



# **Final Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration**

## **Booster Station 5513W/5514 Improvements and Reservoir 5514-2 Construction**

**State Clearinghouse # 2021090582**

**Prepared by:**  
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## ACRONYM LIST

Acronym	Term
AB	Assembly Bill
APE	Area of Potential Effects
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
BMP	Best Management Practice
BS	Booster Station
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CDOC	California Department of Conservation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGS	California Geological Survey
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CO	Carbon monoxide
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon dioxide
CVAG	Coachella Valley Association of Governments
CVMSHCP/NCCP	Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan
CVWD	Coachella Valley Water District
dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibel
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
gpm	gallons per minute
GWP	Global Warming Potential
IS	Initial Study
kWh	Kilowatt-hours
LST	Localized Significance Threshold
MG	million gallons
MHI	median household income
MTCO <sub>2</sub> e	Metric Tons Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
n.d.	No date
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PM	Particulate matter
PRC	Public Resources Code
RCTC	Riverside County Transportation Commission
ROG	Reactive organic gases
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCADA	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition



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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Purpose of this Document**

Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) has prepared this Initial Study (IS) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts related to implementation of the Booster Station (BS) 5513W/5514 Improvements and Reservoir 5514-2 Construction Project (the “proposed project”). The purpose of the project is to improve the domestic water system which serves CVWD’s Cove Community system within the city of Rancho Mirage. The proposed project alleviates water storage deficiencies within the CVWD system by increasing water storage capacity and improving associated infrastructure reliability and efficiency.

The project proposes the placement of a new, above-ground water storage tank (Reservoir 5514-2) to be located on the existing CVWD Reservoir 5514 site. The placement of Reservoir 5514-2 at Site 5514 requires the relocation of the existing Site 5514 booster pump station (BS 5514) to Site 5513 due to site constraints; the relocated booster station would be known as BS 5513-W. To further support improvements, the existing motor control center located at Site 5513 (BS 5513) would be replaced to accommodate both the existing booster station and new booster station 5513-W. In addition, approximately 600-feet of pipeline would be replaced in the roadway to tie the new BS 5513-W into the existing water distribution system that serves the old BS 5514 pressure zone.

CVWD is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed project. CEQA requires that the lead agency prepare an IS to determine whether an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), Negative Declaration (ND), or Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is needed. CVWD has prepared this IS to evaluate the potential environmental consequences associated with the proposed project, and to disclose to the public and decision makers the potential environmental effects of the proposed project. Based on the analysis presented herein, an MND is the appropriate level of environmental documentation for the proposed project.

### **1.2 Scope of this Document**

This IS/MND has been prepared in accordance with CEQA (as amended) (Public Resources Code sections 21000 et. seq.), the 2021 State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, sections 15000 et. seq.), and CVWD’s Local CEQA Guidelines (CVWD 2020). 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 2021 State CEQA Guidelines. This IS/MND contains all 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 2021 State CEQA Guidelines. 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

The proposed project may receive funding from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF), which is administered by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) via funds from US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA). Therefore, to support compliance with the federal environmental review requirements of these funding programs, this document includes analysis pertinent to several federal regulations (also referred to as federal crosscutters or CEQA-Plus). The intent of CEQA-Plus is to comply with the US EPA's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review requirements and ensure consistency with federal regulations. Guidelines for complying with cross-cutting federal authorities can be found in the DWSRF regulations at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) section 35.3575.

The federal crosscutters analyzed in this document include:

- Environmental Alternative Analysis
- Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act
- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
- Clean Air Act
- Coastal Barriers Resources Act
- Coastal Zone Management Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Environmental Justice
- Farmland Protection Policy Act
- Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act
- Floodplain Management: Executive Orders 11988, 12148, and 13690
- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
- Marine Mammal Protection Act
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- National Historic Preservation Act, Historic Sites Act
- Protection of Wetlands
- Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 10
- Safe Drinking Water Act, Sole Source Aquifer Protection
- Wild and Scenic Rivers Act
- Wilderness Act

### **1.3 California Environmental Quality Act Public Review Process**

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines section 15073, this IS/MND was circulated for public review. The public review period lasted for the statutory 30-day review period (September 29, 2021 – October 29, 2021) and provided opportunity to review and provide written comment concerning the environmental effects of the project being considered within the document.

CVWD circulated the IS/MND to the State Clearinghouse for distribution to state agencies. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15072, a Notice of Intent to Adopt the IS/MND was provided to the public, other responsible agencies, and trustee agencies, and to the Riverside County Clerk.

A copy of the Draft IS/MND was available for review at: [www.cvwd.org](http://www.cvwd.org).

Written comments were to be submitted to CVWD by 5 p.m. on October 29, 2021, and addressed to:

William Patterson, Environmental Supervisor  
Coachella Valley Water District  
75515 Hovley Lane East  
Palm Desert, CA 92211

Or emailed to: [Wpatterson@cvwd.org](mailto:Wpatterson@cvwd.org)

Following the 30-day public review period, CVWD evaluated any written comments received on the Draft IS/MND and incorporated any revision which has substantial evidence that the proposed project could have a significant impact on the environment into the Final IS/MND. CVWD also prepared a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) to be adopted along with the Final IS/MND. This MMRP has been included here as Section 1.6. As stated in Section 1.4, no public comments were received.

CVWD's Board of Directors will consider adopting the Final IS/MND and MMRP in compliance with CEQA at a publicly noticed meeting, planned for December 7, 2021.

### **1.4 Public Comments**

This IS/MND was available for public review from September 29 – October 29, 2021. No comments were received on the document. Therefore, no revisions have been made in response to comments.

### **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 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.

## 1.6 Environmental Impact and Mitigation Summary

### Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

CEQA requires that when a lead agency adopts a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), it shall prepare a monitoring or reporting program for all required mitigation measures (CEQA Guidelines Section 15097). This Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) describes the monitoring and reporting program for mitigation measures adopted by Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) to avoid or substantially reduce impacts related to the *Booster Station 5513W/5514 Improvements and Reservoir 5514-2 Construction Project* to less than significant levels. CVWD and its contractors are required to implement the adopted mitigation measures for the proposed project in accordance with the MND. This MMRP contains a checklist and description of all adopted mitigation measures, including the responsible parties, timing, and completion criteria.

### Program Administration

The MMRP shall be administered by CVWD. Mitigation measures shall be incorporated into design and construction contracts, as appropriate, to ensure full implementation. The MMRP shall be maintained by the designated CVWD Project Manager and be available for inspection upon request at CVWD offices.

### Mitigation Monitoring Requirements

Table 1-1 provides a summary of mitigation measures by resource area. Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines sections 15097 and 15126.4, the following mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project design and would be implemented before or during construction in accordance with the project; thereby, reducing all identified potential environmental impacts to a less than significant level.

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The table does not include impacts or criteria that were deemed No Impact or Less than Significant due to actions associated with the proposed project; rather, the table focuses on potentially significant impacts and associated mitigation measures to reduce the impacts to less than significant.

**Table 1-1: Booster Station 5513W/5514 Improvements and Reservoir 5514-2 Construction Project - Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program**

