



DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL
A California State Agency

Project: Delta Plan Ecosystem Amendment, Delta Stewardship Council
Date Issued: May 11, 2020

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

DRAFT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PROPOSED ECOSYSTEM AMENDMENT

*For assistance interpreting the content of this document,
please contact Delta Stewardship Council staff.
Email: accessibility@deltacouncil.ca.gov
Phone: 916-445-5511*

Notice is hereby given that the Delta Stewardship Council (Council) will prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the proposed Delta Plan Ecosystem Amendment (Proposed Project or Proposed Ecosystem Amendment), and will hold a public scoping meeting to receive comments on the scope of the PEIR, as detailed below. Consistent with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15206, the Proposed Project is considered a project of statewide, regional, or areawide significance. The Council, as the lead agency, determined that the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment may result in potentially significant environmental impacts, and that a PEIR is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT SCOPING PROCESS

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15082, this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is being circulated to obtain suggestions and information from responsible, trustee, and involved federal agencies and members of the public, including organizations and individuals, on the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be included in the proposed Delta Plan Ecosystem Amendment PEIR. A “responsible agency” is a public agency, other than the lead agency, that has the responsibility for carrying out or approving a project (CEQA Guidelines section 15381). A “trustee agency” is a state agency that has jurisdiction by law over natural resources that are held in trust for the people of the State of California and that could potentially be affected by implementation of the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment (CEQA Guidelines section 15386).

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15082(b)(1), within 60 days of receiving the NOP, responsible and trustee agencies and involved federal agencies shall provide the Council with specific details about the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the PEIR related to the agency’s area of statutory responsibility.

The Council will take into consideration comments received from responsible, trustee, and federal agencies and members of the public in preparing the PEIR, which will address the potential environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Project at a program level, consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15168.

Written Comments

Written comments on the scope of the PEIR are due no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 10, 2020.

Send comments or requests to be added to the mailing list to:

Harriet Ross, Assistant Planning Director
Delta Stewardship Council
980 9th Street, Suite 1500
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-445-5511
Email address: ecosystemamendment@deltacouncil.ca.gov

All comments should include “Delta Plan Ecosystem Amendment NOP” as the subject and the name and email address of the contact person so that the contact information can be automatically added to the distribution list for future notices and information about the Proposed Project environmental review process.

All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the official administrative record and may be available to the public. Commenters may request the Council to withhold contact information from public disclosure, which will be honored to the extent allowable under California law. For the Council to consider withholding contact information, this request must be stated prominently at the beginning of the submitted comments.

Scoping Meeting

A remote public scoping meeting is scheduled at the following date and time:

Thursday, May 28, 2020 from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

In accordance with the Governor’s Executive Order N-25-20 issued on March 12, 2020, and the Governor’s Executive Order N-29-20 issued on March 17, 2020, the Delta Stewardship Council will continue to provide opportunities for remote participation by Councilmembers, staff, and the public with prudent measures to reduce community transmission of COVID-19.

The meeting’s proceedings will be conducted entirely remotely. There will not be a public access location. Members of the public may participate in the scoping meeting via webcast or by calling into a teleconference line. The public scoping meeting will begin with a brief overview presentation of the proposed Delta Plan Ecosystem Amendment process with time for public comments on the scope and content of the PEIR to follow.

The meeting will be conducted with WebEx, which uses video accessed through the link below and audio from a teleconference line. To view the webcast, click the link (<https://deltacouncil.webex.com/deltacouncil/onstage/g.php?MTID=e49ab085cfb30055ac6be63674a40de4a>). To hear the audio portion of the meeting and provide comment, please call the following teleconference number: Call-in Number: 1-877-402-9757, access code 4450441. Additional scoping meeting details are available online at <https://www.deltacouncil.ca.gov>.

Mailing List

All comments received should include the name and email address of the contact person so that the contact information can be automatically added to the CEQA distribution list for the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Additional requests for persons to be added to the mailing list should include name and email address and be submitted to Harriet Ross at the address above or via email at ecosystemamendment@deltacouncil.ca.gov.

