Appendix H
Evans Creek Site Environmental Assessment

EVANS CREEK SITE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

PREPARED FOR:

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AB	Assembly Bill
AQMP	air quality management plan
Basin	South Coast Air Basin
BMP	best management practice
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CH_4	methane
CO_2	carbon dioxide
dB	decibel
DEIR	Draft Environmental Impact Report
DPM	diesel particulate matter
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
GHG	greenhouse gases
N_2O	nitrous oxide
PM	particulate matter
PM_{10}	particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
RPU	Riverside Public Utilities Department
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
Scoping Plan	Climate Change Scoping Plan
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
Upper SAR HCP	Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Valley District	San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District
Western	Western Municipal Water District
WRCMSHCP	Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

Chapter 1
Environmental Screening Analysis Checklist

1.	**Project Title:**	Evans Creek Tributaries Restoration Project Improvements
2.	**Lead Agency Name and Address:**	San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District 380 East Vanderbilt Way San Bernardino, CA 92408
3.	**Contact Person and Phone Number:**	Heather Dyer, Water Resources Project Manager Email: comments@sbvmwd.com
4.	**Project Location:**	Evans Creek is within the city of Riverside as shown in Figure 1.
5.	**Project Sponsor's Name and Address:**	San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District 380 East Vanderbilt Way San Bernardino, CA 92408
6.	**General Plan Designation:**	Open Space/Natural Resources
7.	**Zoning:**	PF (Public Facilities)

8. Description of Project:

In addition to the four restoration sites evaluated in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), an additional site, Evans Creek, was considered as an alternative for implementation of greater restoration activities in addition to the four sites evaluated as the proposed project in the DEIR, as described further below. The additional restoration activity proposed at the Evans Creek site is evaluated in the DEIR as Alternative B.

The Proposition 84 grant program provides funding to construct the four sites (Old Ranch Creek, Anza Creek, Hole Creek, and Hidden Valley Creek) identified by the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program. The restoration work proposed at Evans Creek was not included in the Proposition 84 grant application, as there was not sufficient funding for this additional site. This site was not included in the evaluation of the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program as part of the proposed project evaluated under the DEIR, but was evaluated in the DEIR as Alternative B. Evans Creek is being evaluated in this environmental screening analysis as an additional restoration site that could be restored in addition to the four sites evaluated as the proposed project in the DEIR. This environmental screening analysis informs the alternatives analysis in the DEIR and provides a comparative analysis of the environmental impacts associated with Alternative B as compared to the proposed project evaluated in the DEIR.

The Evans Creek site burned in 2017 and now provides an immediate opportunity for restoration enhancement. Where Evans Creek reaches the Santa Ana River levee, it flows through two parallel 48-inch reinforced concrete circular barrels with concrete aprons and wingwalls. The levee has a depressed spillway just north and about 11 feet higher than the culvert inverts to allow conveyance of high flows over the levee. A grouted rock drop structure connects the downstream concrete apron with the earthen channel in the Santa Ana River floodway. The Santa Ana River's low-flow channel is presently located on the north side of the floodway; thus, the outfall from the Evans Creek does not connect directly with the mainstem Santa Ana River. Instead, it flows down a formerly active channel of the Santa Ana River in a southwesterly direction paralleling the levee.

The bed elevation of the earthen channel downstream of the drop structure is 7 feet higher than the concrete invert apron of the culvert 180 feet upstream. The culvert is not passable by Santa Ana sucker under most flow conditions because of insufficient depths and excessive velocities.

Improvements at Evans Creek would include a new groundwater well and pump, new riparian corridor, new bank, channel bed complexity and rock and woody structures, fish passage, new channel, and recreational and educational amenities for Fairmount Park. The following key enhancement features are noted for the Evans Creek site, as shown on **Figure 1.**

1. The existing channel at Evans Creek does not have a reliable source of water from Evans Lake. If the lake elevation drops below the elevation of the sluice box at Dexter Drive, or the sluice box is not functioning correctly, little to no water spills from the lake to Evans Creek. A new groundwater well and pump would be constructed at the upstream extent of the channel near Dexter Drive to provide water. The exact capacity of the new pump has not yet been determined but the plan is for a minimum flow of 200 gallons per minute, which is 0.45 cubic foot per second. Minimum flows of 2 cubic feet per second may be required for limited durations to provide the flow depths necessary for sucker passage based on the preliminary fish passage designs. Future studies would need to be conducted to determine the achievable flow rate from the new pump. Ideally, the new pump would have the ability to vary flow rates so that pulses of higher flows can be periodically routed down the channel to flush fine sediment accumulations on gravel substrate.
2. A new native riparian corridor would be created in which nonnative plants would be removed and replaced with native vegetation plantings. The riparian corridor would be approximately 100 feet wide (50 feet on either side of the channel), for a total of 8.5 acres. The actual width of the corridor could be changed in future designs as additional details are provided on actual mitigation needs.
3. Over 1,000 feet of new bank would be constructed on the channel's left bank to confine water to the enhanced channel and increase flow depths and velocities rather than allowing it to spread out into relatively flat, depressional areas to the south.
4. Channel bed complexity would be created by adding pools and riffles in channel reaches that would have sufficient flow velocities to maintain suitable coarse substrate for sucker habitat. Gravel would be added to new riffle sections that would have sufficient flow velocities to maintain suitable coarse substrate for Santa Ana sucker habitat.
5. Rock and woody material structures would be added that would create and sustain habitat complexity.
6. A fish passage would be added at the barrier created by the culvert under the Santa Ana River levee to allow Santa Ana sucker to migrate from the Santa Ana River into the enhanced Evans Creek channel to access additional habitat and find refugia from changing hydrologic conditions in the mainstem.
7. The existing channel in the mainstem Santa Ana River that heads south along the levee and under the Mission Boulevard bridge would be plugged with rock and wood and a new 280-foot-long channel would be excavated through a sediment berm in order to make a continuous channel connection between Evans Creek and the Santa Ana River.
8. In coordination with the City of Riverside Parks and Recreation Department, recreational and educational amenities would be created at the site to enhance public use of Fairmount Park. Refer to **Figure 2** proposed conceptual improvements that would be considered at the site and adjacent park.
9. Restoration and native vegetation enhancement would occur where vegetation burned in the 2017 fire through similar construction and operational activities as those of the proposed Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program.

Creation of fish passage at the barrier created by the culvert under the Santa Ana River levee would allow Santa Ana sucker to migrate from the Santa Ana River into the enhanced Evans Creek to access additional habitat and find refugia from changing hydrologic conditions in the mainstem. Full details of the preliminary fish passage designs are contained in a report prepared by Northwest Hydraulic Consultants. In summary, two concept designs were developed to provide upstream passage for adults and potentially juvenile Santa Ana sucker.

- **Option 1**: A vertical slot or orifice fishway downstream of the culvert outlet apron that would provide sufficient backwater to allow passage through the north culvert barrel.
- **Option 2**: A roughened channel (rock ramp) fishway downstream of the culvert outlet that would create backwater to the pipe outlet with baffles in the south culvert barrel to provide passage.

Completely replacing the existing culverts was also considered but is considered less feasible due to the logistics of cutting or tunneling through the flood control levee and the potential for blockage with changes in the Santa Ana River bed elevations. Conceptually, this option would replace the existing culverts at a lower elevation, such that they would connect with the invert elevation of the channel in the Santa Ana River bed. The culverts could have a natural bottom by countersinking oversized barrels, and a roughened channel fish passage could be constructed upstream of the culvert inlet to connect to the invert elevation of the channel upstream. Alternatively (depending on channel morphology and slope upstream), the upstream channel might be allowed to degrade 2 to 3 feet to match the new culvert elevation.

The typical cross-section developed for the Evans Creek site shows several proposed enhancements to the creek. Under the existing condition, the site is nearly all nonnative plants and the channel is shallow, poorly defined, and overgrown with vegetation in many areas. The post-project condition cross-section shows how a new bank would be constructed to confine water to the enhanced channel so that flow depths and velocities would be increased. Large woody material would be added to the channel along with gravel substrate to enhance habitat conditions and a new riparian vegetation corridor would be planted with native vegetation. Refer to **Figure 1** for the location and conceptual improvements proposed.

In addition, the City of Riverside Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department proposes to add community facilities within the project site (e.g., educational nature trails and bike paths, amphitheater, archery range, interpretive garden, educational signage, challenge course or other educational amenity, community demonstration garden or incubation farm, group camping and day use area, parking, picnic benches, restrooms). Final design for the Evans Creek site has not been developed and this analysis takes into account options for the site's buildout, which may involve a combination of restoration and recreational opportunities.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The proposed Evans Creek site covers approximately 115 acres in the city of Riverside's Fairmont Park. It is bounded to the northeast by Evans Lake, to the west by the levee along the Santa Ana River, and to the east by the Santa Ana River Trail Bike Path. Evans Creek channel receives water from Evans Lake, either through the slice gate what allows water to flow into the low-flow channel or from water that flows over the spillway and into the spillway channel. The land at the site is owned by the City of Riverside.

Fairmount Park and Evans Lake lie to the northeast of the site, which supports fishing, small non-motorized boating, and general recreation. To the south of the site lies an asphalt walking/bike trail and to the west of the site lies the Santa Ana River levee and bike path. In addition, the Santa Ana River levee and bike trail along with the culverts beneath are currently located at the downstream end of the site. The site is surrounded by the Santa Ana River to the west, residential uses to the north and east, and Mission Inn Boulevard to the south.

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval May Be Required:

City of Riverside, County of Riverside Flood Control encroachment permits, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) aquatic resource permits, Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) permits, landowner access agreement.

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?

Note: Conducting consultation early in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts on tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code Section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code Section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code Section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

Native American consultation will be conducted in accordance with Section 106, Assembly 52, and Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1. Formal consultation has begun with tribes previously requesting consultation. This process is ongoing.

* Recreation facilities (e.g. trails, camp site, picnic area, nature center, etc.) will be incorporated into the site plan which will reduce restoration opportunities shown in this figure.

Figure 1. Evans Creek Restoration Concept

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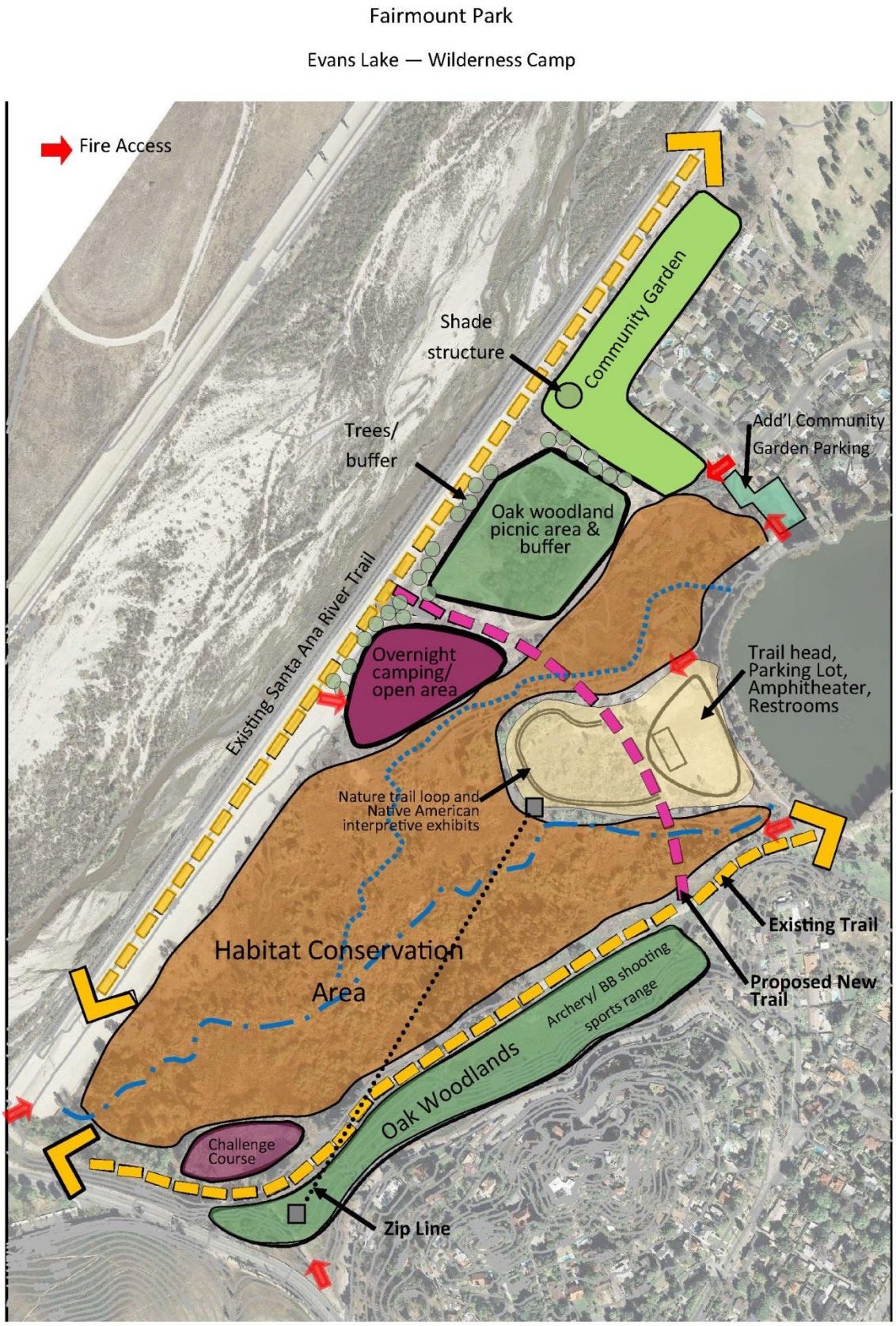

Figure 2. Fairmount Park Evans Creek Conceptual Improvements (Subject to Change)

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would potentially be affected by addition of the Evans Creek site to the proposed project evaluated under the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR (i.e., Alternative B evaluated under the DEIR) as detailed in the environmental screening analysis on the following pages. As further described below, Alternative B's impacts have been determined to be similar to those identified in the DEIR. For the majority of impacts, no additional environmental impacts were identified and no additional mitigation beyond the mitigation measures identified in the DEIR would be required for implementation of Alternative B. The mitigation measures identified in the DEIR would apply to the implementation of Alternative B. However, as further described below, Alternative B may result in impacts on cultural and/or paleontological resources not previously described in the DEIR; as such, additional mitigation (mitigation measures CUL-7 and GEO-3) would be required for those impacts. After implementation of mitigation measures CUL-7 and GEO-3, Alternative B impacts related to cultural and/or paleontological resources would be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agricultural and Forestry Resources	☐ Air Quality
☒ Biological Resources	☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Energy
☒ Geology/Soils/ Paleontological Resources	☐ 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/Service Systems	☐ Wildfire	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

Approach to Analysis

The environmental screening analysis takes into account the whole action involved in implementation of Alternative B, including offsite as well as onsite, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts. For all answers except "No Impact" determinations, brief explanations are provided that are adequately supported by the information cited in the analysis following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one being evaluated here (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone).

This environmental screening analysis evaluates whether the implementation of Alternative B would result in: (i) significant environmental effect(s) in addition to those identified under the DEIR; (ii) less-than-significant impacts with incorporation of additional mitigation not previously identified in the DEIR; (iii) less-than-significant impacts with incorporation of mitigation previously identified in the DEIR; (iv) less-than-significant impacts with no mitigation required; or (v) no impact.

Determination

On the basis of this environmental screening analysis, and as described in detail below, for the majority of impacts, no additional environmental impacts were identified and no additional mitigation beyond the mitigation measures previously identified in the DEIR would be required for implementation of Alternative B. The mitigation measures identified in the DEIR would apply to the implementation of

Alternative B. However, implementation of Alternative B would result in additional impacts related to cultural and paleontological resources that would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level with incorporation of mitigation identified below (mitigation measures CUL-7 and GEO-3) that were not previously identified in the DEIR as applicable to the proposed project.