Mitigation Measure	Monitoring and Reporting Actions	Implementation Schedule	Monitoring Frequency	Responsible Party	Review and Approval by:	Verification: Status/ Date Completed/ Initials
<p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Nesting Birds</b></p> <p>If construction occurs within the bird breeding season (typically January 1 to September 15 to account for both passerines and raptors), then no more than 1 week prior to initiation of ground disturbance and/or vegetation removal, a nesting bird and raptor pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within the disturbance footprint plus a 100-foot buffer (500 feet for raptors), where feasible. If the proposed project is phased or construction activities stop for more than one week, a subsequent pre-construction nesting bird and raptor survey will be required prior to each phase of construction.</p> <p>Pre-construction nesting bird and raptor surveys shall be conducted during the time of day when birds are active and shall factor in sufficient time to perform this survey adequately and completely. A summary of results of the nesting bird and raptor survey results shall be submitted to the lead agency for review and approval prior to ground and/or vegetation disturbance activities.</p> <p>If nests are found, their locations shall be flagged. An appropriate avoidance buffer ranging in size from 25 to 50 feet for passerines, and up to 500 feet for raptors. These avoidance buffers shall be determined based upon the species and the proposed work activity. The avoidance buffers shall be determined and demarcated by a qualified biologist with exclusion construction fencing or other suitable flagging. Active nests shall be monitored until it has been determined that the nest is no longer being used by either the young or adults. No ground disturbance shall occur within this buffer until the qualified biologist confirms that the breeding/nesting is complete and all the young have fledged. If no nesting birds are observed during pre-construction surveys, no further actions would be necessary.</p>	<p>1. Include measure in contract documents.</p> <p>2. Avoid construction activities between January 1 and September 15.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>3. Confirm a qualified biologist conducted pre-construction nesting bird and raptor surveys and submitted a report of survey results within the appropriate time frame, and established a no-work buffer zone, as appropriate.</p> <p>4. Confirm construction is avoided in the no-work buffer zone until biologist determines that the nest is inactive.</p>	<p>1. Contracting</p> <p>2. Construction</p> <p>OR</p> <p>3. Pre-construction</p> <p>4. Construction</p>	<p>1. Once</p> <p>2. Once</p> <p>OR</p> <p>3. Once, within 1 week prior to construction, or if construction re-starts</p> <p>4. Continuously throughout construction, if applicable</p>	<p>1. CVWD</p> <p>2. Construction Contractor</p> <p>OR</p> <p>3. CVWD, Construction Contractor</p> <p>4. Construction Contractor</p>	<p>CVWD</p>	<p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>OR</p> <p>3. _____</p> <p>4. _____</p>
<p><b>Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Compliance with CVMSHCP/NCCP the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan's Land Use Adjacency Guidelines</b></p> <p>CVWD shall demonstrate compliance with the CVMSHCP/NCCP Section 4.5 Land Use Adjacency Guidelines by implementing the following measures prior to final design and/or for inclusion in the contractor specifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Drainage: Alterations to site drainage or runoff quality shall not alter quantity or quality of drainage.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Design plans shall maintain existing site drainage patterns that would result in similar quantities and locations as existing site runoff.</li> <li>○ The Contractor shall not introduce toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials, or other elements that would be allowed to enter site runoff.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Toxics: The proposed project shall not release toxins into the environment such they could affect the nearby Conservation Area.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Contractor shall not use chemicals or generate bioproducts on-site that would be discharged to or have the potential to be released to the adjacent Conservation Area.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Lighting: The proposed project shall not result in a substantial increase in direct or unshielded lighting within the Conservation Area.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Site lighting shall be selected to be down facing, shielded, and use warm toned light.</li> <li>○ Site lighting shall be located at points screened from or facing away from the Conservation Area to the maximum extent feasible. If not feasible, landscape screening shall be implemented where Conservation Area ambient light levels are substantially increased as a result of the new site lighting.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Noise: Sustained hourly construction noise levels over 75 dBA Leq at the edge of the Conservation Area shall be avoided.</i></li> </ul>	<p>1. Include measure in contract documents.</p> <p>2. Confirm the Section 4.5 Land Use Adjacency Guidelines measures are implemented and/or included in the contractor specifications</p> <p>3. Confirm Construction Contractor follows Section 4.5 Land Use Adjacency Guidelines measures</p>	<p>1. Contracting</p> <p>2. Pre-Construction</p> <p>3. Construction</p>	<p>1. Once</p> <p>2. Once, prior to final design and/or final contractor specifications</p> <p>3. Periodically throughout construction</p>	<p>1. CVWD</p> <p>2. CVWD, Construction Contractor</p> <p>3. Construction Contractor</p>	<p>CVWD</p>	<p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p>

Mitigation Measure	Monitoring and Reporting Actions	Implementation Schedule	Monitoring Frequency	Responsible Party	Review and Approval by:	Verification: Status/ Date Completed/ Initials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CVWD shall review the contractor's schedule, and work with the contractor to identify when construction activities could result in levels of noise of 75 dBA Leq or greater (measured at the boundary of the Conservation Area) that would be sustained for durations greater than one hour.</li> <li>○ If sustained noise levels are anticipated, the contractor shall implement noise control measures to help attenuate sound. Potential measures consistent with the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines may include but are not limited to setbacks, berms, sound walls, or other physical barriers to help attenuate sound.</li> <li>● <i>Invasives: Introduction of prohibited species listed on Table 4-113 of the CVMSHCP/NCCP shall be prohibited and native species from Table 4-112 of the implementation measures shall be selected for site vegetation.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Design plans shall incorporate native species as listed in Table 4-112 of the CVMSHCP/NCCP and shall avoid use of any invasive species listed on Table 4-113.</li> <li>○ The Contractor shall certify all equipment has been cleaned and is clear of foreign soils that potentially contain invasive species that could be introduced on site.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <i>Barriers: Removal of existing barriers separating the project area and the Conservation Area shall be avoided.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Contractor shall refrain from modifying any access to the Conservation Area. All fencing into a conservation area shall be avoided throughout construction and project implementation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <i>Grading/Land Development: Extend slopes associated with development into the adjacent Conservation Area shall be prohibited.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Contactor shall be responsible for site grading, which shall not extend slopes beyond the project site or into the Conservation Area.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>						
<p><b>Mitigation Measure HAZ-1: Hazardous Materials Management and Spill Control Plan</b></p> <p>Prior to site mobilization, the construction contractor is required to submit to CVWD a Hazardous Materials Management Spill Control Plan that includes a project-specific contingency plan for hazardous materials and waste operations. CVWD will review and approve the plan. The plan shall be applicable to construction activities and shall establish policies and procedures according to applicable codes and regulations, including but not limited to the California Building and Fire Codes, and federal and California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations. Elements of the Plan shall include, but not be limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A discussion of hazardous materials management, including delineation of hazardous material storage areas, access and egress routes, waterways, emergency assembly areas, and temporary hazardous waste storage areas;</li> <li>● Notification and documentation of procedures; spill control and countermeasures, including employee spill prevention/response training.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Include measure in contract documents.</li> <li>2. Confirm Construction Contractor has prepared a Hazardous Materials Management and Spill Control Plan.</li> <li>3. Confirm Construction Contractor follows procedures in the Hazardous Materials Management and Spill Control Plan.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contracting</li> <li>2. Pre-Construction</li> <li>3. Construction</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Once</li> <li>2. Once</li> <li>3. Periodically throughout construction</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CVWD</li> <li>2. Construction Contractor</li> <li>3. Construction Contractor</li> </ol>	CVWD	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. _____</li> <li>2. _____</li> <li>3. _____</li> </ol>
<p><b>Mitigation Measure NOI-1: Vibration Control During Construction</b></p> <p>CVWD shall incorporate the following vibration control measures into the construction contract specifications to be implemented by CVWD and the construction contractor as required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CVWD's Project Manager shall coordinate with the contractor to identify any changes in construction equipment or use locations that would generate groundborne vibration in excess of human annoyance (a peak particle velocity of 0.1968 inches per second) at residential structures.</li> <li>● If equipment vibration would exceed 0.1968 inches per second at a residential receptor the contractor shall work with CVWD's Project Manager to identify if feasible equipment substitutions are possible. If no feasible equipment substitutions are possible, CVWD shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Notify any residential owners with structures within 30 feet of the area in which the vibration causing equipment would be used.</li> <li>○ With the landowner's permission, a licensed professional shall conduct an assessment of structural integrity and note any preexisting damage prior to use of vibratory equipment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confirm measures are incorporated into the contract specifications.</li> <li>2. Confirm CVWD-approved notices were provided to required residents</li> <li>3. Implement noise and vibration control measures.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contracting</li> <li>2. Pre-Construction</li> <li>3. Construction</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Once</li> <li>2. Once</li> <li>3. Throughout construction</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CVWD</li> <li>2. CVWD, Construction Contractor</li> <li>3. Construction Contractor</li> </ol>	CVWD	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. _____</li> <li>2. _____</li> <li>3. _____</li> </ol>

