern County, Los Angeles County, Riverside County, and San Bernardino County. Each county has its own General Plan, which serves as a blueprint for the future, prescribing policy goals and objectives to shape and guide the physical development of the county. In the State of California, all counties (including cities) are required to develop a General Plan. A General Plan is a comprehensive policy document that informs future land use decisions.

4.11.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project physically divide an established community?

b) Would the project cause a significant environmental conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

a and b) No Impact. The Project would utilize existing conveyance facilities and would not include new construction. The Project would be in conformance with all land use policies and general plans. There would be no impact.

4.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

Table 4-15: Mineral Resources Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.12.1 Baseline Conditions

There are multiple mining and mineral extraction facilities and mining claims in Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. The California Department of Conservation Division of Mine Reclamation compiles data on the current status of mines and the commodities produced. The California Geological Survey produces Mineral Land Classification studies that identify areas with potentially important mineral resources that should be considered in local and regional planning.

4.12.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact. The Project would not result in significant impacts associated with the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state, considering there would be no construction or earthmoving activities associated with implementation. There would be no impact.

b) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

No Impact. The Project is intended to use existing conveyance facilities to transport water. It would not alter any existing land uses. Therefore, the Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. There would be no impact.

4.13 NOISE

Table 4-16: Noise Impacts

Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.13.1 Baseline Conditions

Ambient noise levels in Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties vary widely and primarily come from noise generators such as major roads, airports, and rail lines. Along the canals, the sound of the movement of water and pumping equipment are sources of noise. These noise levels are at its peak during times of full SWP allocation.

4.13.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

No Impact. The Project would not result in generation of a temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance or any other applicable standards. No physical change in the environment would result from the implementation of this Project. Without ground disturbance or construction, there would be no potential for the Project to generate excessive levels of noise. Therefore, there would be no impact.

b) Would the project result in generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?

No Impact. The Project would not result in generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels. No physical change in the environment would result from the implementation of this Project. Without ground disturbance or construction, there would be no potential for the Project to generate vibration or noise. Therefore, there would be no impact.

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No Impact. The Project would use existing conveyance facilities and would not involve the construction of new structures where people would reside or work. There would be no impact.

4.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Table 4-17: Population and Housing Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for Sample, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.14.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project spans Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. According to the United States Census Bureau, as of July 2021, Kern County, Los Angeles County, Riverside County and San Bernardino County have an estimated population of 917,673, 9,829,544, 2,458,395, and 2,194,710, respectively.[24]

4.14.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

No Impact. The Project would utilize existing conveyance facilities and would not propose any new construction or earthmoving activities. The Project would provide a flexible supplemental water supply to help SGPWA meet long-term reliability goals when coupled with other existing and planned future water supplies, while also offsetting Ventura's SWP costs.

The water proposed to be transferred to SGPWA will contribute to its robust water supply portfolio that is designed to increase regional self-reliance and reduce reliance on the Delta.[25] As described in SGPWA's 2020 UWMP, the County of Riverside's regional growth and economic trends project the population within the SGPWA's service area will continue to expand, requiring SGPWA to diligently secure reliable water supplies that can flexibly meet long-term water demand forecasts.

The proposed transfer provides one flexible source to help improve reliability when its other water sources designed to meet long-term growth needs are constrained from time-to-time. The SGPWA's 2020 UWMP describes the portfolio of these existing and planned future water supplies, their

[24] (United States Census Bureau 2021); (United States Census Bureau 2021); (United States Census Bureau 2021); (United States Census Bureau 2021)

[25] SGPWA and the retail water suppliers are actively increasing regional self-reliance consistent with Delta Plan Policy WR P1 – Reduce Reliance on the Delta Through Improved Regional Water Self-Reliance as detailed in SGPWA's 2020 UWMP.

management, and regional efforts to reduce per-capita demand.[26] The supply portfolio described in the 2020 UWMP provides the supporting resources to meet the projected growth.