Online Availability

A copy of this NOP and other information about the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment, including the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment text and supporting documents, are available online at <http://www.deltacouncil.ca.gov/delta-plan/amendments>.

INTRODUCTION

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009, California Water Code (Wat. Code) sections 85000, et seq., (Delta Reform Act or Act) requires the development of a legally enforceable, comprehensive, long-term management plan for the Delta, referred to as the Delta Plan, which the Council adopted in 2013. Since its adoption, several portions of the Delta Plan have required revisions due to changes in circumstances and conditions in the Delta.

The Proposed Project is an amendment to Chapter 4 of the Delta Plan (Protect, Restore, and Enhance the Delta Ecosystem) to address a fundamental shift in how conservation is being planned and implemented in the Delta.

PURPOSE OF THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Pursuant to CEQA, the Council is initiating preparation of a PEIR for the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. This NOP has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of CEQA to notify the responsible, trustee, and involved federal agencies, and members of the public, including organizations and individuals, that the Council intends to prepare a PEIR for this Proposed Project and to solicit guidance from the public and those agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the PEIR. Additionally, the Council will conduct tribal consultation under Assembly Bill 52. The NOP is an important step in initiating the scoping process to determine the range of issues to be addressed in the PEIR. The objectives of the scoping process are to:

- Provide an opportunity for public and agency involvement in preparation of the PEIR,
- Help identify the scope of issues and potential impacts that must be discussed in the PEIR to adequately and accurately address potential impacts of the Proposed Project, and
- Help identify a reasonable range of alternatives to the Proposed Project.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Background

As required by the Delta Reform Act, the Council created the Delta Plan, a comprehensive, long-term management plan for the Delta. Adopted by the Council in 2013, the Delta Plan created new regulatory policies and recommendations to further the “coequal goals” for the Delta set forth in Wat. Code section 85054:

“Coequal goals” means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place.

When it was adopted in 2013, the Delta Plan anticipated the need for periodic reviews and updates in response to changing circumstances and conditions in the Delta. Five amendments have been made to the Delta Plan to date. The Proposed Ecosystem Amendment would be the sixth amendment to the Delta Plan.

Need for the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment

Pursuant to Wat. Code section 85054, the Council works to achieve the goal of protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. Inherent in that goal is the objective to “restore the Delta ecosystem, including its fisheries and wildlife, as the heart of a healthy estuary and wetland ecosystem” (Wat. Code section 85020[c]). In addition, pursuant to Wat. Code sections 85211 and 85308, subds. (b)-(d), ecosystem performance measures enable the Council to track progress in meeting the objectives of the Delta Plan.

The Delta Plan was adopted in 2013, while the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) planning process was underway. The BDCP proposed a large, landscape-scale restoration program and reserve system within the Delta.¹ In accordance with Wat. Code, section 85320(e), Chapter 4 of the Delta Plan was originally developed based on the expectation that the BDCP would be incorporated into the Delta Plan. As stated in the 2013 Delta Plan, “[s]uccess of ecosystem restoration depends on considering and addressing all stressor categories as well as completing and implementing the BDCP.”²

In May 2015, state and federal agencies shifted their approach from broad-based ecosystem protection and restoration strategies under the BDCP to a more focused set of mitigation projects required under the National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinions for operation of the State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP). This effort, known as the EcoRestore initiative, has enabled significant progress in meeting implementation deadlines for projects that previously faced

¹ The Bay Delta Conservation Plan conservation measures were not limited to reserve establishment and ecosystem restoration, but also identified actions such as nonnative species control, storm water management, remediation of unscreened water diversions, and illegal fish harvest reduction through game warden support.

² Delta Stewardship Council. 2013. Protect, Restore, and Enhance the Delta Ecosystem, Chapter 4 in The Delta Plan. p. 148.

significant planning and permitting delays. Implementation of these projects is critical to offset impacts of the SWP and CVP to threatened and endangered fish species. These actions, however, do not fully address the impaired condition of the estuary, which is the cumulative result of past physical changes (e.g., reclamation of marshland for agricultural use, construction and operation of federal, state, and local water management infrastructure). A more comprehensive approach to protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem is required to achieve the Delta Reform Act's goals.