<b>Mitigation Measure</b>	<b>Monitoring and Reporting Actions</b>	<b>Implementation Schedule</b>	<b>Monitoring Frequency</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Review and Approval by:</b>	<b>Verification: Status/ Date Completed/ Initials</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If the equipment would generate vibration exceeding the threshold within 30 feet of the residence, the contractor shall install vibration monitors at the location of structures to monitor groundborne vibration levels at the structure for the duration of activity within 30 feet.</li> <li>○ If vibration levels, shown by vibration monitoring, exceed 0.1968 inches per second, a follow-up structural integrity assessment shall be conducted by a licensed professional to compare before and after results. If damage occurred as a direct result of construction- related groundborne vibration, CVWD shall determine fair market value of repairing damage caused and provide compensation to the structure owner.</li> </ul>						
<p><b>Mitigation Measure TRA-1: 14-day, Written Project Notice</b></p> <p>The contractor shall be required to provide written project notice including schedule and contact information to the HOA community and nearby residences (within 500 feet of project boundaries) 14 days prior to site mobilization. A copy of all project notice documents shall be approved by CVWD's project manager in advance of site mobilization.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Include measure in contract documents</li> <li>2. Confirm construction contractor has prepared a written notice in accordance with contract terms</li> <li>3. Confirm construction contractor provided written notice to the HOA community and nearby residences in accordance with contract terms</li> <li>4. Confirm construction contractor provided a copy of all documents to CVWD's project manager</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contracting</li> <li>2. Pre-Construction</li> <li>3. Pre-Construction</li> <li>4. Pre-Construction</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Once</li> <li>2. Once</li> <li>3. Once</li> <li>4. Once</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CVWD</li> <li>2. Construction Contractor</li> <li>3. Construction Contractor</li> <li>4. Construction Contractor</li> </ol>	CVWD	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. _____</li> <li>2. _____</li> <li>3. _____</li> <li>4. _____</li> </ol>

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## 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

### 2.1 Project Overview

The project proposes domestic water system improvements at two CVWD sites (Site 5513 and Site 5514) to alleviate water storage deficiencies and increase water storage capacity, reliability, and efficiency within the CVWD water distribution system. This section describes the proposed project background, purpose and need, location, environmental setting, and detailed description of the project construction and necessary permits.

Figure 2-1 shows the regional setting of the project and Figure 2-2. shows the location of the two proposed project sites.

### 2.2 Project Background

CVWD is a potable water retailer that services a region covering approximately 1,000 square miles from the San Geronio Pass to the Salton Sea, mostly within the Coachella Valley in Riverside County, California (as shown on Figure 2-1). The boundaries also extend to small portions of Imperial and San Diego counties. Within CVWD's service area, CVWD operates two individual water systems: the Cove Community system and Improvement District 8. The proposed project is within the Cove Community system, which covers much of the northern Coachella Valley, including the city of Rancho Mirage. The proposed project would benefit portions of the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood. Site 5513 and Site 5514 are shown on Figure 2-2.

The following describes the current equipment, system, and operations of Site 5513 and Site 5514 that are included in, or relevant to, the proposed project:

- BS 5513 is located at 40860 Thunderbird Road in the city of Rancho Mirage at Site 5513. BS 5513 contains three pumps (Pump 1 is 30 horsepower [hp] with a pumping rate of 550 gallons per minute [gpm]; Pump 2 is 40 hp with a pumping capacity of 600 gpm; Pump 3 is 40 hp with a pumping capacity of 650 gpm) which pump water to fill Reservoir 5514-1 located at Site 5514. Operational energy demand at BS 5513 ranges from approximately 30 kilowatts (kW) to 85 kW which equates to approximately 19,000 kW hours (kWh) per month or 225,000 kWh per year.
- Approximately 0.4 miles west of Site 5513 is Site 5514 which contains BS 5514. BS 5514 consists of four pumps (Pump 5514N-1 is 20hp with a pumping rate of 400 gpm; Pump 5514N-2 is 30hp with a pumping rate of 375 gpm; Pump 5514S-1 is 20hp with a pumping rate of 235 gpm; Pump 5514S-2 is 30hp with a pumping rate of 325 gpm) which boost water uphill to approximately 80 customers in the Thunderbird Heights community. Operational energy demand at BS 5514 ranges from approximately 24 kilowatts (kW) to 47 kW which equates to approximately 17,000 kW hours (kWh) per month or 204,000 kWh per year.

- Reservoir 5514-1 (an aboveground steel domestic water storage tank) is also located at Site 5514. The existing tank volume is 0.5 MG. Reservoir 5514-1 provides water supply and storage for a portion of the Thunderbird Heights community. However, the tank does not provide sufficient storage for the existing demands in the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood.

### **2.3 Project Purpose and Need**

The proposed project is necessary to ensure a reliable water supply to the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood, which is within CVWD's Cove Community system. The project infrastructure is aging (Reservoir 5514-1 is 66 years old) and in need of replacement or repair. The system configuration in the area has no redundancy, leaving the risk associated with system failure high and warranting complete replacement of certain project features. Additionally, portions of the system are undersized relative to existing water demands. Therefore, CVWD is seeking to add storage capacity and make necessary equipment upgrades in order to provide more reliable and efficient water service in the area. Recent modeling work conducted for CVWD's system indicates that there is a 1.7 MG storage deficit in the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood (Akel 2017). Other planned capital improvements would reduce this deficit to approximately 0.6 MG but would not completely eliminate the need for additional storage. The proposed project would add 0.5 MG of storage to further alleviate the storage deficit and provide greater redundancy to the drinking water system. Relocation and rehabilitation of the existing booster stations would be necessary in order to allow space for the new storage tank and enable reconfiguration of the system. Additionally, the proposed project would provide water supply availability for fire suppression that is required by law, with BS 5513W providing additional fire flows and Reservoir 5514-2 providing additional storage.

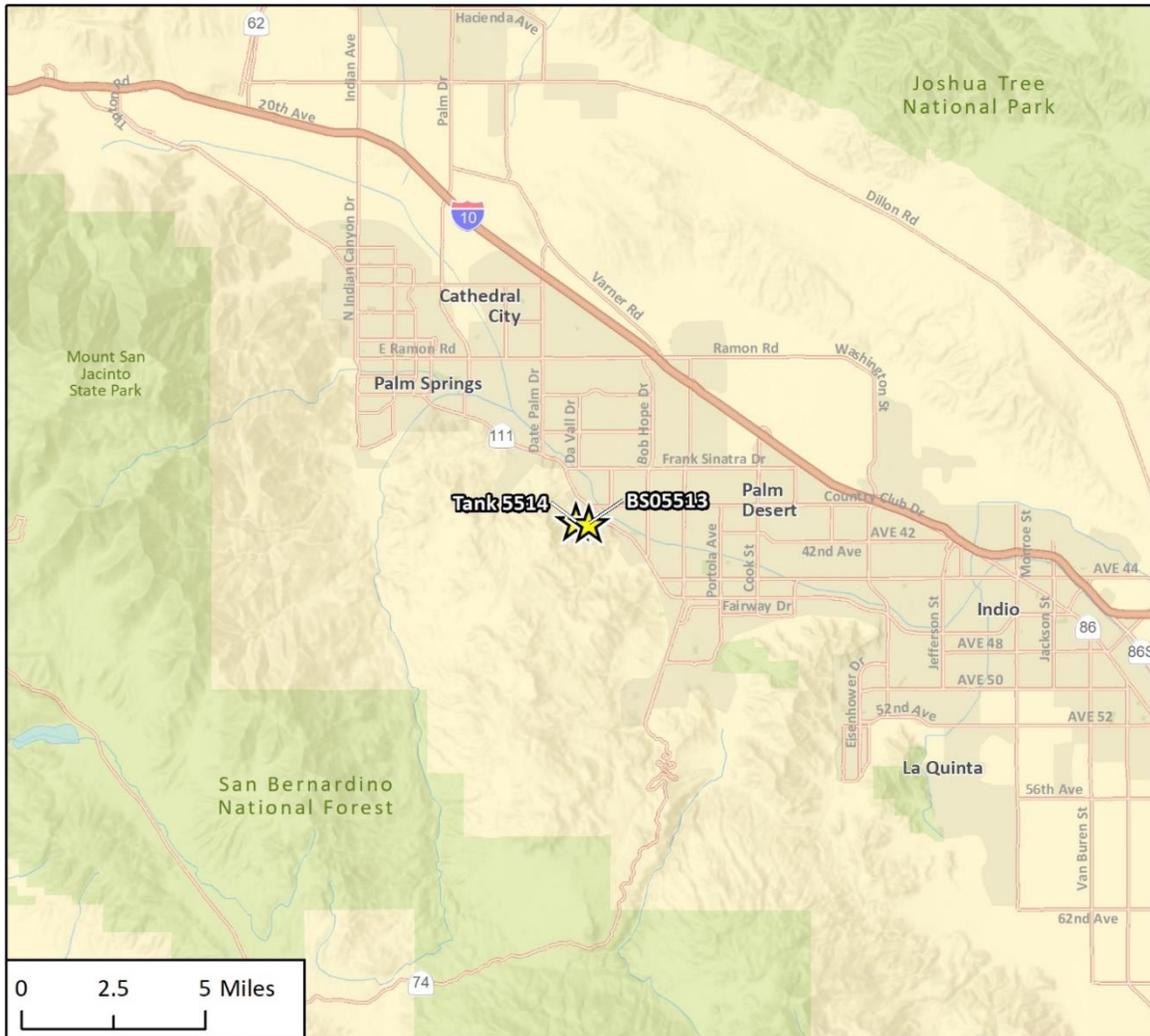
The objective of the proposed project is to improve the reliability of water supply, pressure, and storage for the portions of CVWD's Cove Community system within the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood.