I. Aesthetics

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would Alternative B:					
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings along a 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 that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impacts on aesthetics. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

The Evans Creek site is bounded to the east by the Santa Ana River Trail, a national recreation trail that upon completion will incorporate 110 miles of trail system from San Bernardino County in the north to Orange County in the south. Also, the Santa Ana River is the epicenter of a 2,650-square

mile watershed that involves major portions of three counties. The river drains southwest toward Prado Dam. Several natural and channelized drainage courses connect with the river. In addition to fundamental water-related functions, the project provides a corridor through developed land and link open spaces together. Among other things, this creates biologically essential wildlife corridor that allow wildlife to move from one open space to another without crossing streets, highways, or developed land.

The proposed project site is located within the Santa Ana River floodplain. According to the City of Riverside General Plan, the Santa Ana River watercourse and riverbed is described as a prominent scenic resource extending along the city's northern boundary. "The Santa Ana River is a place of natural beauty… a place of significant natural habitat for many species of birds and other animals, as well as being a prominent visual landmark for visitors and residents" (City of Riverside 2007).

As detailed in the project description, portions of the proposed project area are heavily used by humans including recreational day-users and the homeless. The site is currently fenced on the western side along the Santa Ana River Trail; however, several holes have been cut in the chain link fence. An asphalt foot/bike path exists on the southeastern side of the site and Evans Lake, a popular park and fishing location, is located to the west. Both of these areas are unfenced and allow easy access to humans. Homeless encampments were observed throughout the site, with a heavier concentration in the central and southern areas.

Views of the Santa Ana River floodplain from neighboring residential areas and Santa Ana River Trail are also described in the City of Riverside General Plan as "scenic." Mount Rubidoux, a scenic viewpoint of the city of Riverside, can be seen from the adjacent Evans Creek site. The major access into the project site is Mission Inn Avenue, which is designated by the City of Riverside General Plan as a scenic boulevard (Figure 5.1-1, Scenic and Special Boulevards and Parkways).

Discussion

a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

The proposed Evans Creek restoration improvement project would include the construction of 1,000 feet of new bank, and a new riparian corridor that includes restoring the native plant community and the provision of additional educational opportunities within Fairmount Park. The directly adjacent Mission Inn Avenue is designated by the City of Riverside General Plan as a scenic boulevard (Figure 5.1-1, Scenic and Special Boulevards and Parkways). After construction of the restoration improvements have been completed, the proposed project would have a beneficial effect on views from a scenic boulevard. Therefore, no impacts are expected from the proposed project that would result in a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

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

The proposed Evans Creek project is not located along a scenic highway; however, Mission Inn Boulevard adjacent to the proposed project is a scenic boulevard. The proposed project would improve the condition of the project site and create more scenic views from Mission Inn. The restored site would result in enhanced vegetation and new a tributary and would not destroy outcroppings or historic buildings. Therefore, no impacts that would substantially damage scenic resources along a scenic highway are expected.

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?

The project site is currently natural but disturbed areas, with large areas of invasive species or fire damage and the influence of homeless encampments scattered throughout. Views of the site during the construction phase would not substantially affect a scenic vista because site disturbance activities would be temporary, phased, and limited to invasive species removal, grading, watering, planting, and other associated improvements.

Habitat enhancement and public education included in the proposed project have the potential to increase the use of the existing recreational resources that could be viewed from distinct vantage points, including Mission Inn Boulevard. The proposed Evans Creek project would result in beneficial effects to the existing visual character and quality of the site and its surroundings and the existing visual character and quality of the site would be improved after implementation. The Santa Ana River floodplain's native habitat is considered a scenic visual resource. Through the removal of invasive species and restoration of native habitat the existing visual character and quality of the site would be improved. Therefore, a less-than-significant impact is expected from the proposed project that would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views.

d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?

The proposed Evans Creek project includes the potential construction of an overnight camping area, picnic area, community garden, amphitheater, restrooms, challenge course, sports range, and Native American interpretive exhibits. Construction-related activities would be conducted during daytime hours, consistent with the codes and ordinances of the city of Riverside. Furthermore, no glare would be produced because there would be no reflective surfaces proposed as part of the restoration effort. Therefore, no light and glare impacts would be created by the proposed project.

II. Agricultural and Forestry Resources

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
In determining whether impacts on agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts on forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project, and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in the Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would Alternative B:					
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 conflict with a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

		Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in 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))?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
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 that, 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?	☐		☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impacts for agricultural and forestry resources. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impacts or less-than-significant impacts with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

The proposed project site is designated as Open Space/Natural Resources per the City of Riverside General Plan 2025 (2007) and is zoned PF (Public Facilities). The site is not zoned for agricultural uses. Within the proposed Evans Creek site, there is designated Farmland of Local Importance on the site (City of Riverside 2007a, Figure 5.2-1, Designated Farmland).

Discussion

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?

The entire proposed Evans Creek site is within an area designated as Open Space/Natural Resources and the area is currently used for recreational purposes associated with Fairmount Park (City of

Riverside 2007b). Its continued recreational use and the proposed restoration improvements would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, of Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use. The proposed Evans Creek Site includes an area designated as Farmland of Local Importance. However, the project site is zoned PF (Public Facilities) and the project area is not currently zoned as agriculture or used for agricultural purposes. The project site is not in agricultural production, would not change the current land use, and would not remove existing agricultural lands (fallow or active). No agricultural activities currently occur in the project area and project activities would be limited to removal of invasive species, site cleanup, and restoration of native habitat. Therefore, a less-than-significant impact on farmland would occur.

b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or conflict with a Williamson Act contract?

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965—commonly referred to as the Williamson Act—enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments which are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value.

The proposed Evans Creek project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract, as there is no Williamson Act contract on the site (City of Riverside 2007a, Figure 5.2-2, Williamson Act Preserves). The Evans Creek site is zoned as PF (Public Facilities) by the City of Riverside and is used as a recreational public facility. Therefore, the proposed Evans Creek project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, no impact on existing zoning or conflict with a Williamson Act contract would occur.

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))?

The proposed Evans Creek project site is not located in an area zoned as forest land, timberland, or a Timberland Production Zone and would not conflict with existing zoning or cause rezoning of forest land or timberland. The proposed Evans Creek project would therefore have no impact on forest land or timberland. Therefore, no impact on existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production would occur.

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

The proposed Evans Creek project site is not located within an area designated as forest land, timberland, or a Timberland Production zone. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact would occur

e. Involve other changes in the existing environment that, 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?

The proposed Evans Creek project is zoned PF (Public Facilities) and designated as Open Space/Natural Resources by the City of Riverside. The proposed project would not result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or the conversion of forest to non-forest uses. Therefore, no impact would occur.

III. Air Quality

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would Alternative B:					
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 a nonattainment area for 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?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impacts or a less-than-significant impact with no mitigation required for air quality. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impacts or a less-than-significant impact with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

Air quality management agencies of direct importance in the city of Riverside are the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), California Air Resources Board (CARB), and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). EPA has established federal air quality standards for which the CARB and SCAQMD have primary implementation responsibility. The CARB and SCAQMD are also responsible for ensuring that state air quality standards are met.

The proposed Evans Creek project site is located within the South Coast Air Basin (Basin), which includes all of Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San

Bernardino counties. The Basin is bounded to west by the Pacific Ocean and to the north and east by the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto Mountains. Within the Basin, ozone (O_3) and particulate matter (PM) less than 2.5 microns in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$), and PM less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10}) are the pollutants of primary concern. Both federal and state standards for O_3, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10} are not met in the Basin and the EPA has designated the Basin as a nonattainment area for these pollutants (SCAQMD 2017).

Within the Basin, O_3 and fine PM ($PM_{2.5}$) are the pollutants of primary concern. Both federal and state standards for ozone, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10} are not met in the Basin and EPA has designated the Basin as a nonattainment area for these pollutants (SCAQMD 2017).

SCAQMD is responsible for establishing and enforcing local air quality rules and regulations that address the requirements of federal and state air quality laws, including the development and implementation of the air quality management plan (AQMP).

Discussion

a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

The project lies within the Riverside portion of the Basin, which is under the jurisdiction of SCAQMD. SCAQMD is required, pursuant to the federal Clean Air Act, to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants for which the Basin is in nonattainment. Construction and maintenance activities would generate emissions of reactive organic gases, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ that could result in short-term air quality impacts. Emissions would originate from off-road equipment exhaust, employee and haul truck vehicle exhaust, and earth moving. However, this project would comply with all applicable regulatory standards as required by SCAQMD and would meet the AQMP consistency criterion.

Projects that propose development that is consistent with the growth anticipated by the relevant planning documents that were used in the formulation of the AQMP would be consistent AQMP. The project area has a land use designation of Open Space/Natural Resources per the City of Riverside General Plan 2025 (2007) and is zoned PF (Public Facilities). The proposed project would restore approximately 115 acres of public park area. Thus, because the proposed project would not result in a change in land use, the proposed project is consistent with the city's General Plan land use designation. Once constructed, operations and maintenance would be minor, and the proposed project would not result in any population or employment growth and is therefore consistent with regional growth projections. Additionally, the proposed project would implement all applicable SCAQMD rules, including Rule 55 (fugitive dust control), and both short-term construction and long-term operations would result in minimal emissions. As the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds, as modeled in the DEIR, the Evans Creek Tributaries Project would be smaller in size and scale and would produce fewer emissions in comparison. This proposed project would not result in any land use or zoning changes that would conflict with the General Plan or zoning designations or result in growth beyond that prescribed in the city's General Plan. As such, because the proposed project would be consistent with the city's General Plan, which was used in the formulation of the AQMP, the proposed project is considered consistent with applicable air quality plans. Impacts would be less than significant.

b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is a nonattainment area for an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

The proposed Evans Creek project is located in an area that is designated as nonattainment for O_3, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10}. The proposed project would result in temporary construction related air quality emissions and short-term operations and maintenance related emissions. Emissions would vary from day to day, depending on the level of activity, the specific type of construction activity occurring, and, for fugitive dust, prevailing weather conditions. However, due to the short-term nature of these emissions, it is not expected that the amount to emissions to be released for construction activities for this project would exceed regional SCAQMD thresholds. As the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds, as modeled in the DEIR, the Evans Creek Tributaries Project would be smaller in size and scale and would produce fewer emissions in comparison. Therefore, impacts are expected to be less-than-significant.

Project maintenance and monitoring activity is expected to be minimal and would include hand tools and some minor equipment (e.g., chainsaws, hedge trimmers). Maintenance and monitoring activities would be far less than construction activities, and consequently emissions are expected to be minimal and far below SCAQMD threshold levels. Therefore, operation of the proposed project would not result in an impact on air quality because emissions would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in a nonattainment area.

Overall, according to SCAQMD, individual projects that exceed the daily significance thresholds would cause a cumulatively considerable increase in emissions for those pollutants for which the Basin is in nonattainment. If the project's pollutant emissions are below the threshold levels, the impacts from an air contaminant are not considered to be cumulatively considerable. As shown in Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR (Tables 3.2-7 and 3.2-9), neither construction nor maintenance activities would result in regional emissions exceeding SCAQMD thresholds. Therefore, impacts of the project would not be cumulatively considerable, and this impact would be less than significant.

c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

The potential for significant air quality impacts is addressed based on potential receptor exposure to localized criteria pollutants and diesel particulate matter (DPM). SCAQMD's localized significance thresholds evaluate whether project-generated emissions may violate the ambient air quality standards (SCAQMD 2009) and therefore expose receptors to substantial criteria pollutant concentrations. SCAQMD thresholds for evaluating receptor exposure to DPM emissions are used. The "substantial" DPM threshold defined by SCAQMD is the probability of contracting cancer for the maximum exposed individual exceeding 10 in 1 million, or the ground-level concentrations of non-carcinogenic toxic air contaminants resulting in a hazard index greater than 1 for the maximum exposed individual (SCAQMD 2017).

The proposed Evans Creek project is located in Fairmont Park, a sensitive recreational land use. Residential development is north and southeast of the project site. The exposure would be limited to temporary construction activities. Heavy-duty equipment and vehicles required for construction activities would generate DPM emissions that could expose nearby receptors to increased health risks. However, work at each site would be short term, and carcinogenic risks are generally assessed

over a period of 30 years. The brief duration of construction work at the project site is therefore far less than typically associated with chronic health impacts. As the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds, as provided in the DEIR, the Evans Creek Tributaries Project would be smaller in size and scale and would produce fewer emissions in comparison. Additionally, the proposed project would not result in a permanent facility that emits pollutants. Implementation of project would not expose sensitive receptors to significant pollutant concentrations or health effects. This impact would be less than significant.

d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Project-related odor emissions would be limited primarily to the construction period, during which emissions from diesel-powered construction equipment could be temporarily evident in the immediately surrounding area. Potential sources of odors during construction activities include diesel exhaust from construction equipment and diesel vehicles. These odors would not affect a substantial number of people, as the scale of construction would be small, and the frequency of vehicle trips would be low. Odor emissions would also dissipate as a function of distance and would be lower at the nearest sensitive receptor. The proposed Evans Creek project would not result in odor emissions that would adversely affect a substantial number of people. Therefore, no impact is expected.

IV. Biological Resources

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
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, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marshes, vernal pools, coastal wetlands, 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?	☐	☐	☒	☒	☐

		Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either less-than-significant impacts or less-than-significant impacts with mitigation incorporated for biological resources. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either less-than-significant impacts or less-than-significant impacts with incorporation of mitigation previously identified in the DEIR. No additional mitigation measures would be required to mitigate impacts associated with Alternative B.

Affected Environment

A comprehensive list of special-status species has been compiled for the project site. Field verification, baseline habitat assessments, vegetation mapping, and rare plant surveys identified 14 special-status species that were either observed in or may occur in the project site based on the presence of suitable habitat (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Special-Status Species Observed in or with Suitable Habitat within the Project Area

		Status	
Common Name	**Scientific Name**	**Federal**	**State**
Plants			
Santa Ana River woolly-star	*Eriastrum densifolium* ssp*. sanctorum*	Endangered	Endangered
Smooth tarplant	*Centromadia pungens* ssp.	None	1B
Fish			
Santa Ana sucker	*Catostomus santaanae*	Threatened	None
Arroyo chub	*Gila orcuttii*	None	SSC
Santa Ana speckled dace	*Rhinichthys osculus ssp.*	None	SSC
Amphibian and Reptiles			
Western pond turtle	*Actinemys marmorata*	None	SSC
Two striped garter snake	*Thamnophis sirtalis sp.*	None	SSC
Coast horned lizard	*Phrynosoma coronatum*	None	SSC

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	
		Federal	State
Birds			
Southwestern willow flycatcher	*Empidonax traillii extimus*	Endangered	Endangered
Least Bell's vireo	*Vireo bellii pusillus*	Endangered	Endangered
Western yellow-billed cuckoo	*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*	Threatened	Endangered
Yellow-breasted chat	*Icteria virens*	None	SSC
Mammals			
Los Angeles little pocket mouse	*Perognathus longimembris brevinasus*	None	SSC
San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit	*Lepus californicus bennettii*	None	SSC

Source: ICF 2018
SSC = California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern
1B = California Rare Plant Rank 1B

The affected environment of the Evans Creek restoration site is described within the impact discussion.

Discussion

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?

Construction and operation activities have the potential to cause direct and indirect impacts on the following sensitive and listed species if individuals are present at the proposed Evans Creek project during construction.

Special-Status Wildlife

The Evans Creek site was determined to potentially provide habitat, currently and/or with restoration, for 10 of the 21 wildlife species covered by the Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan (Upper SAR HCP) (**Table 2**). Only two of these species are expected to occur prior to restoration: least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) and yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*). The proposed Evans Creek project would result in permanent and temporary impacts during construction and operations on existing vegetation communities, and many of these communities provide suitable habitat for special-status wildlife species.

Special-Status Plant Species

The site was determined to potentially provide habitat, currently and/or with restoration, for one of the two plant species covered by the Upper SAR HCP (**Table 2**). There was existing known or potentially occupied habitat for the Santa Ana River woolly-star identified within the Evans Creek site. No existing known, potentially occupied or future potentially occupied post restoration habitat was identified for slender-horned spineflower. The proposed Evans Creek project would result in permanent and temporary impacts during construction and operations on existing vegetation

communities, and some of these communities provide suitable habitat for special-status plant species, specifically the Santa Ana River woolly-star (*Eriastrum densifolium* ssp*. sanctorum*).