After the shift from the BDCP to EcoRestore, the Council committed to revisit the Delta Plan to assess and address the need for an amendment to Chapter 4 of the Delta Plan.³

PROJECT LOCATION – PLANNING AREA

The location of the Proposed Project is the planning area to be considered in the PEIR as defined by the purposes and uses of the Delta Plan, which are described in the Delta Reform Act. The primary planning area is the Delta, which is defined in the Delta Reform Act and Wat. Code section 85058 as “the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta as defined in [Wat. Code] section 12220, and the Suisun Marsh, as defined in section 29101 of the Public Resources Code.” The extended planning area is defined by the watersheds that contribute flows to the Delta (including areas within the Delta watershed upstream of the Delta, and the Trinity River watershed) and areas of California with places of use receiving water from or conveyed through the Delta. The primary and extended planning areas are shown in Figure 1.

³ In 2018, the Council separately adopted a Delta Plan amendment to address conveyance, storage, and operations of the water supply system, which had also been a component of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan.



Figure 1. Planning Area for Delta Plan Ecosystem Amendment Program Environmental Impact Report

Figure 1 is a statewide map of California. The map identifies the Planning Area for Delta Plan Ecosystem Amendment Program Environmental Impact Report. The primary planning area is the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta) and Suisun Marsh. The extended planning area is defined by the watersheds that contribute flows to the Delta and areas outside the Delta watershed that receive water from or conveyed through the Delta.

Alternative formats of this map are available upon request.

Primary Planning Area

Wat. Code section 85300(a) states “The Delta Plan shall include subgoals and strategies to assist in guiding state and local agency actions related to the Delta.” One of the uses of these strategies will be for state or local public agencies that propose to undertake a covered action to determine if the covered action is consistent with the Delta Plan. The term “covered action” is defined in Wat. Code section 85057.5(a) generally as “a plan, program, or project as defined pursuant to section 21065 of the Public Resources Code that...[w]ill occur, in whole or in part, within the boundaries of the Delta or Suisun Marsh.”

The Primary Planning Area will consist of the Delta, as defined in Wat. Code section 85058. The Delta lies roughly between the cities of Sacramento, Stockton, Tracy, and Antioch. It extends approximately 24 miles east to west and 48 miles north to south, and includes parts of five counties (Sacramento, San Joaquin, Contra Costa, Solano, and Yolo). The Suisun Marsh is located south of Fairfield and includes land adjacent to Carquinez Strait, Grizzly Bay, Suisun Bay, and Honker Bay (see Figure 1).

Extended Planning Area

The extended planning area will extend outside of the Delta, as defined in Wat. Code section 85058, to include areas that would be affected by the Proposed Project. The Act includes several provisions that require the Delta Plan to address issues outside of the Delta. Section 85302(b) states “The geographic scope of the ecosystem restoration projects and programs identified in the Delta Plan shall be the Delta, except that the Delta Plan may include recommended ecosystem projects outside the Delta that will contribute to achievement of the coequal goals.”

As shown in Figure 1 of this NOP, the Delta Watershed area includes a large portion of California north of Fresno and the San Joaquin River. This area includes more than two dozen counties and extends as far north as the California-Oregon border in Modoc County.

The Extended Planning Area outside the Delta Watershed Area includes areas extending from Napa County south to San Benito County, and the western half of California south of Fresno. This area extends along the coast from San Luis Obispo south to the California-Mexico border.

STUDY PERIOD

The study period to be considered in the PEIR is defined by the purposes and uses of the Delta Plan. The Delta Plan contains both “recommendations” and an integrated and legally enforceable set of “policies.” The policies will serve as the basis for future findings of consistency with the Delta Plan by state and local agencies regarding Delta-related projects

that are “covered actions,” as defined in Wat. Code section 85057.5(a), and for subsequent evaluation of those findings by the Council on appeal, pursuant to Wat. Code section 85225 et seq. This regulatory arrangement requires a Delta Plan that has a long-term perspective, with the acknowledgement that the “Council shall review the Delta Plan at least once every five years and may revise it as the Council deems appropriate” (Wat. Code section 85300(c)).