### **2.4 Project Location**

The proposed project is located within a gated, residential community in the city of Rancho Mirage, Riverside County, California. Rancho Mirage is located southwest of the cities of Palm Springs and Cathedral City, and northwest of the city of Palm Desert. California State Route (SR) 111 runs northwest to southeast through Rancho Mirage. Physically, the project site is bounded by the Santa Rosa Mountains to the west, and the Indio Hills and the edge of Joshua Tree National Park to the northeast.

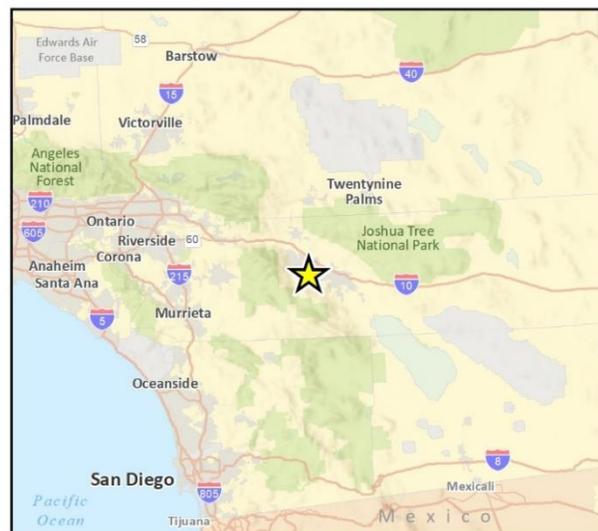
The project area is in the Coachella Valley region of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), and it is located in the Whitewater River watershed. Surrounding land uses in the project area include residential, rural residential, open space, and public facilities as shown in Figure 2-3.

**Figure 2-1: Regional Setting**



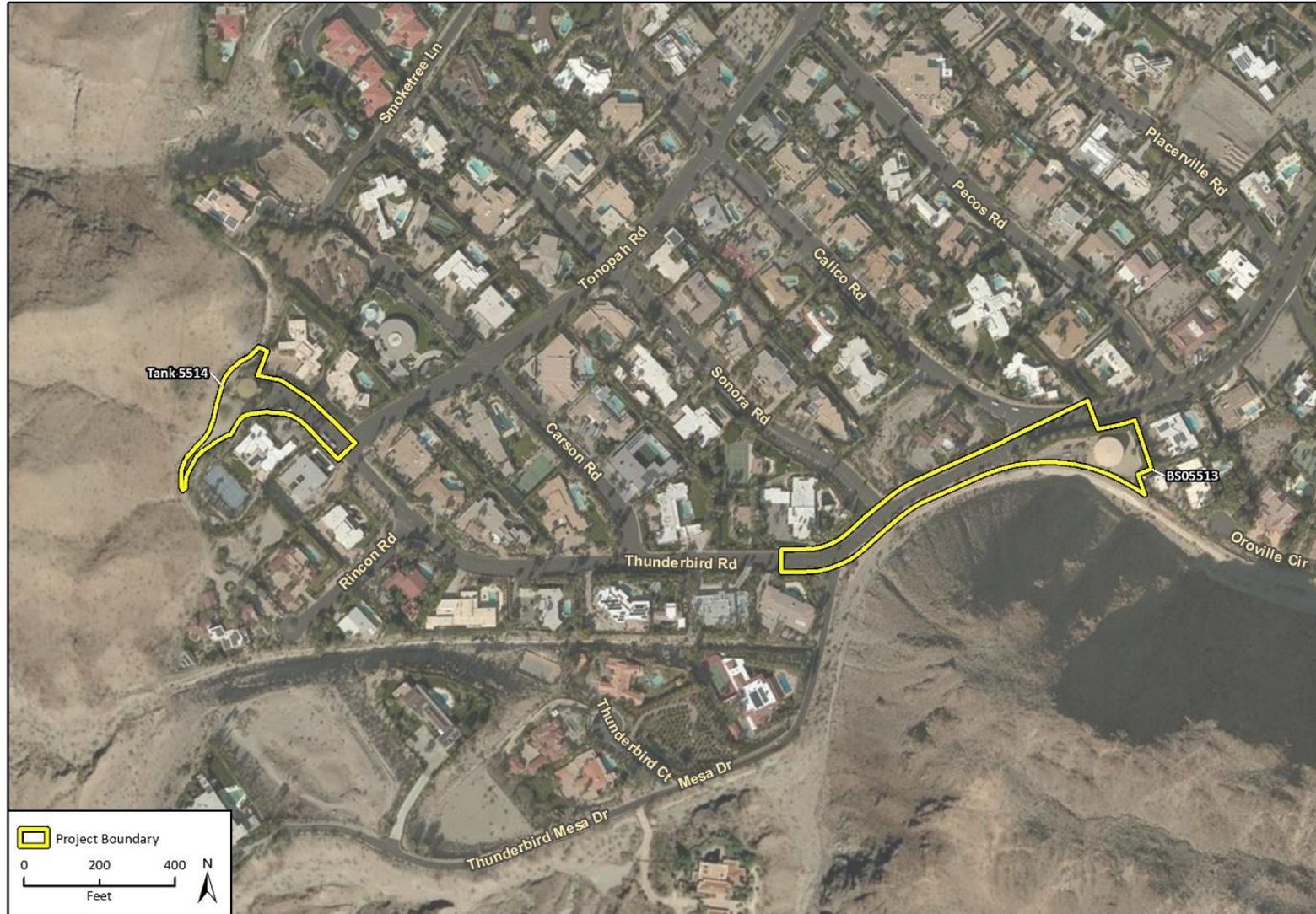
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Project Location