Santa Ana River Woolly-star

Suitable habitat for Santa Ana River woolly-star within the Evans Creek site currently occurs within the Santa Ana floodplain north of Mission Inn Avenue. Restoration opportunity exist in the form of habitat enhancement within this area such as the removal of tamarisk scrub, Arundo, and other nonnative species. The low flow channel and spillway channel and adjacent areas within the main portion of the site do not provide suitable habitat for Santa Ana woolly-star. This area, if restored, would consist of riparian forest and woodland habitats that would not provide suitable open, sage-dominated vegetation on floodplain terraces, as the flow regimes are not sufficient to create this type of habitat that is preferred by this species.

The proposed Evans Creek project would result in similar permanent, temporary, and indirect impacts on special-status plant species as discussed for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program. If Santa Ana River woolly-star are discovered during the restoration process and are within a proposed disturbance area, the individuals would be avoided, if possible, or relocated to adjacent suitable habitat.

Table 2. Potential to Occur for Covered Species at the Evans Creek Site

Species	Habitat Suitability
Santa Ana River Woolly-star (*Eriastrum densifolium* ssp. *sanctorum*)	Existing known or potentially occupied
Slender-horned Spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*)	Not suitable
Delhi Sands Flower-loving Fly (*Rhaphiomidas terminatus abdominalis*)	Not suitable
Santa Ana Sucker (*Catostomus santaanae*)	Future potentially occupied post restoration
Arroyo Chub (*Gila orcutti*)	Future potentially occupied post restoration
Santa Ana Speckled Dace (*Rhinichthys osculus* ssp.)	Future potentially occupied post restoration
Arroyo Toad (*Anaxyrus [Bufo] californicus*)	Not suitable
Mountain Yellow-legged Frog (*Rana muscosa*)	Not suitable
Western Spadefoot (*Spea hammondii*)	Not suitable
Western Pond Turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*)	Future potentially occupied post restoration
South Coast Garter Snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis* sp.)	Future potentially occupied post restoration
California Glossy Snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*)	Not suitable
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*)	Future potentially occupied post restoration
Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)	Existing known or potentially occupied
Tricolored Blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*)	Not suitable
Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*)	Not suitable
Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*)	Existing known or potentially occupied
Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*)	Not suitable

Species	Habitat Suitability
Cactus Wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*)	Not suitable
Coastal California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*)	Not suitable
Los Angeles Pocket Mouse (*Perognathus longimembris brevinasus*)	Future potentially occupied post restoration
San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*)	Not suitable
San Diego Black-tailed Jackrabbit (Lepus californicus bennettii)	Future potentially occupied post restoration

Impact BIO-1.1: Construction-related Direct Impacts on Special-status Species

Construction Impacts

Least Bell's vireo, yellow-breasted chat, white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), and yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia*) are known, or expected, to nest within the limits of disturbance. Because the habitat suitability for special-status wildlife is expected to be increased, no permanent direct impacts on special-status wildlife are anticipated. These species would not have access to nesting and foraging opportunities in areas where vegetation is removed and would likely remain out of these areas for in indeterminate period as restored vegetation becomes denser and more mature. If occupied by sensitive species, construction activities involving removal or modification of vegetation from the riparian, grassland, scrub, forest, woodland, and/or wetland plant communities could disturb, injure, or kill individuals or cause nest failure. All vegetation communities within the limits of disturbance and adjacent buffer areas also have the potential to support nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code.

The proposed Evans Creek project has the potential to directly affect least Bell's vireo, yellow-breasted chat, white-tailed kite, and yellow warbler individuals, nests, and occupied habitat with active territories during construction in the nesting season.

Direct permanent impacts on special-status wildlife from the proposed Evans Creek project are expected to be the same as those described for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program.

Temporary Direct Impacts

Temporary direct impacts on wildlife species would include temporary impacts on their habitat or disturbance from construction activities. Temporary loss of habitat could result in the reduced availability of food and shelter for resident and migratory species that rely on the Evans Creek site. The Evans Creek project would result in similar impacts on special-status wildlife as the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program, but with slightly more habitat affected. The displacement of the federally listed least Bell's vireo is not expected to result in substantial adverse impacts on this species due to the abundant suitable habitat nearby in the mainstem Santa Ana River that would remain available for nesting and foraging. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant. Similarly, the displacement of the California species of special concern yellow-breasted chat is also expected not to result in substantial adverse impacts on this species, and impacts would be less than significant.

Significance Determination

Impacts for the proposed Evans Creek project would be considered significant prior to the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-24, as described in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR. The implementation of these measures would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level for the proposed Evans Creek project.

Impact BIO-1.2: Construction-related indirect impacts on special-status species

Construction Impacts

Indirect construction impacts on special-status species present or potentially present within the proposed Evans Creek project are expected to be similar to those discussed for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program.

Significance Determination

Impacts for the proposed Evans Creek project would be considered significant prior to the implementation of mitigation measure BIO-25, as described in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR. The implementation of this measure would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level for the proposed Evans Creek project.

Impact BIO-1.3: Indirect Impacts on Special-Status Species Resulting from Habitat Modifications

Construction Impacts

Summary of Habitat Modifications

The existing channel at Evans Creek does not currently have a reliable source of water from Evans Lake. A new groundwater well and pump would be constructed at the upstream extent of the channel near Dexter Drive to provide water.

A new riparian corridor would be created in which nonnative plants would be removed and native vegetation would be planted. The riparian corridor would be approximately 100 feet wide (50 feet on either side of the channel) for a total of 8.5 acres.

For the proposed Evans Creek project, over 1,000 feet of new bank would be constructed on the channel's left bank to confine water to the enhanced channel and increase flow depths and velocities rather than allowing it to spread out into relatively flat depressional areas to the south where the elevation differences between the existing floodplain and channel are minimal.

Channel bed complexity would be created by adding pools and riffles in channel reaches that would have sufficient flow velocities to maintain suitable coarse substrate for Santa Ana sucker (*Catostomus santaanae*) habitat. Gravel would be added to new riffle sections that would have sufficient flow velocities to maintain suitable coarse substrate for Santa Ana sucker habitat. Rock and woody material structures would be added that would create and sustain habitat complexity.

A fish passage would be added at the barrier created by the culvert under the Santa Ana River levee to allow Santa Ana sucker fish to migrate from the Santa Ana River into the enhanced Evans Creek channel to access additional habitat and adjust to changing hydrologic conditions.

The existing channel in the mainstem Santa Ana River that heads south along the levee and under the Mission Boulevard bridge would be plugged with rock and wood and a new 280-foot-long channel would be excavated through a sediment berm in order to make a continuous channel connection between Evans Creek and the Santa Ana River.

Creation and enhancement of aquatic and riparian habitat in the proposed Evans Creek project, including installation of a perennial water source, would increase the quantity and quality of stream habitat used by special-status fishes, semi-aquatic species, and other riparian species resulting in long-term benefits to these species. Enhancements of other existing vegetation communities would improve functions and values for other special-status wildlife.

Impacts on Special-Status Species from Habitat Modification

Temporary Construction Impacts on Special-Status Species from Habitat Modification

It is assumed that temporary impacts would be similar in type and intensity to those described for each restoration site of the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program and would result in approximately 22 to 25 acres of disturbance, with roughly two-thirds of this disturbance occurring on native communities.

These impacts are associated with activities to restore the current land cover type dominated by nonnative species to high-quality aquatic and riparian habitat for focal, special-status species. This would be achieved through channel creation and enhancement, installation of instream habitat features, and native riparian vegetation planting. In their current state, these vegetation communities have the potential to support, or do support, special-status riparian bird species, aquatic and semi-aquatic species, and terrestrial species. Although impacts would be temporary, the impacts on approximately 17 acres of native vegetation would displace special-status species from suitable habitat and would be potentially significant. However, these impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of mitigation measures BIO-2 through BIO-9, and BIO-11 and BIO-12, included in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR.

Permanent Construction Impacts on Special-Status Species from Habitat Modification

For the proposed project, habitat improvements would result in a total of 0.64 acre of permanent impacts on vegetation communities. These permanent impacts would result from the conversion of existing vegetation to features such as culverts, weirs, and boulders used in the creation and enhancement of aquatic habitat and riparian habitat.

It is expected that creation and enhancement of the Evans Creek site would occur for approximately 115 acres. The amount of permanent construction impacts was not calculated, but is expected to be less than 0.5 acre. Because of the creation and enhancement of up to 115 acres of habitat within the Evans Creek site, most of which is highly degraded, no net loss of occupied or sensitive habitat would occur as a result of 0.5 acre or less of hardscape project components; rather, a net increase in habitat would occur.

Benefits to Special-Status Species from Habitat Modification

Creation and enhancement of aquatic and riparian habitat in Evans Creek and the establishment of a perennial water source would increase the quantity and quality of stream habitat for special-status fishes and semi-aquatic species, resulting in long-term benefits to those species. Channel

modifications and increased flow could reduce the current risk of suffocation, desiccation, and predation that may occur when fish are stranded or trapped in isolated aquatic habitats during seasonal drying of portions of Evans Creek.

Creation, restoration, and enhancement of floodplain habitat would occur at the Evans Creek site. Creating floodplain benches to provide additional areas to where overbank flows can spread is expected to enhance existing riparian zones and improve riparian habitat that would benefit sensitive amphibians, reptiles, and bird species, such as least Bell's vireo and yellow-breasted chat breeding. Suitable habitat for Santa Ana River woolly-star currently occurs at the Evans Creek site. Restoration opportunities to enhance the floodplain and to restore California annual grassland and alkali marsh would improve habitat conditions for Santa Ana River woolly-star and smooth tarplant.

Nonnative vegetation removal and replacement with native species is proposed in riparian and California annual grassland habitats at Evans Creek. As described above, vegetation removal activities have the potential to temporarily impact nesting birds and other sensitive terrestrial species; however, this restoration activity is expected to have a net benefit to these species by improving the quality and quantity of riparian and California annual grassland habitats. Species potentially benefitting from riparian restoration and grassland habitat improvement include those that may breed, forage, and/or shelter in riparian and upland habitats. These species include, but are not limited to, least Bell's vireo, grasshopper sparrow, yellow-breasted chat, yellow warbler, western yellow bat, and two-striped garter snake, all of which rely on riparian and/or grassland habitat.

Human activity in both the buffer and the floodplain degrades conditions as a result of trail creation, trash disposal, vegetation clearing, and human waste. Limiting human disturbance in restored and enhanced areas would be expected to benefit all special-status species and improve overall wetland conditions. The restoration areas would be fenced, restoration signage would be installed, and routine patrols would be conducted.

A summary of the covered species that would benefit from restoration activities at the Evans Creek site is found in **Table 3**. Establishment of layback banks and benches and the secondary/high flow channel would include the creation of riparian and scrub habitat within the proposed Evans Creek project. The installation of the groundwater well; the construction of the 1,000-foot new channel bank in the low flow channel; construction of riffles and pools in the low flow channel; the construction of the instream woody material structure every 200 feet and the reroute of the low flow channel within the Santa Ana River would all benefit Santa Ana sucker, Santa Ana speckled dace, arroyo chub, western pond turtle, and south coast garter snake. The creation of a fish passage structure at the SAR levee would benefit Santa Ana sucker and arroyo chub. The removal of invasive species, trash, debris, illegal trails, and homeless encampments from the channels and riparian areas and replacement with native riparian habitat would also benefit these species. Least Bell's vireo, yellow-breasted chat, and yellow warbler occur on site, and riparian habitat suitable for these species occupies much of the site. These species, as well as southwestern willow flycatcher, black-tailed jackrabbit, Los Angeles pocket mouse, and Santa Ana River woolly-star, would also benefit from these actions. The same actions but in upland habitat would benefit western pond turtle, south coast garter snake, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, yellow-breasted chat, black-tailed jackrabbit, and Los Angeles pocket mouse. Santa Ana River woolly-star and smooth tarplant were not detected but are expected to occur. California walnut was present. Restoration of the creek, including removal of invasive species and enhancement of the riparian habitat, would benefit these plant species.

Table 3. Summary of Restoration Design Components and Benefits to Covered Species at the Evans Creek Restoration Site

	Benefits to Covered Species										
Restoration Opportunities	**Santa Ana Sucker**	**Santa Ana Speckled Dace**	**Arroyo Chub**	**Western Pond Turtle**	**South Coast Garter Snake**	**Least Bell's Vireo**	**Southwestern Willow Flycatcher**	**Yellow-breasted Chat**	**Black-tailed Jackrabbit**	**Los Angeles Pocket Mouse**	**Santa Ana River Woolly-Star**
Layback banks of spillway channel, create floodplain benches	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Establish secondary/high-flow channel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Remove invasive species, trash, debris, illegal trails, and homeless encampments from channels and plant with native riparian species	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Remove invasive species, trash, debris, illegal trails, and homeless encampments from riparian habitat and plant with native riparian species	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Remove invasive species, trash, debris, illegal trails, and homeless encampments from upland habitat and plant with native upland species				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Establish Oak Woodland						✓	✓	✓			
Installation of groundwater well and pump to provide sufficient flows for Santa Ana sucker	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Construct 1,000 feet of new channel bank in the low flow channel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Construct riffles and pools in low flow channel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Construct instream woody material structure every 200 feet	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Reroute low-flow channel within Santa Ana River	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Create fish passage structure at the Santa Ana River levee	✓	✓	✓								

Summary of Impacts and Benefits

In summary for Impact BIO-1.3, for the proposed Evans Creek project a total of less than 0.5 acre of habitat would be expected to be permanently affected. While this habitat would be permanently affected due to the proposed Evans Creek project hardscape installation, new floodplain bench habitat would be created and the quality of habitat would be enhanced at the proposed Evans Creek

project site, largely through activities to restore hydrological functioning, controlling invasive wildlife species, and limiting human disturbance. As described above, creation and enhancements are expected to have an overall benefit to many special-status species with no net loss of habitat resulting from permanent design components. Nonetheless, the proposed Evans Creek project would require mitigation measures to avoid and minimize impacts. Restoration of degraded habitats with higher-quality habitat, long-term management and protection of restored sites, and implementation of mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-17 from the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR would reduce this impact to less-than-significant levels.

Significance Determination

Impacts for the proposed Evans Creek project would be considered significant prior to the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-17, as described in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR. The implementation of these measures would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level for the proposed Evans Creek project.

By design, the proposed Evans Creek project would increase the amount and quality of habitat for the Santa Ana sucker and other sensitive native species and enhance jurisdictional aquatic resources; restore existing channels and an existing floodplain tributary; enhance existing riparian and floodplain habitats; limit human disturbance; and control nonnative invasive species.

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

The proposed Evans Creek project would create or enhance ecologically important riparian, and floodplain habitat through restoration of the proposed Evans Creek project. Although the proposed Evans Creek project would result in a net gain in these habitat types, construction would cause the temporary loss or degradation of habitat potentially used by native species. Similar to the proposed Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program sites, it is assumed that construction would take approximately 4 months to occur and the revegetation of the affected areas would likely take several years to become dense, mature native vegetation stands similar to the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program.

Impacts on Riparian Habitat or Other Sensitive Natural Communities

Construction Impacts

The dominant vegetation community within the Evans Creek site is a heavily disturbed cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*)-wild grape (*Vitis girdiana*) forest alliance. This community is surrounded by Evans Lake spillway to the northeast, the Santa Ana River levee to the northwest, and upland areas consisting of nonnative communities including semi-natural woodland stands, California annual grassland alliance, black mustard (*Brassica nigra*) and other mustards herbaceous semi-natural alliance, and disturbed areas. In addition to the cottonwood-wild grape forest alliance, several native vegetation communities also provide vegetation cover within the site and include cottonwood forest alliance, black willow (*Salix gooddingii)* woodland alliance, California walnut (*Juglans californica*) woodland alliance, and arrow weed (*Pluchea sericea*) shrublands.

The Evans Creek site is currently vegetated with several different invasive species including, but not limited to, Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolia*), palm (*Phoenix canariensis* and *Washingtonia robusta*), tamarisk (*Tamarix* spp.), eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.), fig (*Ficus carnica*), mustard (*Brassica* spp.), fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), and nonnative grasses. **Table 4** includes the mapped vegetation communities and land cover types at the Evans Creek site. There are 52.18 acres of native vegetation communities, including arrow weed shrubland, black willow woodland, California walnut woodland, southern cottonwood-wild grape forest, cattail herbaceous, and cottonwood forest. There are 55.75 acres of nonnative vegetation communities including black mustard and other mustards herbaceous, Brazilian pepper semi-natural woodland, California annual grassland, eucalyptus semi-natural woodland, Mexican fan palm semi-natural woodland, tamarisk semi-natural woodland, and tree of heaven semi-natural woodland. Finally, there are 7.19 acres of land cover types including disturbed areas and urban/developed areas. The total 115.12 acres is the acreage included in the Evans Creek project.