The Delta Reform Act contains a long-term goal for implementation of Delta Plan ecosystem restoration subgoals and strategies, which is to “[r]estore large areas of interconnected habitats within the Delta and its watershed by 2100.” (Wat. Code section 85302(e)(1)). This 2100 timeframe provides a basis for consideration of a long-term vision for the Delta Plan. However, as stated in Chapter 1 of the Delta Plan:

The Delta of 2100 likely will be very different from the Delta of today. Some of the changes will be intentional or predictable, and others will be unintended and surprising. Changes are likely or expected to result from population growth, climate change and sea-level rise, land subsidence, and earthquakes—most beyond human ability or willingness to control. Human-made changes in land use and water use are also expected to continue.... The law requires that the Delta Plan be [reviewed] every [five] years, [any resulting update] is intended to build on an evolving base of knowledge, directing near- and mid-term actions, and preserving and protecting longer-term opportunities as yet unknown.

The Delta Reform Act also includes references to numerous studies and programs, the results of which should be considered in development (and amendment) of the Delta Plan. At this time, those studies have not been completed and several are not anticipated to be completed before 2030. However, it is anticipated that many of the projects recommended by those studies would be implemented by 2050.

Consequently, because many of the actions that could be implemented by other agencies in response to the Delta Plan would be evaluated, designed, and implemented by 2050, this PEIR considers a study period that extends until 2050.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In accordance with section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, an NOP is required to describe the proposed project and its location. The project to be analyzed in the PEIR consists of the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment to the Delta Plan, as described below.

The Council is proposing to amend Chapter 4 of the Delta Plan (Protect, Restore, and Enhance the Delta) to address the shift from the BDCP to EcoRestore and provide a more comprehensive approach to ecosystem protection, restoration, and enhancement in the Delta, as required to achieve the goals and strategies described in the Delta Reform Act. The Proposed Ecosystem Amendment was developed based on robust stakeholder engagement and scientific synthesis. The Proposed Ecosystem Amendment consists of:

- Chapter 4 narrative which includes new and revised policies and recommendations;

- Three regulatory appendices (Appendices 3A and 4A and New Definitions; and Appendix 8A);
- Four technical appendices (Appendix Q1-Q4); and
- An appendix containing new and revised ecosystem performance measures pertinent to the coequal goal of protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem (Appendix E).

The analysis in the PEIR will assume that the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment and the rest of the currently adopted Delta Plan are implemented and achieve their desired outcomes, regardless of whether the outcomes are expressed as policies or recommendations, and, accordingly, evaluate the potential impacts of the types of projects that the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment and the Delta Plan would encourage and promote in the Primary and Extended Planning Areas.

New and Revised Policies and Recommendations

The proposed new and revised policies and recommendations within Chapter 4 are:

- New Policy, ER Policy “A.” Disclose Contributions to Restoring Ecosystem Function and Providing Social Benefits
- Revised Policies
 - ER P4. Expand Floodplains and Riparian Habitats in Levee Projects
 - ER P2. Restore Habitats at Appropriate Elevations
 - ER P3. Protect Opportunities to Restore Habitat
- New Recommendations
 - New ER Recommendation “A.” Increase Public Funding for Restoring Ecosystem Function
 - New ER Recommendation “B.” Use Good Neighbor Checklist to Coordinate Restoration with Adjacent Uses
 - New ER Recommendation “C.” Fund Targeted Subsidence Reversal Actions
 - New ER Recommendation “D.” Funding to Enhance Working Landscapes
 - New ER Recommendation “E.” Develop and Update Management Plans to Halt or Reverse Subsidence on Public Lands
 - New ER Recommendation “F.” Support Implementation of Ecosystem Restoration

- New ER Recommendation “G.” Align State Restoration Plans and Conservation Strategies with the Delta Plan
- New ER Recommendation “H.” Prioritize Unscreened Diversions within the Delta
- New ER Recommendation “I.” Fund Projects to Improve Survival of Juvenile Salmon
- Revised Recommendations
 - ER R1. Update Delta Flow Objectives
 - ER R5. Update the Suisun Marsh Protection Plan
 - ER R7. Prioritize and Implement Actions to Control Nonnative Invasive Species
 - ER R8. Manage Hatcheries to Reduce Risk of Adverse Effects
 - ER R9. Coordinate Fish Migration and Survival Research

