

## 20. Other CEQA Required Sections

### 20.1 Introduction

This chapter includes a discussion of the project's significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided, significant irreversible environmental changes, and growth-inducing effects, as required by State *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines* Section 15126, and effects found not to be significant, as required by Section 15128.

### 20.2 Significant Environmental Effects That Cannot Be Avoided

State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.2(c)) require a discussion of significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented. Unavoidable impacts are those that cannot be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. Mitigation measures proposed as part of the proposed project, including those required to comply with state and federal regulations and those recommended by this draft environmental impact report (DEIR), would reduce the majority of the impacts to a less-than-significant level. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, Executive Summary, the proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to aesthetic resources, air quality, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and transportation, described as follows.

**Aesthetics.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in significant impacts, primarily related to the final maximum elevation of the WRSL, which would be much more prominent in the landscape because of its larger size and height, resulting in greater levels of visual contrast with the surrounding open space and agricultural land uses. Additionally, the generation of offsite litter from vehicles accessing the facility would continue to be significant and unavoidable as the project expands.

**Air Quality.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in significant air quality impacts. Specifically, the proposed project has the potential to result in impacts related to offsite odors that remain significant after mitigation.

**Greenhouse Gases.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in significant GHG impacts; specifically, the proposed project has the potential to result in increases in GHG production that remain significant after mitigation.

**Transportation.** Implementation of the proposed project would result in significant impacts to traffic and transportation related to new daily vehicle travel, which would add vehicle miles traveled to the project area.

### 20.3 Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes

State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.2(d)) require a discussion of the significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed project. Significant irreversible environmental changes may include committing to use of nonrenewable resources that future generations would be unable to reverse or providing access to previously inaccessible areas. The commitment of resources should be evaluated to justify such current consumption.

The proposed project would result in an increase in consumption of nonrenewable resources (that is, fossil fuels, including diesel, gasoline, and propane) during construction and operations associated with the use

of heavy equipment, increase in transportation, and increase in electricity usage. A full analysis on energy required for implementation of the proposed project is described in Chapter 17, Utilities and Energy.

The proposed project involves expanding existing solid waste operations and constructing complementary and programmatic uses, resulting in the conversion of undeveloped land on the eastern and western properties. This change in land use would represent a long-term commitment to the proposed use, as the potential for the proposed uses to be reverted back to undeveloped land uses is highly unlikely.

Lastly, the proposed project could result in irreversible damage from environmental accidents, such as an accidental spill or explosion of a hazardous material. During construction, equipment on the site would use various types of fuel. Operation of the proposed project would include the use of hazardous materials, primarily associated with heavy equipment operations, which could increase the risk of an accidental spill or release. However, these hazardous materials would be used in relatively small quantities, and in California, various local and regional agencies strictly regulate and enforce how hazardous substances are stored, used, and sold. The enforcement of these existing regulations would be expected to minimize the potential for irreversible damage associated with accidental spills or explosions on the project site.

Although the proposed project would result in the ir retrievable commitment of nonrenewable resources, the Western Placer Waste Management Authority (WPWMA) Board of Directors could reasonably conclude that such consumption would be justified because the proposed project would provide an important and necessary public service for local and regional businesses and residents, and would contribute to economic development in the region. In addition, the project includes components that would offset, to some degree, the use of nonrenewable resources, including the following:

- Beneficial reuse of landfill gas (LFG): As the landfill expands, LFG generated from the site would continue to be converted to renewable electricity.
- The complementary and programmatic element of the proposed project includes the construction of an LFG-to-compressed natural gas facility. With the installation of this facility, the WPWMA would produce and sell renewable vehicle-grade or pipeline-grade compressed natural gas, hydrogen, or other renewable fuel.
- Other renewable energy technologies are anticipated to be developed as part of the complementary and programmatic element that could result in additional renewable energy production from LFG.

## 20.4 Growth-Inducing Effects

State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.2(e)) require an evaluation of the growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project. A growth-inducing impact is defined by the CEQA Guidelines as follows:

*The ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth... It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.*

The proposed project has been developed to identify the physical and operational waste recovery and waste disposal changes needed at the WPWMA facility to continue providing high-quality solid waste management services in response to a fast-growing population in an increasingly complex regulatory environment and rapidly changing global recycling markets. The area surrounding the project site consists of undeveloped open space, and no existing residential subdivisions are located within 1 mile of the site.

The proposed project would provide for ongoing waste disposal and recovery operations and could increase local employment to accommodate these operations. However, workers would be expected to come from the existing workforce within the surrounding communities. The implementation of the complementary and programmatic elements would further expand the demand for workers. Depending upon how quickly the complementary and programmatic elements are developed, the increased demand for workers could increase the demands on the local housing supply. However, the proposed project is consistent with the land use and zoning designation in the Sunset Area Plan (SAP), and by extension, the employment, public facility development, and housing assumptions evaluated in the SAP environmental impact report (EIR). Implementation of the proposed project would be expected to generate employment opportunities for current and future residents consistent with the SAP's goals and policies. Therefore, the proposed project would not be expected to induce substantial unplanned population growth or housing demand in the County and would not be expected to be growth inducing.

## **20.5 Impacts Found Not to Be Significant**

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines require that an EIR contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in the EIR. Based on the analysis conducted in preparing this DEIR, impacts on agricultural resources and recreation associated with project implementation were found not to be significant. Although the project site currently includes areas of grazing land on the eastern property and parts of the western property, the project site does not include any designated prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of statewide importance. Also, the land use and zoning designations for these lands supports solid waste and industrial uses. No lands on the project site are designated for agricultural uses, and the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agriculture use or with a Williamson Act contract. Also, the proposed project does not include uses that would disturb or disrupt existing recreational uses and would not be expected to substantially increase the demand on existing recreational resources. Although the project would increase employment within the region, this increase in employment would not be expected to result in the substantial physical deterioration of recreational facilities. Therefore, no further analysis of these topics is included in this DEIR.