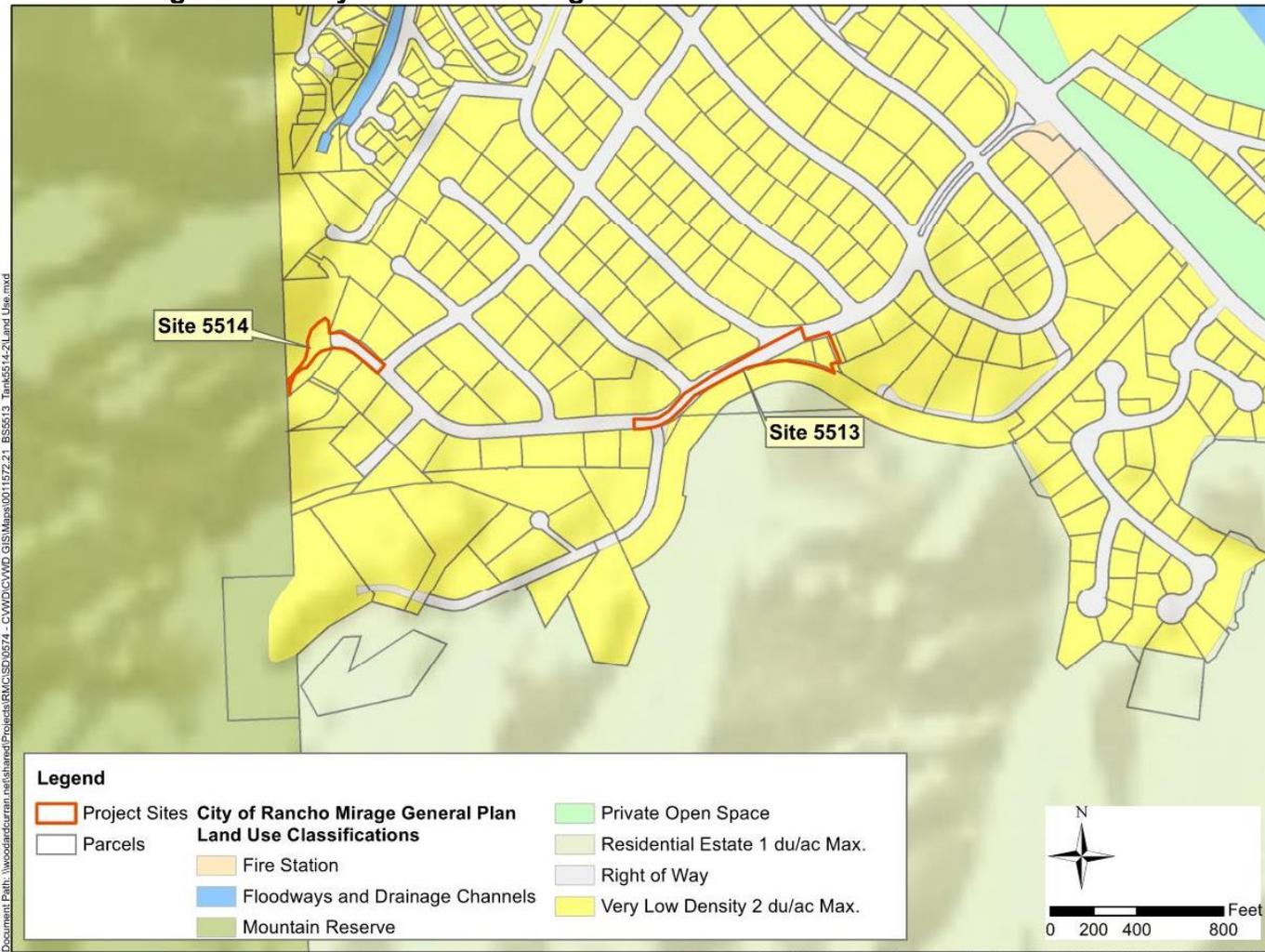


395fig 1 Regional Location

Figure 2-2: Project Location Map



**Figure 2-3: City of Rancho Mirage General Plan Land Use Classifications**



## 2.5 Environmental Setting

The project sites are within the gated residential neighborhood of Thunderbird Heights, which is adjacent west of SR 111 (referred to as Highway 111). The neighborhood is bordered by SR 111 on the east; residential, recreational, and commercial areas to the north, and open space to the south and west. Both project sites are located along Thunderbird Road and are zoned as very low density residential (R-L-2) (City of Rancho Mirage 2013a). Sites 5513 and 5514 are bordered as follows:

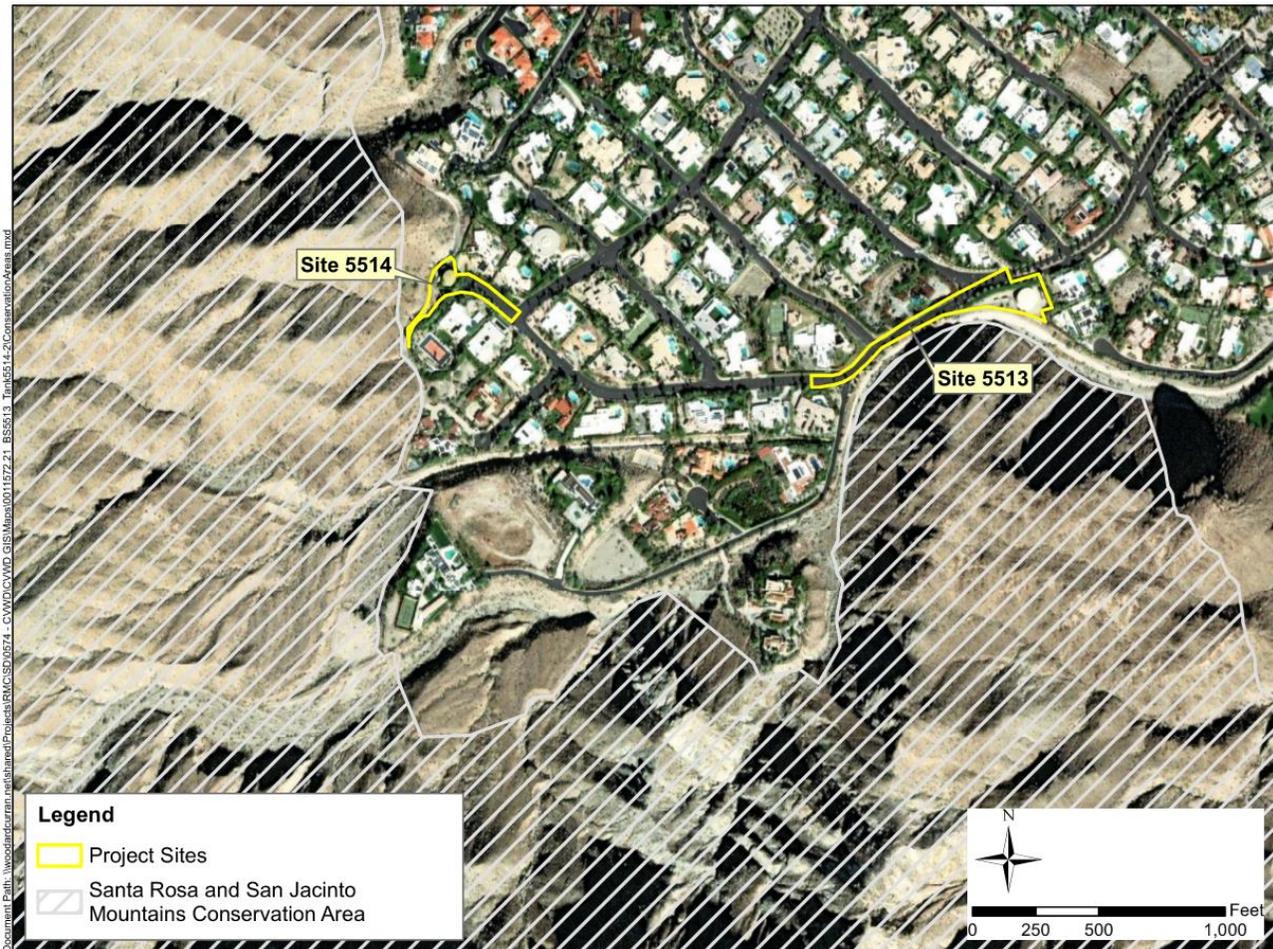
- North: residential land, with commercial land beyond
- East: residential land, with SR 111 further east
- South: residential land, open space
- West: open space, Santa Rosa Mountains

The nearest sensitive receptors to the project sites are the residences within the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood. Site 5514 is at the end of Thunderbird Road in the back of a cul-de-sac with residences on the north and south sides approximately 80 feet and 50 feet away, respectively. The site is screened from these residences by thick tall vegetation. Site 5513 sits on the southeast side of Thunderbird Road with two residences to the east approximately 50 feet from the site and an additional four residences located across Thunderbird Road. Site 5513 is also screened from these residences with thick tall vegetation. These residences in relation to the project sites are shown on Figure 2-4.

Although neither of the project sites are located within a biologically sensitive area, the western side of Site 5514 and southern side of Site 5513 are adjacent to the *Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan* (CVMSHCP/NCCP) conservation area (Figure 2-4) which is considered a biologically sensitive area. This planning area is within eastern Riverside County and provides a regional vision for balanced growth to meet the requirements of federal and state endangered species laws while promoting enhanced opportunities for recreation, tourism, and job growth. The CVMSHCP contains Land Use Adjacency guidelines for projects bordering Conservation Areas, to reduce impacts to potentially present wildlife species.

