



Cawston Lift Station Replacement Project

Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration

Lead Agency:

Eastern Municipal Water District

2270 Trumble Road

Perris, CA 92570

February 2026



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Prepared for:

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
AB	Assembly Bill
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ALUP	Airport Land Use Plan
ALUCP	Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan
AP	Alquist-Priolo
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
ASCE	American Society of Civil Engineers
AWWA	American Water Works Association
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BRTR	Biological Resources Technical Report
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalFIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CalEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CDOC	California Department of Conservation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFG	California Fish and Game
CGS	California Geological Survey
CH ₄	Methane
CMU	Concrete Masonry Unit
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CO	Carbon monoxide
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
CY	Cubic yard
dB	Decibel
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EMWD	Eastern Municipal Water District

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EVMWD	Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GHG	Greenhouse gas
HFD	Hemet Fire Department
hp	Horsepower
HUSD	Hemet Unified School District
H ₂ S	Hydrogen sulfide
IBC	International Building Code
IS	Initial Study
IS/MND	Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
kW	Kilowatt
lbs/day	Pounds per day
LCI	Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
LF	Linear feet
LS	Lift station
LHMP	Local Hazard Mitigation Plan
LHMWD	Lake Hemet Municipal Water District
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MGD	Million Gallons per Day
MM	Mitigation Measure
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MRZ	Mineral Resource Zone
MTCO _{2e}	Metric Tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
N ₂ O	Nitrous Oxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
ND	Negative Declaration
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
NO _x	Oxides of Nitrogen
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NWC	Northwest Corner
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
O ₃	Ozone
Pb	Lead
PF	Public Facilities
P-I	Public Institutional
PM ₁₀	Particulate matter less than 10 microns in aerodynamic diameter
PM _{2.5}	Particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in aerodynamic diameter
PVC	Polyvinyl Chloride
ROG	Reactive Organic Gas
ROW	Right-of-Way
RTU	Remote Terminal Cabinet
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCE	Southern California Edison
SCIC	South Coastal Information Center
SLF	Sacred Lands File
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SO ₂	Sulfur dioxide
SO ₄ ²⁻	Sulfates
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USGS	United States Geologic Survey
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VCP	Vitrified clay pipe
VFD	Variable frequency drive
VdB	Vibration decibels
VHFHSZ	Very high fire hazard severity zone
VMT	Vehicle miles traveled

Acronym/Abbreviation	Definition
VOC	Volatile organic compound
WEAP	Worker Environmental Awareness Program
WRCOG	Western Riverside Council of Governments
WR-MSHCP	Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this Document

Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) has prepared this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) to evaluate the environmental impacts of the Cawston Lift Station Replacement Project (Project). The Project includes the demolition of an existing lift station and construction and operation of a new lift station on a nearby vacant site, as well as off-site pipeline improvements. The Project site is within the City of Hemet, Riverside County, California on the west side of Cawston Avenue and north of Stetson Avenue.

1.2 Lead Agency

The lead agency is the public agency with primary responsibility for a proposed project. Where two or more public agencies will be involved with a project, CEQA Guidelines Section 15051 establishes criteria for identifying the lead agency. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15051(b)(1), "the lead agency will normally be the agency with general governmental powers, such as a city or county, rather than an agency with a single or limited purpose." Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15367 and based on the criterion above, EMWD is the lead agency for the Project.

1.3 Trustee and Responsible Agencies

Other federal, state, and local agencies are involved in the review and approval of the Project, including trustee and responsible agencies under CEQA. Under CEQA, a trustee agency is a state agency that has jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project that are held in trust for the people of the State of California. A responsible agency is an agency other than the lead agency that has responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.

Responsible and trustee agencies are consulted by the CEQA lead agency to ensure the opportunity for input and also review and comment on the IS/MND. Responsible agencies also use the CEQA document in their decision-making. Several agencies other than EMWD may require permits, approvals, and/or consultation in order to implement various elements of the Project.

According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15381, for the purposes of CEQA, the term responsible agency includes agencies which have discretionary approval power over the Project. No discretionary actions by agencies other than EMWD are required. As such, there are no responsible agencies for the Project; refer to **Section 2.9, Required Permits and Approvals**.

1.4 Scope of this Document

This IS/MND has been prepared in accordance with CEQA (as amended) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et. seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 et. seq.), as updated on December 28, 2018. CEQA Guidelines Section 15063 describes the requirements for an IS and Sections 15070–15075 describe the process for the preparation of an MND. Where appropriate, this document refers to either the CEQA Statute or State CEQA Guidelines (as amended in December 2018). This IS/MND contains all of the

contents required by CEQA, which includes a project description, a description of the environmental setting, potential environmental impacts, mitigation measures for any significant effects, consistency with plans and policies, and names of preparers.

This IS/MND evaluates the potential for environmental impacts to resource areas identified in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines (as amended in December 2018). The environmental resource areas analyzed in this document include:

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

1.5 Impact Terminology

The level of significance for each resource area uses CEQA terminology as specified below:

- **No Impact.** No adverse environmental consequences have been identified for the resource or the consequences are negligible or undetectable.
- **Less than Significant Impact.** Potential adverse environmental consequences have been identified. However, they are not adverse enough to meet the significance threshold criteria for that resource. No mitigation measures are required.
- **Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.** Adverse environmental consequences that have the potential to be significant but can be reduced to less than significant levels through the application of identified mitigation strategies that have not already been incorporated into the proposed project.
- **Potentially Significant.** Adverse environmental consequences that have the potential to be significant according to the threshold criteria identified for the resource, even after mitigation strategies are applied and/or an adverse effect that could be significant and for which no mitigation has been identified. If any potentially significant impacts are identified, an EIR must be prepared to meet the requirements of CEQA.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project Overview

The proposed EMWD Cawston Lift Station Replacement Project (Project) includes the decommissioning and removal of an existing lift station (LS) and construction and operation of a replacement LS on a vacant nearby site in the City of Hemet (City), Riverside County, California. In addition, a new force main and gravity sewer would be constructed within Cawston Avenue to serve the new LS. Refer to **Section 2.7, Proposed Project Description** for a detailed description of the Project components.

2.2 Project Purpose

The purpose of the proposed Project is to construct a new upgradable LS with capacity to accommodate 2045 projected flows.

The Project objectives are:

- Replace an outdated and undersized LS with a new upgradable LS.
- Meet existing and projected demands for wastewater conveyance in EMWD's San Jacinto Valley service area.
- Comply with existing regulations governing wastewater treatment and disposal.

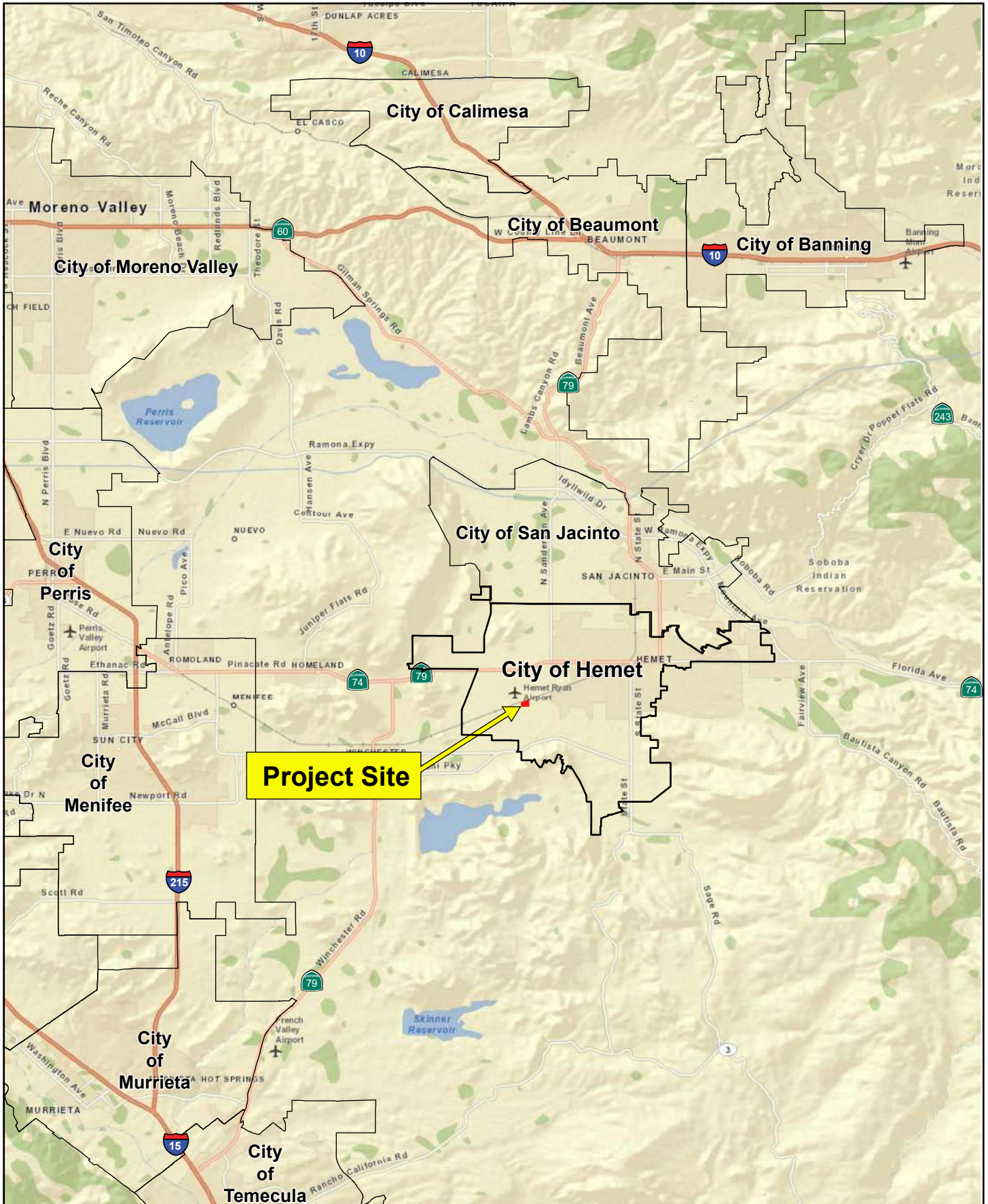
2.3 Regional Location

The Project site is located within the City of Hemet, Riverside County. The City is located within the San Jacinto Valley in western Riverside County, approximately 30 miles southeast of the City of Riverside, 60 miles east of the City of Anaheim, and 80 miles north of the City of San Diego. The City is largely surrounded by unincorporated communities to the east (East Hemet and Valle Vista), south (Ramona Bowl), and west (Winchester). The City of San Jacinto is located directly north of Hemet. Diamond Valley Lake borders the City to the southeast; refer to **Figure 1, Regional Location Map**.

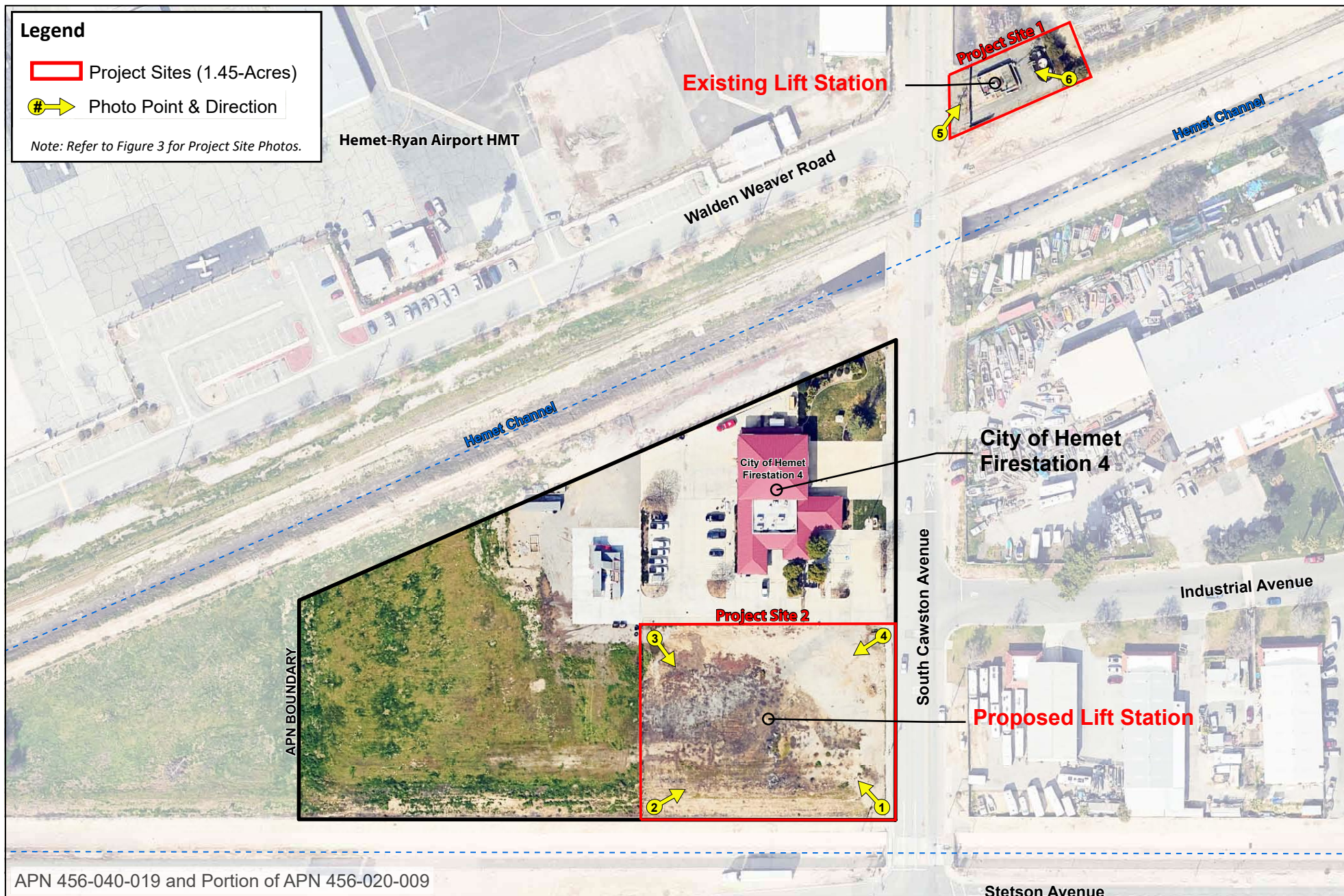
2.4 Project Location

The Project site includes the existing LS site, proposed Cawston LS replacement site, and roadway right-of-way. The existing LS is located at the northeast corner of North Cawston Avenue and Walden Weaver Road. The proposed LS would be located on an approximately 1.2-acre (approximately 51,570 square feet) parcel of vacant land with Assessor's Parcel Number 456-020-012, on the west side of Cawston Avenue and north of Stetson Avenue; refer to **Figure 2, Local Vicinity Map**. Pipeline work would occur within the South Cawston Avenue right-of-way.

The Hemet Fire Department (HFD) Station No. 4 is located immediately adjacent to the proposed LS site with the Hemet Channel and Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway located north of the fire department. Further north is the Hemet-Ryan Airport (HMT). The Project site is located on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-Minute Series Topographic Map, Winchester, California Quadrangle.



Source(s): Cadre Environmental, 2025.



Source(s): Cadre Environmental, 2025.

2.5 Existing Conditions

The proposed LS site is a disturbed vacant site; see **Figure 3, Site Photos**. The existing LS site is improved with the Cawston LS station and is heavily maintained and free of vegetation. The proposed LS site has an approximate elevation of 1,516 feet, while the existing LS site has an approximate elevation of 1,519 feet. The proposed force main and gravity sewer would be constructed within the right-of-way of South Cawston Avenue, which is a paved road.

The Project is located within the Hemet-Ryan Airport Land Use Plan (ALUP) within Zone D.

For information related to specific geology and soils located within the Project sites, refer to **Section 3.7, Geology and Soils**.

According to City of Hemet 2030 General Plan Figure 6.2, the proposed LS site and proposed force main alignment are within the 500-year flood zone, per the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) map. The 500-year flood zones are areas with a 0.2 percent (or 1 in 500 chance) annual chance of flooding; refer to **Section 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality**. Furthermore, the Project is located in the Diamond Valley Combined Dam Inundation Area (see Hemet 2030 General Plan Figure 6.3) where flooding could occur in an unlikely event of a catastrophic earthquake that could cause the collapse of the East Dam of Diamond Valley Lake.



PHOTOGRAPH 1 - Project Site 2



PHOTOGRAPH 3 - Project Site 2



PHOTOGRAPH 2 - Project Site 2



PHOTOGRAPH 4 - Project Site 2

Source(s): Cadre Environmental, 2025.

Note: Refer to Figure 2: Local Vicinity Map for Photo Location Key.



PHOTOGRAPH 5 - Project Site 1, EMWD Cawston Lift Station
- L3121



PHOTOGRAPH 6 - Project Site 1, EMWD Cawston Lift Station
- L3121

Source(s): Cadre Environmental, 2025.

Note: Refer to Figure 2: Local Vicinity Map for Photo Location Key.

2.6 Existing General Plan Land Use and Zoning Designations

The Project is located within the Public Facilities (PF) General Plan Land Use Designation and the Public Institutional (P-I) Zone.^{1,2} Refer to **Section 3.11, Land Use and Planning** for detailed information related to existing general plan land use and zoning designations of the Project site and surrounding areas.

2.7 Proposed Project Description

EMWD proposes to decommission and remove the existing Cawston LS (located on the east side of Cawston Avenue approximately 515 feet north of the proposed Cawston LS location) and construct a replacement LS on the northwest corner (NWC) of the intersection of Cawston Avenue and Stetson Avenue (see **Figure 4, Proposed Lift Station**). The proposed LS would include a wet well, three bypass manholes, an equipment building, liquid and vapor phase odor controls, a generator, fuel tank and separate SCE enclosure. The Project would provide connections for future vapor phase odor controls. The entire proposed LS site would be paved. Pipeline improvements within Cawston Avenue right-of-way include the extension of a 20-inch force main connection from the location of the existing LS site to the proposed LS site and the extensions of a 21-inch gravity sewer main to convey flows from the existing sewer manhole from the existing LS site to the proposed LS site. The following sections detail each of the Project's propose components.

2.7.1 Existing Cawston Lift Station

The existing LS was constructed in 1978 as a wet well/dry well type station. The existing LS has a below-grade electrical room and is serviced by Southern California Edison (SCE) through pole-mounted transformers. The peak flow capacity of the existing LS is 1.8 million gallons per day (MGD). Sewage is currently conveyed through a 10,000 linear foot 16-inch force main. In 2019, a condition assessment of the existing LS was conducted and found that the site is undersized for the desired design capacity.³ The assessment also found that the structure is generally sound but needs improvement, and that the existing electrical and mechanical equipment are passed beyond their serviceable life expectancy and need replacement. In conclusion, the assessment recommended rebuilding the LS on an expanded or new site. As discussed below, a replacement LS would be constructed on a new site. The existing LS would be demolished with the top five feet of the pits being removed and filled with concrete slurry. There are currently no plans for future use of the existing LS site, and it would remain vacant after removal.

2.7.2 New Cawston Lift Station

The Project proposes construction of a new upgradable LS at the NWC of the intersection of Cawston Avenue and Stetson Avenue (see **Figure 4, Proposed Lift Station**). The proposed LS would include a wet well, three bypass manholes, an equipment building, liquid and vapor phase

¹ City of Hemet. 2012. *City of Hemet 2030 General Plan*; Figure 2.1. <https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5332/Figure-21-Land-Use-Plan5142019> (accessed September 2025).

² City of Hemet. 2019. *Official Zoning Map City of Hemet*. <https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5289/official-zoning-map1222019?bidId=> (accessed 2025).

³ Krieger and Stewart. 2025. *Eastern Municipal Water District Preliminary Design Report for Cawston Lift Station Replacement Project*, page 8.

odor controls, a generator, fuel tank and separate SCE enclosure. The Project would provide connections for future vapor phase odor controls. The entire proposed LS site would be paved.

2.7.2.1 Communication Tower

The Project would include the construction of a 40-foot freestanding radio tower with antenna. The construction of the radio tower would include an 8-foot concrete foundation to be placed underground. Additionally, the radio tower will include 10-foot anti-climb panels near the base of the tower and secured with stainless steel hardware.

2.7.2.2 Wet Well

The wet well would be designed with one chamber and an inlet structure. The chamber would be designed for three 250 horsepower (hp) sewage pumps (two duty and one standby). There would also be a 1,000 kilowatt (kW) standby generator. The new lift station would have a capacity of 6.5 MGD on opening day with the potential to upgrade to 9.4 MGD.

The wet well would be approximately 37 feet deep and sized for a maximum of four pump starts per hour. The operating depth is approximately 7.5 feet. The maximum retention time would be approximately 32 minutes at minimum pump flow and 16 minutes at maximum pump flow.

2.7.2.3 Equipment Building

The equipment building would consist of a Concrete Masonry Unit (CMU) block masonry building with parapet roof. The building would house distribution panels, Variable Frequency Drives (VFDs), a Remote Terminal Unit (RTU) cabinet, an Automatic Transfer Switch, and security panels in the Electrical Room and generators in the Generator Room. An Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant restroom would also be included in the building. The Electrical Room would be air conditioned. At initial construction, the building would be equipped with various pumps, one 1,000 kW generator, and the air conditioning system.

2.7.3 Pipeline Improvements

2.7.3.1 Force Main

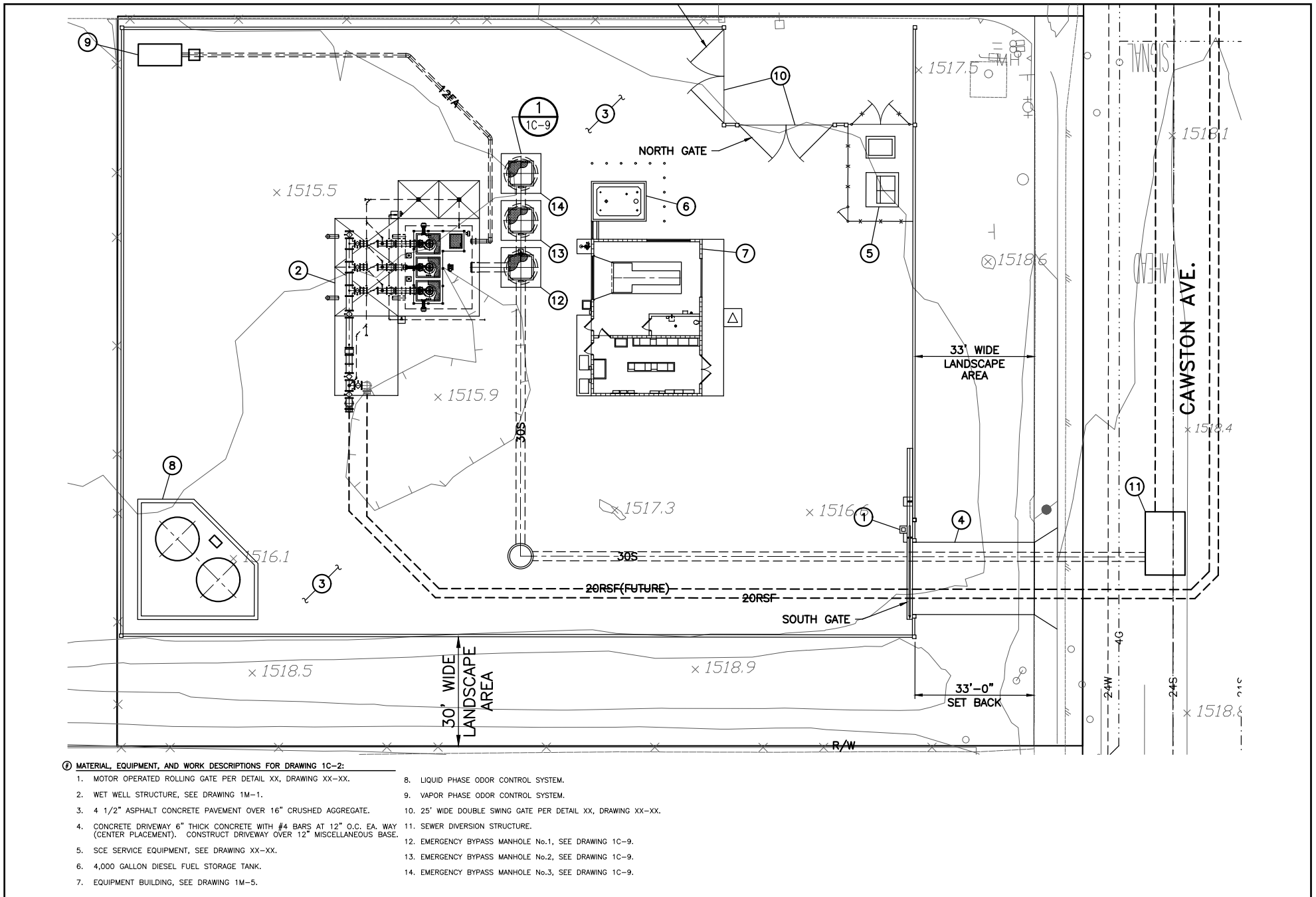
The Project proposes the construction and operation of a non-redundant 800 linear feet (LF) of 20-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) force main to extend the existing 16-inch force main from the existing LS site to the proposed LS site. Redundancy of the force main would be provided where the main crosses the railroad. The 20-inch force main would be C900 PVC DR18.¹ This pipeline would be constructed within the right-of-way of the existing South Cawston Avenue using open cut trenching. The trench that would be cut to construct the force main would be at most 6 feet 2 inches deep, such that the top of the force main is 4 feet below the ground surface. The trench would be no more than 10 feet wide as a trench box would be utilized. When crossing the railroad, a trenchless construction method would be utilized, such as jack and bore. The bore pit would be

¹ C900 PVC DR18 denotes the type of pipe and the pipe's ratings and American Water Works Association (AWWA)/American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards.

approximately 45-feet by 16-feet and the receiving pit would be approximately 10-inches by 10 feet.

2.7.3.2 Gravity Sewer

Additionally, the Project proposes the construction and operation of 700 LF of 21-inch Vitrified Clay pipe (VCP) gravity sewer main to convey sewer flow from the existing sewer manhole located in South Cawston Avenue in front of the existing LS site to the proposed LS site. This pipeline would be constructed within the right-of-way of the existing South Cawston Avenue using open cut trenching. The trench that would be cut to construct the force main would be at most 20 feet 3 inches deep. As this is a gravity sewer, the pipe would be sloped and the overall trench depth would change with distance. The portion of this pipeline crossing existing storm water channel and railroad would be constructed using trenchless method, such as jack and bore. The trench would be no more than 10 feet wide as a trench box would be utilized. The bore pit would be approximately 45-feet by 12-feet and the receiving pit would be approximately 10 inches by 10 feet.



Source(s): Eastern Municipal Water District, 2025.

2.7.4 Site Access

Local access to the Project would be provided via Cawston Avenue. Regional access would be provided via Domenigoni Parkway and State Route 74 (SR-74), which connect to Interstate 215 (I-215) to the west. Regional access is also provided via State Route 79 (SR-79), which connects to Interstate 10 (I-10) to the north.

Truck, passenger, and emergency vehicle access would be provided to the proposed LS site via two gated access driveways along South Cawston Avenue.

- Driveway No. 1 would be a 20-foot-wide driveway located on the southeasternmost corner of the proposed LS site. A motor operated rolling gate would be constructed across the driveway. This driveway is intended as an exit only driveway for the proposed LS site. This gate is denoted as the “South Gate” on **Figure 4**.
- Driveway No. 2 would provide access to the proposed LS site via the existing fire station driveway on the northeastern most corner of the site. Two 25-foot-wide double swing gates would be installed to provide access. These gates are denoted as the “North Gate” and “West Gate” on **Figure 4**.

Driveway Nos. 1 and 2 would provide a Knox Box key switch or padlock to allow emergency vehicles to access the site at any time of the day or night.

