

3.0

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

3.0.1 Introduction

This chapter defines the terminology used in this PEIR and the CEQA requirements related to the alternatives analysis. The 14 sections in this chapter discuss the possible environmental effects of the proposed Program for specific environmental issue (or resource) areas identified by the LAHD. Sections 3.1 through 3.14 discuss both environmental issues found to be potentially significant and those found not to be significant.

To assist the reader in comparing information about the various environmental issues, Sections 3.1 through 3.14 each present the following information for their specific resource area:

- Environmental setting (the environmental setting or baseline for this Draft PEIR are the physical conditions that existed in 2011);
- Applicable regulations;
- Impact assessment methodology;
- Thresholds of significance (i.e., the criteria against which the significance of an impact is judged);
- Impact determination;
- Mitigation measures;
- Residual impacts;
- Summary of impact determinations; and,
- Significant unavoidable impacts.

Cumulative impacts for the proposed Program for each environmental resource area are summarized in Chapter 4.0, Cumulative Analysis. The proposed Program alternatives are presented and analyzed in Chapter 5.0, Program Alternatives. Although not required under CEQA, Chapter 6.0, Environmental Justice, provides an assessment of potential disproportionate environmental effects to low-income or minority populations consistent with the environmental justice guidelines for NEPA.

3.0.2 Terminology Used in this Environmental Analysis

In evaluating the potential impacts of the proposed Program and alternatives, the level of significance is determined by applying the threshold of significance (significance criteria) presented for each resource area. The following terms are used to describe each impact.

- **No Impact:** A designation of no impact is given when no adverse changes in the environment are expected.
- **Less than Significant Impact:** A less than significant impact would be identified when the proposed Program or alternatives would cause no substantial adverse change in the environment (i.e., the impact would not reach the threshold of significance).
- **Significant Impact:** A significant impact would create a substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the proposed Program or alternatives. Such an impact would exceed the applicable significance threshold established by CEQA but would be reduced to a less than significant level by the required application of a mitigation measure(s).
- **Significant Unavoidable Impact:** As required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b), this term is used when a residual impact that would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment could not be reduced to a less than significant level through any feasible mitigation measure(s).
- **Mitigation:** Mitigation refers to measures that would be implemented to avoid or lessen potentially significant impacts. The PEIR identifies mitigation measures that LAHD would apply to the proposed appealable/fill projects and land use changes, as applicable, if the PEIR is certified. As part of future site-specific reviews, LAHD would adjust the mitigation measures as necessary to respond to project-specific conditions and confirm that the proposed measures would be required to effectively avoid or reduce particular environmental impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4[a][1][B]). Mitigation includes:
 - Avoiding the impact completely by not taking a certain action or parts of an action;
 - Minimizing the impact by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation;
 - Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment;
 - Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; and,
 - Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.
- **Residual Impacts:** This is the level of impact after implementation of mitigation measures.

3.0.3 Requirements to Evaluate Alternatives

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, that could feasibly attain most of the basic project objectives but would avoid or substantially lessen any significant environmental impacts. The EIR should compare merits of the alternatives and determine an environmentally superior alternative. Chapter 5.0, Program Alternatives, of this Draft PEIR sets forth potential alternatives to the proposed Program and evaluates their suitability, as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6. The environmentally superior alternative is identified in Section 5.6, Environmentally Superior Alternative.

3.0.4 Level of Analysis

This PEIR serves as a first-tier document for later CEQA review of the proposed appealable/fill projects under the proposed Program. The LAHD will use the PEIR's program-scale analysis to focus later CEQA documents prepared for the proposed appealable/fill projects through a process known as "tiering." CEQA Guidelines Section 15152(c) states that when a lead agency is using the tiering process in connection with an EIR for a large-scale planning approval, such as a general plan or component thereof, the development of detailed, site-specific information may not be feasible and can be deferred to a project-specific CEQA document. The analysis in this PEIR focuses on land use changes that would result in changes and/or intensification of activities with the potential for causing direct or indirect impacts on the physical environment; it includes the potential impacts of the proposed appealable/fill projects, as defined under CCA Section 30715, and proposed land use changes.

The PEIR does not include a detailed environmental review of the proposed appealable/fill projects and land use changes since, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15168, sufficient details are not available. Therefore, for most resource areas, assessments of proposed appealable/fill project and land use changes in the PEIR rely primarily on qualitative assessments. Quantitative assessments are completed to the extent that data allow. Consistent with the timing for specific proposed appealable/fill projects, when appropriate levels of detail regarding the projects become available, project-specific environmental documents will be prepared and will incorporate this PEIR by reference, concentrating on site-specific issues and focusing on quantitative assessments.

Consistent with a PEIR level of analysis, it is notable that several changes proposed in the PMPU are administrative (e.g., changes to existing planning areas and land use categories/definitions) and would cause no impacts to the physical environment. For much of the PMPU area, proposed land use categories would be compatible with or less intensive than existing land uses, potentially resulting in fewer impacts to the physical environment compared to existing conditions. Consequently, these land use changes are not addressed in the individual resource sections. Further, since there are no proposed appealable/fill projects or land use changes associated with Planning Areas 1 and 5 (Section 2.5.3, Changes to Land Uses and Proposed Appealable/Fill Projects within the PMPU Planning Areas), evaluations are presented only for Planning Areas 2, 3, and 4 in the resource sections.

3.0.5 Summary

As described in Chapter 1.0, Introduction, and Chapter 2.0, Program Description, the PMPU would consolidate areas characterized by predominant land use patterns within the Port and allocate a single land use to most sites. The PMPU would also include appealable/fill projects and other projects that have been approved in certified CEQA documents and/or are currently undefined (i.e., in the conceptual design stage). The proposed appealable/fill projects included in the PMPU are in various planning stages and are expected to be initiated or completed within the next 5 years.

This PEIR focuses on the proposed appealable/fill projects, as defined under CCA Section 30715, and provides a programmatic evaluation of impacts associated with buildout of these projects. In general, this PEIR is intended to simplify the task of preparing subsequent environmental documents for the proposed appealable/fill projects and will serve as the first-tier document for later CEQA review of the proposed appealable/fill projects included in the PMPU. The LAHD expects that most of the proposed appealable/fill projects that are included in this PEIR would require separate environmental documents. CDPs for the proposed appealable/fill projects would not be issued until those project-specific CEQA reviews are completed. However, it would not be necessary to seek a PMPU amendment from the CCC regarding the proposed fill projects analyzed herein.

This PEIR does not analyze the impacts of other projects included in the PMPU that have already been evaluated in certified CEQA documents. Furthermore, as some projects included in the PMPU are in the conceptual design stage, sufficient project details are not available to support a programmatic evaluation of potential impacts. These other projects are listed in the PEIR for purposes of public disclosure and addressed in Chapter 4.0, Cumulative Analysis.