Temporary construction would affect riparian and other sensitive natural communities. Impacts for the Evans Creek site would be similar in nature and extent to the four sites in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program. Temporary impacts would be expected to be approximately 22 to 25 acres of disturbance, with roughly two-thirds of this disturbance occurring on native communities.

The construction of approximately 1,000 feet of defined channel would be constructed on the channel's left bank to confine water to the enhanced channel and increase flow depths and velocities. In addition, grading would occur in select reaches to create channel bed complexity (adding pools and riffles) with the addition of gravel to riffle sections. This would result in the temporary direct impact of the loss of exiting vegetation within the channel. These impacts would be considered temporary as the loss of any existing riparian and natural vegetation communities would be expected to reestablish after disturbance or be revegetated with native vegetation. In some areas, gravel would replace nonnative vegetation, but these areas would be designed to provide wildlife habitat.

Nonnative vegetation would be removed from the riparian corridor (approximately 100 feet wide) for a total of 8.5 acres. While nonnative vegetation would be lost temporarily, this loss would be replaced by the reestablishment of native vegetation through restoration.

The removal of existing vegetation and grading of the defined channel would result in the temporary impact on non-wetland waters of the U.S. and streambed and riparian waters of the state.

Permanent effects would include physical design changes such as creating a passage (roughened channel, orifice, vertical slot) for Santa Ana sucker to access Evans Creek, or the addition of boulders, gravel bars, and culverts resulting in small, but adverse, permanent impacts due to reductions in habitat quantity or suitability for native species. Construction would affect riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities within or adjacent to existing access roads.

Impacts on waters of the U.S. and waters of the state, including protected wetlands and other jurisdictional resources, are evaluated separately in Impact BIO-3. Permanent impacts would represent a minor component of the overall of the proposed Evans Creek project impacts.

Indirect impacts from the Evans Creek would be the same as those discussed for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program.

Table 4. Vegetation Communities and Land Cover Types at the Evans Creek Site

Common Name	Alliance(s)	Acres
Native Communities		**52.18**
Arrow Weed Shrubland	*Pluchea sericea*	3.32
Black Willow Woodland	*Salix gooddingii*	3.96
California Walnut Woodland	*Juglans californica*	0.41
Southern Cottonwood-Wild Grape Forest	*Populus fremontii – Vitis girdiana*	33.99
Cattail Herbaceous	*Typha ssp.*	0.07
Cottonwood Forest	*Populus fremontii*	10.43
Nonnative Communities		**55.75**
Black Mustard and Other Mustards Herbaceous	*Brassica nigra, Hirschfeldia incana., Sisymbrium irio*	24.21
Brazilian Pepper Semi-Natural Woodland	*Schinus terebinthifolia*	1.23
California Annual Grassland	*Bromus, Avena, Erodium,* spp., etc.	16.01
Eucalyptus Semi-Natural Woodland	*Eucalyptus globulus, Eucalyptus camaldulensis*	3.67
Mexican Fan Palm Semi-Natural Woodland	*Washingtonia robusta*	7.86
Tamarisk Semi-Natural Woodland	*Tamarix* spp.	0.30
Tree of Heaven Semi-Natural Woodland	*Ailanthus altissima*	2.47
Land Cover Types		**7.19**
Disturbed Habitat	Vacant (disturbed bare ground)	4.78
Urban/Developed	Urban/Developed	2.41
Total		**115.12**

The Evans Creek site contains three channels: a concrete drainage channel, a low-flow channel, and a spillway channel, which converges with the low-flow channel into a single channel approximately in the middle of the site. In addition, the site contains a portion of the Santa Ana River. The riparian habitat within the low-flow channel consisted primarily of Fremont cottonwood-wild grape, Mexican fan palm, black mustard, tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), and eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.). The spillway channel riparian habitat consisted primarily of Fremont cottonwood, wild grape, Mexican fan palm, black mustard, tree of heaven, arrow weed, and eucalyptus. The concrete drainage channel contains no riparian vegetation. Habitat within the Santa Ana River is dominated by Fremont cottonwood, red willow, arroyo willow, and mulefat with a few patches of tamarisk.

Operational Impacts

Direct operational impacts for the proposed Evans Creek project would be the similar to those discussed for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program.

Summary of Impacts and Benefits

Despite an expected overall increase in the amount and quality of riparian habitat and sensitive natural vegetation communities, the proposed Evans Creek project would result in permanent loss of up to 0.5 acre of native vegetation communities. In addition, approximately 22 acres of native vegetation communities are expected to be temporarily degraded through construction activities

within the proposed Evans Creek project. This impact would be potentially significant. However, restoration of channel morphology and hydrologic functioning of the Santa Ana River tributaries, limiting human disturbance, and removal of nonnative invasive species, the quality and quantity of riparian and other natural habitats within the Evans Creek project site would result in a beneficial impact.

Significance Determination

Impacts for the proposed Evans Creek project would be considered significant prior to the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-16, 26, and 27, as described in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR. The implementation of these measures would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level for the proposed Evans Creek project.

c. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marshes, vernal pools, coastal wetlands, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

The Evans Creek site contains three channels: a concrete drainage channel, a low-flow channel, and a spillway channel, which converges with the low-flow channel into a single channel approximately in the middle of the site. In addition, the site contains a portion of the Santa Ana River.

This includes waters of the U.S. and state consisting of non-wetland waters subject to the jurisdiction of USACE and RWQCB under Sections 404 and Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, respectively, and streambed and associated riparian subject to regulation by CDFW under Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code. Impacts on aquatic resources would be potentially significant and would require mitigation.

Construction Impacts

The construction impacts on jurisdictional resources at the Evans Creek site are expected to be similar to the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program with the exception that no wetlands were mapped within the Evans Creek site study area. Acreages of jurisdictional waters within the Evans Creek project boundaries are included in **Table 5** below. The construction impacts on these resources are expected to be similar to the other sites with temporary impact acreages expected to be between 3 and 15 acres and permanent impact acreages to be between 0.1 and 0.3 acre for waters of the U.S (USACE/RWQCB). Similarly, temporary impact acreages would be expected between 2 and 60 acres for CDFW jurisdictional resources and between 0.1 and 0.5 acre for permanent impacts. It is expected that the proposed Evans Creek project would create more permanent federal and state jurisdictional waters than would be lost. Therefore, the proposed Evans Creek project would not result in permanent adverse effects on jurisdictional resources.

Operational Impacts

Direct and indirect operational impacts for the proposed Evans Creek project would be similar to those described for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program.

Significance Determination

The proposed Evans Creek project may adversely affect non-wetland waters of the U.S. and state and CDFW jurisdictional resources by direct modification (i.e., restoration and creation) of these habitats. This direct impact would be considered significant under CEQA. With implementation of mitigation measures BIO-28 and BIO-29 detailed in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR, adverse effects on federally protected wetlands, non-wetland waters, and state waters (riparian and streambed) would result in a net increase in area as well as functions and values within state and federal jurisdiction following restoration activities. Therefore, this impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with mitigation incorporated.

Table 5. Jurisdictional Resources (Existing Conditions) for the Evans Creek Site

	Waters of the U.S. (USACE/RWQCB)				CDFW Jurisdiction			
	Non-wetland[1] (ac.)	Non-wetland (ac.)	Non-wetland, concrete lined (ac.)	Total (ac.)	Streambed (ac.)	Riparian (ac.)	Total (ac.)	Linear Feet
Low-flow Channel	1.98	-	0.08	2.06	2.05	62.82	65.85	3,489
Spillway Channel	0.83	0.14	-	0.97	0.98			2,624
Santa Ana River	-	1.98	-	1.98	1.99	3.33	5.32	640
Concrete Drainage	-	-	0.02	0.02	0.02	-	0.02	122
Total	**2.81**	**2.12**	**0.10**	**5.03**	**5.04**	**66.15**	**71.19**	**6,875**

[1] Meets 3-parameter wetland, but because they are contained within a riverine feature and are located below the ordinary high-water mark they were mapped as non-wetland waters of the U.S.

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?

The Santa Ana River functions as a major regional wildlife movement corridor and breeding ground for many special-status and common aquatic and terrestrial wildlife species. Impacts on wildlife corridors for the proposed Evans Creek project would be similar to those discussed for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program. However, overall the proposed Evans Creek project would have a net permanent benefit for species as it would improve aquatic breeding habitat and habitat connectivity and allow for increased aquatic species movement through channel enhancement actions and flow restoration. Nevertheless, aquatic impacts would be potentially significant during construction and for some time after construction and require mitigation.

Operational Impacts

As with the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program, for the Evans Creek site following construction, revegetation efforts would likely take several years to become dense and mature, and, until that time, would have limited cover, foraging, breeding, and dispersal functions for many special-status and common species. Aquatic species would likely not have adequate aquatic vegetation or overhanging bank vegetation for natural life history

requirements, including movement and dispersal, until vegetation fills in. Semi-aquatic and terrestrial species would likely have reduced movement activities in the restoration areas until adequate native vegetation cover is present. Similarly, avian species would have less nesting, foraging, and migrating opportunities until the native vegetation has reestablished at sufficient density to provide the necessary functions and values required for breeding and dispersal. In addition, special-status species could be affected by maintenance crews performing invasive removal, weeding, planting, or other restoration maintenance activities and when biologists are performing field analysis related to restoration success criteria. Maintenance is expected to occur over a 5- to 10-year period and would likely result in more impacts on wildlife species soon after construction and decrease over time as native vegetation matures and limits invasive establishment and the need for intensive maintenance. Nonetheless, operational impacts would be potentially significant and require mitigation.

Significance Determination

Impacts for the proposed Evans Creek project would be considered significant prior to the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-2 through BIO-9, BIO-11 and BIO-12, BIO-19, BIO-26, and BIO-28, as described in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR. The implementation of these measures would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level for the proposed Evans Creek project.

Overall, the proposed Evans Creek project would increase the quantity and quality of aquatic habitat, native riparian habitat, native scrub habitat, and grassland habitat, thereby increasing the functions and values related to breeding and connectivity for wildlife movement through the proposed Evans Creek project and within the larger Santa Ana River floodplain. Considering the benefits of the proposed Evans Creek project on the movement of native fishes and wildlife, migratory wildlife corridors, and nursery sites relative to temporary impacts resulting from construction activities and habitat modifications, and with implementation of mitigation measures, interference with the movement of native resident fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impedance of the use of native wildlife nursery sites would be less than significant.

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

Ordinance No. 559 Regulating the Removal of Trees (Riverside County), Section 1, states, “No person shall remove any living native tree on any parcel or property greater than one-half acre in size, located in an area above 5,000 feet in elevation and within the unincorporated area of the County of Riverside, without first obtaining a permit to do so, unless exempted by the provisions of Section 4 of this ordinance.”

The proposed project actions would not occur in any areas above 5,000 feet in elevation. Therefore, no conflicts with local tree preservation policies or ordinances are anticipated under the proposed project.

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?

Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

As described for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program, the proposed Evans Creek project would be consistent with the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRCMSHCP). The proposed project occurs within the Cities of Riverside/Norco Area Plan of the WRCMSHCP. **Table 6** summarizes the specific applicable WRCMSHCP details such as Criteria Cells and Public/Quasi-Public Conserved Lands applicable to the proposed project. WRCMSHCP Criteria Cells specify planning species and biological requirements and considerations to be addressed. Refer to Section 3.0 and Section 7.0 of the WRCMSHCP for more information on public and private development within the Criteria Area, including actions determined to be consistent with the WRCMSHCP.

Table 6. Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Criteria Cells, Plan Areas, Plan Area Subunits, Conserved Lands Containing Portions of the Evans Creek Site, and Individual Species Survey Areas

Evans Creek		
WRCMSHCP Criteria Cell: None	WRCMSHCP Plan Area: Cities of Riverside and Norco Area Plan	WRCMSHCP Plan Area Subunit: None
Criteria Cell Planning Species: None (not within a Criteria Cell)		
Criteria Cell Biological Issues and Considerations: Not applicable (not within a Criteria Cell)		
Public/Quasi-Public (PQP) Conserved Lands of the WRCMSHCP: The City of Riverside owns PQP lands (noted as the "Fairmont Park Area") within the Evans Creek site, with some lands noted as "Santa Ana River Mission- Hwy60" on the north side of the levee.		
Individual Species Survey Areas: Burrowing owl and Brand's phacelia.		

Habitat Conservation Plan for the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat in Western Riverside County, California

The proposed Evans Creek project does not occur within the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan Core Reserve Area. Riverside County Ordinance No. 663.10 was established to implement the mitigation provisions of the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Habitat Conservation Plan, which includes a mitigation fee for new development in western Riverside County. However, this project is not a development project, would not affect any Stephen's kangaroo rat habitat, and would not be subject to the fee.

Upper Santa Ana River Habitat Conservation Plan

As described for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program, the proposed Evans Creek project goals and objectives are to provide long-term benefits to the special-status species and habitats covered by the Upper SAR HCP. The proposed Evans Creek project would be consistent with the Upper SAR HCP.

City of Riverside – General Plan

The proposed Evans Creek project is entirely within the city of Riverside. The discussion of the impacts on this general plan of the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program are expected to be similar to those of the proposed Evans Creek project.

Construction Impacts

Construction activities could result in temporary direct and indirect impacts on special-status species and their habitats, as described previously. The proposed Evans Creek project would implement mitigation measures BIO-2 through BIO-9 and BIO-11 through BIO-12, as described in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR, and would adhere to the requirements of the City of Riverside General Plan (policies OS-5, OS-6, and OS-7), and the Riverside County General Plan (Policies OS 3, OS 5, OS 6, OS 9, OS 17, and OS 18).

The proposed Evans Creek project would also address biological issues and considerations of the WRCMSHCP area (for required surveys and Public/Quasi-Public Conserved Lands). With the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-2 through 9, BIO-11 and BIO-12, BIO-26, and BIO-28 as included in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR, the proposed Evans Creek project would not conflict with the provision of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan because the proposed Evans Creek project would not result in permanent loss of habitat and would increase the quantity and quality of native vegetation and aquatic resources that will benefit each of the species covered by these plans.

Operational Impacts

Maintenance activities could result direct and indirect impacts on special-status species and their habitats, as described previously.

Significance Determination

Impacts for the proposed Evans Creek project would be considered significant prior to the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-2 through BIO-9, BIO-11 and BIO-12, BIO-26, and BIO-28, as described in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR. In addition, compliance with policies of the City of Riverside General Plan would ensure the proposed Evans Creek project aligns with the goals of, and is consistent with, the WRCMSHCP.

In summary, as discussed for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program, the proposed Evans Creek project is intended to align with the provisions, goals, and objectives of the Upper SAR HCP and with adopted conservation plans, WRCMSHCP. In general, the proposed Evans Creek project would be consistent with these adopted plans and is expected to provide a net improvement to stream, wetland, riparian, scrub, and grassland habitat quality thereby improving WRCMSHCP Public/Quasi-Public Conserved Lands within the proposed Evans Creek project area, WRCMSHCP cores and linkages for WRCMSHCP benefiting sensitive species and their habitats overall. However, construction activities could result in potentially significant direct and indirect impacts on listed species and their habitat, including those covered by the WRCMSHCP with potential to occur in the proposed Evans Creek project site. With implementation of mitigation measure BIO-9 from the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR, impacts on an adopted habitat

conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan are anticipated to be reduced to a less-than-significant level; therefore, this impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with mitigation incorporated.

The implementation of these measures would reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level for the proposed Evans Creek project.

V. Cultural Resources

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts with mitigation incorporated for cultural resources. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR and as further described below, Alternative B would result in certain less-than-significant impacts with mitigation previously identified in the DEIR; however, Alternative B would also result in impacts that would be reduced to a less-than-significant level only with incorporation of additional mitigation not previously identified in the DEIR. This additional mitigation is further described below (mitigation measure CUL-7).