No sensitive receptors (such as schools, hospitals, childcare facilities, and residential care facilities) are located within 0.5 miles of the proposed project sites. Other than residential, the nearest sensitive receptors outside the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood include the Rancho Mirage Elementary School (approximately 2 miles southeast of the project sites), Eisenhower Memorial Hospital (1.7 miles northeast), and the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory (0.7 miles southeast).

**Figure 2-4: CVMSHCP/NCCP Conservation Areas in Proposed Project Vicinity**



## 2.6 Proposed Project Description

The project proposes the construction of a new steel domestic water tank (referred to as Reservoir 5514-2) adjacent to the existing Reservoir 5514-1. To accommodate placement of Reservoir 5514-2 at Site 5514, the existing BS 5514 would be demolished and relocated to Site 5513; the relocated booster station would be renamed for its new location and called BS 5513-W. Additionally, approximately 600 linear feet of pipeline would be placed with Thunderbird Road to replace an existing pipe segment and accommodate the BS 5514 relocation.

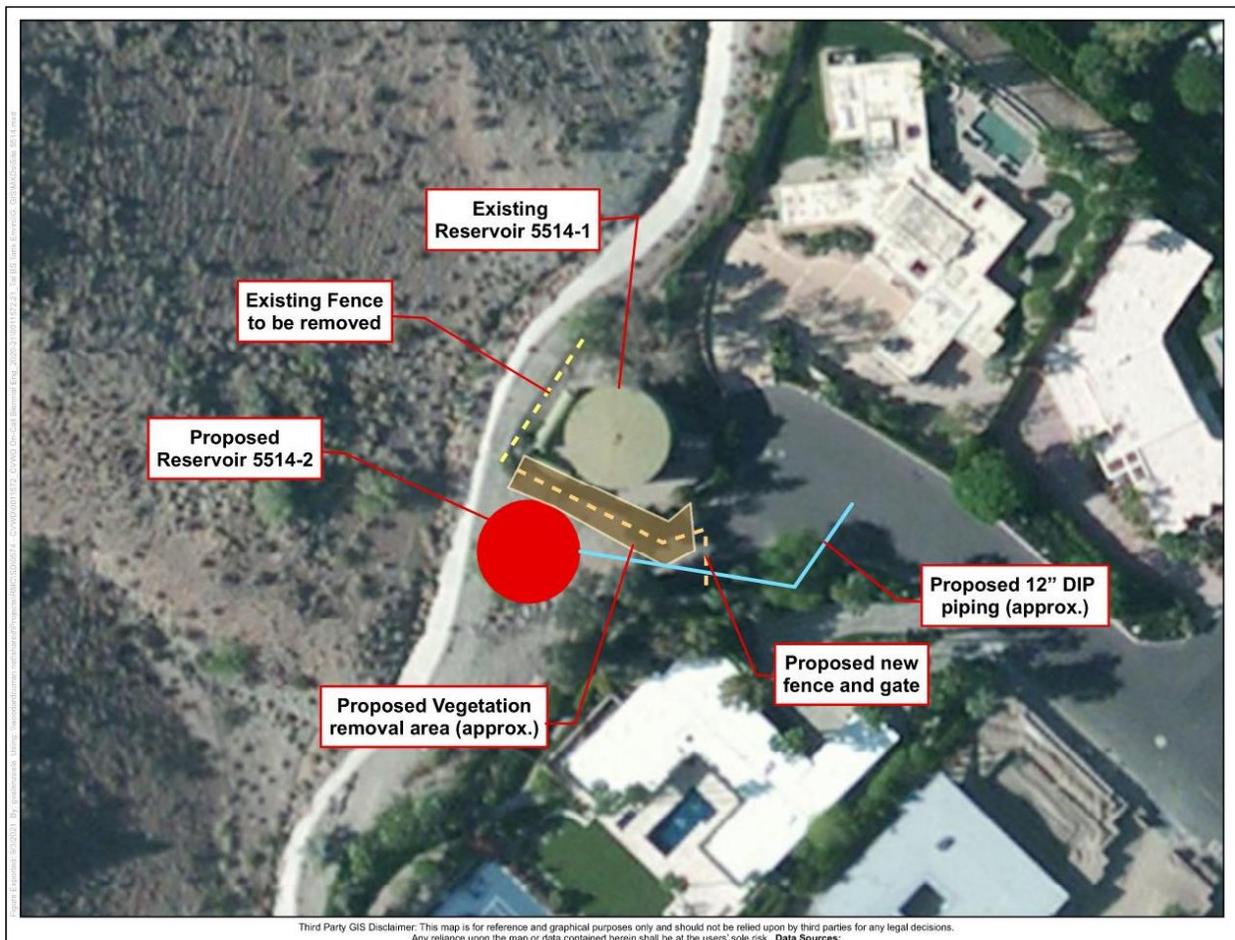
### 2.6.1 Reservoir 5514-2

Site 5514 is located at 70160 Thunderbird Road and currently houses Reservoir 5514-1 (an aboveground steel domestic water storage tank) and BS 5514. Reservoir 5514-1 provides the water supply and storage for a portion of the Thunderbird Heights community. The project proposes to construct the new 0.5-MG water storage tank, Reservoir 5514-2, at Site 5514 to alleviate system storage deficiencies and provide

system redundancy (Figure 2-5). Construction of Reservoir 5514-2 would include removing and disposing of the existing BS 5514 hydropneumatic tanks (located west and south of Reservoir 5514-1) and associated appurtenances, and piping to the pump house (located at the east side of Reservoir 5514-1). The new 0.5-MG welded steel tank would be similar in size, shape, and aesthetics to the existing Reservoir 5514-1. Reservoir 5514-2 would have a diameter of 50 feet and a height of 34 feet, with a footprint of approximately 2,000 square feet. Construction would include site grading, foundation, piping, coating, and painting, appurtenances, electrical, and fencing.

The existing chain-link fencing and trees immediately south of Reservoir 5514-1 would be removed. A new 16-foot chain-link double gate would be installed across the existing fenced access point just south of Reservoir 5514-1. Four new LED lights are proposed on the sides of Reservoir 5514-2 for use only when servicing the tank at night or during an emergency situation. Approximately 300 feet of 12-inch ductile iron piping would be constructed from the new tank to Thunderbird Road.

**Figure 2-5: Proposed Reservoir 5514-2 Location**



## 2.6.2 BS 5513 Upgrades and New BS 5513-W

BS 5513 pumps water up Thunderbird Road to fill the nearby Reservoir 5514-1. BS 5514 is a critical facility that boosts water uphill to serve approximately 80 residential customers (a subset of the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood). It is currently located at Site 5514, adjacent to Reservoir 5514-1. In order to construct the new tank (Reservoir 5514-2) at Site 5514, BS 5514 must be demolished and relocated. In order to demolish and reconstruct BS 5514, BS 5513 must be upgraded.

The project would construct a second domestic water pump station on Site 5513 to replace BS 5514. The new pump station would be designated as BS 5513-W (Figure 2-6). BS 5513-W would include all necessary aboveground and underground appurtenances including pumps and motors, piping, valves, mechanical, structural, electrical (including a new transformer), diesel back-up generator, instrumentation, telemetry, and other miscellaneous equipment, housed within an covered equipment building.

A pressure reducing station would also be constructed at Site 5514. The project would rehabilitate and upgrade the existing BS 5513 with new electrical equipment that would maximize pumping efficiencies and improve system reliability by combining the existing electrical panels with one new motor control center and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) cabinet. A 400kW diesel backup generator would be installed to operate in the event of electrical grid power failure. The generator would be exercised for approximately 15 minutes weekly for ongoing maintenance.

Area lighting would be installed at the new Southern California Edison (SCE) meter/main and tank locations and exterior building lights would be installed at the booster station. Indoor lighting is also proposed at each enclosed building. Exterior building, reservoir, and area lighting would be of the lowest illumination necessary and would be shielded and directed downward to avoid light spillage.

Some site vegetation would be removed for construction and replanted with new landscape vegetation that would shield the site in a manner similar to the existing vegetation. Reservoir

**Figure 2-6: Proposed Booster Station 5513-W Location**



### 2.6.3 Thunderbird Road Pipeline

The proposed project would include a 600-foot section of 12-inch ductile iron pipeline extending from BS 5513, along Thunderbird Road southwest to the intersection of Thunderbird Road and Thunderbird Mesa Drive. This pipeline would replace the existing 8-inch pipeline to accommodate the increase in water pressure and proposed capacity of the new pump station BS 5513-W. The pipeline would be installed within existing easements via approximately 3-foot-wide trenches excavated to a depth of approximately 4 feet. The replacement of this pipeline segment would only require temporary, partial closure of Thunderbird Road, for two to five days total (during daytime hours). Construction is estimated to take one work week to complete and is assumed to progress at a rate of 150 feet of pipe per day.