2.7.5 Fencing and Walls

As noted above, the Project would include one motor operated rolling gate at Driveway No. 1, two 25-foot-wide double swing gates at Driveway No. 2, and a 6-foot-tall perimeter block wall. The 6-foot-tall wall would be constructed using standard construction techniques and foundation footings would extend 2 feet deep and be 5 feet wide at most.

2.7.6 Parking

As the proposed LS would be unmanned, designated surface parking spaces would not be required to be provided. However, for routine maintenance and operations, staff would be able to utilize any of the paved areas within the proposed LS site to park. Landscaping

The proposed LS site would provide approximately 13,000 sq. ft. of landscape coverage within the setback areas of the proposed LS site. A 33-foot-wide landscape area would be provided along the Cawston Avenue frontage, and a 30-foot-wide landscape area would be provided along the Stetson Avenue frontage. Stormwater best management practices such as bio swells or retention basins would be integrated into the landscape areas.

2.7.7 Construction Phases and Schedule

Construction of the Project includes mass grading of the entire Project site and trenching for the extension of the pipeline improvements within Cawston Avenue. Mass grading and trenching are expected to be completed over a duration of 2 weeks and 8 weeks, respectively. Temporary construction work areas would be staged within the proposed LS site; off-site construction staging

would not be required. Additionally, the existing LS could be used for construction staging, if needed.

2.7.8 Soil Cut and Fill Quantities

The Project is anticipated to require approximately 3,000 cubic yards (CY) of soil cut and approximately 1,900 CY of soil fill. The balance of 1,100 CY of soil would be used across the entire site to create positive drainage for stormwater runoff.

2.7.9 Hours of Operation

The proposed LS and pipelines would be unmanned, designed to operate twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

2.7.10 Project Timeline

Construction is anticipated to begin in July 2026 and continue for 18 months, ending in December 2027.

The Project would be constructed sequentially starting with the pipeline infrastructure improvements (force main and gravity sewer), the construction of the proposed LS, and then the demolition of the existing LS once the proposed LS has been made operational.

2.8 EMWD Standard Construction Practices and Environmental Commitments

2.8.1 EMWD Standard Construction Practices

EMWD maintains standard construction specifications, practices and procedures for incorporation into the design and construction of all EMWD projects. The following standard construction specifications, practices and procedures, would be implemented as part of the proposed Project:

- The design and construction of the facilities would comply with applicable standards set forth by the American Water Works Association, the Greenbook Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction (Greenbook Committee of Public Works Standards, Inc. 2024), the International Building Code (International Code Council 2024), and the California Building Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2).
- EMWD would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations pertaining to hazardous materials, including Federal Code Title 40 and 49; Occupational Safety and Health Administration 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1910; California code sections 5001, 5401, 5701, and 25507; California Health and Safety Code, Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Article 6.5, Article 6.6, and Article 13; and Riverside County ordinance 651.5. Additionally, the contractor would be required to comply with EMWD Detailed Provisions Section 02201 – Construction Methods & Earthwork of the Standard Detailed Provisions for Flammable or Toxic Materials to prevent spontaneous combustion or dispersion.
- EMWD and its contractors would be required to adhere to EMWD's General Safety Requirements for Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste (Specification 1.15 of Section 01000-7) which require proper communication of hazardous substances on a project site, proper storage and disposal of hazardous substances on the site, and clean-

up of any spills in accordance with manufacturer's and/or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements.

- EMWD would comply with federal hazardous materials transportation law (49 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.), and California Health and Safety Code Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Article 6.5 which require precautionary measures be taken during the routine transport of hazardous materials, such as testing and preparation of a transportation safety plan. According to California Health and Safety Code Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Article 13, used oil that may be produced from construction or operation of the Project would be recycled.
- Groundwater encountered during construction would be discharged to land within the potential staging areas, as well as used to wet soil during trench backfilling or for general dust control. Discharges would be conducted in accordance with applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) discharge permits.
- Prior to Project construction, EMWD would require its construction contractor to prepare a Traffic Control and Detour Plan in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, California Department of Transportation Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, Riverside County traffic control requirements and local Permit requirements. At a minimum, the plan would:
 - Identify staging locations to be used during construction;
 - Identify safe ingress and egress points from staging areas;
 - Identify potential road closures;
 - Establish haul routes for construction-related vehicle traffic;
 - Include a detour plan that identifies alternative safe routes to maintain pedestrian and bicyclist safety during construction;
 - Identify roadways and access points for emergency services; and require that disruptions to or closures of these lanes be minimized; and
 - Include provisions for traffic control measures such as barricades, warning signs, cones, lights, and flag persons, to allow safe circulation of vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, and emergency response traffic.

The Traffic Control and Detour Plan would be reviewed and approved by EMWD's project manager and the construction inspector prior to Project construction. EMWD's construction inspector would also provide the construction schedule and Traffic Control and Detour Plan to the City of Hemet for review to ensure that construction of the proposed Project does not conflict with other construction projects that may be occurring simultaneously in the Project vicinity, or emergency evacuation routes given close proximity of Hemet Fire Department Station 4 to the project site.

- All construction work would require the contractor to implement fire hazard reduction measures. In accordance with EMWD Specifications Detailed Provisions Section 02201 – Construction Methods & Earthwork of the Standard Detailed Provisions, the entire work and site, including storage areas, are inspected at frequent intervals to verify that fire prevention measures are constantly enforced; fully charged fire extinguishers of the

appropriate type, supplemented with temporary fire hoses wherever an adequate water supply exists, are furnished and maintained; and flammable materials are stored in a manner that prevents spontaneous combustion or dispersion.

- Construction would comply with South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rule 403 Fugitive Dust Control requirements as per EMWD's Dust Abatement procedures outlined in EMWD Specifications Detailed Provisions Section 02201 – Construction Methods & Earthwork of the Standard Detailed Provisions.
- EMWD's construction contractor would adhere to Engineering Special Provisions, Special Condition 09, which requires compliance with the California General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity Order No. 2022-0057 DWQ (NPDES General Permit No. CAS000002), including preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Construction would implement best management practices (BMPs) to control water quality of stormwater discharges offsite, according to the SWPPP, such as site management "housekeeping" (e.g., proposer storage of materials, waste management, spill prevention, equipment maintenance, dust and tracking control), erosion control, sediment control, tracking control and wind erosion control.
- Staging areas selected by the Project contractor would be located on parcels that avoid adverse environmental impacts and would be required to comply with EMWD's Standard Construction Practices.

2.8.2 Environmental Commitments

EMWD has committed to the following measures to further their environmental stewardship and to reduce and potential impacts of their activities. The following commitments would be implemented by the Project:

- The construction fleet contracted for the Project would be required to comply with CARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulations, which would limit vehicle idling time to five minutes, restrict adding vehicles to construction fleets with older-tier engines, and establish a schedule for retiring older, less fuel-efficient engines from the construction fleet.

2.9 Required Permits and Approvals

Anticipated permits are identified in **Table 2-1: Permits and Approvals**Error! Reference source not found.. All anticipated permits require ministerial action only and as such, none of these agencies constitute a responsible agency under CEQA (Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 14, Section 15381).

Table 2-1: Permits and Approvals

Agency	Permit/Approval
City of Hemet	Encroachment Permit(s)
State Water Resources Control Board NPDES Construction General Permit	State Water Resources Control Board NPDES Construction General Permit for Storm Water Discharges (SWPPP)
South Coast Air Quality Management District	Permit to Construct an Emergency Generator; Permit to Construct Vapor Phase Odor Control; Permit to Operate an Emergency Generator
Riverside County Flood Control District	Encroachment Permit
Riverside County Transportation Commission	Encroachment Permit

3. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. **Project title:** Cawston Lift Station Replacement Project
2. **Lead agency name and address:** Eastern Municipal Water District
2270 Trumble Road
P.O. Box 8300
Perris, CA 92572-8300
3. **Contact person and phone number:** Martha Vilchis
Water Resources Specialist
vilchism@emwd.org
951-928-3777 ext. 4525
4. **Project location:** City of Hemet,
Riverside County, California
5. **Project sponsor's name and address:** Same as Lead Agency
6. **General plan designations:** Public Facilities (PF)
7. **Zoning:** Public Institutional (P-I)
8. **Description of project:** The proposed EMWD Cawston Lift Station Replacement Project (Project) includes the decommissioning/demolition of an existing lift station (LS) and construction and operation of a replacement LS on a vacant nearby site in the City of Hemet (City), Riverside County, California. In addition, a new force main and gravity sewer would be constructed within Cawston Avenue to serve this new LS, extending from the existing site. Refer to **Section 2, Project Description** of this Draft IS/MND.
9. **Surrounding land uses and setting:** Vacant lands (west and south), institutional uses (fire station, north), and industrial (east)
10. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)**
- State Water Resources Control Board
 - South Coast Air Quality Management District
 - Riverside County Flood Control District
 - Riverside County Transportation Commission
 - City of Hemet

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 2180.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

On August 19, 2025, EMWD sent outreach letters to Native American tribes, who are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Project area and who have indicated to EMWD that they are interested in receiving notifications. Consultations were held with the Morongo Band of Mission Indians on October 1, 2025, Pechanga Band of Indians on November 4, 2025, and Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians on October 29, 2025. Three other Native American tribes were contacted but declined consultation or did not respond.

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this Project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☐ I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the Project have been made by or agreed to by the Project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that the proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ I find that the proposed Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed Project, nothing further is required.

Joe Broadhead
Signature

2/10/2026
Date

Joseph Broadhead
Printed Name

Principal Water Resources Specialist
Title

3.1 Aesthetics

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:				
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 within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the Project is in an urbanized area, would the Project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Discussion

The Project is located within the southwestern portion of the City of Hemet, with the existing LS north of the Hemet Channel and the proposed lift station south of the Hemet Channel. The existing LS is on the east side of the Hemet-Ryan Airport across South Cawston Avenue. The proposed LS is south of the Hemet-Ryan Airport, on the west side of South Cawston Avenue. The proposed LS site is on the same parcel as City of Hemet Fire Station 4, and is currently vacant land.

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

Hemet is located in a valley at the foot of Mount San Jacinto. Significant vistas within the City, as defined by the City of Hemet General Plan, include the San Jacinto Mountains, the San Bernardino National Forest and Mountains, and the San Gabriel Mountains.⁵ Due to the flatness of the valley that the City is located within, view corridors towards these vistas extend for miles along roadways.

⁵ City of Hemet. 2012. *City of Hemet 2030 General Plan*; Page 7-11.

https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2162/7_OS_web?bidId= (accessed September 2025).

The existing LS site and proposed LS site are located within an area of the City that has been developed with warehousing, industrial, commercial, and residential uses, surrounding the site on all sides. The proposed lift station site is located across the street from warehousing uses, and is immediately adjacent to an existing Fire Station and industrial uses. North of the Project Site is the Hemet-Ryan Airport and additional industrial uses. South of the Project Site are multiple residential developments, as well as commercial uses southeast of the site.

Views of the San Jacinto Mountains, the San Bernardino National Forest and Mountains, and the San Gabriel Mountains are available from roadways surrounding the Project site, such as South Cawston Avenue and Stetson Avenue. The overall visual footprint of the proposed LS would be insignificant compared to any buildings located nearby. The majority of the proposed LS would be subterranean and would not generally consist of vertical structures. Vertical structures proposed on the proposed LS site would be the perimeter walls/fencing which would not exceed 6 feet in height. Furthermore, the proposed LS site would not encroach on any adjacent roadways, and these areas would maintain views of nearby hillsides and mountains.

Considering that the proposed LS would generally be subterranean, not include vertical structures in excess of 6 feet in height, and that the scenic resources would remain viewable throughout the entirety of the City of Hemet, a less than significant impact would occur with respect to scenic vistas.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

The nearest officially designated state scenic highway to the Project site is California SR-74, which starts at the western boundary of the San Bernardino National Forest and ends at the SR-74 / SR-111 intersection in Palm Desert.⁶ The closest segment of SR-74 that is officially designated is approximately 10.8 miles east of the Project site. The remainder of SR-74 is an eligible state scenic highway; however, it is not officially designated as such. The Project site is approximately one mile south of the eligible segment of SR-74.

The proposed facilities would not impact the eligible and designated state scenic highway due to distance from SR-74 and small scale of the Project. No other significant trees, rock outcroppings or historic buildings would be impacted by the Proposed Project.

⁶ California Department of Transportation. 2024. *California State Scenic Highway System Map*. <https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aaca> (accessed September 2025).

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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

According to Public Resources Code Section 21071, an urbanized area is an incorporated city that has a population of at least 100,000 persons or an incorporated city that has a population of less than 100,000 persons and not more than two contiguous incorporated cities combined equals at least 100,000 persons, among other definitions that do not apply to the Project. According to the 2020 Census, the City of Hemet's population was approximately 89,833.⁷ The City of San Jacinto is an adjacent incorporated city. The City of San Jacinto's population was approximately 53,898, according to the 2020 Census.⁸ As such, the Project site is located in an urbanized area, and this discussion will analyze whether the Project conflicts with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

The Project is located within the Public Facilities (PF) General Plan Land Use Designation and the Public Institutional (P-I) Zone. Lift stations are permitted uses within this land use designation and zoning. The Project would comply with all the development standards for P-I zoning per the City of Hemet Code of Ordinances (Article XXXV). No other City codes exist regarding scenic quality, outside of those described within the zoning. Lighting is discussed below in **Section 3.1(d)**. Temporary impacts would occur during construction. However, as construction is temporary and no non-standard construction techniques are proposed, these impacts would be limited and not unexpected. As the Project would be consistent with the zoning standards and does not propose an unpermitted use, a less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

⁷ United States Census Bureau. 2020. *Census Data, city of Hemet*.
https://data.census.gov/profile/Hemet_city_California?g=160XX00US0633182 (accessed September 2025).

⁸ Ibid. 2020. *Census Data, city of San Jacinto*. https://data.census.gov/profile/San_Jacinto_city_California?g=160XX00US0667112 (accessed September 2025).

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

Construction of the Project would not introduce temporary sources of light, given that construction activities are expected to be limited to daytime hours. Should nighttime construction occur, all lighting would be required to comply with the City of Hemet Code of Ordinances Section 90-1222, which requires that all lighting be directed away from adjoining residential uses and rights-of-way, preventing any acute impacts to adjacent uses and motorists. As such, construction impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
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?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
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))?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

The Project would be located on currently vacant land that is in a developed area of the City. The area around the Project site is designated as Urban and Built-Up Land, while the Project site for the proposed LS is classified as "Farmland of Local Importance" by the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. There are no zoning designations or classifications for forestland, timberland, or timberland production on or adjacent to the Project site.

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?

According to the California Department of Conservation, the Project site is located on land that is classified as "Farmland of Local Importance."⁹ As previously discussed, the Project site is within the Public Facilities (PF) General Plan Land Use Designation and the Public Institutional (P-I) Zone. As the land is not designated or zoned for agricultural uses and is not Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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

The Project site is within the Public Facilities (PF) General Plan Land Use Designation and the Public Institutional (P-I) Zone and is not zoned for agricultural uses. The Project site is not enrolled in a Williamson Act Contract.¹⁰ No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

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))?

and

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

The Project site is within the Public Facilities (PF) General Plan Land Use Designation and the Public Institutional (P-I) Zone and is not zoned for forestry uses. The Project site has been previously disturbed, and no forest land exists within the Project site. No impact would occur.

⁹ California Department of Conservation. 2025. *California Important Farmland Finder*. <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/> (accessed September 2025).

¹⁰ California Department of Conservation. 2024. *Williamson Act Enrollment Finder*. <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/WilliamsonAct/> (accessed September 2025).

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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

The Project site is classified as "Farmland of Local Importance." The undeveloped and vacant land to the south and west of the proposed LS site are classified similarly. The surrounding area has been developed with urban uses such as single family residential, industrial, and institutional uses. None of these surrounding parcels are zoned or designated for agricultural uses. Additionally, as identified in **Section 2.6, Existing General Plan Land Use and Zoning Designations**, the Project site is designated and zoned for Public Facilities (PF) and Public Institutional (P-I), respectively. Neither allow nor conditionally allow agricultural uses. As such, the land was not planned at the City level to be utilized for farmland and no conversion of Farmland would occur. As such, a less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than Significant.

3.3 Air Quality

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

Discussion

The Project site is located within the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), which is regulated by the SCAQMD. The SCAQMD monitors air pollutant levels to ensure the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) are met and, if they are not met, to develop strategies to meet the standards.

Depending on whether the NAAQS or CAAQS are met or exceeded, the SCAB is classified as being in "attainment" or "nonattainment." The 2022 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) assesses the attainment status of the SCAB and is summarized in Error! Reference source not found.. As shown therein, the SCAB is in nonattainment for the State ozone (1-Hour and 8-Hour), PM10 (24-Hour and Annual), and PM2.5 (Annual) requirements, and for the Federal ozone (1-Hour and 8-Hour), PM2.5 (24 hour and Annual), and lead (3-Months Rolling) requirements. Thus, the SCAB is required to implement strategies that would reduce pollutant levels to recognized standards, which is done through the Clean Communities Plan (formerly known as the Air Toxics Control Plan). The Clean Communities Plan is designed to examine the overall direction of the SCAQMD's air toxics control program and includes control strategies aimed at reducing toxic emissions (SCAQMD 2010).

Table 3-1: Criteria Pollutant Attainment Status – SCAB

Criteria Pollutant	Averaging Time	State (CAAQS)	Federal (NAAQS) ¹
--------------------	----------------	---------------	------------------------------

Ozone (O ₃)	1-Hour	Nonattainment	Nonattainment (extreme)
	8-Hour	Nonattainment	Nonattainment (extreme)
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1-Hour	Attainment	Attainment (maintenance)
	8-Hour	Attainment	Attainment (maintenance)
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	1-Hour	Attainment	Unclassifiable/Attainment
	Annual	Attainment	Attainment (maintenance)
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	1-Hour	Attainment	Unclassifiable/Attainment
	24-Hour	Attainment	Unclassifiable/Attainment
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	24-Hour	Nonattainment	Attainment (maintenance)
	Annual	Nonattainment	No Criteria Defined
Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	24-Hour	No Criteria Defined	Nonattainment (serious)
	Annual	Nonattainment	Nonattainment (serious)
Lead (Pb)	30-Day	Attainment	No Criteria Defined
	3-Months Rolling	No Criteria Defined	Nonattainment (partial)
Hydrogen Sulfide (H ₂ S)	1-Hour	Unclassified/Attainment	No Criteria Defined
Sulfates (SO ₄ ²⁻)	24-Hour	Attainment	No Criteria Defined
1. Under the NAAQS when an area is in nonattainment, the level of nonattainment is classified based on the particular pollutant. These classifications are based on the severity of the air pollution problem, with "Extreme" being the most severe and carrying the most stringent requirements. Classifications include marginal, moderate, serious, severe, and extreme. The timeframe required for areas to come into attainment generally corresponds with their classification. "Maintenance" is the status an area enters after moving from nonattainment to attainment.			

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

The SCAQMD's 2022 AQMP assesses the attainment status of the SCAB, which includes the Project site, and provides a strategy for attainment of state and federal air quality standards. The AQMP strategies are developed based on population, housing, and employment growth forecasts anticipated under local city general plans and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)'s 2024 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, referred to as Connect SoCal.

A project would conflict with or obstruct an applicable air quality plan if it would lead to population, housing or employment growth that exceeds the forecasts used in the development of the applicable air quality plan.

The Project would replace an existing LS and construct new sanitary gravity and force main to extend service to the proposed LS. The Project would improve operational benefits to accommodate existing and planned demands for wastewater conveyance in EMWD's service area that would occur with or without the Project. Construction would not require personnel to relocate from outside the area; jobs would be filled by local workers. The Project would not lead to unplanned population, housing or employment growth that exceeds the forecasts used in the development of the AQMP. Potential conflicts with the AQMP would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

The Project would result in emissions of criteria pollutants from short-term construction activities. The pipeline and any manholes (if required) would not be associated with long-term energy usage or additional EMWD Operations and Maintenance (O&M) activities. Inspection of the pipeline and manholes would be incorporated into EMWD's existing O&M activities.

Given the relatively small scale of the Project, a Project-specific air quality analysis was not prepared. Instead, a comparison to a larger project that did have a project-specific air quality analysis is made to evaluate construction impacts. Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District's (EVMWD) Diamond Regional Sewer Lift Station and Dual Force Mains Project (SCH No. 2019049011; <https://ceqanet.lci.ca.gov/Project/2019049011>) (EVMWD Project) is utilized. The EVMWD Project is located in the City of Lake Elsinore, approximately 17.3 miles southwest of the Project site. The EVMWD project included the construction of 3,400 linear feet of parallel 24-inch-diameter and 16-inch-diameter force mains as well as the construction and operation of a LS with a maximum capacity of 19.9 MGD. Construction was anticipated to occur over 18 months, similar to the proposed Project. Additionally, air quality emissions are measured in pounds per day (lbs/day) (a daily rate of emissions rather than a total mass of emissions), allowing direct comparisons.

The EVMWD Project did not result in the exceedance of any SCAQMD threshold of significance, resulting in less than significant impacts. The EVMWD Project evaluated the construction and localized construction emissions that would occur (refer to Table 2 and Table 3 of the EVMWD Project IS/MND)¹¹. Considering the Project would only require the construction of a total of 1,500 LF of sewer pipeline and a LS of proposed maximum capacity of 9.4 MGD, which represents a smaller potential impact, impacts would similarly be less than significant.

Operationally, indirect air quality emissions would occur as a result of power generation required to operate the LS pumps. The EVMWD Project IS/MND determined that all pollutant emissions would be below SCAQMD thresholds for operations (refer to Table 4 of the EVMWD Project IS/MND). Considering the Project proposes an LS with a maximum capacity of 9.4 MGD, which is smaller than the LS proposed in the EVMWD Project (19.9 MGD), it can be assumed that operational air quality emissions would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds.

Lastly, the EVMWD Project was required to comply with all SCAQMD air quality standards, such as SCAQMD Rule 403, which includes proper dust control during construction. The Project would

¹¹ Helix Environmental Planning, Inc. 2019. *Diamond Regional Sewer Lift Station and Dual Force Mains Project*, page 16-17. [ThdRavJfWfGDWHuXm0hPGF8FjR5NCIGOPrRyR7waiP17Blauht5PkbTWwKE2PftxCpHCpxmAL0aVwyw90](https://ceqanet.lci.ca.gov/Project/2019049011) (accessed December 2025).

also be subjected to the same SCAQMD standards as the EVMWD Project. As such, similar to the EVMWD Project, the Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant and a less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Sensitive receptors are typically defined as schools (preschool–12th grade), hospitals, resident care facilities, senior housing facilities, day care centers, or other facilities that may house individuals with health conditions that would be adversely impacted by changes in air quality. There are no sensitive receptors immediately adjacent to the Project site. The nearest sensitive receptor is Harmony Elementary School approximately 0.5 miles to the south. Additionally, as described in **Section 3.3(b)** above, the Project would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds of significance. Therefore, sensitive receptors would not be subjected to substantial pollutant concentrations and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

The Project would involve emissions of sulfur compounds from use of oil and diesel fuel during construction, which would potentially result in unpleasant odors. Construction would be temporary and odorous emissions from construction equipment tend to dissipate quickly within short distances from construction sites. Once the proposed Project is operational, the pipeline would not be associated with odors. The proposed LS may have incidental odors associated with its operation. The Project would include a liquid phase odor control system to reduce the potential for nuisance odors from being emitted. As the project includes design features to control odors, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.4 Biological Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
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 Game 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, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒

-
- f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Discussion

A Biological Resources Technical Report (BRTR) was prepared for the Project by Cadre Environmental in April 2025. This BRTR is available as **Appendix A** to this Draft IS/MND. A reconnaissance survey of the Project Sites was conducted by Ruben Ramirez of Cadre Environmental on April 8th, 2025, to characterize and identify potential sensitive plant and wildlife habitats at the existing LS site and the proposed LS site. Additionally, a literature review was conducted to assess known and existing biological resources within and adjacent to the Project site.

MSHCP

Although the EMWD is not a permittee to the Western Riverside County MSHCP, the BRTR and the following environmental analysis assess the Project for compliance with the plan. The Project site and the existing LS site are located within the Western Riverside County MSHCP San Jacinto Plan Area and are not located within or adjacent to an MSHCP Criteria Area Cell, Cell Group, or Linkage Area. Refer to Figure 3, MSHCP Relationship Map, in **Appendix A**.

The BRTR documents the following vegetation communities within the existing and proposed LS sites.

Table 3-2: Vegetation Communities Acreages

Vegetation Type	Existing LS (acres)	Proposed LS (acres)	TOTAL Acres
Disturbed	--	1.24	1.24
Developed	0.21	--	0.21
TOTAL	0.21	1.24	1.45

Disturbed

The proposed LS site is heavily disturbed, generally devoid of vegetation, and substrates consist of a layer of decomposed granite. Scattered species documented onsite include stinknet (*Oncosiphon piluliferum*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), broad stemmed filaree (*Erodium botrys*), shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*) prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), common sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), common groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), London rocket (*Sisymbrium irio*), cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*), small flowered fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), and ripgut grass (*Bromus diandrus*).

Developed

The existing LS site is developed within the existing Cawston Lift Station L3121. A few ornamental trees and scattered weeds are present, including common sow thistle and common groundsel.

General Wildlife Species

General wildlife species documented on site included northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), black phoebe American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*), and house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*).

Jurisdictional Resources

No resources regulated by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) were documented within the Project site.

Sensitive Habitats

No vegetation communities listed by CDFW as sensitive were documented within or adjacent to the Project site.

Sensitive Plants

The Project site is not located within a Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) Narrow Endemic or Criteria Area Species Plant Survey Areas.

No state or federally listed/proposed threatened or endangered plant species were documented or are expected to occur within the Project site based on the developed condition of the existing LS site and the disturbed condition (decomposed granite substrates) and lack of suitable habitat on the proposed LS site nor the existing LS site. Refer to Table 2, Sensitive Plant Species with Potential to Occur Onsite, in **Appendix A**.

Sensitive Wildlife

The Project site is not located within an MSHCP Amphibian, Mammal, or Burrowing Owl Survey Area.

No state or federally listed/proposed threatened or endangered wildlife species were documented or are expected to occur within the Project site based on the developed condition of the existing LS site and the disturbed condition (decomposed granite substrates) and lack of suitable habitat on the proposed LS site. Refer to Table 3, Sensitive Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur Onsite, in **Appendix A**.

While not a federally or state listed/proposed threatened or endangered species, the California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*) was documented within and adjacent to the proposed LS site. As a result, the California horned lark has moderate potential to occur onsite. The California horned lark is on the California watch list and is an MSHCP covered species. Habitat for the California horned lark includes agriculture (field croplands), grassland, cismontane alkali marsh,

playa and vernal pool habitat, Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub, and coastal sage scrub. It has been recorded in chaparral and riparian habitat; however these are not typical habitats used by this species. This species has a moderate potential to occur onsite as it may occasionally forage onsite in the disturbed habitat documented within the proposed LS site.

Overall, the Project site does not occur within a designated critical habitat for federally endangered or threatened species.

Wildlife Movement

The Project site does not represent a regional or local wildlife movement corridor and provides no cover, food, natural unrestricted water courses or habitats that would facilitate regional wildlife movement onsite. The Project site is also not located within or adjacent to an MSHCP designated core, extension of existing core, non-contiguous habitat block, constrained linkage, or linkage area.

The existing and proposed LS sites are bound by permanent fencing, developed lands, and high traffic roads.

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 Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

While EMWD is not a signatory to the Western Riverside County (WR-) MSHCP, compliance with the WR-MSHCP is still evaluated.

Sensitive Plants

The Project site is not located within an WR-MSHCP Narrow Endemic or Criteria Area Species Plant Survey Area. As concluded in **Section 3.4(f)** below, the proposed action would not conflict with the WR-MSHCP guidelines.

No state or federally listed/proposed threatened or endangered plant species were documented or expected to occur within the Project site. Additionally, no special-status plants were documented onsite. No impact to sensitive plant species would occur.

Sensitive Wildlife

The Project site is not located within an MSHCP Amphibian, Mammal or Burrowing Owl Survey Area. As concluded in **Section 3.4(f)** below, the proposed action would not conflict with the WR-MSHCP guidelines.