Affected Environment

According to the City of Riverside General Plan 2025 Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (City of Riverside 2007), the Evans Creek site is located within an unknown archaeological sensitivity area (Figure 5.5-1, Archaeological Sensitivity) but is a medium prehistoric cultural resources sensitivity area (Figure 5.5-2, Prehistoric Cultural Resources Sensitivity). A cultural resources assessment has not been conducted at the site; however, cultural resources are known to occur in the vicinity of the site. However, the proposed Evans Creek project is located in Fairmont Park (Cultural Heritage Landmark #69) adjacent to Evans Lake. Evans Lake is a manmade water feature constructed in the 1900s. Evans Lake and the associated outbuildings have reached the age of consideration for evaluation of the California Register of Historical Resources.

In 2011, the American Planning Association designated Fairmount Park as a “Great Public Space” (APA 2019). Fairmount Park has a long-standing history in the city dating back to the 1870s and is a prominent feature in the city. The Fairmount Park site has been utilized as a picnic and swim area as early as 1870 and a 35-acre park was dedicated in 1898. The park was eventually expanded to 245 acres. The firm Olmsted & Olmsted was hired to develop a park plan for Riverside in 1911, and one

element that was implemented in that plan was Lake Evans (1924) (APA 2019). The 1911 plan included passive landscape in the park's historical core to highlight the surrounding vistas and preserve natural features. A 1912 boathouse was reconstructed and dedicated in 1994 as Stewarts Boathouse, in honor of Bob and Pat Stewart. Band shell was constructed in 1920 and was designed by Arthur Benton, a prominent Mission Revival Style architect and it was rebuilt twice after fires in 1986 and 1992. The park's golf course was originally built in 1930 and is one of earliest public courses in Southern California. The Union Pacific Engine #6051 memorial was installed in 1954 and it commemorated the 50th anniversary of railroad coming to the city of Riverside. The Water Buffalo memorial was installed in 1946 to celebrate Riverside's role in manufacturing this World War II vehicle, which was built in the Food Machinery Corporation near the Downtown Riverside Metrolink Station during the war. A 1985 tree inventory for Fairmount Park showed that many trees from the 1911 Planting Plan were still alive. The Evans Creek site and Fairmount Park is a site with much history in the city of Riverside.

The site is heavily used by humans, including recreational day-users and the homeless. The site is currently fenced on the western side along the Santa Ana River Trail Bike Path; however, several holes have been cut in the chain link fence. An asphalt foot/bike path exists on the southeastern side of the site and Evans Lake, a popular park and fishing location, is located to the west. Both of these areas are unfenced and allow easy access to humans. Homeless encampments were observed throughout the site, with a heavier concentration in the central and southern areas. As evidenced by burn scars on the palm trees, the site has burned several times in the last few years due to human activities, including in 2017. The continued disturbances and human influences on the site could affect any intact cultural resources on the site and the potential to encounter new significant cultural resources.

Discussion

a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

At this time there are no known historical resources in the project site; however, a cultural resources investigation for this project site has not been completed. Should this project proceed, there is a potential for significant impacts on historical resources. The application of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 included in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR would reduce these impacts to less-than-significant levels. The proposed project involves ground disturbance, which presents the possibility of unearthing historical resources that were previously not identified. Should previously unidentified historical resources be discovered as a result of proposed ground disturbance, a significant impact would result, and mitigation measures CUL-1 and CUL-5 as included in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR, in addition to new mitigation measure CUL-7, would reduce this impact to less-than-significant levels.

Mitigation Measure CUL-7: Conduct Cultural Resources Inventory and Assessment

San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley District), or other implementing entity for the project, will prepare a cultural resources inventory and assessment for the project site to identify any potential historical resources. The inventory and assessment would ensure that construction would not result in significant impacts on historical resources that would result

from construction and operation of the proposed project. This assessment would include the following, at a minimum:

- Project description
- Project location maps, regional vicinity, and location
- Regulatory guidelines for determining significance
- Existing conditions
- Background (pre-contact context and post-contact context, ethnographic affiliation)
- Methodology
- Sacred Lands Records search results
- Cultural resources records search results
- Survey results
- Management recommendations

b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

At this time there are no known archaeological resources in the project site, but at the time of this report no cultural resources investigation has been conducted at this time. Should this project proceed there is a potential for significant impacts on archaeological resources. With implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 included in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR, impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels. The proposed project involves ground disturbance, which presents the possibility of unearthing historical resources that were previously not identified. Should previously unidentified historical resources be discovered as a result of proposed ground disturbance, a significant impact would result, and mitigation measures CUL-1 and CUL-5 included in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR and new mitigation measure CUL-7 would mitigate this impact to less-than-significant levels.

c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

No known human remains are located in the vicinity of the proposed project area. Because the proposed project would involve ground-disturbing activities in the vicinity of archaeological sites, it is possible that such actions could unearth, expose, or disturb previously unknown human remains. Mitigation measure CUL-6 included in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR would ensure that impacts on human remains would be less than significant.

VI. Energy

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
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?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact with no mitigation required for energy resources. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

The electricity is produced from a variety of sources, including natural gas, oil, coal, hydroelectric, wind, and solar (City of Riverside 2007). Energy resource such as natural gas and electricity for city residents are delivered by the Gas Company and Southern California Edison. Both entities are regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission.

Discussion

a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

The proposed Evans Creek project would require the use of fossil fuels for heavy construction equipment and materials processing, and the consumption or destruction of other nonrenewable or slowly renewable resources. The amount of fuel and construction materials used for the project would not result in a significant impact. However, the operation of proposed restoration activities associated with the project would be considered passive use and would not require electricity. No additional impacts on energy sources are anticipated. Energy consumption during construction and operation would not substantially contribute to an increase in energy and therefore would not substantially affect local and regional energy supplies or result in wasteful or inefficient use of energy. Impacts would be less than significant.

Therefore, impacts due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources would be less than significant.

b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

The proposed Evans Creek project would use a minimal amount of energy during construction and maintenance, which would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. No impact is expected.

VII. Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:					
1. 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.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
2. Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
4. 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 an onsite or offsite 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

		Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
e.	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems in areas where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
f.	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact, a less-than-significant impact, or a less-than-significant impact with mitigation incorporated for geology, soils, seismicity, and paleontological resources. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in no impact or less-than-significant impacts; however, Alternative B would also result in impacts that would be reduced to a less-than-significant level only with incorporation of additional mitigation not previously identified in the DEIR. This additional mitigation is further described below (mitigation measure GEO-3).

Affected Environment

The proposed Evans Creek project is located within the city of Riverside, which lies within the northern end of the Peninsular Ranges, approximately 12 miles south of the intersection with the Transverse Range. The Santa Ana Mountains are approximately 15 miles south and southwest of the city of Riverside, while the San Jacinto Mountains are approximately 10 miles east and northeast of the city of Riverside. The San Bernardino Mountains are about 20 miles north of the city. A series of hills and small mountains surround the project area. These hills and mountains are between the two dominant San Jacinto and Santa Ana mountain ranges. They include La Sierra/Norco Hills, Mount Rubidoux, Box Springs Mountains, Sycamore Canyon, and the many smaller ranges south of the city. Within the city of Riverside, surface elevations range from about 700 feet above mean sea level near the Santa Ana River to over 1,400 feet above mean seal level west of La Sierra. The highest point in the southern portion of the City of Riverside's Sphere of Influence as defined by the General Plan (City of Riverside 2007a) is Arlington Mountain, standing at 1,853 feet above mean seal level approximately 1.5 miles northwest of Lake Mathews. Additionally, portions of Box Springs Mountain Reserve in the northern portion of the City of Riverside's Sphere of Influence area extend as high as 2,000 feet.

The proposed Evans Creek project area is entirely within Quaternary alluvium (Qa).

No Fault-Rupture Hazard Zone, as designated by the California Department of Conservation, Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone (California Department of Conservation 2010) exists within the proposed project area. However, the city of Riverside is in a region with several active fault lines including the San Jacinto and Elsinore faults. The San Andreas fault lies in the County of San Bernardino northeast of the project site (City of Riverside 2007b).

Paleontological resources are the fossilized biotic remains of ancient environments. They are valued for the information they yield about the history of the earth and its past ecological settings. The proposed project area is classified as low potential for finding paleontological resources according to the County of Riverside General Plan Paleontological Sensitivity Model (County of Riverside 2015). Riverside County has an extensive record of fossil life starting in the Jurassic period, 150 million years ago.

Discussion

a. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

1. 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.

No Fault-Rupture Hazard Zones, as designated by the California Department of Conservation's Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones (2010), exist in the proposed Evans Creek project site. There are no known seismic faults within the city of Riverside.

However, the project area is in a region with several active fault lines including the San Jacinto and Elsinore faults. The San Andreas fault lies in the County of San Bernardino northeast of the project site and would not pose a fault-rupture risk to the site due to distance. While the potential earthquake risk is considered low, regional faults such as the Rialto-Colton, San Jacinto, and Chino faults, as well as the more distant San Andreas fault, pose earthquake risks to western Riverside County.

The Evans Creek project site is not mapped on the California Geological Survey's Earthquake Fault Zone regulatory maps, including Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning maps. However, the proposed project is in the vicinity of several active fault lines including the San Jacinto and Elsinore faults. No structures are proposed as part of the project. Because no known active faults traverse the project area, fault rupture is unlikely to occur during implementation of the proposed project. Additionally, the project area is not within a State of California Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Hazard Zone (California Department of Conservation 2010), and project features do not include the addition of new structures meant for human occupancy within 50 feet of the nearest fault. As such, people or structures would not be exposed to substantial adverse effects from a rupture of a known earthquake fault. No impact would occur.

2. Strong seismic ground shaking?

As with most Southern California regions, the proposed Evans Creek project site would be subject to strong ground shaking in the event of a major earthquake. Three major fault zones and some subordinate fault zones are found in the Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic

Province where the proposed project is located. The project areas have a potential for strong seismic ground shaking according to the State of California Seismic Safety Commission map "Earthquake Shaking Potential for the Los Angeles Metropolitan Region, Counties, Summer, 2003" (http://ssc.ca.gov/forms_pubs/la_county_print.pdf). This map shows the relative intensity of ground shaking and damage in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan region from anticipated future earthquakes. As a result, the proposed project could be subject to future seismic shaking and strong ground motion resulting from seismic activity, and damage could occur.

Due to the nature of the proposed project, it is not expected to draw a substantial amount of people, either during project implementation activities or permanently. No structures intended for human occupation (or otherwise) would be built, and the potential risk to people as a result of strong seismic ground shaking would be extremely limited, while potential impacts on property would not occur. As a result, the project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving strong seismic ground shaking. Impacts would be less than significant.

3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Liquefaction occurs when saturated, low-density, loose materials (e.g., sand or silty sand) are weakened and transformed from a solid to a near-liquid state as a result of increased pore water pressure. The increase in pressure is caused by strong ground motion from an earthquake. Liquefaction more often occurs in areas underlain by silts and fine sands and where shallow groundwater exists. According to the City of Riverside General Plan Environmental Impact Report (City of Riverside 2007b, Figure PS-2, Liquefaction Zones), the major geologic hazards associated with ground shaking include liquefaction and ground failure.

Implementation of the proposed project would not expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects from seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. The proposed project is not expected to draw a substantial amount of people, either during project implementation activities or permanently. Furthermore, no structures intended for human occupation or residence would be built and the potential risk to people as a result of ground failure or liquefaction would be extremely limited, while potential impacts on property would not occur. As a result, impacts would be less than significant.

4. Landslides?

According to the City of Riverside General Plan Environmental Impact Report (2007b), seismically induced landslides and rockfalls would be expected in the Santa Ana River floodplain in the event of a major earthquake or substantial ground disturbance caused by human activity. Strong ground motions can also worsen existing unstable slope conditions, particularly if coupled with saturated ground conditions. Factors contributing to the stability of slopes include slope height and steepness, engineering characteristics of the earth materials composing the slope, and intensity of ground shaking. A ground acceleration of at least 0.10 gravitational acceleration (g) in steep terrain is necessary to induce earthquake-related rockfalls, although exceeding this value does not guarantee that rockfalls would occur. Because there are several faults capable of generating peak ground accelerations of over 0.10 g in Riverside County, there is a high potential for seismically induced rockfalls and landslides to occur. Construction crews and other onsite personnel

could be exposed to landslide risk during project construction and maintenance. However, the proposed project is not expected to draw a substantial amount of people, either during project implementation activities or permanently as recreational use is intermittent and of short duration. These impacts would be less than significant.

b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

There is potential for soil erosion or the loss of topsoil from restoration activities, but controls on erosion and runoff implemented during construction and the vegetation establishment periods would avoid or minimize adverse impacts. This work proposes to restore areas with existing erosion, debris, and sedimentation issues, with the intent of leading to less erosion or siltation on site or off site when compared to existing conditions. Restoration and mitigation activities would include the construction of 1,000 feet of new bank, a new riparian corridor, added channel bed complexity and a fish passage, which are designed to substantially reduce erosion relative to existing conditions. Restoration and mitigation activities would also include removal of invasive and nonnative plant species that could temporarily contribute to soil erosion or the loss of topsoil during and immediately following removal. Erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) would be put in place to limit erosion and prevent sediment impacts on adjacent aquatic habitat through compliance with the State Water Resources Control Board's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Constructions and Land Disturbance Activities. Any restoration efforts and introduction of hydrology would need to account for the minimal gradient change from upstream to downstream. In addition, any soil that is removed due to grading activities would need to be placed strategically on site where it would not negatively affect resources or hauled off site. As a result, impacts would be less than significant.

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 an onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

The entire proposed Evans Creek project site is located in Quaternary alluvium (Qa). The project would not result in landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse because project activities include stabilization of site conditions and any existing erosive banks. As a result, impacts would be less than significant (Dibblee and Minch 2004).

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?

Implementation of the proposed project would not create substantial risks to life or property as a result of expansive soils. Expansive soils are fine-grained soils (generally high-plasticity clays) that can undergo a significant increase in volume with an increase in water content as well as a significant decrease in volume with a decrease in water content. Changes in the water content of highly expansive soils can result in severe distress for structures constructed on or against the soils. However, due to the nature of the proposed project, it is not expected to draw a substantial amount of people, either during project implementation activities or permanently as recreational use is intermittent and of short duration. Furthermore, no structures intended for human occupation would be built; therefore, potential risk to people would be extremely limited, while potential impacts on property would not occur. As a result, impacts would be less than significant.

e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems in areas where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?

The project would not include any installation or use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. No impact would occur.

f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Most of the project area is underlain by younger Quaternary deposits, which contain a low sensitivity for paleontological resources. The County of Riverside Paleontological Sensitivity Model indicates that the Evans Creek project location is in an area of Low Potential for paleontological resources. However, at the time of this evaluation, the proposed project area has not been studied for paleontological resources. The proposed project would involve ground disturbance which presents the possibility of unearthing paleontological resources that were not previously identified. Should previously unidentified historical resources be discovered as a result of proposed ground disturbance, a significant impact would result, mitigation measures GEO-1, and GEO-2, as included in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR, in addition to new mitigation measure GEO-3, would mitigate this impact to less-than-significant levels.

Mitigation Measure GEO-3: Conduct Paleontological Resources Inventory and Assessment

Valley District, or other implementing entity for the project, will prepare a Paleontological Resources Inventory and assessment for the project to identify any potential paleontological resources. The inventory and assessment would ensure that construction would not result in significant impacts on paleontological resources as a result of construction. This assessment would include the following, at a minimum:

- Project description
- Project location maps, regional vicinity, and location
- Background information
- Geology of the area
- Paleontology of the area
- Regulatory guidelines
- Paleontological records search
- Survey results
- Paleontological significance and rating
- Management recommendations

VIII. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

		Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:						
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?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

GHGs are gases that absorb infrared radiation in the atmosphere. This absorption traps heat, maintaining the Earth's surface temperature at level higher than would be the case in the absence of GHGs, leading to many disruptions to natural earth processes. GHGs include water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), perfluorocarbons, hydrofluorocarbons, and halogenated chlorofluorocarbons. The primary GHGs associated with the project are CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O.