The Proposed Project also includes removal of the following Delta Plan recommendations:

- ER R2. Prioritize and Implement Projects that Restore Delta Habitat – Recommendation removed as relevant components are addressed in New ER Policy “A.”
- ER R3. Complete and Implement Delta Conservancy Strategic Plan – Recommendation removed as relevant components are addressed in New ER Recommendations “F” and “G.”
- ER R6. Regulate Angling for Nonnative Sport Fish to Protect Native Fish – Recommendation removed as recommended proposals have been developed.

New and Revised Ecosystem Performance Measures

The Delta Plan’s performance measures are an integral component of the Delta Plan Adaptive Management framework and enable the Council to track progress in meeting the objectives of the Delta Plan. The performance measures are quantified or otherwise measurable targets to be used as indicators of whether specific actions are producing expected results. Five-year assessments of performance measures, completed in accordance with Delta Reform Act requirements for the Council to review the Delta Plan at least once every five years, are based on evaluation of interim milestones set for each measure. The Five-Year Review process also sets a framework for conducting an evaluation of performance measures for their effectiveness. Assessments of performance measures will inform the adaptive management of the Delta Plan.

The Council proposes to amend Appendix E of the Delta Plan to refine performance measure targets, metrics, and baseline conditions associated with proposed new and revised policies and recommendations within Delta Plan Chapter 4.

The proposed new and revised ecosystem performance measures are:

- New Performance Measures
 - Performance Measure 4.12: Subsidence Reversal for Tidal Reconnection, with target met by 2030
 - Performance Measure 4.13: Barriers to Migratory Fish Passage, with some targets met by 2030 and others met by 2050
 - Performance Measure 4.14: Increased Funding for Restoring Ecosystem Function, with target met by 2030
 - Performance Measure 4.15: Seasonal Inundation, with target met by 2030
 - Performance Measure 4.16: Acres of Natural Communities Restored, with target met by 2050
- Revised Performance Measure 4.6: Doubling Goal for Wild Central Valley Salmon, within interim targets for the period of 2035-2065, with target met by 2065

The Proposed Project also includes removal of the following performance measures:

- Performance Measure 4.4: Acres of Habitat Restored
- Performance Measure 4.8: Landscape Metrics to Assess Ecological Functions
- Performance Measure 4.7: Progress Toward Native Species in Protected and Restored Habitats and Migratory Corridors
- Performance Measure 4.11: Percent of Hatchery Fish that are Marked and Tagged

General Types of Activities for Implementation of the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment

Projects or actions taken by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment could include: changes in water flows; restoration of natural communities, including but not limited to wetland, upland, or riparian habitat; subsidence reversal activities; protection of native species and reduction of nonnative invasive species impacts; construction of new infrastructure and improvements to existing infrastructure, including screened diversions and improvements to fish passage, and modifications to improve hydrologic surface water connectivity and increase frequency of seasonal inundation.

The PEIR will consider the environmental impacts of reasonably foreseeable projects that could be undertaken in compliance with the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Given both the plan-level nature of the Proposed Project policies and recommendations and new or revised performance measures, as well as the uncertainty concerning the extent to which the Proposed Project would result in any particular action, it is difficult to identify all specific

activities or projects for implementation of the Proposed Project and when, where, or how they could be implemented as a result of the Proposed Project. Because specific project details such as project size, configuration, location, and operation for potential projects that may be implemented by a variety of project proponents are not known at this time, the PEIR will assess the potential effects of different types of projects and activities that could be undertaken by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Therefore, analyses of similar, “example” projects that are representative of the types of impacts that could occur as a result of the actions by other public agencies undertaken in compliance with the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment will be reviewed for the analysis in the PEIR.