No state or federally listed/proposed threatened or endangered wildlife species were documented or expected to occur within the Project site.

Moderate potential habitat was documented onsite for one sensitive species, the California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*). Impacts to 1.24-acre of potential foraging habitat characterized as disturbed habitat (proposed LS site) would represent a less than significant

impact. The Project would be required to complete pre-construction surveys compliant with Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game (CFG) Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. Regulatory compliance would ensure that no bird species are impacted as a result of construction and any impacts would be less than significant.

Additionally, the Project site is located completely within the Stephen's Kangaroo Rate (SKR) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) fee area which is administered by the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA). As such, to reduce potential impacts to SKR, the Project would implement **MM BIO-1**, which would require the Project applicant to pay SKR fees. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, a fee of \$500 per acre is due for all new development. As such, with the implementation of **MM BIO-1**, the Project would not have a substantial adverse effect on sensitive wildlife species, and a less than significant impact to SKR would occur.

Mitigation Measures

MM BIO-1 **Stephen's Kangaroo Rat Fee.** The existing LS and proposed LS are within the SKR HCP fee area, which is administered by the RCHCA. Therefore, prior to the issuance of a grading permit, the Project Applicant would be required to pay a fee of \$500 per acre.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact with mitigation.

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

A total of 2.45 acres of previously disturbed land would be impacted as a result of the Project and no aquatic resources exist within the Project site. No impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities would occur as a result of the Project.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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

As indicated in the BRTR (**Appendix A**), no wetlands are located within the Project site. Therefore, there would be no substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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 Project site does not represent a regional wildlife movement corridor and provides no cover, food, natural unrestricted water courses, or habitats that would facilitate regional wildlife movement onsite. The Project site is not located within an MSHCP designated core, extension of existing core, non-contiguous habitat block, constrained linkage, or linkage area.

However, the Project site and adjacent habitats possess resources expected to potentially provide nesting habitat for nesting birds protected under the MBTA and CDFG Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. As such, the Project would be required to implement mitigation measures for potential direct/indirect impacts to nesting bird species would require compliance with the MBTA and CDFG Code Sections 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. Construction activities conducted outside the nesting season (between September 1st and January 31st) do not require preconstruction nesting bird surveys. However, if construction activities are proposed between February 1st and August 31st, the Project would implement **MM BIO-2**, which requires a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction nesting bird and raptor survey(s) no more than three days prior to initiation of grading to document the presence or absence of nesting birds within or directly adjacent to the Project site, as required by the code. With the implementation of **MM BIO-2**, impacts to nesting birds would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

MM BIO-2 Nesting Bird Preconstruction Surveys. Regulatory requirement for potential direct/indirect impacts to nesting bird species will require compliance with the MBTA and CDFG Code Section 3505, 3503.5, and 3513. Construction activities conducted outside the nesting season (between September 1st and January 31st) do not require pre-removal nesting bird surveys. If construction activities are proposed between February 1st and August 31st, a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction nesting bird survey no more than three (3) days prior to initiation of grading to document the presence or absence of nesting birds within or directly adjacent to the existing LS and the proposed LS.

The survey(s) will focus on identifying any bird nests that would be directly or indirectly affected by construction activities. If active nests are documented, species-specific measures will be prepared by a qualified biologist and implemented to prevent abandonment of the active nest. At a minimum, grading in the vicinity of a nest will be postponed until the young birds have fledged. The perimeter of the nest setback zone will be fenced or adequately

demarcated with stakes and flagging at 20-foot intervals, and construction personnel and activities restricted from the area. A survey report by a qualified biologist verifying that no active nests are present, or that they young have fledged, will be submitted to the City of Hemet for review and approval prior to initiation of grading in the nest setback zone. The qualified biologist will serve as a construction monitor during those periods when construction activities occur near active nest area to ensure that no inadvertent impacts on these nests occur. A final monitoring report of the findings, prepared by a qualified biologist, will be submitted to the City of Hemet documenting compliance with the CDFG Code. Any nest permanently vacated for the season would not warrant protection pursuant to the CDFG Code.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact with mitigation.

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

No trees meeting the City of Hemet tree removal ordinance as outlined in Municipal Code Article IV, Care and Maintenance of Street Trees, are located within or adjacent to the Project site.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

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 Project site is not located within an MSHCP Criteria Area Cell or Cell Group. Therefore, no Habitat Evaluation and Acquisition Negotiation Strategy (HANS) or Joint Project Review (JPR) are required.

The Project site is not located within a MSHCP Narrow Endemic Plant Survey Area (WR-MSHCP Section 6.1.3); Criteria Area Species Survey Area (WR-MSHCP Section 6.3.2); Amphibian Species Survey Area (WR-MSHCP Section 6.3.2); Mammal Species Survey Area (WR-MSHCP Section 6.3.2); or Burrowing Owl Survey Area (WR-MSHCP Section 6.3.2), and therefore no surveys are required, and the Project is consistent with the WR-MSHCP Sections 6.1.3 and 6.3.2.

No Section 6.1.2 riparian or riverine resources are located within the Project site. The Project is consistent with WR-MSHCP Section 6.1.2.

The WR-MSHCP Urban/Wildlands Interface guidelines presented in Section 6.1.4 are intended to address indirect effects associated with locating commercial, mixed uses and residential

developments in proximity to a MSHCP Conservation Area. The Project site is not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area. The Project is compliant with WR-MSHCP Section 6.1.4.

The fuels management guidelines presented in Section 6.4 of the WR-MSHCP are intended to address brush management activities around new development within or adjacent to MSHCP Conservation Areas. The Project site is not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area. The Project is compliant with WR-MSHCP Section 6.4.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

3.5 Cultural Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	[]	[]	[X]	[]

Discussion

A Cultural Resources Assessment was prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. on September 9, 2025 (Appendix B). The report includes research, record searches, and a field survey to identify cultural resources on the Project site and in the vicinity of the Project. The complete *Cultural Resources Assessment* is provided in **Appendix B**. A discussion of the proposed Project's potential impacts to tribal cultural resources, including tribal outreach and consultation, is provided in **Section 3.18, Tribal Cultural Resources**.

Records Search

A records search of the Project site and a one-mile buffer was conducted through the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC). The SCIC reported that no cultural resources have previously been recorded within the Project site and that the existing LS was previously surveyed and reviewed as a part of one previous cultural resources study. The proposed LS site has not been previously surveyed. The Cultural Resources appendix contains record search results.

Field Survey

Kimley-Horn cultural resources staff conducted a pedestrian survey of the entirety of the Project site on May 12, 2025. The survey was conducted by walking parallel transects spaced approximately 10 to 15 meters apart. Access to the existing LS site was provided by EMWD. Digital photographs were taken at various points of the Project site. Ground visibility was excellent throughout the undeveloped portion of the Project site at 95 percent. The existing LS was developed with EMWD infrastructure and actively maintained. The proposed LS site is vacant, undeveloped, and no surficial evidence of previous development was visible. The entirety of the Project site has been previously disturbed via grading, development, and demolitions. Specifically,

the existing LS site is an active-use water infrastructure site, and the proposed LS site has been graded and scraped.

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

The Cultural Resources Assessment did not identify any Historic Cultural Resources, as defined by CEQA, within the Project site. While there are historical cultural resources within the City of Hemet, none are located within the Project site, with the nearest being located at the Hemet-Ryan Airport. Construction and operation of the proposed Project would not cause an adverse change in the significance of nearby historical resources. As there are no Historic Cultural Resources within the Project site and immediate surroundings, a less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

The Cultural Resources Assessment did not identify any unique archaeological resources, as defined by CEQA, within the Project site. Research indicated a low level of sensitivity for intact buried prehistoric archaeological resources to be identified during Project implementation due to extensive prior ground disturbance. As such, a less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

No human remains are known to be present within the proposed Project sites. However, the Project would require ground disturbing activities during construction which have the potential to encounter previously unknown human remains. If human remains are found, the procedures for discovery of human remains would be followed; the State of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. In the event of an unanticipated discovery of human remains, the County Coroner must be notified immediately. If the human remains are determined to be of Native American origin, the Coroner will notify the NAHC, which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD has 48 hours from being granted site access to make recommendations for the disposition of the

remains. If the MLD does not make recommendations within 48 hours, the landowner shall reinter the remains in an area of the property secure from subsequent disturbance. Operation of the proposed Project would not involve ground disturbing activities and would therefore have no impact. Impacts from the Project would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.6 Energy

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

Discussion

Electrical service for the Project area is provided by SCE. According to SCE's power content label for 2023, its electricity comes from approximately 37.6 percent renewables, 4.5 percent large hydroelectric, 20.0 percent natural gas, 9.1 percent nuclear, and 28.8 percent from other and unspecified power sources through transactions.¹²

Local and state agencies have developed plans and policies that address prioritizing renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy reduction measures and meet state targets for reduction in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. These include the City of Hemet General Plan Open Space and Conservation Element and Climate Action Plan (CAP), the County of Riverside 2019 CAP; and the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) Subregional Climate Action Plan, which are discussed further in **Section 3.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions**. The County of Riverside CAP was adopted in 2015, with an update adopted in 2019, to establish and update the County's GHG reduction targets and reduction strategies.

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

Construction of the Project would involve construction-related fossil fuel consumption from operation of diesel-powered construction equipment, on-site mobile generator(s), and fossil fuel consumption from material hauling, delivery, and worker vehicle trips. The anticipated construction fleet for the Project includes typical construction equipment such as a backhoe/loader, excavator, utility trucks, water truck, compressor, pump, pick-up trucks, dump trucks, concrete saw, pavement breaker, sweeper, paver, and generator.

¹² California Energy Commission. 2023. 2023 Power Content Label, Southern California Edison Company. <https://www.energy.ca.gov/filebrowser/download/7362> (accessed September 2025).

The Project would implement typical construction practices such as site clearing and grading, excavating and installation, and site restoration. The Project would not require unusual or excessive construction equipment or practices that would result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy compared to projects of similar type and size. In addition, the construction fleet contracted for the Project would be required to comply with CARB In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulations, which would limit vehicle idling time to five minutes, restrict adding vehicles to construction fleets with older-tier engines, and establish a schedule for retiring older, less fuel-efficient engines from the construction fleet.

The pipeline and any required manholes would not be associated with long-term energy usage or additional EMWD O&M activities. Inspection of the pipeline and any required manholes would be incorporated into EMWD's existing O&M activities and would involve portable monitoring equipment. While the proposed LS would require energy uses, the Project involves the replacement of an existing LS. Additionally, the Project would increase EMWD's sewer system capacity to accommodate planned growth anticipated in the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) that would occur with or without the Project. Inspection and repair, if necessary, of the Project would be incorporated into EMWD's existing O&M activities; no new staff would be required to serve the Project. Furthermore, O&M activities would be conducted using EMWD's vehicle fleet, which is continually being improved with regard to efficiency and fuel type, consistent with the County of Riverside 2019 CAP Update and City of Hemet CAP. As such, construction and operation of the Project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

The Project would not interfere with State or local plans related to renewable energy or energy efficiency. The Project would not result in a net increase beyond existing levels in energy use or vehicle trips during operation. The City of Hemet General Plan contains goals and policies to encourage energy efficiency; and the City of Hemet CAP focuses on reducing energy and GHG emissions. The CAP includes suggested measures to reduce emissions and GHGs through energy use reduction, water use reduction, recycling and diversion, alternative transportation, and renewable energy utilization. Additionally, the WRCOG Subregional CAP identifies several goals, measures, and strategies to reduce GHG emissions from energy, transportation and land use, solid waste, and water.

Operation of the Project would be incorporated into EMWD's existing O&M activities and would not result in an increase in new vehicle trips. The Project would not involve land use changes that would indirectly result in an increase in vehicle trips or vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As explained under **Section 3.6(a)** above, the construction and operation of the Project would not involve

wasteful or inefficient energy consumption. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with the City of Hemet General Plan or CAP, or the WRCOG Subregional CAP, which were developed to keep GHG emissions in line with State emission reduction targets. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation would be required.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.7 Geology and Soils

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	[]	[]	[X]	[]
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
iv) Landslides?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of top soil?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
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?	[]	[]	[X]	[]

-
- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
| f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ |

Discussion

The Project area is within a previously developed, relatively flat portion of the City of Hemet. As with most regions in southern California, the Project area is located in areas of several known active earthquake faults. No Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Zones are identified in the Project site by the State Division of Mines and Geology. The nearest fault is the Casa Loma Fault, located approximately 3.4 miles northeast of the Project site.¹³

The Project site is underlain by alluvial soils, which are more susceptible to settlement and liquefaction than other soils. The Project site is located in an area of moderate liquefaction susceptibility, according to the City of Hemet General Plan Public Safety Element.

a.i) *Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: 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 41.*

As with most regions in southern California, the Project area is located in a region with several known active earthquake faults. The potential for ground rupture is most likely to occur along the traces of active faults. The Project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo (AP) fault zone; the nearest AP fault zone is the San Jacinto fault zone. The Casa Loma fault (within the San Jacinto fault zone) is the closest named fault to the Project site. The San Jacinto fault zone and the Casa Loma fault are located approximately 3.4 miles northeast of the Project site.¹⁴ Due to the distance between the AP fault zone and mapped fault and the Project area, the potential for ground rupture at the site is considered to be low. Thus, impacts related to rupture of a known earthquake fault would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

¹³ California Geological Survey. ND. *Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation*. <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/eqzapp/> (accessed November 2025).

¹⁴ California Geologic Survey. ND. *Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation*. <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/eqzapp/> (accessed September 2025).

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

a.ii) Directly or indirectly caused potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: Strong seismic ground shaking?

The Project is located within a seismically active region of southern California near local and regional faults capable of generating earthquakes with strong ground shaking. The intensity of ground shaking would depend upon the magnitude of the earthquake, distance to the epicenter, and the geology of the area between the epicenter and the project area. The Project does not propose permanent on-site workers. Workers would only be present during construction and during O&M activities. Inspection and repair, if necessary, of the Project would be incorporated into EMWD's existing O&M activities; no new staff would be required to serve the Project.

While the Project would increase EMWD's sewer system capacity, the Project would accommodate planned growth anticipated in the 2020 UWMP that would occur with or without the Project. The Project itself would not induce growth or otherwise bring additional people to the area or structures people would occupy that would be at risk of loss, injury or death from strong seismic ground shaking. Furthermore, the Project facilities would all generally be buried or low profile and not pose a fall risk that could damage structures or injure people.

In accordance with EMWD's existing Standard Construction Practices, the Project facilities would be designed per EMWD's Engineering Standards and Specifications, as well as applicable American Water Works Association standards and would incorporate measures to accommodate seismic loading pursuant to guidelines such as the "Greenbook" Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction and the International Building Code. These guidelines are produced through joint efforts by industry groups to provide standard specifications for engineering and construction activities, including measures to accommodate seismic loading parameters. These standards and guidelines are widely accepted by regulatory authorities and are regularly included in related standards such as municipal building and grading codes. In addition, the Project's design would follow guidelines within the California Building Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2), which is based on the International Building Code with amendments to reflect conditions specific to California. Because building and construction codes related to seismic shaking would be followed, there would be less potential for structural damage or loss due to seismic ground shaking. Even if structural damage does occur during a seismic event, it would be isolated to the various Project components; the Project would not exacerbate a risk of seismic-related events or damage to other existing resources in the vicinity. Impacts would be less than significant, and mitigation would not be required.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

a.iii) Directly or indirectly caused potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Liquefaction is the process by which clay-free soil, such as sands and silts, temporarily lose cohesion and strength and turn into a fluid state during a severe ground shaking event. This primarily occurs in areas saturated with high groundwater levels and recent deposits of sands and silts. According to the California Geological Survey (CGS), the Project is not in an area that is susceptible to liquefaction; however, the City of Hemet General Plan Public Safety Element designates the Project site as being in an area that is moderately susceptible to liquefaction.^{15,16}

The Project would be designed and constructed in accordance with the latest California Building Code (CBC) and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) seismic requirements for buildings and structures. All proposed Project facilities would be designed in accordance with EMWD's Engineering Standards and Specifications, the applicable geotechnical reports, and the other standards and guidelines described under **Section 3.7(a.ii)** above, that would ensure pipeline and LS resiliency during earthquakes and other ground instability events, such as liquefaction. Further, adherence to the Project-specific geotechnical investigation recommendations would reduce seismic risks. Each of these items (CBC and ASCE standards, EMWD standards, site-specific geotechnical investigation recommendations) reduce these risks as they include measures such as site stabilization and require certain structural treatments given the site-specific constraints. Examples of common structural treatments in liquefaction-prone areas are deep foundations (e.g., pile- or pier-based foundations) and shallow foundations with soil improvements such as dewatering or compaction to increase the density of soils underlying the foundation. Implementation of these standards would generally improve the conditions within the site when compared to the existing conditions. As such, the Project would generally improve seismic conditions associated with liquefaction and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

Seismically induced landslides and slope failures are common occurrences during or soon after large earthquakes. Landslides can occur when strong ground movement, such as an earthquake, shakes loose soil and causes land and debris to lose stability and slide. The Project is not located on a hillside and the proposed pipeline and the proposed LS would be constructed within existing roadway right-of-way and a vacant parcel. The Project is not located in an area that is susceptible

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ City of Hemet. 2012. *City of Hemet 2030 General Plan*; Figure 6.1. https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10809/Public-Safety-Element_FINAL_02282025 (accessed September 2025).

to landslide as there are no slopes in excess of 10 percent.^{17,18} As the Project is not located in an area susceptible to landslide, the potential for the Project to directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death resulting from a Project failure during a seismically induced landslide or slope failure is limited. Therefore, landslide impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of top soil?

The Project could result in minor erosion of soils or loss of topsoil onsite during Project construction, in particular due to the presence of soil stockpiles during excavation activities. Exposed soil piles are susceptible to erosion during strong winds, heavy rains, or other storm events. Construction of the Project would disturb a total area greater than one acre in size and would therefore be required to obtain coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) NPDES Stormwater Construction General Permit during Project construction. A SWPPP would be prepared and implemented in compliance with the Construction General Permit. BMPs would be identified in the SWPPP to control and reduce impacts associated with construction activities and erosion of soil. In accordance with EMWD's Standard Construction Practices, potential BMPs include site management "housekeeping," erosion control, sediment control, tracking control and wind erosion control. With implementation of the standard construction BMPs, the potential for soil erosion or the loss of topsoil during construction of the Project would be less than significant. All pipeline disturbance areas would be repaved after construction is complete, and the LS sites would be final stabilized, and would not result in further soil erosion. Additionally, the proposed LS site includes landscaping on the east and southern boundaries, this landscaping would stabilize the ground surface and limit soil erosion. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

¹⁷ City of Hemet. 2012. *City of Hemet 2030 General Plan*; Page 6-11. https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10809/Public-Safety-Element_FINAL_02282025 (accessed September 2025).

¹⁸ Ibid; Figure 3.7. https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2169/3_Community_Design_web?bidId= (accessed September 2025).

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

The Project area is underlain by alluvial soils, which are more susceptible to settlement than other soils.¹⁹ Additional landslide impacts were addressed in **Section 3.7(a.iv)** above. Lateral spreading is caused by earthquake-induced liquefaction, which has been determined to be a less than significant impact; refer to **Section 3.7(a.iii)**. Liquefaction and lateral spreading risks exist in the Project area, though the Project's activities would not exacerbate these risks because it would not change the soil type or trigger a seismic event. Along with adherence to EMWD's Engineering Standards and Specifications and other standards and guidelines, these would ensure structural resiliency to earthquake events and associated lateral spreading and liquefaction. Subsidence and collapse are a known risk in alluvial valley regions like the Project area. All excavation backfill and compaction would be in accordance with EMWD construction standards; refer to **Section 2.8**. As a result, fill materials used to backfill would be stable with little risk of subsidence or collapse. Therefore, implementation of the Project is not expected to result in significant risk of landslide, lateral spreading, liquefaction, subsidence, or collapse. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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?

Expansive soils have the ability to significantly change their volume, shrink and swell, due to their soil moisture content. Expansive soils can crack rigid structures and potentially create pipeline rupture. Typically, expansive soils are very fine grained with a high to very high percentage (60 percent or more) of clay. Surficial soils underlying the Project site consist predominantly of alluvial fan deposits derived from granite and not on clayey soils. Based on the low clay particle content of the soil, the Project site would not be located on expansive soils. The pipeline and LS would therefore be constructed on a soil type and rock that are less susceptible to expansion. The Project would be designed and constructed to the standards described in **Section 3.7(a.ii)** such as EMWD's existing standard construction practices and engineering standards, AWWA standards, the CBC and IBC, ASCE standards, and others. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

¹⁹ Natural Resources Conservation Service. ND. *Web Soil Survey*. <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/> (accessed September 2025).

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

The proposed Project does not propose the construction or use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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

The Project sites are disturbed and/or developed, consisting of paved roads for the pipeline alignments, the developed existing LS, and vacant but previously disturbed for the proposed LS; refer to **Section 2.5, Existing Conditions**. To determine if the Project sites have high sensitivity for paleontological resources, the Hemet 2030 General Plan and County of Riverside General Plan were consulted. The Hemet 2030 General Plan does not indicate whether the Project sites are located within an area that has paleontological sensitivity; however, the County of Riverside General Plan shows that this portion of the County has high paleontological sensitivity.²⁰ High paleontological sensitivity generally occurs when a site has sedimentary rock/alluvial deposits. Alluvial deposits tend to have high paleontological sensitivity because the rapid burial of organic material and artifacts within the sediment layers protects them from surface erosion and decay. The fine-grained silts and clays often found in floodplains and deltas can create anoxic conditions that aid in the preservation of delicate organic materials, including plant remains and vertebrate fossils. The compaction of alluvial deposits then creates the sedimentary rocks that contain these fossils. As the Project is located on previously disturbed parcels and roadway right-of-way, the probability of encountering paleontological resources is low, however there is still a possibility that paleontological resources are present, given the regional sensitivity to paleontological resources and inadvertent discovery of resources is still possible. Implementation of **MM GEO-1** describes the processes for mitigating impacts to inadvertent paleontological finds and subsequent process should an inadvertent find be discovered during Project construction. Impacts would be less than significant with the implementation of **MM GEO-1**.

²⁰ County of Riverside. 2013. *Riverside County General Plan*; Figure OS-8.

<https://planning.rctlma.org/sites/g/files/aldnop416/files/migrated/Portals-14-genplan-general-Plan-2017-elements-OCT17-Ch05-MOSE-120815.pdf> (accessed September 2025).

Mitigation Measures

MM GEO-1: Paleontological Resources Worker Program

Qualified Professional Paleontologist. Prior to excavation, the project applicant shall retain a Qualified Professional Paleontologist, as defined by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology. The Qualified Professional Paleontologist shall direct all mitigation measures related to paleontological resources.

Paleontological Worker Environmental Awareness Program. Prior to the start of construction, the Qualified Professional Paleontologist or their designee shall conduct a paleontological Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training for construction personnel regarding the appearance of fossils and the procedures for notifying paleontological staff should fossils be discovered by construction personnel.

Significance Determination:

Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated.

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	[]	[]	[X]	[]

Discussion

Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHG) are pollutants known to increase the “greenhouse” effect in the Earth’s atmosphere, thereby adding to global climate change impacts. The State of California definition in the Health and Safety Code, Section 38505(g) identifies certain pollutants as GHGs. These pollutants include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. Water vapor is identified as a short lived GHG; whose concentrations are largely determined by natural processes such as evaporation. Other GHGs such as fluorinated gases are created and emitted from human-made sources, also known as anthropogenic sources. The most common anthropogenic GHGs are CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O.

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

Given the relatively small scale of the Project, a Project-specific GHG emissions analysis was not prepared. Utilizing a similar approach to **Section 3.3(b)**, a comparison to a larger Project that did have a project-specific GHG emissions analysis will be made to evaluate construction and operational impacts. EVMWD’s Diamond Regional Sewer Lift Station and Dual Force Mains Project (SCH No. 2019049011; <https://ceqanet.lci.ca.gov/Project/2019049011>) (EVMWD Project) will be utilized. This project included the construction of 3,400 linear feet of parallel 24-inch-diameter and 16-inch-diameter force mains as well as the construction and operation of a LS with a maximum capacity of 19.9 MGD. Construction was anticipated to occur over 18 months, similar to the Project. Additionally, GHG emissions are measured in metric tons of CO₂-equivalents per year (MTCO₂e/yr), allowing direct comparisons.

The EVMWD Project IS/MND determined that construction would result in the emission of 866 MTCO₂e amortized to 29 MTCO₂e/yr for 30 years. During Phase 3 of the EVMWD Project (full buildout with the LS operating at 19.9 MGD), operational emissions would be 825 MTCO₂e/yr with total emissions being 854 MTCO₂e/yr to include the amortized construction emissions. This is below the 3,000 MTCO₂e/yr regional threshold set by the County of Riverside. The Project would

only require the construction of a total of 1,500 LF of sewer and a LS with maximum capacity of 9.4 MGD, which represents a smaller potential impact. Therefore, it can be qualitatively assumed that the Project would emit less than 854 MTCO₂e/yr resulting in less than significant impacts.

In addition to the low per-year generation of MTCO₂e, the Project would adhere to existing energy efficiency requirements during construction, including CARB's In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulations that limit vehicle idling time to five minutes, restrict adding vehicles to construction fleets that have lower than Tier 3 engines, and establish a schedule for retiring older and less fuel-efficient engines. GHG impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

California's 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality lays out a path to achieve targets for carbon neutrality and reduce anthropogenic GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels no later than 2045. The Project would not involve a considerable increase in new vehicle trips or land use changes that would result in an increase in vehicle trips, such as urban sprawl. The Project is designed to meet existing and anticipated demand that would occur with or without the Project and would not conflict with any 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan emission reduction strategies or climate change policies or measures. Furthermore, O&M activities would be conducted using EMWD's vehicle fleet, which is continually being improved with regard to efficiency and fuel type, consistent with the relevant CAPs.

The Project would not interfere with existing City, County, or regional programs intended to reduce energy and improve water use efficiency. It would not result in GHG emissions higher than the SCAQMD significance screening threshold or County of Riverside 2019 Climate Action Plan MTCO₂e/yr threshold. The proposed Project would not, therefore, conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for reducing emissions of GHGs. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) For a Project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area?	☐	☐	☒	☐
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

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

Discussion

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database (DTSC 2024) is a data management system for tracking DTSC cleanup, permitting, enforcement and investigation efforts at hazardous waste facilities and sites with known contamination or sites where there may be reasons to investigate further. The SWRCB maintains the GeoTracker system for sites that impact or have the potential to impact water quality in California (SWRCB 2025). This includes leaking underground storage tank (LUST) sites, Department of Defense Sites, and Cleanup Program Sites. A regulatory records search was performed for the Project site using the SWRCB GeoTracker database (SWRCB 2025) and the DTSC EnviroStor database (DTSC 2025), both accessed November 3, 2025. These lists are a compilation of information from various sources listing potential and confirmed hazardous waste and hazardous substances sites in California. The Envirostor and GeoTracker databases reported no active cases within one mile of the Project.

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

Typical hazardous materials that may be used during construction and routine operations and maintenance activities include gasoline, diesel fuel, oil, solvents, and lubricants. The use of these materials for their intended purpose would not pose a significant risk to the public or environment. Wastes, both hazardous and non-hazardous, accumulated during construction activities would be handled, documented, and disposed of in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Hazardous materials would be stored in designated construction staging areas and would be used, transported, handled, and stored in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations (Federal Code Title 40 and 49; Occupational Safety and Health Administration 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1910; California code sections 5001, 5401, 5701, and 25507; California Health and Safety Code Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Article 6.5, Article 6.6) which are intended to minimize health risk to the public associated with hazardous materials. In addition, the Project would require the implementation of a SWPPP to address the discharge of construction related pollutants in storm water runoff (including construction-related hazardous materials) through implementation of appropriate BMPs. Specific BMPs would be determined during preparation of the SWPPP based on site- and project-specific characteristics (equipment types, etc.), and would be in conformance with the NPDES Construction General Permit. Conformance with federal hazardous materials transportation law (49 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.) and California Health and Safety Code Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Article 6.5 would require precautionary measures be taken during the routine transport of hazardous materials, such as testing and preparation of a transportation safety plan. According to California Health and Safety Code Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Article 13, used oil that may be produced from construction or operation of the project would be recycled.