The proposed transfer adds one more source to further enhance flexibility to help SGPWA achieve its reliability objectives and does not add to growth already anticipated and addressed by SGPWA. There would be no impact.

Furthermore, current per-capita water use rates have been significantly decreasing through combined water conservation efforts of both the SGPWA and local retail water suppliers. These decreases are anticipated to continue into the future, with the forecast future population requiring less water than absent such conservation actions. These decreases in per-capita water use are detailed in Appendix A of SGPWA's 2020 UWMP and are a critical component of SGPWA's efforts to reduce Delta reliance. There would be no impact.

b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. The Project involves the transfer of water between Ventura and SGPWA. The water conveyance facilities that would be utilized to initiate the transfer is an existing active system. The water transferred would improve the reliability of supplies for benefit of the current population. Project elements would not involve the displacement of housing or people, and no new housing would be constructed as part of the Project. There would be no impact.

[26] See SGPWA's 2020 UWMP at https://wuedata.water.ca.gov/uwmp_plans.asp?cmd=2020

4.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

Table 4-18: Public Services

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	☐	☐	☐	☒
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.15.1 Baseline Conditions

Kern County, Los Angeles County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County, and the incorporated cities within SGPWA's service area maintain public services for their respective jurisdictions and provide fire and police protection, as well as schools, parks and other public facilities and services.

4.15.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

i. Fire Protection:

ii. Police Protection:

iii. Schools:

iv. Parks:

v. Other public facilities:

No Impact. The Project would not include any activities that would increase demand for public services. The primary purpose of the Project is to transfer water to SGPWA so that they can meet their existing demand, while offsetting Ventura's SWP costs. The Project would utilize existing conveyance facilities to transfer the water. There would be no impact.

4.16 RECREATION

Table 4-19: Recreation Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.16.1 Baseline Conditions

Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino Counties offer a variety of recreational opportunities through their associated Parks and Recreation Departments and nearby State and federal lands. There may be recreational areas for the public to utilize near the Project such as parks, reservoirs, campsites and hiking trails.

4.16.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project 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?

No Impact. The Project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that any physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. No physical change in the environment would result from this Project. The Project would not result in either an influx of population (e.g., by creation of housing or creation of jobs) or relocation of persons from elsewhere into the Project area. As such, there would be no impact.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No Impact. The Project would not include recreational facilities. As the Project would not result in direct or indirect population growth, the construction of new, or the expansion of existing recreational facilities, would not be necessary. There would be no impact.

4.17 TRANSPORTATION

Table 4-20: Transportation Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)??	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.17.1 Baseline Conditions

Like other California counties, the primary form of transportation in Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties is through vehicular travel. All counties are served by a large network of highways, expressways, and freeways. Each county also has public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle lanes, and trails.

4.17.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project conflict with a plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 subdivision (b)?

No Impact. There would be no population growth associated with the Project, nor would implementation of the Project result in an increase of traffic volume or use of transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities in the Project area. There would be no effects regarding vehicle miles traveled or any other items listed under CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 subdivision (b). Therefore, implementation of the Project would not increase vehicle miles traveled in the Project area or conflict with a plan, ordinance, or policy that pertains to the circulation system. There would be no impact.

c) Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No Impact. No roadway design features are associated with this Project and there would be no change in the existing land use that could result in an incompatible use. There would be no impact.

d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?

No Impact. No roads would be modified as a result of this Project. Therefore, there would be no impact to any emergency access.

4.18 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Table 4-21: Tribal Cultural Resources Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:	☐	☐	☐	☒
i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in the local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.18.1 Baseline Conditions

The prehistoric population of the SGPWA service area includes the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. The Morongo Band of Mission Indians are a mixture of several different small groups of California Indians, including the Serrano, Cahuilla, and Cupeno. The territories occupied by these tribes contain various resources that are protected today. The Morongo Indian Reservation spans more than 35,000 acres located at the foot of the San Gorgonio and San Jacinto Mountains. The prehistoric populations of Kern, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino counties included the Tachi-Yokuts, the Ventureños, the Gabrieleños, the Fernandeños, the Serranos, the Vanyumes, the Mohaves, and the Chemehuevis. Resources may currently be known, but there is potential for many others to be unknown and undiscovered.

