

Chapter 2 Affected Environment, Environmental Consequences, and Avoidance, Minimization, and/ or Mitigation Measures

This chapter describes the current environmental setting in the study area and identifies the potential impacts of implementing the proposed project. The discussion for each environmental topic discussed below will describe the present conditions, discuss the potential impacts of building the proposed project, and indicate which measures would be taken to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate those impacts. Only mitigation measures within this document have been identified by number. Therefore, the remaining measures, consisting of avoidance and/or minimization measures have not been numbered. To achieve the project purpose and need and avoid or minimize environmental impacts, two Build Alternatives (Alternatives 1 and 2) and the No Build Alternative are being evaluated. Per Section 15126.4 of the CEQA Guidelines the Department is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the measures identified within Environmental Commitments Record (Appendix B).

The environmental analysis contained within the following chapter considers the potential environmental consequences associated with implementation of the proposed project. The environmental impact analysis discusses potential impacts in four general categories: human environment, physical environment, biological environment, and cumulative impacts. As part of the scoping and environmental analysis conducted for the project, the following environmental issues were considered, but no adverse impacts were identified: coastal zone, wild and scenic river areas, and farmlands/timberlands. There is no further discussion regarding these issues in this document. Because the project is not located within the Coastal Zone, no discussion of this topic is included. Furthermore, discussion regarding the topics of wild and scenic rivers and farmland/timberlands was not included within this document due to the absence of these resources in the project area.

The Department has not adopted thresholds of significance pursuant to CEQA. As a statewide agency covering diverse geographic areas, the Department has, as a matter of policy, left the determination of significance to District PDT. As such, the District 12 PDT has made the significance determination as shown at the end of each topical section under the heading “Level of Significance.” The use of the term “thresholds of significance” is not used for projects on the State Highway System (SHS).