Alternatives to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6, the PEIR will describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project that are capable of meeting most of the basic objectives of the project, and that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The PEIR will also identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but rejected as infeasible, and briefly explain the reasons why. The PEIR will provide an analysis of the No-Project Alternative and will also identify the environmentally superior alternative.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Council has determined that a PEIR is required for the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. The PEIR will identify the potentially significant environmental effects (“impacts”) of the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment and alternatives in accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. Mitigation measures or approaches to future mitigation programs will be described to reduce significant impacts or potentially significant impacts to a less-than-significant level.

The PEIR will examine the potential significant environmental effects of the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. The Proposed Project does not involve construction or operation of specific facilities or other specific physical actions by the Council. That is because the Council does not construct or operate facilities or undertake other specific physical actions in the Delta. Rather, pursuant to the Delta Reform Act, the Delta Plan is a comprehensive plan that includes policies with regulatory effect setting specific parameters and requirements with which the “covered actions” (as defined in Wat. Code section 85057.5(a)) of state and local agencies must comply. It also contains recommendations to federal, state, and local agencies to take other actions to help achieve the coequal goals.

The potential environmental impacts resulting from the implementation of the Proposed Project would assume that the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment and the rest of the currently adopted Delta Plan are implemented and achieve their desired outcomes. Additionally, the analysis will evaluate the potential impacts of types of projects that the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment and the Delta Plan would encourage and promote. Once proposals for specific projects consistent with the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment are developed, their impacts will be more fully evaluated in future project-level CEQA documents prepared by the lead agencies for the proposed projects.

The Proposed Ecosystem Amendment PEIR will consider all resource areas identified in CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, Environmental Checklist, in the evaluation of environmental effects. The PEIR will provide a program-level evaluation of the potential impacts, addressing potential adverse effects at both the local and regional levels. The PEIR will include evaluation of the cumulative effects of the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. The PEIR will describe thresholds of significance to determine the significance of potential impacts, and will identify program-level mitigation measures, including performance-based approaches or policies.

For covered actions constructed or otherwise implemented in response to the proposed amendments, other public agencies would be required to implement all applicable Delta Plan mitigation measures or equally effective measures, if feasible, as required by Delta Plan policy G P1 (b)(2) (California Code of Regulations title 23 section 5002 (b)(2)).

Due to the wide range of actions that could be undertaken by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment in the Primary Planning Area and the Extended Planning Area, it is anticipated that significant effects could occur for the resources summarized below.

- **Aesthetics:** The analysis of aesthetic resources will evaluate potential changes to existing visual resources that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects on scenic vistas; potential to damage scenic resources; changes to visual character and public views; and new sources of light and glare.
- **Agriculture and Forestry Resources:** The analysis of agricultural and forestry resources will evaluate farmland and forestland conversion and other related effects potentially resulting from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to the conversion of designated farmland to nonagricultural use; conflicts with agricultural use zoning and Williamson Act contract lands; conflicts with zoning of forestland, and/or conversion of forestland to non-forest use.
- **Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** The analysis of air quality and greenhouse gas emissions will evaluate related effects of any increased emissions potentially resulting from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include those associated with temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) emissions and the potential for those emissions to conflict with applicable plans (air quality plans and/or plans adopted to reduce greenhouse gas emissions); exceed applicable standards; expose sensitive receptors; create objectionable odors; and/or result in a significant impact on the environment.
- **Biological Resources – Aquatic:** The analysis of aquatic biological resources will evaluate potential changes to water resources that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Aquatic biological resource impacts will be evaluated in terms of how

physical and operational project components would result in adverse environmental impacts based on information developed for the potential operational changes that will be conducted.

Specific topics to be addressed include those associated with temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) impacts to habitat associated with special-status fish species; direct effects on special-status fish species; and interference with the movement of native resident fish species.