A variety of legislation has been enacted at the state level related to climate change and achieving statewide GHG emissions reductions from all sectors of the economy. Assembly Bill (AB) 32 (2006) codified the state's GHG emissions targets and requires CARB to implement emission limits, regulations, and other measures to reduce statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. CARB adopted the Climate Change Scoping Plan (Scoping Plan) in December 2008, which outlines measures for meeting the 2020 GHG emissions reduction limits. Senate Bill (SB) 32 was signed in 2016 and expands on AB 32, requiring CARB to ensure statewide emissions are reduced to at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The most recent Scoping Plan update was released in 2016, and outlines policies and actions for the state's 2030 GHG emissions target, as outlined in SB 32.

The State CEQA Guidelines require lead agencies to describe, calculate, or estimate the amount of GHG emissions that would result from a project. Section 15064.4 calls for a good-faith effort when describing, calculating, or estimating GHG emissions. Section 15064.4 also states that a determination of the significance of GHG impacts should consider whether the project would

increase or reduce GHG emissions, exceed a locally applicable threshold of significance, or comply with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions. However, the revised guidelines do not require or recommend a specific analysis methodology or provide quantitative criteria for determining the significance of GHG emissions and the guidelines confirm that lead agencies have the discretion to determine appropriate significance thresholds. The revised guidelines also state that preparation of an environmental impact report is required if "there is substantial evidence that the possible effects of a particular project are still cumulatively considerable notwithstanding compliance with adopted regulations or requirements" (Section 15064.4).

Discussion

a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

The main source of GHG emissions associated with the proposed project would be related to combustion of fossil fuels during the restoration construction activities from use of heavy construction equipment, trucks to haul material and equipment, and construction-related passenger vehicle trips. The proposed project would restore previously natural and riparian areas on a heavily disturbed site adjacent to the Santa Ana River. Because the project proposes to enhance, rehabilitate, and re-establish hydrological processes, vegetation communities, and wildlife habitats, operation of the proposed project is expected to be aligned with local and statewide efforts to increase carbon sequestration, and is therefore not expected to generate GHG emissions. Project emissions are not expected to exceed SCAQMD's bright-line screening threshold or be inconsistent with state plans, GHG emissions produced by the project would are expected to result in a less-than-significant impact.

b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

As discussed above, AB 32 and SB 32 codified the state's GHG emissions reduction targets for 2020 and 2030, respectively. These documents identified the acceptable level of GHG emissions in California needed to reach these targets, and represent the most applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions.

GHG emissions from the proposed project would be related to short-term construction activities and are not expected to exceed the relevant significance thresholds. Current recreational uses on the site would continue after project implementation. The project would not conflict with implementation of regional plans enacted to reduce GHG emissions. No impact would occur.

IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

		Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:						
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 involve handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
d.	Be located on a site that 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.	Be located within an airport land use plan area or, where such a plan has not been adopted, be within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and 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?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

		Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
g.	Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact for hazards and hazardous materials. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

A hazardous material is any material that because of its quality, concentration or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant potential hazard to human health or safety or to the environment. Hazardous materials are used in urban areas for a variety of purposes. The most common large users include manufacturers, medical clinics, agriculture, dry cleaners, pest controllers, film processors, and automotive related business.

Large users and transporters of hazardous materials are monitored and regulated by EPA and other federal, state, and county regulatory agencies, such as the California Department of Toxic Substances Control and the Riverside Fire Department.

EPA has identified a total of 13 sites in the city of Riverside and within its sphere of influence on its 2017 Toxic Release Inventory database. These are sites that are known to release toxic chemicals into the air. EPA's Toxic Release Inventory reporting program closely monitors the emissions from these facilities to ensure that their annual limits allowed under federal regulations are not exceeded and that public health and safety are protected.

Given the city of Riverside's proximity to the Santa Ana River and the city's heavy reliance upon local groundwater basins for drinking water, improper use and disposal of hazardous materials poses a significant threat. Sources of possible contaminants include septic systems, composting activities, and business practices. At present, the water supplied by the Riverside Public Utilities Department (RPU) typically meets or exceeds state and federal water regulations and guidelines. RPU staff monitors the quality of the water supply and complies with state and federal regulatory activity requirements (City of Riverside 2007).

Discussion

a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Construction of the proposed Evans Creek project would involve the transport, use, and disposal of materials such as fuel, solvents, chemicals, and oils associated with operating construction equipment. Such transport, use, and disposal must be compliant with applicable regulations such as the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, which regulates the generation, transport, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste; Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations, which cover all aspects of hazardous materials packaging, handling, and transportation; and the local Certified Unified Program Agency regulations. Although small amounts of fuel, solvents, chemicals, and oils would be transported, used, and disposed of during the construction phase, these materials are typically used in construction projects and would not represent the transport, use, and disposal of acutely hazardous materials.

Even though no transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials is associated with the project, there is potential for transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during construction. However, compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, in combination with construction BMPs implemented from a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), would ensure that all hazardous materials are transported, used, stored, and disposed properly, which would minimize a significant hazard to the public during the construction phase of the project. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

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?

The Evans Creek project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and access conditions. No impact would occur.

c. Emit hazardous emissions or involve handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

No hazardous emissions or handling hazardous materials is proposed at the proposed Evans Creek project site. There is potential for hazardous emissions or handling of hazardous materials, such as gas, oil, hydraulic fluid, degreaser, etc. from construction equipment. Bryant Elementary School is located within one-third mile of the project site, but no other schools are located within one-quarter mile of any of the other restoration sites. The proposed project would not emit hazardous emissions or involve handling of hazardous materials or waste, but there is a potential for hazardous emissions or handling of hazardous materials from construction equipment. The impact would be considered less than significant.

d. Be located on a site that 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?

The proposed Evans Creek project is not located on a site that is included on list of hazardous materials. No impact would occur.

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

The Riverside Municipal Airport is approximately 3.5 miles to the southwest and Flabob Airport is approximately 0.5 mile to the west of the Evans Creek project. The proposed project would involve restoration and enhancement of the native habitat within the boundaries of the restoration site and, thus, would not include elevated features that could interfere with navigable airspace. Site preparation, planting, and maintenance and monitoring activities would have no effect on air traffic patterns. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns or result in a safety hazard for people working in the project area. No residences are proposed as part of the project so the project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing in the project area. During construction and maintenance of the proposed project, workers would be subject to safety hazards due to prolonged daily presence within the Flight Corridor Buffers and Airport Influence Areas. This impact would be temporary and would be considered less than significant.

f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

The proposed Evans Creek project would not impair the implementation of physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No impact would occur.

g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?

The project site is heavily used by the homeless population in the area. Wildland fires are common in the Santa Ana River Watershed both from natural causes, arson, and unintended incidents. This poses a substantial risk to restoration performed on site, as human use at this level is difficult to control without support from the local community, fire protection, and law enforcement, but no additional risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires over existing conditions. The restoration work could potentially reduce the incidences of arson from displacement of the existing homeless population. Additionally, there would be no significant increase in naturally-caused fires due to maintaining similar natural open and recreational spaces as exists currently at the site. Neighboring residences are expected to remain in the project vicinity, but there is no additional risk to these areas introduced by the project since the project area would maintain the area as natural open space. Because there would be no exposure to significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, and the project would not exacerbate wildfire risk because similar natural, open spaces would be maintained as currently exists in the area and no permanent placement of people or structures in the project area are proposed, impacts would be less than significant.

X. Hydrology and Water Quality

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater 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 that would:					
1. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site;	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
2. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site;	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
3. Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
4. Impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

		Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
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?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact for hydrology and water quality. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

The watershed area upstream of Evans Lake is approximately 9 square miles with two major drainage channels, Spring Brook Wash and University Wash, providing most of the runoff to Evans Lake. These channels were constructed by USACE and are maintained by Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. Locally high groundwater elevations likely supported the lake's water historically but with the declines in groundwater levels, the lake's water is now maintained by pumping from wells to support recreation.

Hydrology of the site has been severely manipulated over the last century. Prior to construction of Fairmount Park and Evans Lake, sometime prior to 1931, Spring Brook Wash ran through the Evans Creek site unhindered (as can be seen in 1942 and earlier U.S. Geological Survey topography maps) (Valley District 2019). Groundwater levels of the wash were likely near the surface or artesian and the site may have served as seasonal spawning and rearing habitat for Santa Ana sucker (Valley District 2019). Portions of the site were also within the floodplain of the Santa Ana River, as shown in the 1931 historic imagery (Valley District 2019) and likely received flood flows from the river in larger storm events, depending on the size of the storm and the location of the primary channel in relation to the Evans Creek site at the time of the storm. Currently, the site's hydrology is manipulated and dependent on outflows from Evans Lake, which is maintained by pumping groundwater into the lake, and flows from Spring Brook Wash through the culvert in the spillway channel. In addition, the Santa Ana River levee is now located toward the western end of the site and the Santa Ana River is completely cut off from the site. As such, re-establishing the site to historic hydrologic and hydraulic conditions is not possible.

Primary inputs to the site are from three sources: a culvert that carries flows from Spring Brook Wash into the spillway channel; a spillway/low water crossing over Dexter Drive that feeds the

spillway channel and spills during storm events, both of which are located at the northeastern end of the site; and a riser/outflow box within Evans Lake that carries flows into the low-flow channel at the southeastern end of the site. Flows in the site are likely perennial (or at least intermittent) due to the developed watershed upstream and urban runoff, and during August and October 2018 site visits, water was seen flowing in both channels. However, flows are likely not consistent or predictable throughout the year and may be reduced in the low-flow channel if the lake level drops below the elevation of the outflow box or the box is not functioning properly. Inconsistent and potentially reduced flows can create problems when trying to create habitat for the Santa Ana sucker. Therefore, as discussed previously, a groundwater pump and well are proposed to provide additional flows. However, there may be some potential issues with providing a source of water that is controlled via machinery or a structure. In addition, constructing a fish passage at the Santa Ana River levee that works properly to allow sucker and other fish to access the site has some design and hydraulic hurdles that would need to be worked out in further design.

Discussion

a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

There are no pollutant discharges with the project. During construction there would be removal of nonnative plant species and grading work to establish or enhance channels in the restoration areas as well as provide a connection between the channel and floodplain. There would be protections in place to prevent sediment related to construction activities from migrating into stream channels and the Santa Ana River as well as hazardous materials (gasoline, oils, etc.) from construction equipment that could be accidentally released.

The proposed project would disturb over 1 acre of land and is subject to the State Water Resources Control Board's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Constructions and Land Disturbance Activities. This permit requires implementation of BMPs during construction and development of a SWPPP to reduce or eliminate stormwater discharges during construction. In the long term, the restoration work would enhance natural hydrologic function of the site tributaries and establish native vegetation, resulting in improved sediment transport and water quality. As a result, impacts would be less than significant.

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

The restoration activities would include defining channels and drainage patterns to create habitat while enhancing connection to the floodplain to prevent channel downcutting and bank erosion. This could lead to modifying groundwater infiltration during dry-weather and wet-weather conditions. Channelizing poorly defined flow paths to create fish habitat even in dry-weather conditions could result in decreased localized groundwater infiltration. By creating streams and drainage patterns to provide adequate depths and velocities for fish habitat, water would be efficiently conveyed downstream and water could infiltrate into the ground. Overall groundwater infiltration would likely increase compared to existing conditions by the proposed restoration of floodplain connectivity with the channels and establishing new ones in certain areas. Storm flows would be able to spread across a wider area and infiltrate throughout the restoration area instead of being confined to a steep narrow channel and conveyed downstream as currently exists at the site.

Establishing native plant species throughout the restoration area would potentially increase groundwater recharge as well. Typically plant species native to Southern California use water more efficiently than nonnative species and could increase the availability of shallow groundwater in the project area. A less-than-significant impact would occur.

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 that would:

1. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?

The proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact on hydrology and water quality. There would be additional restoration and site improvements at the Evans Creek site and thus changes to the existing drainage patterns of the site would occur, which could also contribute positive benefits to the existing drainage systems associated with the Upper Santa Ana River. Evans Creek would improve the condition of the Upper Santa Ana River habitat through restoration and mitigation activities at five instead of four sites aimed at improving site conditions and hydrology, although the Upper Santa Ana River watershed would continue to experience those challenges noted previously. This project would result in greater surface water quality impacts during construction and the need for groundwater, but would also benefit hydrology and water quality in the long term.

The proposed project is located within the historic Santa Ana River floodplain and is low gradient with undulating surface topography as a result of historic flood flows as well as human activities including foot trails. Any restoration efforts and alteration of local hydrology would need to account for the minimal gradient change from upstream to downstream.

The proposed project would enhance resiliency to channel erosion and provide connectivity to floodplain areas. By reducing channel downcutting and bank erosion, the proposed project would reduce erosion and siltation both onsite and downstream. Existing channels within the restoration areas are deeper and more confined than the proposed restored channels, which would have enhanced bank stabilization and floodplain connectivity in certain areas to address the existing channel downcutting and bank erosion issues.

Additionally, there would be the construction of 1,000 feet of new bank, and revegetation work in select highly erosive areas as well as at the confluence between the Santa Ana River and the disturbed tributaries within the restoration areas. This work proposes to restore areas with substantial existing erosion, debris, and sedimentation issues, with the intent of leading to less erosion or siltation onsite or offsite when compared to existing conditions. A less-than-significant impact would occur.

2. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on or off site?

During construction, the drainage pattern of the site or area may be temporarily altered and could result in local (on-site) and temporary flooding. However, implementation of the SWPPP would reduce the potential for flooding on site/off site as a result of altering existing drainage patterns. As part of the SWPPP, runoff control measures, such as stream diversions, would be implemented during construction. Furthermore, efforts would be made to conduct the majority of land-disturbing work outside of the typical wet season and minimize the potential for large rain events to flood the project construction area. Following construction and other ground-

disturbing activities such as floodplain enhancement, drainage patterns would be restored and improved. As a result, the proposed project would not result in substantial alteration of existing drainage patterns in a manner that would result in flooding on site or off site, and impacts would be considered less than significant.

The proposed project would alter the existing drainage pattern in certain parts of the site through the alteration of stream courses, but not in a manner that would result in flooding during project operation. Habitat for native species would be created by restoring existing channels and establish new ones in certain areas. In both cases local flood conveyance would be improved by making the channel's hydraulic capacity more efficient when compared to its existing degraded state. No new flows would be introduced to the area. The restoration project areas are within the floodplain of the Santa Ana River, and would improve the site's capacity to absorb flood flows prior to discharging into the Santa Ana River, similar to natural historical conditions within the watershed. A less-than-significant impact would occur.

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

The proposed project would not create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of stormwater systems or provide a substantial additional source of polluted runoff. The proposed project would alter the existing drainage pattern in certain parts of the restoration site through the creation of new channel and enhancement of existing channels, but not in a manner that would result in flooding. Alterations to drainage patterns would occur outside of the stormwater drainage system and not introduce new water sources that could overwhelm stormwater infrastructure. The Santa Ana River is the primary discharge point for all altered drainage patterns in the restoration areas and stormwater infrastructure is not relied upon to convey stormwater from the restoration areas to the Santa Ana River. Most of the alterations occur in natural areas without any planned or existing stormwater infrastructure. No water sources that could contain polluted runoff are included in the project. No impact would occur.

4. Impede or redirect flood flows?

No permanent structures are proposed as part of the project that would impede or redirect flood flows. Restoring floodplain connectivity would enhance natural flood-carrying functions of restoration areas and new channels that would serve to lower flood elevations. The restoration areas are within the 100-year flood hazard area of the Santa Ana River and the proposed bank stabilization and channel restoration work that feeds into the Santa Ana River would have a negligible or positive effect on the Santa Ana River 100-year flood hazard area.

All future flooding would occur within the designated restoration areas that all have land uses compatible with flooding. Flood flow paths would continue to follow the same alignment as they currently do and no infrastructure would be put at additional risk of flooding due to the project. Because the proposed project would not result in the placement of structures that would impede or redirect flood flows within a 100-year flood hazard area, impacts would be less than significant.

d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

The proposed Evans Creek project would not release pollutants due to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. The Santa Ana River and nearby tributaries are not currently subject to inundation by seiche or tsunami; therefore, the project would have no impact. The project would include restoration and mitigation work that would stabilize degraded river banks and improve resiliency to flooding as compared to existing conditions. No impact would occur.

e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

The Santa Ana Region Basin Plan applies to the project site. The proposed project would not introduce any new pollutant sources that could degrade water quality within the Santa Ana River or its tributaries. The proposed project would include floodplain construction in channel reaches that would allow flood water flow improvements, thereby reducing the flow's energy and reducing the potential for future channel incision and bank erosion. As a result, the proposed project would result in a reduction of erosion and sedimentation compared to existing conditions and would have a positive effect on water quality within the site. The project would create conditions for more natural function within the restoration area with interactions between floodplain and channel that do not currently exist. This would allow some treatment of stormwater during rain events from riparian vegetation as the flood flows over onto the newly created floodplain and riparian areas. Overall, the proposed project would result in a positive effect on water quality. As such, the proposed Evans Creek project would not conflict or obstruct with implementation of water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. No impact would occur.