EMWD and its contractors would be required to adhere to EMWD's General Safety Requirements for Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste (Specification 1.15 of Section 01000-7) as noted in **Section 2.8, EMWD Standard Construction Practices**. These requirements address proper communication of hazardous substances on a project site, proper storage and disposal of hazardous substances on the site, and clean-up of any spills in accordance with manufacturer, CalEPA, and/or U.S. EPA requirements.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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 Project has the potential to expose the public and the environment to hazards associated with on-site releases of hazardous materials including gasoline, diesel fuel, oil, solvents, and lubricants during construction. There are no sensitive receptors immediately adjacent to the Project. Should any chemical or hazardous materials storage be required at the Project site after construction, they would be handled and stored in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, and ordinances as identified in Section 3.9(a) above. The proposed LS does not include wastewater treatment operations. Large amounts of chemical or hazardous materials would not be present.

Implementation of these regulations would minimize the risk of hazardous material exposure through material use and accidents. Thus, impacts from hazardous materials to the public or the environment from potential accidents during construction or operation would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

The nearest school to the Project site is Harmony Elementary School (1500 S. Cawston Ave., Hemet, CA 92545), approximately 0.5 miles south of the proposed LS site. Because the closest school is greater than one-quarter mile from the Project site, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

The Project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 according to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database.²¹ As such, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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

The Hemet-Ryan Airport is located approximately 500 feet north of the Project site. The Hemet-Ryan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) was adopted by the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission on February 9, 2017. The entirety of the Project lies within Zone D of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Map (Map HR-1).²² The ALCUP Zone D generally provides restrictions of population density for parcels within these zones, however, the Project does not propose new residences, nor would it increase employment within the City. Zone D is the least restrictive zone, outside of Zone E, which has no restrictions on population density. The proposed LS site would not require any EMWD staff to be present on-site for operations. Workers would be present on-site during construction (which is temporary) and only periodically during operations for routine maintenance.

Additionally, the entirety of the Project site is outside of the 55 decibel (dB) community noise equivalent level (CNEL) contour of the Hemet-Ryan ALUCP existing and future noise impacts (Map HR-3 and Map HR-4). Refer to **Section 3.13, Noise**, for more information on noise. Generally, 55 dB CNEL is not a significant noise level. Overall, the Project would not result in a

²¹ California Department of Toxic Substances Control. ND. *EnviroStor Map*.
<https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/map/?myaddress=Sacramento#> (accessed September 2025).

²² Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission. 2017. *Hemet-Ryan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*.
<https://rcaluc.org/sites/g/files/aldnop421/files/2023-06/Hemet.pdf> (accessed September 2025).

safety hazard or excessive noise for people working in the Project area. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

The City of Hemet has an adopted Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) which detail the City's response protocols specific to emergencies and identify potential hazards within the City. The City has identified evacuation routes throughout the City, however the Project is not located on or within an established evacuation route.²³ West Stetson Avenue is an east-west road south of the Project site, intersects Cawston Avenue, and is a designated evacuation route. Cawston Avenue north of West Stetson Avenue does not serve as a regional route, does not provide connectivity to other parts of the City of Hemet, and generally serves local businesses and the Hemet-Ryan Airport. Construction of the pipeline within Cawston Avenue would be completed through open trenching, other than when it crosses the railway right-of-way. Open trenching of Cawston Avenue would require road or lane closures. Road and/or lane closures would be coordinated with the City of Hemet and appropriate notification would be provided to the public. As Cawston Avenue north of West Stetson Avenue generally serves local businesses only, temporary closure of the road or lanes would not result in significant impacts related to an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

It is important to note that Hemet Fire Department Station 4 is located immediately adjacent to the proposed LS site. As such, a potential short-term impact could occur should temporary roadway closures occur. EMWD would prepare a Traffic Control and Detour Plan as noted in **Section 2.8, EMWD Standard Construction Practices**. EMWD would coordinate with the City of Hemet and the Hemet Fire Department to ensure that adequate access in and out of Station 4 would be maintained throughout construction of the Project. EMWD would also prioritize a construction phasing plan such that total roadway closures would be minimized or eliminated. As such, a less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

²³ Western Riverside Council of Governments. 2024. *WRCOG/SBCTA Sustainability Toolkit Evacuation Routes*. <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=4168a1efbdca40f889ea9dba43e04b4e&extent=-13138981.0556%2C4022288.1589%2C-12669351.9538%2C4239369.3193%2C102100> (accessed September 2025).

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

Refer to **Section 3.20, Wildfire**. A less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to Project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

-
- | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? | [] | [] | [X] | [] |
|---|-----|-----|-------|-----|

Discussion

The Project is located within the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana RWQCB. The Santa Ana RWQCB, Region 8, regulates water quality within the Santa Ana River Region and maintains the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan sets water quality standards in the Santa Ana River Basin by establishing beneficial uses for specific water bodies and designating numerical and narrative water quality objectives. Water quality is also governed through NPDES stormwater discharge permits issued to municipalities, construction sites, and industrial facilities to control non-point source pollutants in stormwater discharges to surface waters. The United States Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identifies flood hazard areas on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) prepared for the National Flood Insurance Program. These areas, known as Special Flood Hazard Areas, are defined as areas where there is a one percent chance of flooding in any given year (also referred to as a 100-year flood) and areas where there is a 0.2 percent chance of flooding in a given year (also referred to as a 500-year flood). Areas outside the 100-year and 500-year flood zones are considered areas of minimal flood hazard.

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?

Potential water quality impacts associated with implementation of the Project would be limited to short-term erosion/sedimentation that would occur during construction of the pipeline, construction of the proposed LS, and demolition of the existing LS. Construction activities that primarily result in sediment releases are related to exposing previously stabilized soils to potential mobilization by rainfall/runoff and wind. Such activities have the potential to degrade surface or groundwater quality and include grading, excavations, and temporary stockpiling of soil.

Construction of the Project would disturb a total area greater than one acre in size and would therefore be required to obtain coverage under the SWRCB's NPDES Stormwater Construction General Permit during Project construction. As part of the permit conditions, and consistent with EMWD Standard Construction Practices, EMWD would be required to prepare a SWPPP and implement BMPs during construction to control sediment and other construction-related pollutants in stormwater discharges. Potential BMPs include housekeeping practices such as proper waste disposal, covering stockpiles with tarps, containment of building materials, and inspection of construction vehicles to prevent leaks or spills. The construction contractor would be required to comply with the Construction General Permit throughout construction. Construction dewatering is not anticipated, and all disturbed areas would be returned to pre-construction conditions. Should construction dewatering be required, the desilted water would be spread on land within the potential staging area. Compliance with the NPDES Stormwater Construction General Permit, including implementation of BMPs would ensure construction of the Project would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, nor

significantly degrade surface water quality. Construction impacts on surface water and groundwater quality would be less than significant.

Operation of the Project would consist of distributing wastewater through the proposed pipeline and proposed LS to EMWD's sanitary sewer system. No adverse impacts on surface water and groundwater quality would occur from operation of the Project.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

The Project involves the replacement of a LS and extension of sanitary gravity and force main pipelines and does not involve the extraction, recharge or use of groundwater. After construction is complete, all pipeline construction areas would be restored to pre-construction conditions (i.e., no permanent disturbance footprint), and would not result in a change in impervious surface area affecting the ability of rainfall to recharge the groundwater basin. The proposed LS site has been previously disturbed but currently allows surface water to infiltrate. The existing LS site is paved and does not allow surface water to infiltrate. As the Project proposes the replacement of the existing LS with the proposed LS, and the existing LS would be demolished and paving removed, the Project would effectively "swap" the impervious surface areas. While the proposed LS site is approximately 5 times the size of the existing LS site, the entirety of the site would not be covered with impervious surfaces and would include landscaping areas to allow for the infiltration of surface waters. The Project would not prevent groundwater recharge.

The Project would serve existing wastewater demand and planned future growth that would occur with or without the Project. The Project would not induce population growth or increase water demands that would require additional groundwater pumping. Operation of the Project does not require potable or non-potable water, meaning the use of water would be limited to temporary construction activities such as dust control. Therefore, the Project would not be expected to substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge efforts. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

c.i) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

Project construction may result in disturbance or exposure of soil that could be subject to erosion and sedimentation during wind or rain events. However, implementation of BMPs as required by the NPDES Stormwater Construction General Permit and SWPPP would limit erosion and sedimentation. As a result, implementation of the proposed Project would not alter the existing drainage pattern of the Project area in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. Therefore, the Project would have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

c.ii) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

According to the FEMA FIRM No. 06065C2085G, the Project site is located within Zone X, which is an area of 0.2 percent annual chance flood (500-year flood) and an area of 1 percent annual chance flood (100-year flood) with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile.²⁴ Considering the Project would not substantially increase the amount of impervious surface area, nor does it propose the alteration of the properties in such a manner as to substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff through slope changes or unique Project characteristics, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

c.iii) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: create or contribute runoff water which would

²⁴ FEMA. ND. Flood Map Service Center: Products and Tools Overview <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/resources/productsandtools>. (accessed October 2025).

exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

As discussed in **Section 3.10(c.i)** and **Section 3.10(c.ii)** above, the Project would not increase surface runoff or alter the existing drainage patterns within the Project area in a manner which would 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. In addition, all construction activities would be conducted in accordance with BMPs specified in the construction SWPPP to reduce impacts to pollutants in storm water discharges. Therefore, the Project would have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

c.iv) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: impede or redirect flood flows?

As discussed in **Sections 3.10(c.i)**, **3.10(c.ii)**, and **3.10(c.iii)** above, the Project would not increase surface flows or pass above, below, or through an existing stream or river. While the Project site is located within a 500- and 100-year flood area, the Project does not propose significant alterations to the site drainage pattern such that regional drainage patterns would change. As a result, the Project would not alter the existing drainage pattern of the site area in a manner which would impede or redirect flood flows. A less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

A tsunami is a large ocean wave, caused by earthquakes or major ground movement. The Project site is located approximately 40 miles from the Pacific Ocean; at this distance, a tsunami would not impact the Project area. A seiche is a large wave generated in an enclosed body of water such as a lake, which is also typically caused by an earthquake. The nearest enclosed body of water is Diamond Valley Lake, located approximately two miles south of the Project area. Diamond Valley Lake is a confined basin of water susceptible to reverberating surface wave action induced by seismic action, however, given the distance to the Project, impacts are not anticipated. The Project site is located within the dam breach inundation zone of the Diamond Valley Lake Dams. However,

considering Project would not permanently store hazardous materials onsite and is generally located underground, significant impacts are not anticipated. Additionally, the Project would adhere to EMWD Standard Construction Practices which would ensure safe handling, transport, and storage of hazardous materials as well as prevention of building material pollutants in storm water runoff through implementation of a SWPPP. Therefore, the Project site is unlikely to become inundated and the potential for release of pollutants is low. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

The Project is located within the jurisdiction of the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The Santa Ana RWQCB, Region 8, regulates water quality within the Santa Ana River Region and maintains the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan sets water quality standards in the Santa Ana River Basin by establishing beneficial uses for specific water bodies and designating numerical and narrative water quality objectives. The water quality objectives are intended to reduce pollutant discharge and ensure that water bodies are of sufficient quality to meet their designated beneficial uses.

As discussed above, pollutant discharge during construction would be avoided via compliance with the Construction General Permit, development of a SWPPP, and implementation of BMPs. While not anticipated, if dewatering is required, the desilted water would be spread on land within the potential staging area. Once operational, the Project would convey wastewater through EMWD's existing sanitary sewer system. The Project would not discharge extracted or treated water into a surface water body or be a source of pollutants for downstream water bodies. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with the Basin Plan or worsen water quality conditions in any 303(d)-listed water body.

The Project area is located within the San Jacinto Groundwater Basin, which is being managed for groundwater sustainability under the San Jacinto Groundwater Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan. The purpose of the Project is to replace an existing LS to provide wastewater conveyance to meet existing and projected demands for wastewater conveyance in EMWD's service area. The Project does not involve the extraction of groundwater, nor would it result in any increases in impervious surfaces that could affect groundwater recharge, and thus the Project would not impact groundwater sustainability. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with applicable water quality control plans or groundwater management plans. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.11 Land Use and Planning

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
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	[]	[]	[X]	[]

Discussion

Project site land use is governed by the City of Hemet's zoning ordinance and general plan. The Project site is also located within an area governed by the WR-MSHCP.

Surrounding City of Hemet General Plan land uses designations adjacent to the Project site include Industrial (I) to the west, Mixed-Use (MU) to the north and east, and Community Commercial (CC) to the south.²⁵

a) Physically divide an established community?

Construction of the proposed Project would temporarily affect adjacent established communities, such as the adjacent commercial and industrial land uses along Cawston Avenue, through increased short-term vehicle trip lengths (as a result of street detours), dust, noise, and traffic during construction, and could temporarily reduce access to adjacent land uses. Any temporary lane or road closures would be addressed in a Traffic Control and Detour Plan, as required by EMWD Standard Construction Practices. However, this temporary impact would not physically divide any established communities. Furthermore, temporary effects from construction activities would not permanently affect the existing surrounding established communities. Temporary construction staging for the pipeline construction would use the proposed LS site and would not require impacts to non-Project related areas.

Regarding operations, the Project is located in an established urban area, the Project pipeline would be located below ground, and disturbed areas would be restored to pre-construction conditions. The existing LS and proposed LS sites are relatively small and are non-linear. They would not create a new division of an established community.

²⁵ City of Hemet. *City of Hemet General Plan 2030*, Figure 2.1 Land Use Plan.

https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5329/2_Land_Use_web5142019?bidId= (accessed December 2025).

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact .

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 Project would consist of the construction of a pipeline, proposed LS, and demolition of the existing LS. The Project is consistent with the land designation and zoning of the proposed LS site. The Project is located within the WR-MSHCP, which encompasses all unincorporated Riverside County land west of the crest of the San Jacinto Mountains to the Orange County line. The WR-MSHCP is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in western Riverside County. As demonstrated in **Section 3.4, Biological Resources**, the Project would be compliant with the WR-MSHCP. As a result, the Project would not conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations intended to avoid or mitigate an environmental effect.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.12 Mineral Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Discussion

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 mandates a process for classification and designation of lands containing potentially important mineral deposits. Classification is carried out by the CGS State Geologist and designation is a function of the CGS State Mining and Geology Board. The relative importance of potential mineral resource sites is indicated through classification into Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs). These MRZs are based on geological appraisals which include the use of literature, geological maps, and publications and data from the California Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, USGS, the former US Bureau of Mines, and the US Bureau of Land Management. It also includes site investigations that determine the chemical and physical components of the area. An area can be classified as:

- MRZ 1: No mineral resources;
- MRZ 2: Significant resource area (quality and quantity known);
- MRZ 3: Significant resource area (quality and quantity unknown);
- MRZ 4: No information (applies primarily to high-value ores).

The proposed Project is located within the City of Hemet. The entirety of the City of Hemet is designated as MRZ-3.²⁶ MRZ-3 areas contain sedimentary deposits that have the potential to supply sand and gravel for concrete and crushed stone for aggregate. However, the City does not consider these areas to contain deposits of significant economic value, based on available data.²⁷

²⁶ City of Hemet. 2012. *City of Hemet 2030 General Plan*; Page 7-20.

https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2162/7_OS_web?bidId= (accessed September 2025).

²⁷ Ibid.

a-b) 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? 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 California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology has not identified significant mineral resources in the City of Hemet, and the City of Hemet has additionally supported this finding in its 2030 General Plan. Therefore, no impact to availability of valuable mineral resources would occur. The Project area is not currently used as a mineral resource recovery site and the Project would not involve mining or the production of mineral resources. No impact on the availability of a known mineral resource or the availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site would occur as a result of construction or operation of the proposed Project.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

3.13 Noise

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
c) For a Project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the Project area to excessive noise levels?	[]	[]	[X]	[]

Discussion

Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound. Noise can cause hearing impairment for humans, and may also disrupt everyday activities such as sleep, speech, and activities requiring concentration. Noise can also interfere with the activities of wildlife, especially nesting birds. Noise-sensitive land uses are generally those where excess noise would disrupt how humans and/or wildlife use the land. Land uses such as residences, schools, libraries, hospitals, churches, offices, hotels, motels, and outdoor recreational areas are considered noise-sensitive. Noise may be generated by mobile (i.e., line) sources (for example, cars, trains, and aircraft) or stationary (i.e., point) sources (for example, machinery, airports, and construction sites).

Groundborne vibration can occur when heavy equipment or vehicles create vibrations in the ground, which can then propagate through the ground to buildings, creating a low-frequency sound. Groundborne vibration can be described by both its amplitude and frequency. Amplitude may be characterized by particle velocity, which is measured in inches or millimeters per second. Vibration can be felt outdoors, but the perceived intensity of vibration impacts is much greater indoors, due to the shaking of the structure. Groundborne vibrations can be a source of annoyance to humans due to a "rumbling" effect, and such vibrations may also cause damage to buildings. Groundborne vibration is discussed in terms of these impacts on humans and structures. The

annoyance potential of groundborne noise is typically characterized using the A-weighted sound level. Common sources of vibration come from trains, transit vehicles, construction equipment, airplanes, and large vehicles. Land uses sensitive to vibration will have a lower vibration threshold.

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

Construction of the Project has the potential to expose people to increased noise levels resulting from the use of equipment and vehicles. There are no sensitive receptors adjacent to the Project; nearby uses generally consist of vacant land, industrial/commercial uses, and a fire station. The nearest sensitive receptor is Harmony Elementary School approximately 0.5 miles to the south. Construction of the Project is expected to last approximately 18 months, and construction activities would include saw cutting of the pavement, trench excavation, trench backfill and compaction, heavy equipment, and site restoration/pavement replacement. Construction noise levels would fluctuate depending on the construction phase, equipment type, duration of use, distance between noise source and receptor, and presence or absence of existing barriers between noise source and receptor.

The Project site is located partially within the noise contours of Stetson Avenue with noise contours maxing out at 70 dB CNEL. Generally, noise generated by the Project during construction would be below 70 dB when heard by a receptor off-site due to the noise attenuation properties.²⁸ According to the Federal Transit Administration, typical construction equipment noise emission levels generally range from 75 to 85 dB at 50 feet from the source, with certain specialized equipment peaking at 101 dB (such as pile drivers).²⁹ Pile driving would not be required for this Project. Construction noise may peak above 70 dB. However, these events would be short term, lasting only a few minutes at any given time. As construction would be temporary and localized, the Project would not cause a permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project. There may be a temporary increase, however, given the attenuation properties of sound, and the fact that there are no sensitive receptors adjacent to the Project, construction impacts would be less than significant.

Once operational, the below-ground sewer pipelines would not generate noise. Noise may be associated with occasional vehicle maintenance trips (approximately one trip per month), but these trips would be infrequent, and the resulting noise would be consistent with existing ambient noises because the pipeline would be within roadway right-of-way. The proposed LS pumps would generate noise, however, these pumps would be located indoors and below ground, significantly reducing the ability for noise to leave the proposed LS site. The Project would have less than significant operational noise impacts.

²⁸ The "inverse square law" is the governing principle in physics whereby a point source emits a sound wave uniformly in all directions (essentially spherically), where the intensity of the sound wave energy at any given point away from the source is diminished as a function of the total surface area of the sphere coincident with that point. Generally, it can be shown that for each doubling of distance from a point source, the sound level decreases by approximately 6 dB.

²⁹ Federal Transit Administration. 2018. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*; Table 7-1. https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/research-innovation/118131/transit-noise-and-vibration-impact-assessment-manual-fta-report-no-0123_0.pdf (accessed September 2025).

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Increases in ground borne vibration levels attributable to the Project would be primarily associated with short-term construction-related activities. The types of construction vibration impacts include human annoyance and building damage. Building damage can be cosmetic or structural. Ordinary buildings that are not particularly fragile would not experience cosmetic damage (e.g., plaster cracks) at distances beyond 30 feet. No buildings exist within a 30-foot radius of the Project site. The nearest building to the proposed LS site is approximately 50 feet to the north, which is the Hemet Fire Department Station 4, refer to **Figure 2**. Therefore, construction of the Project is not anticipated to result in building damage. There are no nearby sensitive receptors.

Construction of the proposed Project is expected to last approximately 18 months and construction activities would include saw cutting of the pavement, trench, trench backfill and compaction, and site restoration/pavement replacement. Groundborne vibrations propagate through the ground and decrease in intensity (attenuate) quickly as they move away from the source. Considering this and that construction would be temporary, consist of typical construction operations, and that there are no buildings within 30 feet of the Project, construction impacts would be less than significant.

Operation groundborne vibrations could occur as a result of the LS pumps which would be required to operate. However, these pumps would be underground and in a concrete vault. This would assist in groundborne vibration attenuation and for the same reasons identified above for construction impacts, would result in less than significant impacts.

Mitigation Measure

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

Refer to **Section 3.9(e)**. The Project site is located within two miles of the Hemet-Ryan Airport. The entirety of the Project site is outside of the 55 dB CNEL contour of the Hemet-Ryan ALUCP existing and future noise impacts (Map HR-4 and Map HR-5 of the ALUCP). The noise contours of

Stetson Avenue indicate that Stetson Avenue generates a higher noise level than the Hemet-Ryan Airport for the Project location. As such, a less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.14 Population and Housing

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

Discussion

In 2020, EMWD served an estimated retail population of 603,950 through approximately 155,561 single family, multi-family, and other commercial, industrial, institutional, landscape, and irrigation accounts. EMWD's service area is currently 40 percent built out, making it one of the few regions in southern California that will see significant population growth in the coming decades. Ultimate demand estimates indicate that before EMWD reaches build out, the population will more than double compared to the current size. As planned for in the EMWD 2020 UWMP, EMWD's retail service area population will increase to approximately 807,200 by 2045.³⁰

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

The Project would not directly induce unplanned population growth because no new housing would be constructed or permanent employment generated as a result of the Project. The Project involves an extension of an existing sanitary gravity and force main, construction of a proposed LS, and demolition of an existing LS, all within EMWD's existing service area. The Project would increase EMWD's sewer system capacity to accommodate planned growth anticipated in the 2020 UWMP that would occur with or without the Project. Inspection and repair, if necessary, of the Project would be incorporated into EMWD's existing O&M activities; no new staff would be required to serve the Project. Therefore, the Project would not directly or indirectly induce unplanned population growth and no impact would occur.

³⁰ Eastern Municipal Water District. 2021. *Urban Water Management Plan*; Table 3-4.
https://content.emwd.org/sites/default/files/2024-07/urbanwatermanagementplan_0.pdf (accessed September 2025).

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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

Construction and operation of the Project would occur entirely within existing City of Hemet roadway right-of-way, on a currently developed parcel (existing LS), and a currently vacant parcel (proposed LS). Potential construction staging areas would occur within the vacant and already graded proposed LS property. The Project would not be constructed in a manner that would remove existing housing stock or reduce areas zoned for residential use. Further the Project would not require temporary removal of residents. Therefore, the Project would not displace existing people or houses or require the construction of replacement housing. For these reasons, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

3.15 Public Services

<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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Would the Project:

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

i) Fire protection?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
ii) Police protection?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
iii) Schools?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
iv) Parks?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
v) Other public facilities?	[]	[]	[X]	[]

Discussion

Fire Protection

The HFD is responsible for fire suppression, rescue activities, and hazardous materials incidents within the City. In the areas within Riverside County's jurisdiction outside of the City of Hemet, Riverside County contracts with CAL FIRE for fire suppression and rescue activities. The City has entered into reciprocal mutual aid agreements with CAL FIRE as well as the surrounding tribal and municipal departments to expedite service delivery and ensure the best possible care for the community. The nearest fire station to the Project site is immediately adjacent to the proposed LS site at 1035 S. Cawston Ave., Hemet, CA 92545.

Police Protection

The Hemet Police Department exists to provide superior service and protection to the residents, merchants, and visitors to the City. The Department is responsible for law enforcement and public safety activities within the City. Outside of the City, the Riverside County Sheriff's Department provides that function. The nearest Hemet Police Department station is the Police Headquarters located at 450 E. Latham Ave., Hemet, CA 92543.

Schools

The nearest school to the Project is Harmony Elementary School located at 1500 S. Cawston Ave., Hemet, CA 92545. The Project is located within Hemet Unified School District (HUSD). HUSD operates ten elementary schools, four middle schools, three high schools, two charter schools, and an alternative education site which houses a continuation high school, adult education, independent study, and other alternative education programs. An additional five HUSD schools are located outside of the City in Anza, Aguanga, Idyllwild, and Winchester.

Parks

Park facilities in the Hemet area range from less than an acre to 483 acres at Simpson Park. Depending on size and/or special purpose, each park offers differing levels of recreational amenities, from passive to active to wilderness to open space. Table 8.1 of the City of Hemet 2030 General Plan provides an inventory of all parks in the City of Hemet. The closest park to the Project is Brubaker Park at 3707 Mustang Way, Hemet, CA 92545, approximately 0.8 mile south along Cawston Avenue.

Other Public Facilities

There are no other public facilities within one-quarter mile of the proposed Project. The Hemet Public Library is located at 300 E. Latham Ave., Hemet, CA 92543, approximately three miles northeast of the Project site. The nearest hospital is the Hemet Global Medical Center, located at 1117 E. Devonshire Ave., Hemet, CA 92543, approximately 3.5 miles to the northeast.

a.i - v) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the following public services: Fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, and other public facilities?

The Project would not increase the number of employees or residents within the City. While the Project would construct a proposed LS immediately adjacent to the HFD Station No. 4, it would demolish the existing LS. This would result in no net increase in uses in the City that would require additional public services. Additionally, as the Project would replace an existing LS, it would not be used to expand utilities and services to a location that is currently unserved such that the Project could induce future population growth.

Due to construction activities within the roadway ROW, temporary lane closures would occur, necessitating traffic control measures or alternate routes and may impact police and fire protection services. Potential construction impacts associated with lane closures would be minimized through the implementation of the Traffic Control and Detour Plan, incorporated into the Project as one of EMWD's Standard Construction Practices (refer to **Section 2.8**). The Traffic Control and Detour Plan would include identification of staging locations, safe ingress and egress points from staging areas, potential road closures, haul routes for construction-related vehicle traffic, safe routes to maintain pedestrian and bicyclist safety during construction, and traffic

control measures. It would be reviewed by the City of Hemet, and County of Riverside and coordinated with emergency service providers.

As a result, the Project would not substantially increase the need for new public services staff or new facilities, nor would it interfere substantially with acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for public services. Therefore, a less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.16 Recreation

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Would the Project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
b) Does the Project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	[]	[]	[]	[X]

Discussion

The Project is located within an area that is developed. The nearest recreational facility is the Lloyd M. Venable Memorial Park, located approximately 0.3 miles to the west of the Project site. However, due to the nature of the Project, implementation would not increase population in the area nor the demand for recreational facilities.

a) Would the Project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

The Project would serve existing and planned development that would occur with or without the Project. The Project does not include residential housing and would not induce permanent employment or population growth that would permanently increase the use of the parks and recreational facilities. The Project would not increase the use of existing parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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

The Project does not include recreational facilities nor would implementation of the Project require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which could have an adverse physical impact on the environment. As a result, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

3.17 Transportation

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

Discussion

Major roadways in the Project vicinity are SR- 79, N. Sanderson Avenue, and W 7th Street. EMWD requires a Traffic Control and Detour Plan, which would identify and minimize the Project's impacts on surrounding roadways.

The City of Hemet *General Plan* Circulation Element establishes goals, objectives, and policies for transportation. It also provides information on current and future conditions for streets and highways, public transportation, non-motorized transportation and other transportation needs. The Riverside County Circulation Element (County of Riverside 2020) designates future road improvements and extensions, addresses non-motorized transportation alternatives, and identifies funding options. A Circulation Element also establishes standards for the movement of people, goods, and services throughout the planning area.