- **Biological Resources – Terrestrial:** The analysis of effects on natural communities and terrestrial wildlife habitats will evaluate potential changes that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include those associated with temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) impacts associated with the loss or degradation of terrestrial habitats, including wetlands (e.g., tidal wetlands) for special-status species, including sensitive natural communities, and designated critical habitat. The assessment will consider current habitats in the Primary Planning Area and the Extended Planning Area that could be affected by projects undertaken by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Impacts on special-status species, including plants and wildlife, will be assessed based on potential effects on their habitats. The analysis will also assess the potential for the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment to conflict with existing regional and local policies, ordinances, and plans, including habitat conservation plans and natural community conservation plans.
- **Cultural Resources and Paleontological Resources:** The analysis of cultural and paleontological resources will evaluate potential changes to cultural resources that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to changes to significant historic buildings, structures, or linear features; disturbance or destruction of prehistoric and historic-era archaeological resources, including submerged resources; disturbance or destruction of buried human remains; and disturbance or destruction of paleontological resources.
- **Energy Resources:** The analysis of energy resources will evaluate potential changes to existing energy resources that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to conflicts with applicable plans, policies, or regulations of local county and/or state energy standards that have been adopted for the purpose of improving energy efficiency; and the potential for inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary long-term consumption of energy or changes to hydropower generation.
- **Geology, Soils, Seismicity, and Mineral Resources:** The analysis of geology and soils will evaluate potential impacts that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and

long-term (operational) effects concerning risks associated with seismic fault rupture and groundshaking; unstable soil and underlying geologic conditions. The analysis will also consider effects associated with increased rates of soil erosion; use of septic tanks; and the potential to destroy unique geological features.

- **Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** The analysis of hazards and hazardous materials will evaluate potential exposure to hazardous materials that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects associated with the use, storage, transportation and disposal of hazardous materials; creation of hazardous conditions associated with accidental release; safety hazards for projects located near a public airport, public-use airport, or private airstrip; conflicts with emergency response access and/or evacuation plans; and exposure to wildfires.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality:** The analysis of hydrology and water quality will evaluate potential effects in hydrologic and water quality conditions that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to: violations of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or substantial water quality degradation; groundwater supply interference; substantial alteration of site drainage patterns resulting in substantial erosion, siltation, or flooding; creation of runoff that would exceed capacity of stormwater drainage systems; and potential flood risk.
- **Land Use and Planning:** The analysis of land use and planning will evaluate potential land use conflicts resulting from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to conflicts with applicable land use plans and regulations adopted to avoid or mitigate environmental effects.
- **Noise:** The analysis of noise will evaluate potential increases in noise and vibration levels that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to exposure of sensitive receptors to increased noise and groundborne vibration levels; and the potential for noise levels to exceed applicable local ordinances.
- **Population, Employment, and Housing:** The analysis of impacts to population and housing will describe the potential causes of growth and housing displacement resulting from actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to unplanned population growth and demand for housing; and displacement of housing or people.
- **Recreation:** The analysis of recreation will evaluate potential impacts to recreation facilities and opportunities resulting from implementation of actions by other public

agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to the impairment, degradation, or elimination of recreational resources, facilities, and opportunities.

- **Transportation, Traffic, and Circulation:** The analysis of transportation, traffic, and circulation will evaluate potential changes to transportation patterns and facilities resulting from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to conflicts with applicable programs, plans, ordinances or policies; increased hazards due to geometric design features or incompatible uses; and interference with emergency access. The analysis will also qualitatively discuss potential conflicts or inconsistencies with vehicle miles traveled considerations described in CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 subsection b.
- **Tribal Cultural Resources:** The analysis of impacts to tribal cultural resources will evaluate potential changes to cultural resources that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to disturbance or destruction of tribal cultural resources.
- **Utilities and Public Services:** The analysis of utilities and public services will evaluate potential impacts to capacity to serve demand associated with actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects to water supply sources, treatment, and distribution systems; wastewater collection and treatment systems; storm drainage collection systems; electrical and natural gas distribution systems; solid waste collection and disposal; law enforcement; fire protection and emergency medical services; schools; and libraries.
- **Wildfire:** The analysis of wildfire hazards will evaluate potential exposure to wildfire risk that would result from implementation of actions by other public agencies in response to the Proposed Ecosystem Amendment. Specific topics to be addressed include temporary (during construction activities) and long-term (operational) effects related to impairment of an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan; and potential to exacerbate wildfire risks.