### 2.6.4 Construction Overview

The proposed project sites (including staging areas) encompass a total area of approximately five acres. It is anticipated that staging would occur on disturbed areas

within the limits of the project sites. It is estimated that the entire area of each site would be temporarily or permanently disturbed during project construction and staging.

Construction activities at Site 5513 would include removal and disposal of portions of existing piping, excavation/shoring, grading, equipment installation (including new piping, electrical equipment, and controls), and surface restoration. The excavation depth at the site would be a maximum of 15 feet for installation of the new BS 5513-W booster suction cans. Adjacent to the BS 5513 site, pipeline would be installed entirely within the Thunderbird Road right of way and on the CVWD-owned sites. Temporary single lane closures are anticipated during the duration of pipeline installation. Pipeline installation work would include surface preparation, trenching/shoring, pipeline installation, and surface restoration.

At Site 5514, BS 5514 would be demolished and removed (including the existing hydropneumatic tanks, appurtenances, and piping), and Reservoir 5514-2 would be constructed. Reservoir construction would include excavation (to a maximum depth of 12 feet), grading, foundation work, on-site piping installation, coating and painting, and installation of appurtenances, electrical. Piping would be installed via approximately 3-foot-wide trenches excavated to a depth of up to 5 feet. The proposed Reservoir 5514-2 would be partially buried to a depth of approximately 9 feet, with a foundation approximately 3 feet deep.

Typical construction equipment for the proposed project would include jack hammers, pavement saws, graders, backhoes, bulldozers, excavators, trenchers, loaders, water trucks, and other trucks. All construction activities would occur within CVWD-owned properties and city rights of way. Disturbance activities would occur on paved, gravel and/or dirt surfaces at Site 5513 and Site 5514, as well as in the paved roadway of Thunderbird Road. Staging would occur on the CVWD-owned parcels. Following construction, disturbed areas would be restored to original grade and roadway surfaces would be restored to their original condition.

### **2.6.5 Construction Trip Generation**

During construction, the project would generate vehicle trips associated with construction crews and materials deliveries. Construction would generate up to 10 round-trip vehicle trips per day, which could include 2 round trip for off hauling of material (such as excavated soil and demolition debris), 2 round trips for delivery of materials, and 6 small vehicle trips for the commute of construction workers, inspectors, consultants, and project managers.

Construction of the pipeline segment in Thunderbird Road would proceed at a rate of approximately 150 linear feet per day. The proposed project would require approximately 690 cubic yards (cy) of soil export, assuming as much native fill is reused for backfill of trenches (or other excavated areas, e.g., tank foundation) as possible. No import material is necessary.

## 2.6.6 Construction Schedule

Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to last 11 months in total. Rehabilitation of BS 5513 and construction of BS 5513-W is expected to require approximately 10 months, and construction of Reservoir 5514-2 is expected to require approximately 11 months. Construction at Sites 5513 and 5514 would occur concurrently.

Project construction activity is anticipated to occur between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday only (not on the weekend) and excluding federal holidays, which is compliant with the Rancho Mirage Municipal Code (Section 15.04.030).

## 2.6.7 Standard Construction Practices

CVWD conducts the following standard practices during construction and would complete these as part of the proposed project:

- *Air Quality / Dust Suppression* – The construction contractor would be required to comply with South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) rule 403.1 to control dust during construction specific to the Coachella Valley. The contractor is required to have an approved Fugitive Dust Control Plan prior to grading or excavation. The contractor is required to comply with the California Air Resources Boards In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulations, which would 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, less fuel-efficient engines from the construction fleet.
- *Drainage / Erosion Control* – During the construction, existing storm water facilities including catch basins, utility access holes, and ditches would be protected using erosion control measures. Design standards outlined in the Riverside County Whitewater River Region Stormwater Quality Best Management Practice Design Handbook for Low Impact Development (Riverside County Flood Control and Watershed Conservation District 2014) would be implemented as applicable to each project site's stormwater drainage features. In addition, the project contractor would comply with drainage and erosion control regulations such as National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), requirements which would require the contractor obtain a Construction General Permit (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002) and develop a construction Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The required regulations and Construction General Permit require implementation of best management practices (BMPs) to control construction-related pollutants in storm water runoff leaving the construction site.
- *Groundwater Dewatering* – Project elements would require excavation to a depth of up to 15 feet below ground surface. If encountered at this depth, groundwater would be controlled using standard methods including stone sumps wrapped in filter fabric and dewatering basins or baffled tanks if required. If dewatering is required coverage under the existing CVWD

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit (Order No. R7-2013-0011; NPDES No. CAS617002).

- *Traffic Controls* – Construction of the proposed project may necessitate limited individual traffic lane closures (Thunderbird Road). Traffic controls would require that emergency crews have access, as needed, and that the contractor coordinates the location of the work daily for routing of emergency vehicles. Traffic control would also require the contractor to make reasonable efforts, wherever possible, to provide landowners access to their property and patrons access to businesses during execution of the work. The contractor may be required to have an approved traffic control plan by city of Rancho Mirage.

## 2.6.8 Operation and Maintenance

Operations of the CVWD domestic water system would continue in the same fashion. Aside from an additional reservoir, an additional back-up generator, and relocated facilities, all operations and maintenance would remain as existing. No operational modifications are proposed. Operation and maintenance visits to Reservoir 5514-2 and BS 5513 and 5513-W would be incorporated into CVWD’s existing schedule. No new operational activities, including vehicle trips, would be required.

## 2.7 Permits

The permits and approvals listed in Table 2-1 may be required for project construction:

**Table 2-1: Permits and Approvals**

Agency	Permit or Approval
<b>Local</b>	
City of Rancho Mirage	Encroachment Permit for work in the public right of way
South Coast Air Quality Management District	Permit to Construct and Permit to Operate diesel backup generator Fugitive Dust Control Plan
Thunderbird Heights Homeowners’ Association	Access and coordination
<b>State</b>	
State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)	NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges associated with Construction Activities
Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Colorado River Region	CVWD Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit (Order No. R7-2013-0011; NPDES No. CAS617002)
<b>Federal</b>	
United States Environmental Protection Agency / SWRCB	Funding under the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

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### 3. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. **Project title:** Booster Station 5513W/5514 Improvements and Reservoir 5514-2 Construction
2. **Lead agency name and address:** Coachella Valley Water District  
75515 Hovley Lane East  
Palm Desert, CA 92211
3. **Contact person and phone number:** William Patterson  
Environmental Supervisor, CVWD  
75515 Hovley Lane East  
Palm Desert, CA 92211  
(760) 398-2651 x2545
4. **Project location:** The proposed undertaking is situated in Thunderbird Heights, a residential community located in the southwestern portion of the city of Rancho Mirage, in Riverside County, California. More specifically, it is in Township 5 south, Range 5 east, and Section 11 of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Cathedral City 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle. The proposed project site consists of three parcels: CVWD's Site 5514 (Assessor's Parcel Number [APN] 690-070-008) and Site 5513 (APN: 690-190-001 and 690-190-002).
5. **Project sponsor's name and address:** Same as Lead Agency
6. **General plan designations:** R-L-2 (Residential very low density)
7. **Zoning:** R-L-2 (Residential very low density)
8. **Description of project:** The Booster Station 5513W/5514 Improvements and Reservoir 5514-2 Construction Project would construct a new aboveground water storage tank (Reservoir 5514-2) to be located on the same site as CVWD's existing Reservoir 5514. To enable construction of the new tank, the existing booster pump station at the site would be demolished and relocated to the nearby Site 5513. To support these improvements, the existing motor control center located at Site 5513 would be replaced to accommodate both an existing booster station and the new booster station. In addition, a short section of new pipeline would be constructed within Thunderbird Road to tie the new booster station into the existing water distribution system. The proposed project would alleviate water storage deficiencies within the CVWD system by increasing storage capacity and improving reliability and efficiency of related infrastructure.
9. **Surrounding land uses and setting:** The project site is bordered by the residential Thunderbird Heights neighborhood (generally to the north and east) and undeveloped open space in the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains (to the west and south). Surrounding land uses are as follows: North: Thunderbird Heights residential



**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. With adherence to the mitigation program identified within this IS/MND, the potentially significant impacts would be reduced or minimized to a less than significant level.