In April 2024, the Southern California Association of Governments adopted Connect SoCal 2024, SCAG's 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. The plan is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. The plan details how the region will address its transportation and land use challenges and opportunities in order to achieve its regional emissions standards and GHG reduction targets. The Connect SoCal plan represents the vision for

southern California's future, including policies, strategies, and projects for advancing the region's mobility, economy, and sustainability through 2050.

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

Construction of the Project would have temporary effects on local roadways, specifically Cawston Avenue. Project construction is estimated to last approximately 18 months and would occur partially within the roadway right-of-way. However, impacts to roadways would not occur during the entirety of the 18 months. Due to construction activities within the roadway right-of-way, temporary lane closures would occur, necessitating traffic control measures or alternate routes. However, construction would occur at a rate of between 30 and 100 LF per day, so impacts from lane closures would not occur in the same area over the entire construction period, and disturbed areas would be restored to their original condition. Because there are no bikeways within the Project's alignment, the Project would not impede bike path or trail access. Pedestrian access would remain via the existing sidewalk along southbound Cawston Avenue.

Potential construction impacts associated with lane closures would be minimized through the implementation of the Traffic Control and Detour Plan, incorporated into the Project as one of EMWD's Standard Construction Practices. The Traffic Control and Detour Plan would include identification of staging locations, safe ingress and egress points from staging areas, potential road closures, haul routes for construction-related vehicle traffic, safe routes to maintain pedestrian and bicyclist safety during construction, and traffic control measures. It would be reviewed by the City of Hemet and County of Riverside and coordinated with emergency service providers. Construction related impacts to roadways, pedestrian facilities, and bikeway systems would therefore be less than significant.

During operation, EMWD staff may be required to implement temporary lane closures to access manholes to conduct maintenance activities. Such activities would be incorporated into EMWD's existing O&M activities and would be temporary. The proposed Project's long-term impacts on roadways, pedestrian facilities, and bikeway systems would therefore be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) outlines criteria for analyzing transportation impacts in terms of VMT for land use projects and transportation projects. VMT refers to the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project. According to the California Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) (formerly the Office of Planning and Research) *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*, the term "automobile" refers to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light-duty trucks. In the case of the

Project, worker trips would be conducted in cars and light-duty trucks. Vendor and hauling trips would be conducted in medium- or heavy-duty trucks and are therefore excluded from the estimation of VMT.

Construction of the Project would involve temporary worker trips which would occur during the approximately 18-month construction period. Construction of the Project would occur sequentially, not concurrently, generally consisting of 1) construction of the gravity and force main pipeline, 2) construction of the proposed LS, 3) demolition of the existing LS. This would limit the number of daily worker trips during construction. According to LCI Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, projects that generate fewer than 110 trips per day may be assumed to cause a less-than-significant transportation impact.³¹ Conservatively, each worker would make 2.5 round trips to the Project site during construction to account for the workers commute, potential lunch break, and miscellaneous other trips. This would create a maximum number of “allowable” workers at 44.³² The Project is expected to require one vehicle trip per month for inspection and maintenance of the pipeline and LS. These trips would be incorporated into EMWD’s existing O&M program and would not increase VMT in the Project area. Based on LCI guidance, the proposed Project would not create a significant impact related to VMT. The Project would be consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

Project construction would temporarily increase transportation hazards in the Project area because it would require lane closures, incompatible uses (i.e., use of heavy construction equipment), and ingress/egress to temporary staging areas from existing roadways. However, implementation of EMWD Standard Construction Practices, which includes a Traffic Control and Detour Plan, would minimize these hazards by identifying and implementing traffic control and safety measures such as flagging and establishment of safe routes.

No new roadways would be constructed, and existing roadways would be restored to their existing condition once construction is complete. Therefore, after construction, the Project would not create roadway hazards. Impacts related to hazards associated with a design feature or incompatible uses would therefore be less than significant.

³¹ California Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation. 2018. *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*. https://lci.ca.gov/docs/20180416-743_Technical_Advisory_4.16.18.pdf (accessed September 2025).

³² In this case “allowable” workers indicates the number of workers to result in fewer than 110 trips per day and have impacts be assumed to be less than significant: $110 / 2.5 = 44$.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

d) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Construction of the Project may require lane closures along the pipeline alignment and would generate trips associated with construction (worker travel and delivery of materials and equipment). Lane closures have the potential to hinder access for emergency vehicles. Traffic control measures are included in EMWD's Standard Construction Practices. Traffic control measures implemented during Project construction would require that emergency crews be able to access sites and surrounding areas. The contractor would coordinate the Traffic Control and Detour Plan with EMWD and emergency service providers to ensure that emergency responders are informed of construction locations and that construction does not interrupt emergency access. Traffic control measures would also require that the contractor make a reasonable effort to preserve access to business and properties during construction. Project impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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Would the Project:

- a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

- | | | | | |
|---|-----|-------|-----|-----|
| i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or | [] | [X] | [] | [] |
| ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision © of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. | [] | [X] | [] | [] |

Discussion

A Cultural Resources Assessment was prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. on September 9, 2025, and is available as **Appendix B** to this Draft IS/MND. This report includes a records search at the SCIC, an SLF search conducted by the NAHC, and cultural resources field survey. Refer to **Section 3.5, Cultural Resources** for results.

EMWD sent tribal consultation letters pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 on August 19, 2025, to Tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the Project to identify resources of cultural or spiritual value to the Tribe. Notices were sent to Agua Caliente Band of Mission Indians (ACBMI), Morongo Band of Mission Indians (MBMI), Pechanga Band of Indians, Rincon Band of Luiseno Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, and Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (YSMN).

Consultations were held with the Morongo Band of Luiseño Indians on October 1, 2025, Pechanga Band of Indians on November 4, 2025, and Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians on October 29, 2025.

During the consultation meetings, the three consulting Tribes expressed concerns with the Project site, noting that it is within the Traditional Use area and considered sensitive. They highlighted the potential of unearthing unknown buried tribal cultural artifacts during ground-disturbing activities and provided recommendations to mitigate the potential impact to these unknown artifacts.

Sacred Lands File Search

As part of the preparation of the Cultural Resources Assessment, Kimley-Horn staff requested a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search through the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) to determine the presence of any listed sacred lands in the Project site or vicinity on April 21, 2025. The NAHC responded on May 6, 2025, and indicated that the results are negative for the presence of sacred sites in or near the Project site.

a.i) 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: 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).

The Cultural Resources Assessment (**Appendix B**) for the Project did not identify any cultural resources within the Project site. The entirety of the Project site, including the existing and proposed LS sites and the pipeline alignment, have been disturbed or developed, which makes the possibility of encountering tribal cultural resources low. Additionally, there are no known tribal burial sites within the Project area. Tribal consultation revealed a high level of sensitivity associated with the potential to uncover tribal resources/artifacts during construction. As previously mentioned, the three consulting Tribes (Morongo Band of Luiseño Indians, Pechanga Band of Indians, and Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians) expressed concerns with the Project site, noting that it is within the Traditional Use area and considered sensitive. They highlighted the potential of unearthing unknown buried tribal cultural artifacts during ground-disturbing activities and provided recommendations to mitigate the potential impact to these unknown artifacts. The potential to disturb unknown tribal resources during construction is considered a significant impact requiring mitigation. Potential impacts would be reduced with implementation of **MM TRI-1** through **MM TRI-5**. As such, a less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

MM TRI-1 Tribal Monitoring

Tribal Monitoring Agreement: At least 30 days prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities, EMWD shall contact the Consulting Tribe to develop a Cultural Resources Treatment Monitoring Agreement (Agreement). The Agreement shall address the treatment of archaeological resources inadvertently discovered on the project site; project grading; ground disturbance and development scheduling; the designation, responsibilities, and participation of tribal monitor(s) during grading, excavation, and ground-disturbing activities; and compensation for the tribal monitors, including overtime, weekend rates, and mileage reimbursement.

Tribal Monitoring: A tribal monitor shall be present for ground-disturbing activities associated with the project. At least seven business days prior to ground-disturbing activities, District shall notify the Tribe(s) of the grading/excavation and monitoring program/schedule, to coordinate the tribal monitoring schedule. The tribal monitor shall have the authority to stop and redirect grading activities to evaluate the nature and significance of any archaeological resources discovered within the project limits. Such evaluation shall include culturally appropriate temporary and permanent treatment pursuant to the Cultural Resources Treatment and Monitoring Agreement, which may include avoidance of cultural resources, in-place preservation, data recovery, and/or reburial so the resources are not subject to further disturbance in perpetuity. Any reburial shall occur at a location determined between the District and the Consulting Tribe, details of which shall be addressed in the Cultural Resources Treatment and Monitoring Agreement. Treatment may also include curation of the cultural resources at a tribal curation facility, as determined in discussion among the District, the project archaeologist and tribal representatives as addressed in the Cultural Resources Treatment and Monitoring Agreement.

MM TRI-2 Evaluation of Discovered Artifacts

Artifacts discovered at the development site shall be inventoried and analyzed by the project archaeologist and tribal monitor. A monitoring report will be prepared detailing the methods and results of the monitoring program, as well as the disposition of cultural material encountered. If no cultural material is encountered, a brief letter report will be sufficient to document monitoring activities.

MM TRI-3 Disposition of Inadvertent Discoveries

If Native American cultural resources are recovered during the course of grading (inadvertent discoveries), the following procedures shall be carried out for final disposition of the discoveries with the tribe. The District shall relinquish

ownership of all cultural resources, including sacred items, burial goods, and all archaeological artifacts and non-human remains as part of the required mitigation for impacts to cultural resources, and adhere to the following:

- 1) Preservation-in-place is the preferred option; preservation-in-place means avoiding the resources and leaving them in the place where they were found with no development affecting the integrity of the resource.
- 2) If preservation-in-place is not feasible, on-site reburial of the discovered items as detailed in the plan required pursuant to mitigation measure CUL-2 is the next preferable treatment measure. This shall include measures and provisions to protect the future reburial area from further impacts in perpetuity. Reburial shall not occur until all legally required cataloging and basic recordation have been completed. No recordation of sacred items shall be permitted without the written consent of all Consulting Native American Tribal Governments.
- 3) In the event that on-site reburial is not feasible, the District will enter into a curation agreement with an appropriate qualified repository with Riverside County that meets federal standards per 36 Code of Federal Regulations 800 Part 79 and therefore would be curated and made available to other archaeologists/researchers for further study. The collections and associated records shall be transferred, including title, to an appropriate curation facility within Riverside County, to be accompanied by payment of the fees necessary for permanent curation.

MM TRI-4 Non-Disclosure of Reburial Locations

It is understood by all parties that unless otherwise required by law, the site of any reburial of culturally sensitive resources shall not be disclosed and shall not be governed by public disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act. The coroner, pursuant to the specific exemption set forth in California Government Code 6254(r), parties, and Lead Agencies will be asked to withhold public disclosure information related to such reburial.

MM TRI-5 Procedure for Discover of Human Remains

If Native American human remains are encountered, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 and California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 will be followed. If human remains are encountered, no further disturbance shall occur until the Riverside County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to the origin. Further, pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98(b), the remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and disposition has been made. If the Riverside County Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the coroner shall contact the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. Subsequently, the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify

the person or persons it believes to be the “most likely descendant.” The most likely descendant shall then make recommendations and engage in consultations concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98.

Significance Determination

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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

The Cultural Resources Assessment (**Appendix B**) for the Project did not identify any cultural resources within the Project site. The entirety of the Project site, including the existing and proposed LS sites and the pipeline alignment, have been disturbed or developed, which makes the possibility of encountering tribal cultural resources low. Additionally, there are no known tribal burial sites within the Project area. However, local Tribal indicated that the Project would be located within Traditional Use Areas and are considered sensitive.

As part of AB 52 consultation with EMWD, the responding tribes, requested mitigation measures to be incorporated and they include **MM TRI-1** through **MM TRI-5**. Implementation of these mitigation measures would ensure that impacts to any tribal cultural resource would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

See **MM TRI-1** through **MM TRI-5** above.

Significance Determination

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Would the Project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the Project that it has adequate capacity to serve the Project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	[]	[]	[]	[X]
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?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	[]	[]	[X]	[]

Discussion

EMWD provides water and sanitary services within the area and the Project site. The City of Hemet manages stormwater drainage. Electrical service in the Project area is provided by SCE. Southern California Gas Company is the natural gas service provider in the Project area. Solid waste generated by the Project would be disposed of at the Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill. The Project

has minimal utility and service needs and would not require expansion or construction of new utilities or service systems facilities.

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

Water Service

Water service within the City of Hemet is provided by EMWD, the Lake Hemet Municipal Water District (LHMWD), and the City of Hemet Water Department. Neither the City of Hemet Water Department nor LHMWD serve the Project site. If water service is required for the Project, EMWD would provide it. The Project does not require additional water service connections nor the upsizing of potential upstream water service systems. No impact on water service would occur.

Wastewater Treatment

Sanitary services within the City of Hemet are provided by EMWD. As such, sanitary sewer services to the Project would be provided by EMWD. The Project involves the replacement of a sanitary LS and extension of the existing sanitary gravity and force mains. The Project would increase EMWD's sewer system capacity to accommodate planned growth anticipated in the 2020 UWMP that would occur with or without the Project. The Project itself would not significantly increase the volume of sanitary flows to the wastewater treatment plant such that expansion of treatment facilities would be required. As such, impacts to wastewater treatment resulting from onsite increases would be less than significant.

Stormwater Drainage

Stormwater drainage within the City of Hemet is managed by the City and by on-site drainage features of individual developed parcels. The City of Hemet stormwater system generally consists of storm drainage within roadways and basins. The Project site is located within the Salt Creek Drainage Area.³³ The majority of the stormwater collected in the City of Hemet drains southerly and is ultimately discharged into Salt Creek, which is located in the southwest part of the City. Salt Creek is the primary drainage course for the City. It is an earthen channel of approximately 660 feet wide that carries approximately 11,000 cubic feet of water per second. South of Stetson Avenue, water flows along a drainage course referred to as Pepper Creek, from east to west at the base of the Santa Rosa Hills, and curves southwesterly near State Street to join Salt Creek. Salt Creek begins by flowing northwesterly from the canyon following Sage Road, south of South State Street, draining the surrounding hills, including Avery Canyon east of Gibbel Road.

The Project would not change the drainage patterns of the existing or proposed LS sites, nor along Cawston Avenue such that new stormwater drainage infrastructure would be required. The Project would be designed to maintain the existing drainage patterns on the existing and proposed LS

³³ City of Hemet. 2012. *City of Hemet 2030 General Plan*; Figure 5.4.
[https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/844/5 CSI_Hemet_web?bidId=](https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/844/5_CSI_Hemet_web?bidId=) (accessed September 2025).

sites and would return the roadways to existing conditions. As such, no impact to stormwater drainage would occur.

Electrical, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications Utilities

Electrical service in the Project area is provided by SCE. As the Project proposes the replacement and demolition of an existing LS, no new electrical infrastructure, other than electricity service connections, would be required. Installation of new electricity service connections is a common feature of the overall construction process. As such, no impact would occur.

The Project would not require natural gas services. No impact would occur.

The Project proposes the construction of a 40-foot freestanding radio tower. As such, telecommunication services may be required for Project operations. However, the Project's anticipated telecommunication service demands would not be such that the existing broadband infrastructure in the City of Hemet would not be sufficient. Telecommunication services for the Project generally consist of monitoring equipment and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition infrastructure. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant.

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

Construction of the Project would require a minimal water supply for purposes such as dust control and concrete mixing. Existing sources would be sufficient and no new or expanded supply would be required for construction. Operation of the proposed Project would not induce unplanned population growth that would require or result in the construction of new water treatment facilities or the expansion of existing facilities. No impact related to sufficient water supplies would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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

The Project would increase EMWD's sewer system capacity to accommodate planned growth anticipated in the 2020 UWMP that would occur with or without the Project. Inspection and repair, if necessary, of the Project would be incorporated into EMWD's existing O&M activities; no new staff would be required to serve the Project. As there would be no new increased demand for wastewater treatment directly caused by the Project, no impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

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?

Solid waste generated by the Project would be disposed of at the Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill. The Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill has a remaining capacity of 14,540,000 cubic yards and has a planned cessation of operation on April 1, 2032.³⁴ Solid waste would only be generated during construction of the Project. Construction of the proposed Project would generate solid waste in the form of construction and demolition debris that would need to be hauled offsite and disposed of in a landfill by the Project's construction contractors. Construction and demolition material would include asphalt and concrete removed from paved areas, metal, and plastic pipe sections.

There are two state regulations that set standards for solid waste generation: AB 939 mandates 50 percent diversion of solid waste; and AB 341 mandates recycling programs to help reduce GHG emissions. Excess construction debris is anticipated to be within the permitted capacity of the local landfill after onsite backfill of excavated soil combined with adherence to mandatory construction waste diversion requirements. Therefore, the Project's impact with respect to generation of solid waste during the construction phase is less than significant.

It is not anticipated that operation of the Project would generate significant amounts of solid waste. The Project would not have permanent on-site staff, nor would operations which generate solid waste (e.g., manufacturing, fulfillment, wastewater treatment). Solid waste generation would be limited to temporary construction activities and would not significantly affect available solid waste disposal capacity in the region. Therefore, impacts related to local solid waste infrastructure capacity during operation would be less than significant.

³⁴ CalRecycle. ND. *Solid Waste Information System Facility/Site Activity Details: Lamb Canyon Sanitary Landfill*. <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/2246?siteID=2368> (accessed September 2025).

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

3.20 Wildfire

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

Discussion

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Fire Resources Assessment Program assesses the amount and extent of California's forests and rangelands, analyzes their conditions, and identifies alternative management and policy guidelines. Through the Fire Resources Assessment Program, CalFire produces maps designating very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZs) within State Responsibility Areas and Local Responsibility Areas. The Project area is designated as a non-VHFHSZ in the City of Hemet Local Responsibility Area.

The City of Hemet has an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) which establishes emergency preparedness and emergency response procedures. The City of Hemet EOP addresses the planned

response to extraordinary emergency situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents, and national security emergencies in or affecting the City of Hemet. The County of Riverside has a *Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan*, also known as the Base Plan, which identifies and reviews the County's past and present hazards and disasters. The Base Plan estimates the probability of future occurrences and sets goals to mitigate potential risks to reduce or eliminate long term risk to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards (County of Riverside 2018). The Base Plan includes key measures and activities to help protect residents, critical facilities, infrastructure, key resources, private property, and the environment from natural hazards in incorporated and unincorporated areas.

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

The Project is not located in a very high fire hazard severity zone (VHFHSZ), and the State Fire Marshal has identified the Project areas as having no FHSZ in the Local Responsibility Area.³⁵ Additionally, the City of Hemet does not identify the Project as being within a FHSZ.³⁶ Construction activities would be located within roadway right-of-way and parcels within the City of Hemet. The proposed LS site would be utilized as a construction staging area during construction of the proposed gravity and force mains within Cawston Avenue and for construction of the proposed LS. Sidewalk and lane closures during construction would temporarily restrict access for use by emergency response vehicles. However, as described in **Section 3.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials**, the segment of Cawston Avenue that the Project would impact generally serves local businesses and the Hemet-Ryan Airport and is not a designated emergency evacuation route. WRCOG has designated both West Stetson Avenue and Sanderson Avenue as part of an evacuation route. Should the Project require a temporary detour of traffic from Cawston Avenue, local roadways would provide connectivity to these WRCOG-designated evacuation routes; emergency services be required from the Hemet Fire Department Station 4, the resulting detour would add at most 0.7 miles to gain access to an evacuation route via Wentworth Drive, according to Google Maps. Nonetheless, EMWD would develop and implement a Traffic Control and Detour Plan as part of its Standard Construction Practices which would reduce conflicts between temporary construction activities and the emergency operations plan (EOP) and local hazard mitigation plan (LHMP) by requiring coordination with emergency services (police, fire, and others); requiring identification of roadways and access points for emergency services; and requiring that disruptions to or closures of these locations be minimized. Impacts of construction on the adopted EOP and LHMP would be less than significant. Further consideration of the proposed construction activities and potential for roadway access and hazardous conditions can be found under **Section 3.17, Transportation**.

Operation of the proposed Project would not physically impair or otherwise interfere with adopted emergency response or evacuation plans in the Project area, as all disturbed ground surface would be returned to pre-construction conditions or paved after excavation and below-grade pipeline installation. Operation of the Project would not interfere with emergency evacuation plans and

³⁵ CalFIRE. ND. *Find your Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) and local public contacts*.

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/5065c998b4b0462f9ec3c6c226c610a9> (accessed September 2025).

³⁶ City of Hemet. 2012. *City of Hemet 2030 General Plan*; Figure 6.4. https://www.hemetca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10809/Public-Safety-Element_FINAL_02282025 (accessed September 2025).

would involve minimal truck trips for maintenance as needed. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

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

As noted above, the Project is not located within a state or local FHSZ. Staging areas would be located on vacant land. Pipelines would be installed below grade and the existing and proposed LS sites do not have steep grades. Therefore, the Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks or expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. There would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

No impact.

c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

The Project would not involve the installation or maintenance of infrastructure that is typically associated with fire risk, such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, or power lines. Construction and operation of the Project would rely on existing roads and utilities. Installation of the pipeline would occur within existing roadway right-of-way, and all disturbed roadway areas would be restored to preconstruction conditions. Therefore, the Project would not result in the installation of a new road that would not exacerbate fire risk. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslopes or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

The Project would be located within existing roadways, a vacant parcel (proposed LS site), and the existing LS site. Cawston Avenue, the existing LS site, and the proposed LS site do not have steep slopes susceptible to landslides. The proposed gravity and force main pipelines would be installed below-grade and overlying ground surfaces would be restored to pre-construction conditions, resulting in no permanent impact on site drainage. Both the existing and proposed LS sites have general drainage characteristics of sheet flow and do not have, nor propose, site-specific stormwater management infrastructure. After demolition of the existing LS, stormwater would generally sheet flow across the site as it does in its existing conditions. The proposed LS site, after construction, would have similar drainage patterns as the existing condition.

Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to significant risks as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Impacts would be less than significant. Further consideration of the proposed Project's impact related to stormwater runoff and drainage can be found under **Section 3.10, Hydrology and Water Quality**.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
Does the Project:				
a) Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	[]	[X]	[]	[]
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)?	[]	[]	[X]	[]
c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	[]	[]	[X]	[]

Discussion

This IS/MND considered potential impacts of the Project on the environment and humans and identifies mitigation measures that when implemented, would minimize these impacts.

- a) Have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community,**

substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

With the implementation of mitigation measures, the Project would have a less than significant impact on the environment.

As discussed in **Section 3.4, Biological Resources**, the Project would have less than significant impacts on biological resources.

Based on the results of the Cultural Resources Assessment, there are no known archaeological or historical resources within the Project sites. There exists the potential to disturb unknown tribal resources during construction. Potential impacts would be reduced with implementation of **MM TRI-1** through **MM TRI-5**. Although there are no known fossil localities within the Project site, the Project area is underlain by geologic units with high paleontological sensitivity. To ensure proper procedures are in place in the event of an unanticipated fossil discovery, **MM GEO-1** would be implemented during construction of the Project.

Mitigation Measures

MM TRI-1 through MM TRI-5, MM GEO-1

Significance Determination

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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)?

As discussed throughout this Draft IS/MND, implementation of the Project has the potential to result in effects to the environment that are individually limited and may be cumulatively considerable in specific areas. In all instances where the Project has the potential to contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact to the environment, mitigation measures have been imposed to reduce potential effects to less than significant levels. This Draft IS/MND includes qualitative analysis of the Project's contribution for air quality, GHG emissions, noise, energy, and traffic, all of which were determined to be less than significant, and no mitigation measures were required, nor represent a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact. The Project is not considered growth-inducing, as defined by State CEQA Guidelines. The potential cumulative environmental effects of implementing the Project would be less than considerable and therefore, a less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

The Project's potential to result in environmental effects that could adversely affect human beings, either directly or indirectly, has been discussed throughout this Draft IS/MND. Construction and operation of the Project would not involve any activities that would result in environmental effects (e.g., air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, geology and soil, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, and wildfire) which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly, and therefore a less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Significance Determination

Less than significant impact.

4. REPORT PREPARATION

4.1 Report Authors

This report was prepared by EMWD, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., and teaming partners. Staff from these agencies and companies that were involved include:

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Cawston Lift Station Replacement Project

Appendices

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February 2026



Cawston Lift Station Replacement Project

Appendices

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APPENDIX A: BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL REPORT

Biological Resources Technical Report

Eastern Municipal Water District Cawston Lift Station Replacement
City of Hemet, Riverside County, California

DRAFT REPORT



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April 2025

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GLOSSARY

APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
BMPs	Best Management Practices
CAPSA	Criteria Area Plant Survey Areas
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game (CDFW effective Jan 1 st 2013)
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CRPR	California Rare Plant Ranks
CWA	Clean Water Act
CWL	California Watch List
EMWD	Eastern Municipal Water District
FC	Federal Candidate for Listing
FE	Federal Endangered
FPE	Federal Proposed Endangered
FPT	Federal Proposed Threatened
FT	Federal Threatened
FESA	federal Endangered Species Act
GIS	Geographic Information System
HANS	Habitat Acquisition and Negotiation Strategy
JPR	Joint Project Review
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MSHCP	Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
NCCP	Natural Communities Conservation Plan
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPPA	Native Plant Protection Act
RCA	Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority
RCHCA	Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCE	State Candidate Endangered
SCT	State Candidate Threatened
SE	State Endangered
SFP	State Fully Protected
SP	State Protected
SR	State Rare
SSC	California Species of Special Concern
ST	State Threatened
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
WDR	Waste Discharge Requirements

INTRODUCTION

The following biological technical report describes a detailed assessment of potential sensitive natural resources located within and immediately adjacent to the Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) Cawston Lift Station Replacement Project Sites. Specifically, the report has been prepared to support the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) documentation, compliance, and review process conducted by the City of Hemet. As discussed below, the assessment includes a thorough literature review, site reconnaissance characterizing baseline conditions (including floral and faunal and dominate vegetation communities), impact analysis, and proposed mitigation/conservation measures.

PROJECT LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

The proposed action includes the demolition of an existing 0.21-acre EMWD lift station (L3121 Cawston Lift) located within Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 456-040-019 (Project Site 1) and relocation to a 1.24-acre property (Project Site 2) located within a portion of APN 456-020-009 (1.45-acres total). The Project Sites are located within United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5' Series Winchester Quadrangle, Riverside County, Township 5 South, Range 1 West, Section 17. Specifically, Project Site 1 extends northwest from the intersection of Stetson Avenue and South Cawston Avenue. Project Site 2 extends north east of South Cawston Avenue and Waldon Weaver Road, City of Hemet, Riverside County, California, as shown in Figure 1, *Regional Location Map*, and Figure 2, *Project Site Map*.

Although the EMWD is not a permittee to the Western Riverside County MSHCP, the following report assesses the proposed project for compliance with the Plan. The Project Sites are located within the Western Riverside County MSHCP San Jacinto Plan Area and are not located within or adjacent to an MSHCP Criteria Area Cell, Cell Group, or Linkage Area, as shown in Figure 3, *MSHCP Relationship Map* (Western Riverside County Regional Conservation Authority (RCA) Geographic Information System (GIS) Data Downloads 2025).

The proposed action includes the demolition and relocation of the EMWD Cawston lift station L3121 located within Project Site 1 to the upgradeable Project Site 2 location. The new lift station would include two (2) access driveways, wet well, two (2) bypass manholes, equipment building, liquid phase and vapor phase odor control system, generator fuel tank, and separate Southern California Edison enclosure. The new Project Site will also include a permitter wall with tubular steel motorized access gate and landscaped areas along frontage of Cawson and Stetson Avenues.