XI. Land Use and Planning

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
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?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in no impact for land use and planning. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in no impact.

Affected Environment

The Evans Lake project site is located within the city of Riverside, Riverside County, California, north of Mission Inn Avenue, east of the Santa Ana River and west of Lake Evans. The project site is 115 acres in area and is within the Santa Ana River Floodplain. The project site is within Fairmount Park and the surrounding area consistent of urban development (residential uses) and the Santa Ana River. The Santa Ana River Trail runs adjacent to the project site and provide access to the area. Fairmount Park and Evans Lake lie to the northeast of the site, which supports fishing, small non-motorized boating, and general recreation. To the south of the site lies an asphalt walking/bike trail and to the west of the site lies the Santa Ana River levee and bike bath. In addition, the Santa Ana River levee and bike trail along with the culverts beneath are currently located at the downstream end of the site. These structures have created a significant barrier to native fish and invertebrates from moving between the site and the Santa Ana River.

The proposed project area is designated as Open Space/Natural Resources (OS) in the city of Riverside General Plan (City of Riverside 2018, Figure LU-10, Land Use Policy Map) and zoned by the City as PF (Public Facilities). Table LU-5 in the City of Riverside General Plan Land Use and Urban Design Element (City of Riverside 2018) indicates the correlation between land use designations and zoning designations and these two designations are considered to be consistent.

Discussion

a. Physically divide an established community?

The proposed Evans Creek project site would not physically divide an established community. The proposed project would restore and enhance the site currently use for and designated for open space, natural resources and public facilities (recreational uses). While some areas of the proposed project are adjacent to established residential communities, no new urban development is proposed as part of the project. The site would remain as undeveloped, natural, open spaces with only minimal other development that would support the restoration, mitigation, recreation, and education functions of the proposed project. No structures that could divide an established community are proposed. No impact would occur.

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?

The proposed Evans Creek project would not cause a significant environmental impact or conflict with any land use plan, policy or regulation adopted for purposes of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The proposed project would be consistent with the City of Riverside General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Creation, enhancement, mitigation, and restoration of native habitat areas within the project site are considered to be consistent with the City of Riverside's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance for open space, natural resources and public facilities designed land uses. No changes to existing designations or zoning are proposed. No impact is expected.

XII. Mineral Resources

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
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?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in no impact for mineral resources. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in no impact.

Affected Environment

The proposed Evans Creek project is located in the city of Riverside. According to the City of Riverside General Plan and Supporting Documents Environmental Impact Report (City of Riverside 2007), the project is located in an area classified as MRZ-2 (adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or there is a high likelihood for their presence and development should be controlled). Valuable mineral resources in the region include granitic rock (gr) and deposits of other rock products including feldspar, silica, and limestone. While the quarrying of gr was a significant industry in Riverside historically, these operations have not been active for decades.

Discussion

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?

The proposed project is in an area that is known or inferred to contain significant mineral resources (MRZ-2); however, is not in production for any resources. The proposed General Plan Land Use Policy Map provides for the preservation of the majority of MRZ-2 land as either open space or parks/recreation, both of which do not preclude mining activities. The proposed project site is designated as a park and open space. The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource. No impact would occur.

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?

The proposed project is in an area that is known or inferred to contain significant mineral resources (MRZ-2); however, is not in production for any resources. The proposed project site is designated as a park and open space. The project site would remain as undeveloped, natural, open spaces with only minimal other development that would support the restoration, enhancement, recreational and educational function of the project. The project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site as identified in the City of Riverside General Plan. No impact would occur.

XIII. Noise

		Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:						
a.	Generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in a local general plan or noise ordinance or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
b.	Generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
c.	Be 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 and expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either less-than-significant impacts or a less-than-significant impact after mitigation for noise. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in a less-than-significant impact with incorporation of mitigation previously identified in the DEIR. No additional mitigation measures would be required to mitigate impacts associated with Alternative B.

Affected Environment

The proposed Evans Creek project is within the city of Riverside and is subject to local standards and guidelines including the City of Riverside General Plan (City of Riverside 2007a) and the City of Riverside Municipal Code (Title 7, *Noise Control)*. The project vicinity is subject to typical urban and suburban noises, such as noise generated by traffic, rail, aircraft, heavy machinery, and day-to-day outdoor activities. *Ambient noise* at a given location or area is the cumulative effect of noise from transportation activities and stationary sources. *Transportation noise* refers to noise from automobile use, trucking, airport operations, and rail operations. *Non-transportation noise* typically refers to noise from stationary sources such as commercial establishments, machinery, air conditioning systems, compressors, and landscape maintenance equipment. Regardless of the type

of noise, the noise levels are highest near the source and decrease with distance. Noise is most often defined as unwanted sound. Although sound can be easily measured, the perceptibility is subjective and the physiological response to sound complicates the analysis of its impact on people. People judge the relative magnitude of sound sensation in subjective terms such as "noisiness" or "loudness." Sound pressure magnitude is measured and quantified using a logarithmic ratio of pressures, the scale of which gives the level of sound in decibels (dB). The human hearing system is not equally sensitive to sound at all frequencies. Therefore, to approximate this human, frequency-dependent response, the A-weighting filter system is used to adjust measured sound levels and is expressed as dBA (City of Riverside General Plan 2007a).

The proposed project is located in the Santa Ana River floodplain, which is designated as Open Space/Natural Resources in the City of Riverside's General Plan. As detailed in the project description, the proposed project is located adjacent to or nearby neighboring residences. Residential and recreational areas are considered to be sensitive receptors.

Discussion

a. Generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in a local general plan or noise ordinance or applicable standards of other agencies?

Construction noise from the proposed project would be temporary and thus not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project. After completion of the restoration and mitigation activities, the proposed project is not anticipated to generate any persistent operational noise or increase traffic in the area in excess of current recreational uses on the site. The proposed maintenance or repair of public properties and are subject to the City's operational noise limits. Long-term maintenance activities and associated noise impacts would be intermittent in nature, occurring periodically in project areas, and would not involve heavy equipment. The only permanent noise source what would potentially be introduced as a result of the project would be a groundwater pump. The pump would operate up to 24 hours a day and would affect the most noise-sensitive periods (nighttime and weekends) when other ambient sources are typically lowest. The implementation of improvement measure NOI-1 and mitigation measures NOI-1 and NOI-2 included in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR would reduce the noise impacts. Therefore, permanent noise impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

b. Generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Construction noise and groundborne vibration from the proposed project would be temporary and thus not result in a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project. After completion of the restoration improvements and construction of recreational amenities, the proposed project is not anticipated to generate any persistent operational vibration in the area. Long-term maintenance activities and associated vibration impacts would be intermittent in nature, occurring periodically in project areas, and would not involve heavy equipment. Therefore, permanent ground-borne noise and vibration impacts would be less than significant.

c. Be 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 and expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

The Riverside Municipal Airport is approximately 3.5 miles to the southwest and Flabob Airport is approximately 0.5 mile to the west of the Evans Creek project. The proposed project would involve restoration and enhancement of the native habitat within the boundaries of the restoration site and, thus, would not include elevated features that could interfere with navigable airspace. Site preparation, planting, and maintenance and monitoring activities would have no effect on air traffic patterns. Due to the proximity of the nearby airports, there is a potential for people working on the project (during construction and maintenance) to be exposed to elevated noise levels from aircraft operations; however, the exposure would be temporary and short term. The project would not cause any alteration to existing airport noise levels and would not construct any new homes or other noise-sensitive structures. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

XIV. Population and Housing

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
a. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Displace a substantial number of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact for population and housing. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact.

Affected Environment

The proposed project is located within the floodplain of the Santa Ana River and is designated as Open Space/Natural Resources area per the City of Riverside General Plan 2025 (2007a). The area surrounding the project is medium density residential housing with some industrial and business uses to the south of the proposed project site. There are currently no existing housing structures within the project site. However, there have been homeless encampments established within the floodplain.

Discussion

a. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

The proposed project would not substantially induce unplanned population growth in the area. There are currently no housing structures within the project site. However, there have been homeless encampments established within the floodplain. The project would not construct any homes or businesses, extend roads, or involve the addition of any other infrastructure that would facilitate population growth. No impact would occur.

b. Displace a substantial number of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The proposed project is not expected to affect population and housing of surrounding areas, as this project would not include removal or construction of any permanent residences. The project area is within public open space areas and is not zoned or designed for residential uses by the City of Riverside. Furthermore, permanent housing would not be allowed within the proposed Evans Creek site or within Fairmount Park. However, the area is populated with temporary homeless encampments constructed in public open space areas. The exact number of homeless populations within the Evans Creek site is unknown and likely changes as the populations move about for different purposes or due to weather conditions.

On December 21, 2017, wildfire erupted under the Mission Inn Avenue Bridge, directly affecting the proposed project site. Numerous properties were threatened by the 50-acre blaze, which forced the evacuation of dozens of nearby homes before it was contained hours later. A homeless cooking fire was believed to be the source of this fire (mynewsLA.com 2018). There have been several attempts to relocate transient populations from the Santa Ana River bottom, but the area continues to draw many chronically homeless people to the site.

In addition to transient population relocation, substantial cleanup of the trash and other debris left behind as part of these encampments, which contain not only garbage but also structures like trailers, vehicles, solar panels, electronic devices like televisions, fencing materials, and other materials that could pollute the water, would be removed from the project site. For one comprehensive cleanup, the effort would involve trash and hazardous materials removal and the police department if transient populations do not vacate the site of their own accord.

As the proposed project would involve creating and maintaining new and improved natural and aquatic habitat, healthy habitat would be necessary for long-term ecological vitality and restoration success. However, the effort could be impaired by continued human influence and interference as currently exists today. As such, the project includes site cleanup for maintaining the restored project areas of the Santa Ana River and preventing homeless populations from re-establishing new encampments. City of Riverside Public Works staff currently patrols areas along the Santa Ana River approximately twice per week; however, additional patrols would be required to keep the transient population from building structures and creating new encampment sites once the site has been restored.

The complex issue of homeless encampments in open space riparian areas would require the involvement and coordination of multiple local agencies, including the implementation of the "Homeless Taskforce Plan" (Tool H-22; City of Riverside 2007b). Homeless encampment removal is considered a less-than-significant impact because occupation of these public spaces is not allowable under the City of Riverside. Furthermore, as stated in the California Penal Code § 602(k), anything left on public or city property that is unattended or abandoned is tagged for removal with a Notice of Pending Removal for 48 hours.

The removal of unpermitted structures, debris, or materials associated with homeless encampments would be environmentally beneficial for the Santa Ana River Basin, both reducing human hazards and eliminating trash and other sources of waste in and around the area. Relocation of transient individuals, removal of homeless encampments, and cleanup of remaining refuse would be coordinated and conducted by the City of Riverside Office of Homeless Solutions prior to construction. The City of Riverside provides outreach, programs, and resources with the overall goal

of reducing homelessness by providing an array of housing options and programs based on community needs (City of Riverside 2018b). Including the existing local programs, the City of Riverside had almost $1.8 million in homeless services resources funds for the 2017–18 fiscal year (City of Riverside 2017). Given the homeless would be relocated by local jurisdictions and encampments would be removed prior to construction activities, the Evans Creek improvements would result in a less-than-significant impact on homeless populations.

XV. Public Services

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
a. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or a 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 following public services:					
Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact for public services. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

The proposed project is located within the Santa Ana River floodplain. There have been multiple homeless encampments observed within the project boundaries and the site is disturbed with trash, fire, and other forms of illegal human influence. Due to this, the site requires a sporadic need for fire and police services.

The riparian vegetation of the Santa Ana River poses conditions conducive to wildfires. However, the major areas of high-fire risk near the project site include the Santa Ana River Basin, Mount Rubidoux, Lake Hills, Mockingbird Canyon/Monroe Hills, Sycamore Canyon, Box Springs Mountain, and La Sierra/Norco Hills. Development into this natural landscape would increase the potential risk of fire damage to people and personal property. Distribution locations, also known as points of

service delivery, are established to ensure the rapid deployment of fire resources to intervene in routine emergencies and provide the appropriate emergency response. The Evans Creek project locations lie within the City of Riverside Fire Department fire responder Area 1 (City of Riverside Fire Department Standard of Cover, 2017).

Riverside Police Department facilities have largely been centralized, with the headquarters building located at 4102 Orange Street in Downtown Riverside serving as the Department's administrative center and housing the office of the Chief of Police, the administrative division (personnel and training), the records branch, the Communications Bureau and the Community Services Bureau (City of Riverside 2007).

Bryant Elementary School is within 0.5 mile to the east of the Evans Creek project location.

The project is within Fairmount Park and is considered a recreational resource. Mount Rubidoux and Carlson Park are south of the project site.

Discussion

a. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities or a 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 following public services:

Fire protection?

The proposed project would restore native and habitat and remove trash and invasive species. The removal of homeless encampments from the project site would lower the risk of a fire spreading from a homeless encampment, as with the Skirball Fire in Los Angeles (2017), and thus would reduce the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities in the vicinity of the project site. On December 21, 2017, wildfire erupted under the Mission Inn Avenue bridge, directly affecting the proposed project site. Numerous properties were threatened by the 50-acre blaze, which forced the evacuation of dozens of nearby homes before it was contained hours later. A homeless cooking fire was believed to be the source of this fire (mynewsla.com 2018).

The project would reduce the need for new or physically altered fire protection facilities in the vicinity of the project site through the removal of homeless encampments and the potential for human-caused illegal fires occurring on the project site. No buildings or habitable structures that may require fire protection services are proposed. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in an increased need for new or physically altered governmental facilities. No impact would occur.

Police protection?

As discussed above, the proposed project would require the removal of homeless encampments, resulting in the displacement of homeless people to available public facilities or other suitable areas. The removal of the encampments prior to construction activities may require police protection. However, any need for police protection to remove the homeless encampments would not require new or physically altered governmental facility construction to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives because the need would be short term in nature. In the long-term, the proposed project could lower the number of homeless encampments and thus could reduce the need for police protection at or near the project site. Therefore, this project would

not result in adverse physical impacts associated with police protection facilities. A less-than-significant impact would occur.

Schools?

The proposed project would not result in adverse impacts on schools. Impacts on schools are usually associated with population growth due to the development of new housing units which can result in greater demands for school facilities. This project would have no effect on population growth and therefore, no impact on the need for new or physically altered school facilities. No impact would occur.

Parks?

The proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact on parks. Degradation of park facilities is usually associated with population growth, and the proposed project would have no effect on population growth as no new development is proposed. It is possible that use of Fairmount Park facilities, onsite trails and the Santa Ana River bike path could increase due to the enhanced habitat quality of the project area. However, this increase in usage is not expected to result in the increased demand for new or physically altered park facilities that would result in adverse physical impacts on the environment. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant.

Other public facilities?

The proposed project would not result in adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered public facilities. The proposed project would result in improvements to habitat in the Santa Ana River floodplain and improvements to recreational uses on the site. As discussed in the Population and Housing section previously, the proposed project would require site cleanup and the removal of homeless encampments in order to restore the natural areas of the Evans Creek Site and create additional recreational amenities. No impact would occur.

XVI. Recreation

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
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. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact for recreation. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in a less-than-significant impact with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

The Evans Creek site is within Fairmount Park in the city of Riverside, and this recreational resource supports fishing, small non-motorized boating, and general recreation. There is also an undeveloped Boy Scout camp located at the Evans Creek site. To the south of the site lies an asphalt walking/bike trail and to the west of the site lies the Santa Ana River levee and bike path. The Santa Ana River Trail runs adjacent to the west of the project site along the levee.

Discussion

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?