Native American Outreach

Witten correspondence was sent to the Morongo Band of Mission Indians via certified mail on August 1, 2022. The Tribe was sent a description of Project activities as well as a map of the conveyance area between SGPWA and Ventura via the SWP. SGPWA has not received written correspondence from any tribe pursuant to PRC 21080.3.1 AB 52 requesting notification of the proposed Project.

4.18.2 Applicable Regulations

Federal

There are no federal regulations, plans, programs, or guidelines associated with tribal cultural resources that are applicable to the Project.

State

Assembly Bill 52

The Project is subject to Native American consultation pursuant to California PRC Section 21080.3 (AB 52). Under AB 52, the lead agency, within 14 days of determining that an application is complete, must notify any Native American Tribe that has previously requested such notification about the Project and inquire whether the Tribe wishes to initiate formal consultation. Tribes have 30 days from receipt of notification to request formal consultation. The lead agency then has 30 days to initiate the consultation, which then continues until the parties come to an agreement regarding necessary mitigation or agree that no mitigation is needed, or one or both parties determine that negotiation occurred in good faith, but no agreement will be made.

Per the statute, tribal consultation is required only with those tribes that formally request consultation in writing.

AB 52 creates a new category of resources called tribal cultural resources. PRC Section 21074(a) defines tribal cultural resources as:

> "Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes (geographically defined in terms of the size and scope), sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
>
> a) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; and/or
> b) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1; and/or
> c) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe."

Because criteria a) and b) also meet the definition of a historical resource under CEQA, a tribal cultural resource may also require additional consideration as a historical resource. Tribal cultural resources may or may not exhibit archaeological, cultural, or physical indicators.

PRC Section 21073 defines California Native American tribes as "a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC for the purposes of Chapter 905 of the Statutes of 2004." This includes federally and non-federally recognized tribes.

4.18.3 Impact Assessment

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that

is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

i. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in the local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or

No Impact. SGPWA has not received any letters from a California Native American tribe pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1 (AB 52) requesting notification of the proposed Project.

Additionally, the Morongo Band of Mission Indians was sent written correspondence via certified mail, notifying them of the water transfer action. They were also provided with a map of the SWP conveyance system that would be utilized for the transfer and were invited to consult on the Project. SGPWA has not received correspondence from the Morongo Tribe.

No construction, vegetation removal, or alteration of existing landmarks or buildings would occur as a result of the Project. There would be no impact.

ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

No Impact. As stated above, there would be no ground disturbance or construction activities that would have the potential to disturb any tribal cultural resources. As such, there would be no impact to tribal cultural resources.

4.19 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Table 4-22: Utilities and Service Systems Impacts

Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.19.1 Baseline Conditions

The SGPWA is a water retailer that provides water supplies to agencies within its service area such as Calimesa, Beaumont, Banning, and Cabazon. Ventura provides water and wastewater services for municipal uses to residents within its jurisdiction. SoCalGas is the predominant provider of natural gas to the Project area and SCE is the predominant provider of electricity.

Each county provides other utility services to their respective regions such as wastewater and solid waste management.

4.19.2 Impact Analysis

a) Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

No Impact. The Project would not involve the relocation or construction of any new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities. Conveyance of the water would occur through existing conveyance facilities. There would be no impact.

b) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

No Impact. No new or expanded water entitlements or construction would be required for the Project. Water transferred as part of the Project would be SWP Table A water that has been contractually allocated to VCWPD, on behalf of Ventura. This water would then be transferred to SGPWA as part of the Project. Ventura's current water supply, without SWP water, is sufficient to meet local demands. Once the Interconnection Project is built and Ventura does have a physical connection to SWP facilities, Ventura's water supply will be augmented, providing an even more reliable source. There would be no impact.

c) Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

No Impact. The Project would not generate additional wastewater. There would be no impact.

d) Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

e) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

d and e) No Impact. The Project would not generate solid waste. Therefore, there would be no impact.