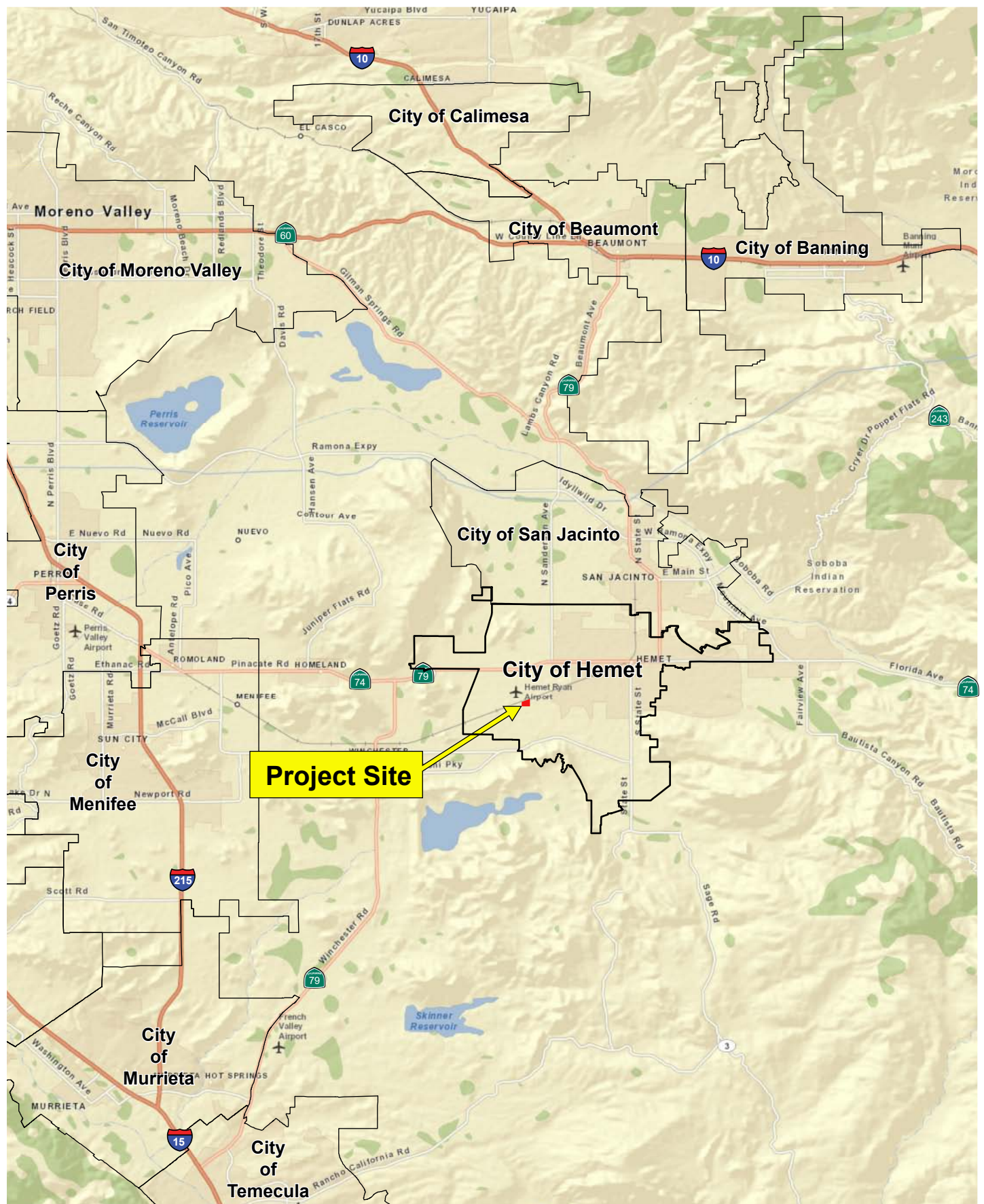


Figure 1 - Regional Location Map

Biological Resources Technical Report

Eastern Municipal Water District Cawston Lift Station Replacement

CADRE
Environmental





APN 456-040-019 and Portion of APN 456-020-009 Project Sites (1.45-Acres) # ➔ Photo Point & Direction

Figure 2 - Project Site Map

Biological Resources Technical Report

Eastern Municipal Water District Cawston Lift Station Replacement



1 inch = 100 feet

LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing biological resource conditions within and adjacent to the Project Sites were initially investigated through review of pertinent scientific literature. Federal register listings, protocols, and species data provided by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) were reviewed in conjunction with anticipated federally listed species potentially occurring within the Project Sites. The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB 2025a), a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Natural Heritage Division species account database, was also reviewed for all pertinent information regarding the locations of known occurrences of sensitive species in the vicinity of the property. In addition, numerous regional floral and faunal field guides were utilized in the identification of species and suitable habitats. Combined, the sources reviewed provided an excellent baseline from which to inventory the biological resources potentially occurring in the area. Other sources of information included the review of unpublished biological resource letter reports and assessments. Other CDFW reports and publications consulted include the following:

- California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants in California (CNPS 2025);
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Species Occurrence Database (USFWS 2025a);
- The Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) database from the USFWS (USFWS 2025b);
- USFWS Critical Habitat Mapper (USFWS 2025c);
- The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) (CDFW 2025a), a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Natural Heritage Division species account database;
- Special Animals (CDFW 2025b);
- State and Federally Listed Endangered and Threatened Animals of California (CDFW 2025c);
- Endangered, Threatened, and Rare Plants of California (CDFW 2025d);
- Special Vascular Plants and Bryophytes List (CDFW 2025e);
- iNaturalist Database. (iNaturalist 2025);
- eBird (eBird 2025);
- City of Hemet Municipal Codes (City of Hemet 2025); and
- City of Hemet General Plan 2030 (City of Hemet 2012).

FIELD SURVEYS

A reconnaissance survey of the Project Sites was conducted by Ruben Ramirez of Cadre Environmental on April 8th, 2025 in order to characterize and identify potential sensitive plant and wildlife habitats, and to establish the accuracy of the data identified in the literature search. Geologic and soil maps were examined to identify local soil types that may support sensitive taxa. Aerial photograph, topographic maps, vegetation and rare plant maps prepared for previous studies in the region were used to determine community types and other physical features that may support sensitive plants/wildlife, uncommon

taxa, or rare communities that occur within or adjacent to the. Habitat assessments were conducted for, but not limited to, the following target species/groups.

- Crotch's bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) [State Candidate Endangered (SCE)];

Section 6.1.2 Riparian, Riverine, Vernal Pool Species

- Riverside fairy shrimp (*Streptocephalus woottoni*) [Federal Endangered FE];
- vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*) [Federally Threatened (FT)];
- least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) [FE/State Endangered (SE)];
- southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) [FE/SE];
- western yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*) [SE].

The MSHCP has determined that the majority of sensitive species potentially occurring within the Project Sites have been adequately covered (MSHCP Table 2-2 Species Considered for Conservation Under the MSHCP Since 1999, 2004). However, additional surveys may be required for narrow endemic plant, criteria area, and specific wildlife species if suitable habitat is documented onsite and/or if the property is located within a predetermined "Survey Area" (MSHCP 2004).

Vegetation Communities/Habitat Classification Mapping/ Floristic Plant Inventory

Natural community names and hierarchical structure follows the "*Manual of California Vegetation Online*" (CNPS 20025) classification system, which has been refined and augmented where appropriate to better characterize the habitat types observed throughout the Project Sites. All plants observed during the survey efforts were either identified in the field or collected and later identified using taxonomic keys. Plant taxonomy follows Jepson Flora Project (eds.) (Jepson eFlora 2025). Scientific names are included only at the first mention of a species; thereafter, common names alone are used.

Wildlife Resources Inventory

All animals identified during the reconnaissance survey by sight, call, tracks, scat, or other characteristic sign were documented. In addition to species actually detected, expected use of the site by other wildlife was derived from the analysis of habitats on the site, combined with known habitat preferences of regionally occurring wildlife species. Vertebrate taxonomy followed in this report is according to the Center for North American Herpetology (2025 for amphibians and reptiles), the American Ornithological Society (American Ornithological Society 2025) for birds, and American Society of Mammalogists (2025) for mammals. Both common and scientific names are used during the first mention of a species; common names only are used in the remainder of the text.

Regional Connectivity/Wildlife Movement Corridors

The analysis of wildlife movement corridors associated with the Project Sites and immediate vicinity is based on information compiled from literature, analysis of the aerial photograph and direct observations made in the field during the reconnaissance site visit.

A literature review was conducted that includes documents on island biogeography (studies of fragmented and isolated habitat “islands”), reports on wildlife home range sizes and migration patterns, and studies on wildlife dispersal. Wildlife movement studies conducted in southern California were also reviewed. Use of field-verified digital data, in conjunction with the GIS database, allowed proper identification of regional vegetation communities and drainage features. This information was crucial to assessing the relationship of the Project Sites to large open space areas in the immediate vicinity and was also evaluated in terms of connectivity and habitat linkages. Relative to corridor issues, the discussions in this report are intended to focus on wildlife movement associated within the Project Sites and the immediate vicinity.

Jurisdictional Resources Assessment

The Project Sites were assessed by Cadre Environmental on April 8th, 2025 for the potential presence/absence of United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), CDFW, and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) jurisdictional resources through review of pertinent scientific literature and industry standard databases including but not limited to the following:

- Custom Soil Resources Report for San Bernardino County, California. (Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) 2025)
- National Wetlands Mapper (NWI) (USFWS 2025d)
- National Surface Water Information System Database. United States Geological Service (USGS 2025).
- Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual, Technical Report (Environmental Laboratory. 1987).
- Regional Supplement to the USACE of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region (USACE 2008).
- Final National Ordinary High Water Mark Field Delineation Manual for Rivers and Streams (USACE 2025).

EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

SURROUNDING LAND USES/TOPOGRAPHY/SOILS

The Project Sites are generally flat and characterized as disturbed habitats and developed, as illustrated in Figure 4, *Vegetation Communities Map* and Figures 5 to 7, *Current Project Site Photographs*.

The Soil Survey of Western Riverside Area has the following soils mapped within the boundary of Project Site 1, as shown on Figure 8, *Soils Association Map*: Ts – Traver fine sandy loam, saline-alkali. Although Traver soils are considered MSHCP sensitive substrates, all of Project Site 1 is developed within the existing Cawston lift station L3121. The Soil Survey of Western Riverside Area has the following soils mapped within the boundary of Project Site 2, as shown on Figure 8, *Soils Association Map*: GtA – Grangeville fine sandy loam drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes, and Cf – Chino silt loam drained, saline-alkali

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES

Acreage totals for vegetation communities documented within the Project Sites is listed in Table 1. *Vegetation Communities Acreages*.

Table 1.
Vegetation Communities Acreages

Vegetation Type	Project Site 1 (acres)	Project Site 2 (acres)	TOTAL Acres
Disturbed	--	1.24	1.24
Developed	0.21	--	0.21
TOTAL	0.21	1.24	1.45

Source: Cadre Environmental 2025.

Disturbed

Project Site 2 is heavily disturbed, generally devoid of vegetation, and substrates consist of a layer of decomposed granite. Scattered species documented onsite include stinknet (*Oncosiphon piluliferum*), red-stemmed filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*), broad stemmed filaree (*Erodium botrys*), shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*) prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), common sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), common groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), London rocket (*Sisymbrium irio*), cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*), small flowered fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii*), and ripgut grass (*Bromus diandrus*).

Developed

Project Site 1 is developed within the existing Cawston lift station L3121. A few ornamental trees and scattered weeds are present including common sow thistle, and common groundsel.

GENERAL WILDLIFE SPECIES

General wildlife species documented on site included northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), black phoebe American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*), and house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*).

JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES

No resources regulated by the USACE, RWQCB and CDFW were documented within the Project Sites. The project will comply with all applicable water quality regulations, including obtaining and complying with those conditions established in (WDRs) and a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits (NO. CAS000002). Both of these permits include the treatment of all surface runoff from paved and developed areas, the implementation of applicable Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction activities and the installation and proper maintenance of structural BMPs to ensure adequate treatment of water before exiting the Project Sites.



Figure 3 - MSHCP Relationship Map

Biological Resources Technical Report

Eastern Municipal Water District Cawston Lift Station Replacement



1 inch = 100 feet



APN 456-040-019 and Portion of APN 456-020-009

Project Sites (1.45-Acres)

DEV Developed

DIS Disturbed

Figure 4 - Vegetation Communities Map

Biological Resources Technical Report

Eastern Municipal Water District Cawston Lift Station Replacement



1 inch = 100 feet



PHOTOGRAPH 1 - Project Site 2



PHOTOGRAPH 2 - Project Site 2

Refer to Figure 2 for Photographic Key - Project Site Map



PHOTOGRAPH 3 - Project Site 2



PHOTOGRAPH 4 - Project Site 2

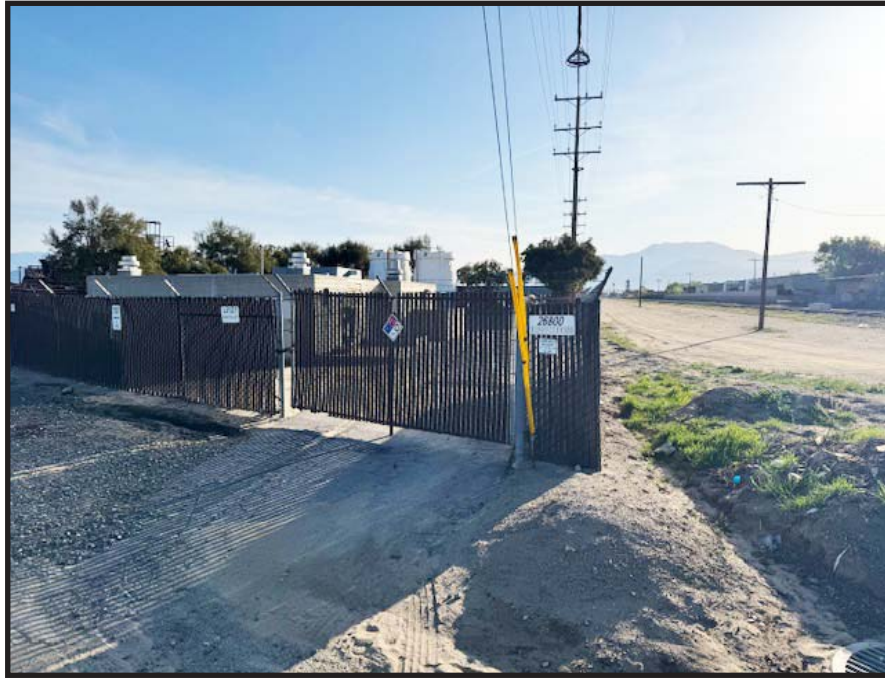
Refer to Figure 2 for Photographic Key - Project Site Map

Figure 6 - Current Project Site Photographs

Biological Resources Technical Report

Eastern Municipal Water District Cawston Lift Station Replacement





PHOTOGRAPH 5 - Project Site 1, EMWD Cawston Lift Station
- L3121



PHOTOGRAPH 6 - Project Site 1, EMWD Cawston Lift Station
- L3121

Refer to Figure 2 for Photographic Key - Project Site Map



APN 456-040-019 and Portion of APN 456-020-009 Project Sites (1.45-Acres)

Figure 8 - Soils Association Map

Biological Resources Technical Report

Eastern Municipal Water District Cawston Lift Station Replacement



1 inch = 100 feet

SENSITIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The following discussion describes the plant and wildlife species present, or potentially present within the property boundaries, that have been afforded special recognition by federal, state, or local resource conservation agencies and organizations, principally due to the species' declining or limited population sizes, usually resulting from habitat loss. Also discussed are habitats that are unique, of relatively limited distribution, or of particular value to wildlife. Protected sensitive species are classified by state and/or federal resource management agencies, or both, as threatened or endangered, under provisions of the state and federal endangered species act.

Sensitive biological resources are habitats or individual species that have special recognition by federal, state, or local conservation agencies and organizations as endangered, threatened, or rare. The CDFW, USFWS, and special groups like the CNPS maintain watch lists of such resources. For the purpose of this assessment sources used to determine the sensitive status of biological resources are:

Plants: USFWS (2025a), CNDDDB (CDFW 2025a), CDFW (2025d, 2025e), CNPS (2025a),

Invertebrate - Crotch's bumble bee *Bombus crotchii*: Leif Richardson, Paul Williams, Robbin Thorp and Sheila Colla, et al. (2022), CDFW (2019, 2023), and CDFW (2025b).

Wildlife: California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (2008), Ornithological Society (2025), American Society of Mammalogists (2025), eBird (2025), iNaturalist (2025), USFWS (2025a), CNDDDB (CDFW 2025a), and CDFW (2012, 2025b, 2025c, 2025f).

Habitats: CNDDDB (CDFW 2025a, 2025f).

FEDERAL PROTECTION AND CLASSIFICATIONS

The Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 (FESA) defines an endangered species as "any species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range..." Threatened species are defined as "any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range." Under provisions of Section 9(a)(1)(B) of the FESA it is unlawful to "take" any listed species. "Take" is defined as follows in Section 3(18) of the FESA: "...harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct." Further, the USFWS, through regulation, has interpreted the terms "harm" and "harass" to include certain types of habitat modification as forms of a "take." These interpretations, however, are generally considered and applied on a case-by-case basis and often vary from species to species. In a case where a property owner seeks permission from a federal agency for an action that could affect a federally listed plant and animal species, the property owner and agency are required to consult with USFWS. Section 9(a)(2)(b) of the FESA addresses the protections afforded to listed plants. Recently, the USFWS instituted changes in the listing status of former candidate species. Former C1 (candidate) species are now referred to simply as candidate species and

represent the only candidates for listing. Former C2 species (for which the USFWS had insufficient evidence to warrant listing at this time) and C3 species (either extinct, no longer a valid taxon or more abundant than was formerly believed) are no longer considered as candidate species. Therefore, these species are no longer maintained in list form by the USFWS, nor are they formally protected. However, some USFWS field offices have issued memoranda stating that former C2 species are henceforth to be considered Federal Species of Concern. This term is employed in this document but carries no official protections. All references to federally protected species in this report (whether listed, proposed for listing or candidate) include the most current published status or candidate category to which each species has been assigned by USFWS. For purposes of this assessment, the following acronyms are used for federal status species:

FE	Federal Endangered
FT	Federal Threatened
FPE	Federal Proposed Endangered
FPT	Federal Proposed Threatened
FC	Federal Candidate for Listing

The designation of critical habitat can also have a significant impact on the development of land designated as “*critical habitat*.” The FESA prohibits federal agencies from taking any action that will “*adversely modify or destroy*” critical habitat (16 U.S.C. § 1536(a)(2)). This provision of the FESA applies to the issuance of permits by federal agencies. Before approving an action affecting critical habitat, the federal agency is required to consult with the USFWS who then issues a biological opinion evaluating whether the action will “*adversely modify*” critical habitat. Thus, the designation of critical habitat effectively gives the USFWS extensive regulatory control over the development of land designated as critical habitat.

The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) makes it unlawful to “*take*” any migratory bird or part, nest, or egg of such bird listed in wildlife protection treaties between the United States and Great Britain, the Republic of Mexico, Japan, and the Union of Soviet States. For purposes of the MBTA, “*take*” is defined as to pursue, hunt, capture, kill, or possess or attempt to do the same.

The Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Protection Act explicitly protects the bald eagle and golden eagle and imposes its own prohibition on any taking of these species. As defined in this act, take means to pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, or molest or disturb. Current USFWS policy is not to refer the incidental take of bald eagles for prosecution under the Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668-668d).

STATE PROTECTION AND CLASSIFICATIONS

California's Endangered Species Act (CESA) defines an endangered species as “...a native species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant which is in serious danger of becoming extinct throughout all, or a significant portion, of its range due to one or more causes, including loss of habitat, change in habitat, overexploitation, predation, competition, or disease.” The State defines a threatened species as “...a native

species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant that, although not presently threatened with extinction, is likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future in the absence of the special protection and management efforts required by this chapter. Any animal determined by the commission as rare on or before January 1, 1985 is a threatened species.” Candidate species are defined as “...a native species or subspecies of a bird, mammal, fish, amphibian, reptile, or plant that the commission has formally noticed as being under review by the department for addition to either the list of endangered species or the list of threatened species, or a species for which the commission has published a notice of proposed regulation to add the species to either list.” Candidate species may be afforded temporary protection as though they were already listed as threatened or endangered at the discretion of the Fish and Game Commission.

Article 3, Sections 2080 through 2085, of CESA addresses the taking of threatened or endangered species by stating “No person shall import into this state, export out of this state, or take, possess, purchase, or sell within this state, any species, or any part or product thereof, that the commission determines to be an endangered species or a threatened species, or attempt any of those acts, except as otherwise provided...” Under CESA, “take” is defined as “...hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill.” Exceptions authorized by the state to allow “take” require “...permits or memorandums of understanding...” and can be authorized for “...endangered species, threatened species, or candidate species for scientific, educational, or management purposes.” Sections 1901 and 1913 of the California Fish and Game Code provide that notification is required prior to disturbance.

Additionally, some sensitive mammals and birds are protected by the State as Fully Protected Mammals or Fully Protected Birds, as described in the California Fish and Game Code, Sections 4700 and 3511, respectively. California Species of Special Concern (SSC) listings include special status species, including all state and federal protected and candidate taxa, Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service sensitive species, species considered to be declining or rare by the National Audubon Society, and a selection of species which are considered to be under population stress but are not formally proposed for listing. This list is primarily a working document for the CDFW's CNDDDB project. Informally listed taxa are not protected per se but warrant consideration in the preparation of biotic assessments. For some species, the CNDDDB is only concerned with specific portions of the life history, such as roosts, rookeries, or nest sites. For the purposes of this assessment, the following acronyms are used for State status species:

SE	State Endangered
ST	State Threatened
SCE	State Candidate Endangered
SCT	State Candidate Threatened
SFP	State Fully Protected
SP	State Protected
SR	State Rare
SSC	California Species of Special Concern

Nesting birds, including raptors, are protected under California Fish and Game Code Section 3503, which reads, “It is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto.” In addition, under California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.5, “it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (birds-of-prey) or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation adopted pursuant thereto”. Passerines and non-passerine land birds are further protected under California Fish and Game Code 3513. As such, CDFW typically recommends surveys for nesting birds that could potentially be directly (e.g., actual removal of trees/vegetation) or indirectly (e.g., noise disturbance) impacted by project-related activities. Disturbance during the breeding season could result in the incidental loss of fertile eggs or nestlings, or otherwise lead to nest abandonment. Disturbance that causes nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort is considered “take” by CDFW.

California Native Plant Society

The CNPS is a private plant conservation organization dedicated to the monitoring and protection of sensitive species in the State. This organization has compiled an inventory comprised of the information focusing on geographic distribution and qualitative characterization of rare, threatened, or endangered vascular plant species of California (Tibor 2001). The list serves as the candidate list for listing as threatened and endangered by CDFW. The CNPS has developed five categories of rarity references as California Rare Plant Ranks (CRPR):

CRPR 1A	Plants presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere
CRPR 1B	Rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere.
CRPR 2A	Plants presumed extirpated in California but common elsewhere
CRPR 2B	Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere
CRPR 3	Plants about which we need more information – a review list.
CRPR 4	Species of limited distribution in California (i.e., naturally rare in the wild), but whose existence does not appear to be susceptible to threat.

As stated by the CNPS:

“Threat Rank is an extension added onto the California Rare Plant Rank and designates the level of endangerment by a 1 to 3 ranking with 1 being the most endangered and 3 being the least endangered. A Threat Rank is present for all California Rare Plant Rank 1B’s, 2’s, 4’s, and the majority of California Rare Plant Rank 3’s. California Rare Plant Rank 4 plants are seldom assigned a Threat Rank of 0.1, as they generally have large enough populations to not have significant threats to their continued existence in California; however, certain conditions exist to make the plant a species of

concern and hence be assigned a California Rare Plant Rank. In addition, all California Rare Plant Rank 1A (presumed extinct in California), and some California Rare Plant Rank 3 (need more information) plants, which lack threat information, do not have a Threat Rank extension.” (CNPS 2010)

0.1	Seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)
0.2	Fairly threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
0.3	Not very threatened in California (<20% of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

SENSITIVE HABITATS

As stated by CDFW:

“One purpose of the vegetation classification is to assist in determining the level of rarity and imperilment of vegetation types. Ranking of alliances according to their degree of imperilment (as measured by rarity, trends, and threats) follows NatureServe’s Heritage Methodology, in which all alliances are listed with a G (global) and S (state) rank. For alliances with State ranks of S1-S3, all associations within them are also considered to be highly imperiled” (CDFW 2025)

No vegetation communities listed by CDFW as sensitive were documented within or adjacent to the Project Sites.

SENSITIVE PLANTS

Although the EMWD is not a permittee to the Western Riverside County MSHCP, the following report assesses the proposed project for compliance with the Plan. The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP Narrow Endemic or Criteria Area Species Plant Survey Areas (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2025).

No state or federally listed/proposed threatened or endangered plant species were documented or expected to occur within the Project Sites based on the developed condition of Project Site 1 and disturbed condition (decomposed granite substrates) and lack of suitable habitat on Project Site 2, as outlined in Table 2, *Sensitive Plant Species with Potential to Occur Onsite*. No suitable habitat was documented within the Project Sites for special-status plants, as outlined in Table 2, *Sensitive Plant Species with Potential to Occur Onsite*.