The Evans Creek project site is located along the Santa Ana River in Fairmount Park which is managed by the City of Riverside. The Santa Ana River Trail runs adjacent to the west of the project site along the levee. As discussed in the project description, in coordination with the City of Riverside Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department, recreational and educational amenities would be created at the site to enhance public use of Fairmount Park. The proposed project would involve site improvements to cleanup the project site and these improvements would

not result in substantial physical deterioration. There would be additional recreational uses and opportunities, including the restoration improvement at the Evans Creek site, additional bike and pedestrian access, educational opportunities, and others, as noted in the project description. The proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact and would be an improvement to creational facilities that are available to the adjacent neighborhood and to the larger community.

b. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

The City of Riverside Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department, a partner to the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, proposes to add community facilities within the Evans Creek Site (e.g., a nature trail, amphitheater, archery range, community garden/demonstration farming, group camping, and day use area). These facilities would be constructed outside of the most sensitive areas of the Evans Creek site and many improvements would incorporate community outreach and education about the natural resources of the site. The specific facilities and their location are not known at this time but are currently being developed; however, the City of Riverside Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department has prepared preliminary designs of possible facility locations (Figure 2). The proposed project would result in site improvements that restore biological and aquatic resources. The proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact.

XVII. Transportation

		Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:						
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 State CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
c.	Substantially increase hazards because of a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
d.	Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact for transportation. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impacts with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

The proposed Evans Creek site is in the northwestern portion of Riverside County and adjacent to the Santa Ana River. Mission Inn Avenue, a 110-foot, four-lane arterial road, borders the site to the south and the Santa Ana River is to the west and is considered a scenic boulevard (City of Riverside 2007). The Santa Ana River Trail is adjacent west to the project site. Access to the project site through Fairmount Park is via Dexter Drive north of the Evans Creek site and Scout Lane through the site.

Discussion

a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?

The proposed project would not involve alterations to the existing traffic or circulation system in the project area or nearby communities, although the project would be expected to expand the bike path through the project site and provide additional opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists. Construction activities may temporarily interfere with the Santa Ana River bike path that transects the proposed project restoration site. All construction vehicles interfering with traffic along the bike path would be guided by personnel using signs and flags to direct traffic. Due to the temporary nature of the construction phase of the project, long-term impacts on the flow of bicycle and pedestrian traffic that utilize the bike path would be considered less than significant and an improvement to the site.

b. Conflict or be inconsistent with State CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

State CEQA Guidelines §15064.3(b) generally requires CEQA documents for land use and transportation projects to evaluate impacts of such projects on vehicle miles traveled. This guideline applies prospectively and is effective statewide as of July 2019. As a restoration project, this project does not generate additional operational vehicular traffic and thus does not generate additional vehicle miles traveled.

Short-term traffic associated with project construction is not anticipated to significantly affect the traffic levels of the surrounding areas, as construction vehicles would be mainly contained on site and would not contribute to congestion or the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to the project. As such, short-term impacts would be less than significant. After the completion of the construction activities, the proposed project is not anticipated to generate any significant amount of additional vehicular traffic, similar to current uses, and the amount of vehicle miles traveled would not noticeably change from existing conditions as the project site would continue to be used as a recreational resource. As such, there would be no conflict on inconsistency with State CEQA Guidelines §15064.3, subdivision (b). No impact would occur.

c. Substantially increase hazards because of a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No safety concerns relative to construction activities would be expected due to typical construction signage, flagging, and health and safety construction plans and procedures associated with construction contracts and permit conditions. Active construction activities would maintain access to pedestrians using the Santa Ana River Trail Bike Path and would be planned to minimize impacts. Therefore, short-term impacts would be less than significant and would not have any long-term effect on the use of the bike path by pedestrians or cyclists. After the completion of the restoration activities, the proposed project is not anticipated to generate any additional vehicular traffic and the project would not result in increased hazards or incompatible uses. No change to the local circulation network, including a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment), is anticipated. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

d. Result in inadequate emergency access?

The proposed Evans Creek project would not result in inadequate emergency access or impair emergency access to the project location. Traffic in the surrounding areas is anticipated to be minimal and limited to onsite construction-related equipment entering and exiting the project area. As such, implementation of the project would not result in inadequate access for any emergency response entities. Because no habitable structures or buildings are proposed, and the project would only improve the existing onsite natural habitat, emergency access would be adequate, similar to existing conditions. No impact would occur.

XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B 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:					
a. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in a less-than-significant impact with incorporation of mitigation for tribal cultural resources. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in a less-than-significant impact with incorporation of mitigation previously identified in the DEIR. No additional mitigation measures would be required to mitigate impacts associated with Alternative B.

Affected Environment

The proposed project is in the Santa Ana River floodplain. The City of Riverside General Plan (City of Riverside 2007a) has documented significant tribal and cultural resources within the vicinity of the project. According to the City of Riverside General Plan 2025 Program Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (City of Riverside 2007b), the Evans Creek site is located within an unknown archaeological sensitivity area but is in a medium prehistoric cultural resources sensitivity area. Tribal consultation, a cultural resources records search, sacred lands file search, and cultural resources assessment has not been conducted at the site; however, cultural resources are known to occur in the vicinity of the site through research and a desktop review of the project area.

Discussion

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:

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

At this time there are no known historical resources within the project site; however, tribal consultation or cultural resources investigation has not been completed. Through a screening level review of cultural resources in the project area, there is a potential for significant impacts on historical resources. The application of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 provided in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR would reduce this impact to less-than-significant levels. The proposed project involves ground disturbance, which presents the possibility of unearthing historical resources that were previously not identified. Should previously unidentified historical resources be discovered as a result of proposed ground disturbance, a significant impact would result, and mitigation measures CUL-1 and CUL-6 provided in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR would mitigate potential impacts to less-than-significant levels.

b. 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?

At this time there are no known significant resources within the project site; however, tribal consultation or cultural resources investigation has not been completed. Through a screening level review of cultural resources in the project area, there is a potential for significant impacts on historical resources. The application of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 provided in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR would reduce this impact to less-than-significant levels. The proposed project involves ground disturbance, which presents the possibility of unearthing significant resources that were previously not identified. Should previously unidentified significant resources be discovered as a result of proposed ground disturbance, a significant impact would result, mitigation measures CUL-1 and CUL-6

provided in the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program DEIR would mitigate this impact to less-than-significant levels.

XIX. Utilities and Service Systems

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
Would Alternative B:					
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, stormwater 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 that 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?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact for utilities and service systems. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impact or less-than-significant impacts with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

The City of Riverside established its own water utility, RPU, in 1913. RPU's primary water source comes from local groundwater basins from the Bunker Hill Basin in San Bernardino and Riverside North and South Basins in Riverside. RPU purchases water from Western Municipal Water District (Western), primarily to meet peak water demand during summer months and during emergencies.

Stormwater flows directly into the city's storm drain system, which then discharges into the Santa Ana River. The Santa Ana River drains a watershed of over 2,700 square miles, which includes Orange County, the northwestern corner of Riverside County, the southwestern corner of San Bernardino County, and a small portion of Los Angeles County.

The City of Riverside Public Works Department provides for the collection, treatment, and disposal of all wastewater generated within the city of Riverside, except for a small area south of Van Buren Boulevard, which is served by Western through its Riverside Regional Water Quality Treatment Plant and complies with state and federal requirements governing the treatment and discharge of wastewater. Primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment of wastewater from the Jurupa, Rubidoux, and Edgemont Community Services Districts is also provided.

The City of Riverside Public Works Department collects trash from approximately 38,500 households (70 percent of all households) largely using automated trash collection trucks. Excessive waste generation is discouraged by the Public Works Department by charging additional fees if a second trash container is required. All non-hazardous solid waste collected is taken to the Robert A. Nelson Transfer Station, which is owned by the County of Riverside and operated under a 20-year franchise by a private company. Waste is then transferred to the Badlands Landfill for disposal. However, local trash haulers may dispose of collected waste at other County landfills in the area, such as the Lamb Canyon Landfill and El Sobrante Landfill. All Riverside County landfills are Class III disposal sites permitted to receive non-hazardous municipal solid waste.

Discussion

a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

The proposed Evans Creek project would not result in or require the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities as the project would essentially continue its current open space and recreational use. No impact would occur.

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

The proposed project would not require new water entitlements. The project aims to use natural water sources and stream functions to provide the target habitat areas. Potable water may be required during construction and plant establishment periods for the proposed native plantings.

A temporary irrigation system may be required to enhance the survivorship of newly installed native plants and seed when plants have been grown in nursery conditions, when they are planted under initially dry or drought conditions, or when planting does not occur within an ideal seasonal planting time frame.

Any system installed would be designed for temporary use for at least 3 years and discontinued once plant establishment is meeting plan goals. Ideally, the irrigation system would be shut off by the end of the third year of the 5-year maintenance and monitoring period; however, final design has not specified the specifics for water supplies to the site. Irrigation system components would likely be removed from the restoration site entirely at the end of the maintenance and monitoring period after approval is granted by the resource agencies and with agency concurrence regarding sustainable water supplies to the site. Regardless of long-term irrigation solutions, prior to planting and seeding, the soil on site would be moist from watering by the contractor or rainfall. All attempts would be made to coordinate seeding with rain events. A less-than-significant impact would occur related to water supplies.

c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that 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?

The project would not include demand for wastewater services because restoration and mitigation activities would not include a need for wastewater services such that capacity would need to be expanded to support the project. The project would not involve the development of land uses that would generate large amounts of wastewater as the project proposes improvements to open space and recreational uses that are similar to current conditions. No impact would occur.

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?

The proposed project would not 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 as the project proposes improvements to open space and recreational uses that are similar to current conditions. No impact would occur.

e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

The project would comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste as the project proposes improvements to open space and recreational uses that are similar to current conditions. No impact is expected.

XX. Wildfire

	Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would Alternative B:					
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks of, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a 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 on 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either no impact or a less-than-significant impact for wildfire. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either no impact or less-than-significant impacts with no mitigation required.

Affected Environment

The proposed project is located within the floodplain of the Santa Ana River and is designated as Open Space/Natural Resources area per the City of Riverside General Plan 2025 (2007). The area surrounding the project is medium-density residential housing with some industrial and business uses to the south of the proposed project site. There are currently no existing housing structures

within the project site. However, there have been homeless encampments established within the floodplain.

Discussion

a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the project area is within a Local Responsibility Area – Unincorporated for fire hazards. According to the County of Riverside General Plan (2007) and the City of Riverside General Plan (2015; Figure PS-7, Fire Hazard Areas), the project area is not within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. There are Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones approximately 0.5 mile north and 0.5 mile east of the project area. The project area is within Fairmount Park and the proposed construction and restoration activities would not alter any roadways that could impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The project would not involve modifications to facilities that are critical to emergency response, such as police, fire, and hospital facilities, and project improvements would not impede access to these facilities in an emergency. All access points, storage, and staging areas would be located in a manner that has the least impact on vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Therefore, the proposed project would not affect an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No impact would be expected.

b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks of, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

No part of the project area is immune from fire danger. Structural and automobile fires represent the most common types of fire in urban areas and can be caused by a variety of human, mechanical, and natural factors. Urban fires have the potential to spread to other structures or areas, particularly if not extinguished quickly. Areas of dense, dry vegetation, particularly in canyon areas and on hillsides, pose the greatest potential for wildfire risks. The major urban/rural interface areas of high fire risk include the Santa Ana River Basin, Mount Rubidoux, Lake Hills, Mockingbird Canyon/Monroe Hills, Sycamore Canyon, Box Springs Mountain, and La Sierra/Norco Hills. Development into this natural landscape would increase the potential risk of fire damage to people and personal property. The Evans Creek project location lies within the City of Riverside Fire Department Fire Responder Area 1.

The project site is heavily used by the homeless population currently in the area. Wildland fires are common in the Santa Ana River watershed from natural causes, arson, and unintended incidents. For example, on December 21, 2017, wildfire erupted under the Mission Inn Avenue Bridge, adjacent to Mount Rubidoux and within the project site. Numerous properties were threatened by the 50-acre blaze, which forced the evacuation of dozens of nearby homes before it was contained hours later. A homeless cooking fire was believed to be the source of this fire (mynewsla.com 2018). There have been several attempts to relocate transient populations from the Santa Ana River bottom, but the area continues to draw many chronically homeless people to the site.

The proposed restoration and mitigation activities could potentially reduce the incidences of arson through removal of homeless encampments from the project site. Post-construction monitoring would also be conducted through park ranger patrol of the project area and other areas along the Santa Ana River to deter unauthorized human disturbances, including garbage disposal and homeless encampments, from disturbing and destroying restoration and mitigation sites.

Additionally, there would be no significant increase in naturally caused fires due to maintaining similar natural, open spaces as currently exist at the site and through the provision of additional water to the site to ensure success of newly installed vegetation. Because there would be no exposure to significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, the project would not exacerbate wildfire risk or expose occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire. As such, impacts would be less than significant.

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 on the environment?

The proposed project would not construct buildings, power lines, or other utilities. All access points, storage, and staging areas during construction would be located in a manner that has the least impact on native vegetation as well as vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The proposed Evans Creek project would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk. No impact is expected.

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?

No buildings or habitable structures are proposed as part of the project. The proposed project would conduct and maintain tributaries restoration activities in a natural, open space area dominated by a river. The proposed project would restore the project area and provide cleanup of trash and other forms of destruction of the site caused by human influences to recover the project site to a more natural and sustainable condition. Post-construction monitoring would also be conducted through county park ranger patrol of the project area and other areas along the Santa Ana River to deter unauthorized human disturbances, including garbage disposal and homeless encampments, from disturbing and destroying the project area. Landslide hazards related to post-fire instability in the lower areas of the project site is not likely to expose people or structures to significant risk. Therefore, the project would not expose people or structures to significant risks of flooding or landslides, and a less-than-significant impact would occur.

XXI. Mandatory Findings of Significance

		Alternative B Would Cause Significant and Unavoidable Impacts as Compared to Proposed Project	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Additional Mitigation not Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with Incorporation of Mitigation Previously Identified in DEIR	Alternative B Would Result in Less-than-Significant Impacts with No Mitigation Required	Alternative B Would Result in No Impact
a.	Does Alternative B 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.	Does Alternative 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.	Does Alternative B have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

The DEIR concluded that the proposed project would result in either less-than-significant impacts or less-than-significant impacts with mitigation as noted above. As compared to the impacts evaluated under the DEIR, Alternative B similarly would result in either less-than-significant impacts or less-than-significant impacts with incorporation of additional mitigation not previously identified in the DEIR. No additional mitigation measures would be required to mitigate impacts associated with Alternative B.

Affected Environment

The affected environment has been described in prior environmental issues sections of the Initial Study document. Please refer to prior sections for more detail.

Discussion

a. Does Alternative B 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?

As described in the project description and the affected environment and discussion sections, the proposed project would involve restoration activities aligned with related regulatory plans and policies. The proposed project would be beneficial for listed species and other wildlife and associated habitat through habitat restoration and enhancement. The proposed project would create potential short-term impacts on wildlife species and habitat due to short-term construction activities associated with restoration, which may be potentially significant if not sufficiently mitigated. As described earlier in Section V, *Cultural Resources*, the proposed project could have potentially significant impacts on important examples of major periods of California history or prehistory. A less-than-significant impact is expected after appropriate mitigation.

b. Does Alternative 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.)

The proposed project could result in cumulative impacts related to the resources identified in this Initial Study with potentially significant impacts. There could also be cumulative impacts related to resources where the analysis herein indicated a less-than-significant impact, but, when added to other past, current, and probable future projects, could result in a cumulatively considerable impact. However, the proposed project site would function similarly to its current use as natural open space and recreational areas, and the proposed project would not interfere with construction or operation of other development near the project area. A less-than-significant impact would occur.

c. Does Alternative B have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

The proposed project would create beneficial effects for human beings and the environment by restoring native habitat in the project area. The project would also aim to relocate homeless individuals from the currently unsafe project area within the floodplain. The homeless encampments that are located at the proposed project site would need to be removed, along with trash, invasive species, and fire-damaged items in order to conduct the restoration activities. After construction, the project area would be restored, new recreational areas would be created on site, and the project would not result in environmental effects on human beings. A less-than-significant impact would occur.

Chapter 2
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