4.20 WILDFIRE

Table 4-23: Wildfire Impacts

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrollable spread of wildfire?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.20.1 Baseline Conditions

The Project spans four counties: Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. Wildfire is a perennial and growing threat throughout California. Years of fire suppression strategy have resulted in high fuel loads, creating conditions for more destructive wildfires. Each County maintains their own wildfire protection plan and wildfire preparedness protocol. Each plan can be found by accessing the individual county's website.

4.20.2 Impact Analysis

a) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

b) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

c) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

d) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

a-d) No Impact. Water would be transferred through existing conveyance facilities as a result of the Project. The Project would not involve construction or other activities that would create a potential fire hazard. Therefore, there would be no impacts.

4.21 CEQA MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Table 4-24: CEQA Mandatory Findings of Significance

Does the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have the potential to substantially 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, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	☒

4.21.1 Statement of Findings

a) Does the project have the potential to substantially 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, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

No Impact. The analysis conducted in this IS concludes that implementation of the Project would not have a significant impact on the environment. As evaluated in Section 4.4 Biological Resources, there would be no significant impacts to Biological Resources as a result of the Project. Therefore, the Project would not substantially 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 reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species. Additionally, as evaluated in Section 4.5 Cultural Resources, the Project would not impact resources of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

No Impact. The assessment of potential cumulative impacts associated with the Project considers reasonably foreseeable future increased water use by water rights holders, the SWP, and system-wide operations. Cumulative impacts also include the projected water use by agencies holding contracts for water supplies from the SWP system. The water transfer is a long-term agreement between Ventura and SGPWA to provide appropriate future water supplies within SGPWA's district boundaries. As previously discussed in Chapter 2 Project Description, the Districts' past beneficial use and determined future water supplies were discussed, providing that the water transfer has mutual benefits. Additionally, the transfer would divert, store, and convey water consistent with applicable regulations and contractual requirements. Water transfers can provide benefits by increasing beneficial use of existing supplies, additional flexibility in drought conditions, reduction of capacity and operation costs, and can better match waters of different quality with different water demands. Water transfers routinely occur throughout the State, utilizing existing water conveyance facilities, and without causing any ground disturbing activities. These districts often enter into multiple water transfer contracts. Ventura and SGPWA have previously engaged in short term transfers of SWP water supplies for the last four years in an effort to buffer against the variability of year-to-year allocations.

The Project would result in the transfer of up to 10,000 AFY of Ventura's annual Table A allocation to SGPWA in amounts that would vary based on existing SWP operational limitations of hydrology and regulatory compliance. The water proposed to be transferred to SGPWA would assist the SGPWA's goal by balancing and adding resilience to the Agency's portfolio, and to help manage groundwater resources. Implementation of the Project would not include the construction of any new facilities, modification of existing facilities or any water supply conveyance or treatment facilities in Ventura or SGPWA's service areas, thereby not creating impacts upon surface water, vegetation, and biological resources. The Project would not result in changes to the overall operations of the SWP, Ventura, or SGPWA. There would be no impact.

c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

No Impact. The City of Ventura does not currently have the capability to receive its SWP allocation, so transferring it to SGPWA would not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Once the City of Ventura has the capability to receive SWP water, it would receive the first 2,000 AF. Transferring the remainder of the annual allocation to SGPWA would not cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The City of Ventura's UWMP assumes that it will not receive more than 2,000 AF of SWP water in a given year. The UWMP concluded that the City of Ventura's demands will not exceed its supplies (even in a multi-year drought) through the planning period of 2045. Additionally, the Project does not include any construction or earthmoving activities that could result in a substantial effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly. There would be no impact.

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