Table 2.
Sensitive Plant Species with Potential to Occur Onsite.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
Munz's onion (<i>Allium munzii</i>) FE/ST CRPR List 1B.1 MSHCP NEPSA CA Endemic	Restricted to mesic clay soils in western Riverside County, California. It blooms from March to May. This species is found in southern needlegrass grassland, annual grassland, open coastal sage scrub, or occasionally, in cismontane juniper woodlands.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
San Diego ambrosia (<i>Ambrosia pumila</i>) FE CRPR List 1B.1 MSHCP NEPSA	San Diego ambrosia is known from Baja California, Mexico, and San Diego and Riverside counties in the United States. It blooms May to September. San Diego ambrosia occurs primarily on upper terraces of rivers and drainages as well as in open grasslands, openings in coastal sage scrub, and occasionally in areas adjacent to vernal pools.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Marsh sandwort (<i>Arenaria paludicola</i>) CRPR 1B.1	Perennial stoloniferous herb generally blooming from May to August within marsh and swamp habitats (brackish, freshwater (CNPS 2025)).	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
San Jacinto Valley crownscale (<i>Atriplex coronata</i> var. <i>notator</i>) FE CRPR List 1B.1 MSHCP CAPSA CA Endemic	The San Jacinto Valley crownscale occurs primarily in floodplains that support alkali scrub, alkali playas, vernal pools, and occasionally alkali grasslands (Bramlet 1993).	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Parish's brittlebush (<i>Atriplex parishii</i>) CRPR List 1B.1 MSHCP CAPSA	Parish's brittlebush is a small prostrate to decumbent annual, white scaly, and is often much less than eight inches in length. It blooms May to October. This species occurs on alkali or saline flats, alkali meadows, and in or along the margins	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
	of vernal pools or playa depressions.	
Davidson's saltscale (<i>Atriplex serenana</i> var. <i>davidsonii</i>) CRPR List 1B.2 MSHCP CAPSA	Davidson's saltscale is a decumbent to ascending annual that is sparsely scaly. It blooms April to October. It grows on coastal bluffs, alkaline alluvial terraces, on alkali or saline flats western Riverside County.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Thread-leaved brodiaea (<i>Brodiaea filifolia</i>) FT.SE CRPR List 1B.1 MSHCP CAPSA CA Endemic	Thread-leaved brodiaea is a geophyte, which produces leaves and flower stalks that sprout from corms (underground bulb-like storage stems). Thread-leaved brodiaea blooms March to June. Thread-leaved brodiaea typically occurs on gentle hillsides, valleys, and floodplains in semi-alkaline flats of riparian areas, vernal pools, mesic southern needlegrass grassland, mixed native-annual grassland, and alkali grassland plant communities in association with clay, clay loam, or alkaline silty-clay soils.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Smooth Tarplant (<i>Centromadia pungens</i> ssp. <i>laevis</i>) CRPR 1B.1 MSHCP CAPSA	Smooth tarplant is an annual member of the sunflower family (Asteraceae) that occurs in vernal pools, alkali playas and scrub, alkali grasslands, riparian areas, along watercourses and disturbed sites. It blooms April to September.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Parry's spineflower (<i>Chorizanthe parryi</i> var. <i>parryi</i>) CRPR 1B.1	Annual herb which generally blooms from April to June within chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub and grassland habitats with sandy and/or rocky openings (CNPS 2025) .	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
White-bracted spineflower (<i>Chorizanthe xanti</i> var. <i>leucotheca</i>) CRPR 1B.2	Annual herb which generally blooms from April to June within Mojavean desert scrub, and pinyon and juniper woodland elev. 300-1200 m.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
Multi-stemmed dudleya (<i>Dudleya multicaulis</i>) CRPR List 1B.2 MSHCP NEPSA	Many-stemmed dudleya is a succulent perennial in the stonecrop family. It blooms April to July. This species is known from several southern California counties, and typically occurs in dry, stony places on heavy soils in scrub and grassland habitats below 2,000 feet elevation. Many-stemmed dudleya is most often associated with clay soils in barren, rocky places, or thinly vegetated openings in chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and southern needlegrass grasslands.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Round-leaved filaree (<i>Erodium macrophyllum</i>) CRPR List 2.1 MSHCP CAPSA CA Endemic	Habitats include open areas in cismontane woodland and valley and foothill grasslands, which are often associated with heavy clay soils below 3,600 feet elevation.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Coulter's goldfields (<i>Lasthenia glabrata</i> ssp. <i>coulteri</i>) CRPR List 1B.1 MSHCP CAPSA	Coulter's goldfields is associated with low-lying alkali and saline habitats along the coast and inland valleys. The majority of the populations are associated with coastal salt marsh. In Riverside County, Coulter's goldfields primarily grow in highly alkaline, silty clays associated with the Traver-Domino-Willows soils, and usually in the wet areas in the alkali vernal plain community.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Robinson's pepper-grass (<i>Lepidium virginicum</i> var. <i>robinsonii</i>) CRPR 4.3	Annual herb which generally blooms from January to July within chaparral and coastal sage scrub habitats (CNPS 2025).	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Little mousetail (<i>Myosurus minimus</i> ssp. <i>apus</i>) CRPR List 3.1 MSHCP CAPSA	Little mousetail is widespread in California. It occurs in alkaline vernal pools, and vernal alkali plains and grasslands, and blooms March to June.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
Mud nama (<i>Nama stenocarpum</i>) CRPR List 2.2 MSHCP CAPSA	Mud nama grows on muddy embankments of marshes and swamps, lake margins, riverbank, meadow, playa, and vernal pools. In western Riverside County, it is known only from the north shore of Mystic Lake (Roberts et al. 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Spreading navarretia (<i>Navarretia fossalis</i>) FT/SE CRPR List 1B.1 MSHCP NEPSA	Spreading navarretia is a member of the phlox family, and is found in vernal pools, chenopod scrub, edge of marshes, and playas on saline-alkali soils. It occasionally grows in ditches and depressions associated with degraded habitat or old stock ponds (Consortium 2012). Spreading navarretia is a small prostrate to occasionally erect annual. Spreading navarretia blooms April to June.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
California Orcutt grass (<i>Orcuttia californica</i>) FE/SE CRPR List 1B.1 MSHCP NEPSA	California Orcutt grass is a small, unique grass that occurs primarily in vernal pool habitats. In southern California, it is known from Orange (recently reported occurrence), Los Angeles, Riverside, Ventura, and San Diego Counties, and continues south into Baja California, Mexico. California Orcutt grass blooms April to August. In Riverside County, this species is found in southern basaltic claypan vernal pools at the Santa Rosa Plateau, and alkaline vernal pools such as Skunk Hollow, at Upper Salt Creek near Hemet, Menifee and elsewhere.	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.
Wright's trichocoronis (<i>Trichocoronis wrightii</i> var. <i>wrightii</i>) CRPR List 2.1 MSHCP NEPSA	The historic known range of Wright's trichocoronis includes the Great Valley of central California, western Riverside County, and south Texas and adjacent northeast	<u>No Potential</u> . Not detected. No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
	Mexico. This plant grows in meadows and seeps, marshes, riparian scrub, and vernal pools. Wright's trichocoronis blooms May to September.	
California Native Plant Society (CNPS): California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR) CRPR 1A – Plants presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere CRPR 1B – plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere CRPR 2A – plants presumed extirpated in California but common elsewhere CRPR 2B – plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere CRPR 3 – plants about which we need more information, a review list CRPR 4 – plants of limited distribution, a watch list .1 – Seriously endangered in California .2 – Fairly endangered in California .3 – Not very endangered in California Federal (USFWS) Protection and Classification FE – Federally Endangered FT – Federally Threatened FC – Federal Candidate for Listing State (CDFW) Protection and Classification SE – State Endangered ST – State Threatened		

Source : Cadre Environmental 2025.

SENSITIVE WILDLIFE

Although the EMWD is not a permittee to the Western Riverside County MSHCP, the following report assesses the proposed project for compliance with the Plan. The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP Amphibian, Mammal or Burrowing Owl Survey Area (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2025).

No state or federally listed/proposed threatened or endangered wildlife species were documented or expected to occur within the Project Sites based on the developed condition of Project Site 1 and disturbed condition (decomposed granite substrates) and lack of suitable habitat on Project Site 2, as outlined in Table 3, *Sensitive Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur Onsite*.

Moderate potential habitat for one (1) sensitive species including California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*) was documented within and adjacent to Project Site 2, as outlined in Table 3, *Sensitive Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur Onsite*.

Table 3.
Sensitive Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur Onsite.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
INVERTEBRATES		
Crotch's bumble bee (<i>Bombus crotchii</i>) SCE	Range extends from southern to northern California within a variety of habitats including grassland, scrub, chaparral and desert habitats. Food plants include but are not limited to the following genera: <i>Antirrhinum</i> , <i>Phacelia</i> , <i>Clarkia</i> , <i>Cordylanthus</i> , <i>Dendromecon</i> , <i>Eschscholzia</i> , <i>Eriogonum</i> , <i>Hypericum</i> , <i>Lantana</i> , <i>Lupinus</i> , <i>Salvia</i> , <i>Asclepias</i> , <i>Cirsium</i> , <i>Monardella</i> , <i>Keckiella</i> , <i>Acmispon</i> , <i>Euthamia</i> , <i>Ehrendorferia</i> , <i>Vicia</i> , and/or <i>Trichostema</i> .	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates detected within the Project Sites. No food plants documented within or adjacent to Project Sites.
Vernal pool fairy shrimp (<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>) FT MSHCP Covered Species	Vernal pool fairy shrimp is restricted to seasonal vernal pools (Eng, Belk, and Eriksen 1990; USFWS 1994). The vernal pool fairy shrimp prefers cool-water pools that have low to moderate dissolved solids, are unpredictable, and often short lived (Eriksen and Belk 1999, MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Riverside fairy shrimp (<i>Streptocephalus woottoni</i>) FE MSHCP Covered Species	<i>S. woottoni</i> is restricted to deep seasonal vernal pools/ephemeral ponds, and stock ponds and other human modified depressions (Eng, Belk, and Eriksen 1990, USFWS 1993, USFWS 2001). Riverside fairy shrimp prefer warm-water pools that have low to moderate dissolved solids, are less predictable, and remained	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
	filled for extended periods of time (MSHCP 2004).	
AMPHIBIANS		
Arroyo toad <i>(Anaxyrus californicus)</i> FE/SSC MSHCP Covered Species	Shallow, slow moving active and braided stream channels with sandy substrates for breeding, bench and terrace habitats for foraging and aestivation, willow scrub, coastal sage scrub and riparian/oak woodlands.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Western spadefoot <i>(Spea hammondi)</i> SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The western spadefoot population is patchily but widely distributed throughout the Riverside Lowlands and San Jacinto Foothills Bioregions. Habitat for this species includes suitable breeding habitat below 1500 meters (i.e., vernal pools or other standing water is free of exotic species) secondary habitats including adjacent chaparral, sage scrub, grassland, and alluvial scrub habitats (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
REPTILES		
Southern California legless lizard <i>(Anniella stebbinsi)</i> SSC	Occurs in moist warm loose soil with plant cover. Moisture is essential. Occurs in sparsely vegetated areas of beach dunes, chaparral, pine-oak woodlands, desert scrub, sandy washes, and stream terraces with sycamores, cottonwoods, or oaks.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Orange-throated whiptail <i>(Aspidoscelis hyperythra)</i> CWL MSHCP Covered Species	The orange-throated whiptail occurs primarily in a wide variety of habitats but is more closely tied to coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitats with less than 90 percent vegetative cover.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
Coastal western whiptail (<i>Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The coastal western whiptail occurs in a wide variety of habitats including coastal sage scrub, desert scrub, Riversidean alluvial fan scrub, woodlands, grasslands, playas, and respective ecotones between these habitats (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
San Diego banded gecko (<i>Coleonyx variegatus abbotti</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	San Diego banded gecko is a microhabitat generalist and also occurs in habitats ranging from cismontane chaparral and desert scrub to open sand dunes and arid tropical forests (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Red-diamond rattlesnake (<i>Crotalus ruber</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The red-diamond rattlesnake is often found in areas with dense vegetation especially chaparral and sage scrub up to 1,520 meters in elevation (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Western pond turtle (<i>Actinemys marmorata</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The western pond turtle inhabits slow moving permanent or intermittent streams, small ponds, small lakes, reservoirs, abandoned gravel pits, permanent and ephemeral shallow wetlands, stock ponds, and sewage treatment lagoons (Rathbun <i>et al.</i> , 1992; Holland, 1994). Pools are the preferred habitat within streams (Bury, 1972, MSHCP 2004)	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Coast horned lizard (<i>Phrynosoma blainvillii</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The horned lizard occurs primarily in scrub, chaparral, and grassland habitats. The species is common in most areas of the Plan Area except where adjacent to urban situations (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
Coast patch-nosed snake (<i>Salvadora hexalepis virgultea</i>) SSC	The coast patch-nosed snake prefers brushy coastal sage scrub/ chaparral habitats.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
BIRDS		
Cooper's hawk (<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	Cooper's hawk is most commonly found within or adjacent to riparian/oak forest and woodland habitats. This uncommon resident of California increases in numbers during winter migration.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Sharp-shinned hawk (<i>Accipiter striatus</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	For the purpose of the conservation analysis, potential habitat for the sharp-shinned hawk includes montane coniferous forest for potential breeding areas (none have been documented) and riparian scrub, woodland, and forest habitat, oak woodland and forest, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, desert scrub, and Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub for foraging. (MSHCP 2004)	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Tri-colored blackbird (<i>Agelaius tricolor</i>) ST/SSC MSHCP Covered Species	Marshes and grasslands. Breeding colonies require nearby water, nesting substrate, and open range foraging habitat of natural grassland, woodland, or agricultural cropland.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (<i>Aimophila ruficeps canescens</i>) CWL MSHCP Covered Species	Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow is a non-migratory bird species that primarily occurs within sage scrub and grassland habitats and to a lesser extent chaparral sub-associations (Unitt 2004). This species generally breeds on the ground within grassland and	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
	scrub communities in the western and central regions of California.	
Grasshopper sparrow (<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The grasshopper sparrow generally prefers moderately open grasslands and prairies with patchy bare ground (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Golden eagle (<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>) CWL, SFP MSHCP Covered Species	Within southern California, the species prefers grasslands, brushlands (coastal sage scrub and chaparral), deserts, oak savannas, open coniferous forests, and montane valleys (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Bell's sage sparrow (<i>Artemisiospiza belli belli</i>) CWL MSHCP Covered Species	Bell's sage sparrow is an uncommon to fairly common but localized resident breeder in dry chaparral and coastal sage scrub along the coastal lowlands, inland valleys, and in the lower foothills of local mountains (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Short-eared owl (<i>Asio otus</i>) SSC	Suitable habitats include salt- and freshwater marshes, irrigated alfalfa or grain fields, and ungrazed grasslands and old pastures. Tule marsh or tall grasslands with cover 30 to 50 cm in height can support nesting pairs.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Long-eared owl (<i>Asio otus</i>) SSC	Deciduous and evergreen forests, orchards, wooded parks, farm woodlots, river woods, desert oases. Wooded areas with dense vegetation needed for roosting and nesting, open areas for hunting. Often associated with deciduous woods near water.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
Burrowing owl (<i>Athene cunicularia</i>) SCE MSHCP Covered Species	The burrowing owl uses predominantly open land, including grassland, agriculture (e.g., dry-land farming and grazing areas), playa, and sparse coastal sage scrub and desert scrub habitats (Garrett and Dunn 1981). Some breeding burrowing owls are year-round residents and additional individuals from the north may winter throughout the MSHCP Area Plan (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites. No burrows were documented within the Project Sites of any size.
Ferruginous hawk (<i>Buteo regalis</i>) CWL MSHCP Covered Species	Range-wide, within California, ferruginous hawks winter in open terrain and grasslands of plains and foothills (Grinnell and Miller 1944). Within southern California, including the ferruginous hawks typically winter in open fields, grasslands, and agricultural areas.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Swainson's hawk (<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>) ST MSHCP Covered Species	Typical habitat is open desert, grassland, cropland with scattered, large trees or small groves. Breeds in stands with few trees in juniper-sage flats, riparian areas, and in oak savannah in the Central Valley. Forages in adjacent grassland or suitable grain or alfalfa fields or livestock pastures.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Vaux's swift (<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>) SSC	refers redwood and Douglas-fir habitats with nest-sites in large hollow trees and snags, especially tall, burned-out snags. Fairly common migrant throughout most of the state in April and May, and August and September.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
Northern harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>) SSC	The northern harrier frequents open wetlands, wet/lightly grazed pastures, fields, dry uplands/prairies, mesic grasslands, drained marshlands, croplands, meadows, grasslands, open rangelands, fresh and saltwater emergent wetlands.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Western yellow-billed cuckoo (<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>) FT/SE MSHCP Covered Species	Although the preferred habitat, riparian scrub and forest, is well distributed at scattered locations within the Plan Area in the Riverside Lowland Bioregions, the western yellow-billed cuckoo apparently no longer inhabits much of this habitat (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable riparian scrub, forest or woodland habitat was documented within or adjacent to the Project Sites.
White-tailed kite (<i>Elanus leucurus</i>) SFP MSHCP Covered Species	The white-tailed kite is found in riparian, oak woodlands adjacent to large open spaces including grasslands, wetlands, savannahs and agricultural fields. This non-migratory bird species occurs throughout the lower elevations of California and commonly nests in coast live oaks (Unitt 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Southwestern willow flycatcher (<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>) FE/SE MSHCP Covered Species	The southwestern willow flycatcher is narrowly distributed at few locations within the Plan Area. Although the preferred habitat, riparian woodland and select other forests, is well distributed within all bioregions and spread over the entire Plan Area, few current locations for the willow flycatcher have been documented (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable riparian scrub, forest or woodland habitat was documented within or adjacent to the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
California horned lark (<i>Eremophila alpestris actia</i>) SWL MSHCP Covered Species	Habitat for the California horned lark includes agriculture (field croplands), grassland, cismontane alkali marsh, playa and vernal pool habitat, Riversidean alluvial fan sage scrub, and coastal sage scrub (Garrett and Dunn 1988). It has been recorded in chaparral and riparian habitat - however these are not typical habitats used by the species.	<u>Moderate Potential</u> . May occasionally forage onsite in the disturbed habitat documented within Project Site 2.
Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>) CWL MSHCP Covered Species	The merlin has a sparse and widespread distribution throughout the MSHCP Plan Area within almost every habitat that occurs within the Plan Area. It occurs within the Plan Area as a transient in the spring and fall and may occasionally winter within the area. It does not require specific conditions or locations for nesting because it does not nest in the region. (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable habitat was documented onsite.
Prairie falcon (<i>Falco mexicanus</i>) CWL MSHCP Covered Species	Habitat use of the prairie falcon includes annual grasslands to alpine meadows. The prairie falcon is associated primarily with perennial grasslands, savannahs, rangeland, some agricultural fields during the winter season, and desert scrub areas, all typically dry environments of western North American where there are cliffs or bluffs for nest sites (MSHCP 2004)	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
American peregrine falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>) SFP MSHCP Covered Species	Throughout the species' range, peregrine falcons are found in a large variety of open habitats, including tundra, marshes, seacoasts, savannahs and high mountains (AOU 1998, MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Yellow-breasted chat (<i>Icteria virens</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The yellow-breasted chat is associated with riparian woodland and riparian scrub habitats (MSHCP 2004)	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable riparian scrub, forest or woodland habitat was documented within or adjacent to the Project Sites.
Loggerhead shrike (<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	Loggerhead shrike prefer open ground for foraging and thick trees and shrubs including sage scrub, chaparral, and desert scrub habitats for nesting.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Coastal California gnatcatcher (<i>Polioptila californica californica</i>) FT/SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The coastal California gnatcatcher is a non-migratory bird species that primarily occurs within sage scrub habitats in coastal southern California dominated by California sagebrush (<i>Artemisia californica</i>), and California buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Yellow warbler (<i>Setophaga petechia</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	Habitat characteristics of the yellow warbler are well known to include riparian scrub and forest and woodland (MSHCP 2004)	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable riparian scrub, forest or woodland habitat was documented within or adjacent to the Project Sites.
Least Bell's vireo (<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>) FE/SE MSHCP Covered Species	Least Bell's vireo resides in riparian habitats with a well-defined understory including southern willow scrub, mule fat, and riparian forest/woodland habitats.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable riparian scrub, forest or woodland habitat was documented within or adjacent to the Project Sites.
Yellow-headed blackbird (<i>Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus</i>) SSC	Prefers freshwater marshes habitat dominated by cattails and tule.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
MAMMALS		
Pallid bat <i>(Antrozous pallidus)</i> SSC	In California, the species as occurring in a variety of habitats, including coniferous forests, oak woodlands, brushy terrain, rocky canyons, open farmland, and desert. Roosts are selected on the basis of temperature/proximity to foraging habitat. They are generalists in their roosting requirements, using a variety of structures including rock crevices, tree hollows, mines/caves, structures.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Northwestern San Diego pocket mouse <i>(Chaetodipus fallax fallax)</i> SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The northwestern San Diego pocket mouse occurs throughout the Plan Area in coastal sage scrub (including Diegan and Riversidean upland sage scrubs and alluvial fan sage scrub), sage scrub/grassland ecotones, chaparral at all elevations up to 6,000 feet (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
San Bernardino kangaroo rat <i>(Dipodomys merriami parvus)</i> FE MSHCP Covered Species	Alluvial sage scrub on alluvial fans, flood plains, along washes, in adjacent upland areas, and in areas with historic braided stream channels; these habitats characterized by sand, loam, sandy loam, or gravelly soils. Prefers the more open early and intermediate phases of alluvial sage scrub, but mature sage scrub is important as refugia during floods.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
Stephens' kangaroo rat (<i>Dipodomys stephensi</i>) FE/ST MSHCP Covered Species	The Stephens' kangaroo rat is found almost exclusively in open grasslands or sparse shrublands with cover of less than 50 percent during the summer (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Western mastiff bat (<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i>) SSC	Western mastiff bats are found in a variety of biotic environments from low desert scrub to chaparral, oak woodland and ponderosa pine.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Western yellow bat (<i>Lasiurus xanthinus</i>) SSC	Although formerly associated only with the desert palm oasis in California (Bond, 1970), yellow bats appear to be expanding their range to the coast and northward, possibly as a result of the planting of ornamental palms.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (<i>Lepus californicus bennettii</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit in open habitats, primarily including grasslands, sage scrub, alluvial fan sage scrub, and Great Basin sage scrub.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Bobcat (<i>Lynx rufus</i>) MSHCP Covered Species	The bobcat requires large expanses of relatively undisturbed brushy and rocky habitats near springs or other perennial water sources.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Pocketed free-tailed bat (<i>Nyctinomops femorosaccus</i>) SSC	Usually associated with rugged canyons, high cliffs, and rock outcroppings. Roosts in rock crevices and caves during the day; may also roost in buildings or under roof tiles (Ziener et al. 1988-1990).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
Big free-tailed bat (<i>Nyctinomops macrotis</i>) SSC	Desert habitats. Roosts in rock crevices in cliffs	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Townsend's big-eared bat (<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>) SSC	A wide variety of habitats including woodlands and arid grasslands. Roosts in mines and caves.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Dulzura kangaroo rat (<i>Dipodomys simulans</i>) MSHCP Covered Species	The Dulzura kangaroo rat occurs throughout the Plan Area in coastal sage scrub habitats and alluvial fan sage scrub), sage scrub/grassland ecotones, chaparral, and desert scrubs at all elevations up to 2,600 feet (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
San Diego desert woodrat (<i>Neotoma lepida intermedia</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The San Diego desert woodrat is found throughout the Plan Area in sage scrub and chaparral wherever there are rock outcrops, boulders, cactus patches and dense undergrowth (MSHCP 2004).	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Los Angeles pocket mouse (<i>Perognathus longimembris brevinasus</i>) SSC MSHCP Covered Species	The Los Angeles pocket mouse appears to be limited to sparsely vegetated habitat areas in patches of fine sandy soils associated with washes or of aeolian (windblown) origin, such as dunes (MSHCP 2004)	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
American badger (<i>Taxidea taxus</i>) SSC	The American badger prefers friable soils in open grassland and scrub habitat in southern California.	<u>No Potential</u> . No suitable undisturbed vegetation or substrates (developed or decomposed granite) detected within the Project Sites.
Federal (USFWS) Protection and Classification FE – Federal Endangered FT – Federal Threatened FC – Federal Candidate for Listing		

Species Name (Scientific Name) Status	Habitat Description	Comments
State (CDFW) Protection and Classification SE – State Endangered SCE – State Candidate Endangered ST – State Threatened SSC – State Species of Special Concern CWL – California Watch List SPF – State Fully Protected		

Sources: Cadre Environmental 2025.

Critical habitat designations by the USFWS were researched to determine if any of the Project Sites are located within USFWS critical habitat. The Project Sites do not occur within a designated critical habitat for federally endangered or threatened species.

REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY/WILDLIFE MOVEMENT CORRIDORS

Overview

Wildlife corridors link areas of suitable habitat that are otherwise separated by rugged terrain, changes in vegetation, or human disturbance. The fragmentation of open space areas by urbanization creates isolated “islands” of wildlife habitat. In the absence of habitat linkages that allow movement to adjoining open space areas, various studies have concluded that some wildlife species, especially the larger and more mobile mammals, will not likely persist over time in fragmented or isolated habitat areas because they prohibit the infusion of new individuals and genetic information (MacArthur and Wilson 1967; Soule 1987; Harris and Gallagher 1989; Bennett 1990). Corridors effectively act as links between different populations of a species. A group of smaller populations (termed “demes”) linked together via a system of corridors is termed a “metapopulation.” The long-term health of each deme within the metapopulation is dependent upon its size and the frequency of interchange of individuals (immigration vs. emigration). The smaller the deme, the more important immigration becomes, because prolonged inbreeding with the same individuals can reduce genetic variability. Immigrant individuals that move into the deme from adjoining demes mate with individuals and supply that deme with new genes and gene combinations that increases overall genetic diversity. An increase in a population’s genetic variability is generally associated with an increase in a population’s health. Corridors mitigate the effects of habitat fragmentation by:

- (1) allowing animals to move between remaining habitats, which allows depleted populations to be replenished and promotes genetic diversity;
- (2) providing escape routes from fire, predators, and human disturbances, thus reducing the risk that catastrophic events (such as fires or disease) will result in population or local species extinction; and
- (3) serving as travel routes for individual animals as they move within their home ranges in search of food, water, mates, and other needs (Noss 1983; Fahrig and Merriam 1985; Simberloff and Cox 1987; Harris and Gallagher 1989).

Wildlife movement activities usually fall into one of three movement categories: (1) dispersal (e.g., juvenile animals from natal areas, individuals extending range distributions); (2) seasonal migration; and (3) movements related to home range activities

(foraging for food or water, defending territories, searching for mates, breeding areas, or cover). A number of terms have been used in various wildlife movement studies, such as “wildlife corridor”, “travel route”, “habitat linkage”, and “wildlife crossing” to refer to areas in which wildlife moves from one area to another. To clarify the meaning of these terms and facilitate the discussion on wildlife movement in this study, these terms are defined as follows:

Travel Route: A landscape feature (such as a ridge line, drainage, canyon, or riparian strip) within a larger natural habitat area that is used frequently by animals to facilitate movement and provide access to necessary resources (e.g., water, food, cover, den sites). The travel route is generally preferred because it provides the least amount of topographic resistance in moving from one area to another; it contains adequate food, water, and/or cover while moving between habitat areas; and provides a relatively direct link between target habitat areas.

Wildlife Corridor: A piece of habitat, usually linear in nature, that connects two or more habitat patches that would otherwise be fragmented or isolated from one another. Wildlife corridors are usually bounded by urban land areas or other areas unsuitable for wildlife. The corridor generally contains suitable cover, food, and/or water to support species and facilitate movement while in the corridor. Larger, landscape-level corridors (often referred to as “habitat or landscape linkages”) can provide both transitory and resident habitat for a variety of species.

Wildlife Crossing: A small, narrow area, relatively short in length and generally constricted in nature, that allows wildlife to pass under or through an obstacle or barrier that otherwise hinders or prevents movement. Crossings typically are manmade and include culverts, underpasses, drainage pipes, and tunnels to provide access across or under roads, highways, pipelines, or other physical obstacles. These are often “choke points” along a movement corridor.

Wildlife Movement within Project Sites

The Project Sites do not represent a regional or local wildlife movement corridor and provides no cover, food, natural unrestricted water courses or habitats that would facilitate regional wildlife movement onsite. The Project Sites are also not located within or adjacent to an MSHCP designated core, extension of existing core, non-contiguous habitat block, constrained linkage, or linkage area.

The Project Sites are bound by permanent fencing, development lands, and high traffic roads.

LOCAL MSHCP & GENERAL PLAN COMPLIANCE**Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
Compliance Analysis**

The proposed Project Sites are located completely within the MSHCP, which is a comprehensive multi-jurisdictional effort that includes western Riverside County and eighteen (18) cities including the County of Riverside. Rather than addressing sensitive species on an individual basis, the MSHCP focuses on conservation of 146 species, including those listed at the federal and state levels and those that could become listed in the future. The MSHCP proposed a reserve system of approximate 500,000 acres, of which 347,000 acres are currently within public ownership and 153,000 acres will need to be assembled from lands currently in private ownership. The MSHCP allows the County and other permittees to issue take permits for listed species so that applicants do not need to receive endangered species incidental take authorization from the USFWS and CDFW.

On June 7th, 2003, the County Board of Supervisors adopted the MSHCP, certified the Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement, and authorized the Chairman to sign the Implementing Agreement with the respective wildlife agencies.

Although the EMWD is not a permittee to the Western Riverside County MSHCP, the following section assesses the proposed project for compliance with the Plan.

MSHCP Reserve Design & Criteria Area Objectives

Regions of the MSHCP have been organized into Area Plans that generally coincide with logical political boundaries, including city limits or long-standing unincorporated communities. Regions of the MSHCP have been organized into Area Plans that generally coincide with logical political boundaries, including city limits or long-standing unincorporated communities. The Project Sites are located within the San Jacinto Valley Area Plan, which encompasses the San Jacinto and Hemet City limits and surrounding unincorporated communities. The San Jacinto Valley Area Plan has a target conservation acreage of 11,540 to 19,465 acres, of which 620 to 1,000 acres are intended to be within the City boundaries.

The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP Criteria Area Cell or Cell Group. Therefore, no Habitat Evaluation and Acquisition Negotiation Strategy (HANS) or Joint Project Review (JPR) are required.

MSHCP Sensitive Species Surveys

The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP Narrow Endemic Plant Survey Area; therefore, no surveys are required (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2025). The project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.1.3.

The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP Criteria Area Species Survey Area; therefore, no surveys are required (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2025). The project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.3.2.

The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP Amphibian Species Survey Area; therefore, no surveys are required (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2025). The project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.3.2.

The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP Mammal Species Survey Area; therefore, no surveys are required (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2025). The project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.3.2.

The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP Burrowing Owl Survey Area; therefore, no surveys are required (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2025). The project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.3.2.

MSHCP Riparian, Riverine, Vernal Pool Resources (Section 6.1.2)

Regulated activities within inland streams, wetlands and riparian areas in Western Riverside County California fall under the jurisdiction of the MSHCP. The MSHCP requires, among other things, assessments for riparian/riverine and vernal pool resources. As projects are proposed within the MSHCP Plan Area, an assessment of the potentially significant effects of those projects on riparian/riverine areas, and vernal pools are required, as currently mandated by CEQA, using available information augmented by project-specific mapping provided to and reviewed by the permittee's biologist(s). Riparian/riverine areas and vernal pools are defined for this section as follows in accordance with Section 6.1.2, Vol. I, of the Final MSHCP Plan:

“Riparian/Riverine Areas are lands which contain habitat dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, or emergent mosses and lichens, which occur close to or which depend upon soil moisture from a nearby fresh water source; or areas with fresh water flow during all or a portion of the year.” (MSHCP 2004)

It is assumed the first part of the definition defines riparian habitat, and the second part defines riverine areas. Vernal pools are defined as:

“...seasonal wetlands that occur in depression areas that have wetlands indicators of all three parameters (soils, vegetation and hydrology) during the wetter portion of the growing season but normally lack wetlands indicators of hydrology and/or vegetation during the drier portion of the growing season. Obligate hydrophytes and facultative wetlands plant species are normally dominant during the wetter portion of the growing season, while upland species (annuals) may be dominant during the drier portion of the growing season”. (MSHCP 2004)

No Section 6.1.2 riparian or riverine resources are located within the Project Sites. The project is consistent with MSHCP Section 6.1.2.

No evidence of vernal pools or other wetland features were recorded on the Project Sites. Vernal pools are depressions in areas where a hard-underground layer prevents rainwater from draining downward into the subsoils. When rain fills the pools in the winter and spring, the water collects and remains in the depressions. In the springtime, the water gradually evaporates away, until the pools became completely dry in the summer and fall. Vernal pools tend to have an impermeable layer that results in ponded water. The soil texture (the amount of sand, silt, and clay particles) typically contains higher amounts of fine silts and clays with lower percolation rates. Pools that retain water for a sufficient length of time will develop hydric cells. Hydric cells form when the soil is saturated from flooding for extended periods of time and anaerobic conditions (lacking oxygen or air) develop.

Consistent with conditions documented onsite and as previously stated, Project Site 1 is developed. Project Site 2 is characterized as disturbed, decomposed granite substrates, and soils characterized as Grangeville fine sandy loam drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes and Chino silt loam drained, saline-alkali - all possessing well drained substrates (drainage class). No indication of clay substrates or hydric soils were documented within Project Site 2. A review of historic aerials was conducted to determine if inundated features were present during years of high rainfall when features would certainly be documented. Historic aerials taken in 2011 and 2023 represent an ideal baseline during which known (previously documented) inundated vernal pools, seasonal depressions and road ruts can easily be seen. No sign or indication of inundation was documented within the Project Sites during a review of historic aerials. In summary, none of the conditions (i.e., no inundated depressions including road ruts, hydric soils, historic inundation, etc.) were observed or documented within the Project Sites. No vernal pool features or indicator plant species are present that would support fairy shrimp. No standing water or other sign of areas that pond water was recorded.

MSHCP Urban/Wildlands Interface Guidelines

The MSHCP Urban/Wildlands Interface guidelines presented in Section 6.1.4 are intended to address indirect effects associated with locating commercial, mixed uses and residential developments in proximity to a MSHCP Conservation Area. The Project Sites are not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area. The project is compliant with MSHCP Section 6.1.4.

MSHCP Fuels Management Guidelines

The fuels management guidelines presented in Section 6.4 of the MSHCP are intended to address brush management activities around new development within or adjacent to MSHCP Conservation Areas. The Project Sites are not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area. The project is compliant with MSHCP Section 6.4.

Stephens' Kangaroo Rat Fee

The Project Sites are located completely within the SKR HCP fee area which is administered by the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA). The project applicant will be required to pay SKR fees as a result of the proposed project.

Prior to issuance of a grading permit, a fee of \$500 per acre is due for all new development.

City of Hemet General Plan – Open Space and Conservation

As outlined below, the City of Hemet's General Open Space and Conservation (Chapter 7) Plan Goals and Policies for the preservation and protection of critical open space and natural resources have been incorporated into the project design and mitigation approach.

“OS-1.1 Development Proposals *Require development proposals to identify significant biological resources and to provide mitigation, including the use of adequate buffering and sensitive site planning techniques, selective preservation, provision of replacement habitats, and other appropriate measures as may be identified in habitat conservation plans or best practices related to particular resources.”* (City of Hemet 2012)

No significant biological resources are located within or adjacent to the Project Sites. The proposed action would not conflict with OS-1.0 Policies.

“OS-1.2 Vernal Pools *Preserve the integrity of the vernal pool complex by ensuring adequate hydration, providing appropriate conservation buffers, and the preservation of native plants, in accordance with the requirements of the MSHCP.”* (City of Hemet 2012)

No vernal pool resources are located within or adjacent to the Project Sites. The proposed action would not conflict with OS-1.2 Policies.

“OS-1.3 Wetland Habitats *Require project applicants to conserve wetland habitats along the San Jacinto River, the Upper Salt Creek watershed, and elsewhere as identified where conservation serves to maintain watershed processes that enhance water quality and contribute to the hydrologic regime, and comply with Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404. Identify and, to the maximum extent possible, conserve remaining upland habitat areas adjacent to wetland and riparian areas that are critical to the feeding, hibernation, or nesting of wildlife species associated with these wetland and riparian areas.”* (City of Hemet 2012)

No wetland resources are located within or adjacent to the Project Sites. The proposed action would not conflict with OS-1.3 Policies.

“OS-1.4 Resource Protection in Development Design *Require appropriate resource protection measures to be incorporated within specific plans and subsequent development proposals. Such requirements may include the preparation of a vegetation management program that addresses landscape maintenance, fuel modification zones, management of passive open space areas, provision of corridor connections for wildlife movement, conservation of water courses, rehabilitation of biological resources displaced in the planning process, and use of project design,*

engineering, and construction practices that minimize impacts on sensitive species, MSHCP conservation areas, and designated critical habitats.” (City of Hemet 2012)

No significant biological resources are located within or adjacent to the Project Sites. The proposed action would not conflict with OS-1.4 Polices.

“OS-1.5 Restriction of Use *As needed to protect resources, limit recreational use in open space areas where sensitive biological resources exist.” (City of Hemet 2012)*

No significant biological resources are located within or adjacent to the Project Sites. The proposed action would not conflict with OS-1.5 Polices.

“OS-1.6 Habitat Conservation Plans *Coordinate with Riverside County and other relevant agencies to implement the Western Riverside County MSHCP, the SKR HCP, and any other applicable habitat plan.” (City of Hemet 2012)*

As concluded in the previous section (Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Compliance Analysis), the proposed action would not conflict with the MSHCP guidelines or OS-1.6 Polices.

“OS-1.7 Wildlife Movement Corridor *Continue efforts to establish a wildlife movement corridor in areas such as the San Jacinto River corridor, Santa Rosa Hills, Lakeview Mountains, and the open space areas surrounding Diamond Valley Lake. As applicable, new development in these areas shall incorporate such corridors. To minimize impediments to riparian wildlife movement, new roadways over ravines, arroyos, and drainages shall maintain wildlife corridors by incorporating bridges or culverts, where practical.” (City of Hemet 2012)*

No local or regional wildlife movement corridors are located within or adjacent to the Project Sites. The proposed action would not conflict with OS-1.7 Polices.

“OS-1.8 Local Resource Preservation *Maintain and enhance the natural resources of the Santa Rosa Hills, Tres Cerritos Hills, Salt Creek, Bautista Canyon, San Jacinto River/Bautista Creek, Reinhardt Canyon, Lakeview Mountains, Diamond Valley Lake, and all other waterways, ecosystems, and critical vegetation to ensure the long-term viability of habitat, wildlife, and wildlife movement corridors.” (City of Hemet 2012)*

No significant biological resources are located within or adjacent to the Project Sites. The proposed action would not conflict with OS-1.8 Polices.

“OS-1.9 Partnerships *Support efforts of local, state, and federal agencies and private conservation organizations to preserve, protect, and enhance identified open spaces and natural resources.” (City of Hemet 2012)*

No significant natural or open space biological resources are located within or adjacent to the Project Sites. The proposed action would not conflict with OS-1.9 Policies.

FEDERAL

Federal Endangered Species Act

The MSHCP serves as an HCP pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the FESA of 1973, allowing participating jurisdictions to authorize "*take*" of plant and wildlife species. The MSHCP has been issued under this Section and provides incidental take for all covered species.

Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act, Section 401 provides guidance for the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. Section 401 requires a project operator to obtain a federal license or permit that allows activities resulting in a discharge to waters of the United States to obtain state certification, thereby ensuring that the discharge will comply with provisions of the CWA. The Regional Water Quality Control Board administers the certification program in California. Section 404 establishes a permit program administered by the USACE that regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. The USACE implementing regulations are found at 33 CFR 320 and 330. Guidelines for implementation are referred to as the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines, which were developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency in conjunction with the USACE (40 CFR 230). The guidelines allow the discharge of dredged or fill material into the aquatic system only if there is no practicable alternative that would have less adverse impacts.

Wetland Definition Pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

Aquatic resources, including riparian areas, wetlands, and certain aquatic vegetation communities, are considered sensitive biological resources and fall under the jurisdiction of several regulatory agencies. The USACE exerts jurisdiction over waters of the United States, including all waters that are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide; wetlands and other waters such as lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent or ephemeral streams), mudflats, sandflats, sloughs, prairie potholes, vernal pools, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds; and tributaries of the above features. The extent of waters of the United States is generally defined as the portion that falls within the limits of the Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM). The OHWM is defined as the "line on the shore established by the fluctuation of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as a clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas."

On April 21, 2020 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the USACE published the Navigable Waters Protection Rule to define "Waters of the United States" in the Federal Register. The April 2020 definition includes four simple categories of jurisdictional waters, including: (1) the territorial seas and traditional navigable waters; (2)

perennial and intermittent tributaries to those waters; (3) certain lakes, ponds and impoundments; and (4) wetlands adjacent to jurisdictional waters.

The April 2020 definition provides clear exclusions for many water features that traditionally have been regulated, such as ephemeral drainages. The April 2020 definition has been formally adopted by EPA and the USACE and was used for this Jurisdictional Delineation.

Wetlands, including swamps, bogs, seasonal wetlands, seeps, marshes, and similar areas, are defined by USACE as “those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions” (33 CFR 328.3[b]; 40 CFR 230.3[t]). Indicators of three wetland parameters (i.e., hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, and wetlands hydrology), as determined by field investigation, must be present for a site to be classified as a wetland by USACE (USACE 1987).

It is important to note that the RWQCB definition of wetland was redefined and the new definition went into effect May 28th, 2020. The definition of a wetland is as follows: An area is wetland if, under normal circumstances, (1) the area has continuous or recurrent saturation of the upper substrate caused by groundwater, or shallow surface water, or both; (2) the duration of such saturation is sufficient to cause anaerobic conditions in the upper substrate; and (3) the area’s vegetation is dominated by hydrophytes or the area lacks vegetation. This RWQCB modified three-parameter definition is similar to the federal definition in that it identifies three wetland characteristics that determine the presence of a wetland: wetland hydrology, hydric soils, and hydrophytic vegetation. Unlike the federal definition, however, the RWQCB wetland definition allows for the presence of hydric substrates as a criterion for wetland identification (not just wetland soils) and wetland hydrology for an area devoid of vegetation (less than 5% cover) to be considered a wetland.

However, if any vegetation is present, then the USACE delineation procedures would apply to the vegetated component (i.e., hydrophytes must dominate). Examples of waters that would be considered wetlands by the RWQCB definition, but not by the federal wetland definition, are non-vegetated wetlands, or wetlands characterized by exposed bare substrates like mudflats and playas, as long as they meet the three-parameters as described in the RWQCB definition. It is important to note that while the USACE may not designate a feature as a wetland, that feature could be considered a special aquatic site or other water of the U.S. by the USACE and potentially subject to USACE jurisdiction.

Migratory Bird Treaty and Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Acts

Migratory birds including resident raptors and passerines are protected under the federal MBTA. The MBTA of 1918 implemented the 1916 convention between the United States and Great Britain for the protection of birds migrating between the U.S. and Canada. Similar conventions between the United States and Mexico (1936), Japan (1972) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (1976) further expanded the scope of international protection of migratory birds. Each new treaty has been incorporated into the MBTA as an amendment and the provisions of the new treaty are implemented domestically. These

four treaties and their enabling legislation, the MBTA, established Federal responsibilities for the protection of nearly all species of birds, their eggs and nests. The MBTA made it illegal for people to "take" migratory birds, their eggs, feathers or nests. Take is defined in the MBTA to include by any means or in any manner, any attempt at hunting, pursuing, wounding, killing, possessing or transporting any migratory bird, nest, egg, or part thereof. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act affords additional protection to all bald and golden eagles.

STATE

California Endangered Species Act

The CESA is similar to FESA in that it contains a process for listing of species regulating potential impacts to listed species. Section 2081 of the CESA authorizes the CDFW to enter into a memorandum of agreement for take of listed species for scientific, educational, or management purposes. The MSHCP serves as an HCP pursuant the Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP) under the NCCP Act of 2001, allowing participating jurisdictions to authorize "Take" of plant and wildlife species. As stated by CDFW:

"On June 22, 2004, the Department issued NCCP Approval and Take Authorization for the Western Riverside County MSCHP per Section 2800 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code. The MSHCP establishes a multiple species conservation program to minimize and mitigate habitat loss and the incidental take of covered species in association with activities covered under the permit." (CDFG 2004)

California Fish and Game Code 3503 and 3513

As stated by CDFW:

"CHAPTER 1. General Provisions [3500 - 3516] (Chapter 1 enacted by Stats. 1957, Ch. 456.) It is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto. (Amended by Stats. 1971, Ch. 1470.)"

Native Plant Protection Act

The Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) enacted a process by which plants are listed as rare or endangered. The NPPA regulates collection, transport, and commerce in plants that are listed. The CESA follows the NPPA and covers both plants and wildlife determined to be threatened with extinction or endangered. Plants listed as rare under the NPPA are designated as threatened under the CESA.

Regional Water Quality Control Board

The RWQCB also has jurisdiction over waters deemed "isolated" or not subject to Section 404 jurisdiction under the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. Corps

decision. Dredging, filling, or excavation of isolated waters constitutes a discharge of waste to waters of the state and prospective dischargers are required to obtain authorization through an Order of Waste Discharge or waiver thereof from the RWQCB and comply with other requirements of Porter-Cologne Act.

Under Section 401 of the CWA, the local RWQCB must certify that actions receiving authorization under Section 404 of the CWA also meet state water quality standards. The RWQCB requires projects to avoid impacts to wetlands if feasible and requires that projects do not result in a net loss of wetland acreage or a net loss of wetland function and values. Compensatory mitigation for impacts to wetlands and/or waters of the state is required.

CDFW Streambed Alteration Agreement

Waters of the State are regulated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) through Section 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code. Section 1600 et seq. requires notifying the CDFW prior to any project activity that might (1) substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream, or lake; (2) substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake; or (3) deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake. If, after this notification, the CDFW determines that the activity may substantially adversely affect fish and wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will need to be obtained. CDFW may then place conditions in the Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any potentially significant adverse impacts within CDFW jurisdictional limits.

The limits of Waters of the State are defined as the “body of water that flows at least periodically or intermittently through a bed or channel having banks and supports fish or other aquatic life. This includes watercourses having surface or subsurface flow that supports or has supported riparian vegetation.” Therefore, the limits extend from the channel bed to the top of the bank, with the addition of the canopy of any riparian habitat associated with the watercourse.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The following section includes an analysis of the direct and/or indirect impacts of the proposed action on sensitive biological resources. This analysis characterizes the project related activities that are anticipated to adversely impact the species, and when feasible, quantifies such impacts. Direct effects are defined as actions that may cause an immediate effect on the species or its habitat, including the effects of interrelated actions and interdependent actions. Indirect effects are caused by or result from the proposed actions, are later in time, and are reasonably certain to occur. Indirect effects may occur outside of the area directly affected by the proposed action.

Cumulative impacts refer to incremental, individual environmental effects of two or more projects when considered together. These impacts taken individually may be minor but may be collectively significant. Cumulative effects include future tribal, local, or private

actions that are reasonably certain to occur in the proposal vicinity considered in this report. A cumulative impact to biological resources may occur if a project has the potential to collectively degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of wildlife species or cause a population to drop below self-sustaining levels, thereby threatening to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal species.

THRESHOLD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The environmental impacts relative to biological resources are assessed using impact significance criteria which mirror the policy statement contained in the CEQA at Section 21001 (c) of the Public Resources Code. This section reflects that the legislature has established it to be the policy of the state to:

“Prevent the elimination of fish and wildlife species due to man’s activities, ensure that fish and wildlife populations do not drop below self-perpetuating levels, and preserve for future generations representations of all plant and animal communities...”

The following definitions apply to the significance criteria for biological resources:

- “*Endangered*” means that the species is listed as endangered under state or federal law.
- “*Threatened*” means that the species is listed as threatened under state or federal law.
- “*Rare*” means that the species exists in such small numbers throughout all or a significant portion of its range that it may become endangered if its environment worsens.
- “*Region*” refers to the area within southern California that is within the range of the individual species.
- “*Sensitive habitat*” refers to habitat for plants and animals (1) which plays a special role in perpetuating species utilizing the habitat on the property, and (2) without which there would be substantial danger that the population of that species would drop below self-perpetuating levels.
- “*Substantial effect*” means significance loss or harm of a magnitude which, based on current scientific data and knowledge, (1) would cause a species or a native plant or animal community to drop below self-perpetuating levels on a statewide or regional basis or (2) would cause a species to become threatened or endangered.

Impacts to biological resources may result in a significant adverse impact if one or more of the following conditions would result from implementation of the proposed project.

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modification, on any endangered, or threatened species, as listed in Title 14 of the California Code of

Regulations (Sections 670.2 or 670.5) or Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (Sections 17.11 or 17.12).

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modification, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS, and meets the definition of Section 15380 (b), (c), or (d) of the CEQA Guidelines.
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS.
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the CWA (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish and wildlife species or with established native resident migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native nursery sites.
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state conservation plan.

Also, the determination of impacts has been made according to the federal definition of “take”. The federal FESA prohibits the “taking” of a member of an endangered or threatened wildlife species or removing, damaging, or destroying a listed plant species by any person (including private individuals and private or government entities). The FESA defines “take” as “to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, would, kill, trap, capture or collect” an endangered or threatened species, or to attempt to engage in these activities. Specifically, the biological resources assessment report addresses the following CEQA Environmental Checklist items.

Environmental Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant Impact	No Impact
Would the Project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modification, 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?			X	
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				X
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?				X
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?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?				X
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Native Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?				X

DIRECT IMPACTS

- 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 CDFW or USFWS?*

Sensitive Plants

Although the EMWD is not a permittee to the Western Riverside County MSHCP, the report assesses the proposed project for compliance with the Plan. The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP Narrow Endemic or Criteria Area Species Plant Survey Areas (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2025). As concluded in the section (Western Riverside

County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Compliance Analysis), the proposed action would not conflict with the MSHCP guidelines No Impact.

No state or federally listed/proposed threatened or endangered plant species were documented or expected to occur within the Project Sites based on the developed condition of Project Site 1 and disturbed condition (decomposed granite substrates) and lack of suitable habitat on Project Site 2, as outlined in Table 2, *Sensitive Plant Species with Potential to Occur Onsite*. No suitable habitat was documented within the Project Sites for special-status plants, as outlined in Table 2, *Sensitive Plant Species with Potential to Occur Onsite*. No Impact.

Sensitive Wildlife

Although the EMWD is not a permittee to the Western Riverside County MSHCP, the report assesses the proposed project for compliance with the Plan. The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP Amphibian, Mammal or Burrowing Owl Survey Area (RCA GIS Data Downloads 2025). As concluded in the section (Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Compliance Analysis), the proposed action would not conflict with the MSHCP guidelines No Impact.
No Impact.

No state or federally listed/proposed threatened or endangered wildlife species were documented or expected to occur within the Project Sites based on the developed condition of Project Site 1 and disturbed condition (decomposed granite substrates) and lack of suitable habitat on Project Site 2, as outlined in Table 3, *Sensitive Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur Onsite*. No Impact.

Moderate potential habitat was documented onsite for one (1) sensitive species including California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*), as outlined in Table 3, *Sensitive Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur Onsite*. Impacts to 1.24-acre of potential foraging habitat characterized as disturbed habitat would represent a less than significant impact. Impacts to 1.24-acre of potential nesting habitat characterized as disturbed habitat would represent a less than significant impact following implantation of **BIO-CM1** Nesting Bird Preconstruction Surveys.

The Project Sites are located completely within the SKR HCP fee area which is administered by the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA). The project applicant will be required to pay SKR fees as a result of the proposed project. Prior to issuance of a grading permit, a fee of \$500 per acre is due for all new development. No Impact.

- b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS?*

A total of 2.45-acres of disturbed habitat and developed property will occur as a result of the proposed project, as summarized in Table 4, *Vegetation Community Impacts*, and illustrated on Figure 9, *Vegetation Communities Impact Map*. No impacts to riparian to sensitive communities would occur as a result of the proposed project. No Impact.



Figure 9 - Vegetation Communities Impact Map

Biological Resources Technical Report

Eastern Municipal Water District Cawston Lift Station Replacement



1 inch = 100 feet

Table 4.
Project Site Vegetation Community Impacts

Vegetation Type	Project Site 1 (acres)	Project Site 2 (acres)	TOTAL Acres	TOTAL Impact Acres
Disturbed	--	1.24	1.24	1.24
Developed	0.21	--	0.21	0.21
TOTAL	0.21	1.24	1.45	1.45

Source: Cadre Environmental 2025.

- c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the CWA (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*

No wetlands are located within the Project Sites. No Impact.

- 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 Project Sites do not represent a regional wildlife movement corridor and provides no cover, food, natural unrestricted water courses or habitats that would facilitate regional wildlife movement onsite. The Project Sites are not located within an MSHCP designated core, extension of existing core, non-contiguous habitat block, constrained linkage, or linkage area. No Impact.

The Project Sites and adjacent habitats possess resources expected to potentially provide nesting habitat for nesting birds protected under the MBTA and CDFG Code Section 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. Measures for potential direct/indirect impacts to nesting bird species will require compliance with the MBTA and CDFG Code Section 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. Construction activities conducted outside the nesting season (between September 1st and January 31st) does not require preconstruction nesting bird surveys. However, if construction activities are proposed between February 1st and August 31st, a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction nesting bird and raptor survey(s) no more than three (3) days prior to initiation of grading to document the presence or absence of nesting birds within or directly adjacent to the Project Sites. Loss of an active nest would be considered a potentially significant impact. Impacts to nesting birds would be reduced to less than significant with the implementation of the following Conservation Measure (**BIO-CM1**: Nesting Bird Preconstruction Surveys). Less than Significant Impact.

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

No trees meeting the City of Hemet tree removal ordinance as outlined in Municipal Code Article IV, Care and Maintenance of Street Trees are located within or adjacent to the Project Sites. No impact.

- f) *Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Native Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?*

As concluded in the section (Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Compliance Analysis), the proposed action would not conflict with the MSHCP guidelines. No Impact.

A detailed summary of MSHCP compliance is presented in the Regional and Regulatory Setting/Local/Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Compliance Analysis section of the report.

INDIRECT IMPACTS

MSHCP Urban/Wildlands Interface Guidelines

Although the EMWD is not a permittee to the Western Riverside County MSHCP, the report assesses the proposed project for compliance with the Plan. Specifically, the MSHCP Urban/Wildlands Interface guidelines presented in Section 6.1.4 are intended to address indirect effects associated with locating commercial, mixed uses and residential developments in proximity to a MSHCP Conservation Area. The Project Sites are not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area. The project is compliant with MSHCP Section 6.1.4.

Water Quality/Hydrology

The project will comply with all applicable water quality regulations, including obtaining and complying with those conditions established in (WDRs) and a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits (NO. CAS000002). Both of these permits include the treatment of all surface runoff from paved and developed areas, the implementation of applicable Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction activities and the installation and proper maintenance of structural BMPs to ensure adequate treatment of water before exiting the Project Sites. No significant impacts are anticipated.

Toxics

The project will comply with all applicable water quality regulations, including obtaining and complying with those conditions established in (WDRs) and a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits (NO. CAS000002). Both of these permits include the treatment of all surface runoff from paved and developed areas, the implementation of applicable Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction activities and the installation and proper maintenance of structural BMPs to ensure adequate treatment of water before exiting the Project Sites. No significant impacts are anticipated.

Lighting

The Project Sites are not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area or sensitive biological receptor. No Impact.

Noise

The Project Sites are not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area or sensitive biological receptor. No Impact.

Invasive Species

The Project Sites are not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area or sensitive biological receptor. No Impact.

Barriers

The Project Sites are not located adjacent to an existing or proposed MSHCP Conservation Area or sensitive biological receptor. No Impact.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The direct and/or indirect impacts of the project would not result in significant cumulative impacts (CEQA Section 15310) to environmental resources within the region of the Project Sites. Cumulative impacts refer to incremental effects of an individual project when assessed with the effects of past, current, and proposed projects. The Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) Lift Station project represents the development of 1.45 acre of developed and disturbed habitats surrounded by high traffic roads/development, and therefore will not result in an adverse cumulative impact to sensitive resources. Impacts related to buildout of the City of Hemet are anticipated to be less than significant if projects comply with the City of Hemet's General Plan policies principles/actions. Following implementation of the following conservation measure, the proposed action would not conflict with the general plan policies for the protection of sensitive resources.

CONSERVATION MEASURE

The following biological conservation measure addresses those adverse impacts determined to be potentially significant or are relevant to the protection of biological resources to the extent practicable as part of ensuring compliance and consistency with all MSHCP conservation goals and CEQA guidelines.

BIO-CM1 Nesting Bird Preconstruction Surveys

Regulatory requirement for potential direct/indirect impacts to nesting bird species will require compliance with the MBTA and CDFG Code Section 3503, 3503.5, and 3513. Construction activities conducted outside the nesting season (between September 1st and January 31st) do not require pre-removal nesting bird surveys. If construction activities are proposed between February 1st and August 31st, a qualified biologist will conduct a preconstruction nesting bird survey no more than three (3) days prior to initiation of grading to document the presence or absence of nesting birds within or directly adjacent to the Project Sites.

The survey(s) will focus on identifying any bird nests that would be directly or indirectly affected by construction activities. If active nests are documented, species-specific measures will be prepared by a qualified biologist and implemented to prevent abandonment of the active nest. At a minimum, grading in the vicinity of a nest will be postponed until the young birds have fledged. The perimeter of the nest setback zone will be fenced or adequately demarcated with stakes and flagging at 20-foot intervals, and construction personnel and activities restricted from the area. A survey report by a qualified biologist verifying that no active nests are present, or that the young have fledged, will be submitted to the City of Hemet for review and approval prior to initiation of grading in the nest-setback zone. The qualified biologist will serve as a construction monitor during those periods when construction activities occur near active nest areas to ensure that no inadvertent impacts on these nests occur. A final monitoring report of the findings, prepared by a qualified biologist, will be submitted to the City of Hemet documenting compliance with the CDFG Code. Any nest permanently vacated for the season would not warrant protection pursuant to the CDFG Code.

Implementation of Conservation Measure **BIO-CM1** would reduce all potential significant unavoidable impacts on biological resources below a level of significance and ensure compliance with MSHCP and CEQA conservation requirements.

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Certification "I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached exhibits present the data and information required for this biological evaluation, and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge."

Author: _____ Date: _____

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APPENDIX B: CULTURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT [CONFIDENTIAL]