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

**DETERMINATION: (To be completed by Lead Agency)**

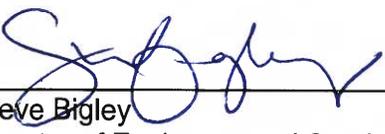
On the basis of this initial evaluation:

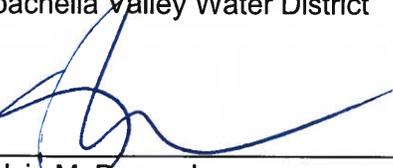
- I find that the proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions 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.



**Prepared by:**  1-12-22 Date  
Kim Clyma, JD  
Task Lead/Senior Environmental Planner  
Woodard & Curran

**Reviewed by:**  1-12-22 Date  
William Patterson  
Environmental Supervisor  
Coachella Valley Water District

**Submitted by:**  1/13/22 Date  
Steve Bigley  
Director of Environmental Services  
Coachella Valley Water District

**Approved by Board:**  1/17/22 Date  
Sylvia M. Bermudez  
Clerk of the Board  
Coachella Valley Water District

### 3.1 Aesthetics

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:</b>				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
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?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]

### Discussion

The proposed project lies within the western Coachella Valley, which is characterized by a variety of contrasting and dramatic geographic features. The valley is surrounded by the rugged San Jacinto, Santa Rosa, and Little San Bernardino Mountains. The Coachella Valley contains a series of low-lying desert flatlands, sloping dunes and rolling foothills. Cove-like areas line the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains. The Whitewater River connects to the Whitewater River Stormwater Channel and then connects to the

Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel before terminating at the Salton Sea. The topography results in expansive views of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto mountains contrasting with the desert floor. The proposed project is located within a private gated community with low-density residential development. The neighborhood consists of single-family homes on large lots with a variety of irrigated and desert landscaping.

There are no State- or County-designated scenic highways in the project area. State Route 111 runs through Rancho Mirage approximately 0.3 miles from the proposed project sites. State Route 111 is recognized as a State-eligible scenic highway but is not designated as a scenic highway. The nearest designated scenic highway to the proposed project sites is State Route 74, which ends in Palm Desert at its connection to State Route 111, approximately 3 miles southeast of the proposed project sites (Caltrans 2019).

The proposed project sites are located within the private, gated Thunderbird Heights neighborhood and are adjacent to surrounding open spaces. The surrounding neighborhood blocks views of the sites from publicly accessible developed areas to the east and north. From within the neighborhood, residents would be able to see the perimeters of the sites; views may include fencing, screening vegetation, and tank structures. Public views of the sites may exist from trails in the surrounding hills.

The proposed project sites are currently developed with existing CVWD domestic water supply infrastructure, including existing above ground tanks and booster stations, site fencing, and perimeter landscaping. The sites are shielded from adjacent roads and residential properties by screening vegetation. Figure 3-1 shows existing infrastructure at Site 5513, including BS 5513 and Reservoir 5513. The site is utilitarian (i.e., functional, and practical) in nature and developed with water supply facilities. Dense vegetation at the top of a berm provides screening from the adjacent roadway.

Reservoir 5514-2 would be constructed at Site 5514, next to the existing Reservoir 5514-1. Figure 3-2 shows the view of Site 5514 from Thunderbird Road. The bulk of Reservoir 5514-1 is screened by trees, and the existing reservoir is painted to blend into the vegetation and surrounding landscape. The proposed reservoir would also be painted with complementary desert tones intended to blend with the surrounding environment. The property adjacent to Site 5514 has trees along the shared boundary which provide screening from the site (Figure 3-3).

**Figure 3-1: View of Existing BS 5513 and Reservoir 5513**



*View looking northeast at the existing, developed Booster Station 5513 and Reservoir 5513 site. Note screening vegetation on the north side of the site, at a higher grade, which is designed to shield the site from the roadway and nearby residences.*

**Figure 3-2: View of Site 5514 from Thunderbird Road**



*View looking west from Thunderbird Road toward Reservoir 5514-1. Reservoir 5514-2 would be constructed south (left) of Reservoir 5514-1 and would not be visible from this vantage point.*

**Figure 3-3: View of Proposed Reservoir 5514-2 Location**



*View looking southwest from the Reservoir 5514-1 site, showing adjacent residential property line and existing screening vegetation along left side, the area in the immediate foreground is the proposed location of Reservoir 5514-2.*

### **a) Less than Significant Impact**

Construction of the proposed project would occur at Site 5513 and Site 5514. Construction activities would result in a temporary change in visual character due to construction (including the presence of construction equipment, construction materials, stockpiles of soil, etc.). While construction activities may temporarily impact views and the visual character of the project area, the proposed project sites are well-surrounded by existing vegetation, which would shield the neighborhood from visual impacts due to construction. Construction impacts would be limited to the 11-month duration of project construction.

Once construction is complete, the new reservoir and booster station facilities would be consistent in height and character to the existing reservoir and booster stations that currently exist at the proposed project sites. Reservoir 5514-2 would be approximately the same size and height as Reservoir 5514-1. The new Reservoir 5514-2 would be located south of Reservoir 5514-1 and would not be visible from Thunderbird Road due to existing vegetation, as shown in Figure 3-2. Vegetation would shield the sites and facilities from view from the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, the proposed project would

d not substantially adversely impact local scenic vistas of surrounding mountains and open spaces, and impacts would be less than significant.

### **b) No Impact**

The proposed project is not within view of a State or County designated scenic highway. State Route 111 is not designated as a scenic highway. State Route 74 is a designated scenic highway, but the proposed project would not be visible from State Route 74, and no other scenic highways are located in the project area. Therefore, the proposed project would have no potential to substantially damage scenic resources within a State scenic highway and there would be no impact on scenic resources.

### **c) Less than Significant Impact**

There would be limited public views of the proposed project sites from the surrounding neighborhood, since Thunderbird Heights is a private, gated community. However, construction and operation of the proposed project would not substantially alter these views; given that both sites are currently developed with above-ground domestic water infrastructure. Additionally, the new facilities would be painted to blend in with the surroundings (similar to the existing facilities) and would be screened from nearby viewers by vegetation. Any vegetation removed would be replaced. Thus, public views of the site would not be substantially degraded and the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on public views.

The proposed project sites are located within a developed residential neighborhood in Rancho Mirage. Rancho Mirage's policies governing scenic quality for new development are included in Chapter 17.20 of the municipal code. Per the municipal code, for new private development, facilities such as mechanical equipment and utilities shall be located out of public view or architecturally screened (Rancho Mirage no date [n.d.]). Equipment shall be screened from view from adjacent public rights-of-way and surrounding private property (Rancho Mirage n.d.). The design of the proposed project would be consistent with the Rancho Mirage code and would not substantially alter the visual character of the sites. The proposed project facilities would be confined to Sites 5513 and 5514, which would be screened from view by vegetation. Views of Reservoir 5514-2 from Thunderbird Road would be blocked by vegetation, and Reservoir 5514-2 would be painted to blend in with the surroundings, similar to the existing Reservoir 5514-1. The new reservoir would not substantially alter the visual character of the area, as Site 5514 is already utilitarian in nature and houses a reservoir of similar size and height. The property owner immediately adjacent to Site 5514 would be closest to Reservoir 5514-2 and could potentially have views of the reservoir. However, as shown in Figure 3-3, existing vegetation would provide screening, and views from private property would not be significantly impacted. CVWD has also been in communication with the property owner, and the owner has planted additional trees which provides greater screening of the site. Thus, the proposed project's impacts on visual character, public views, and conflicts with applicable regulations would be less than significant.

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#### **d) Less than Significant Impact**

The proposed project may result in minor additions of both temporary construction and permanent area lighting and glare. Construction of the proposed project could create a temporary source of glare from construction equipment parked on sites and a temporary source of light if security lighting is needed at the sites. The potential for glare at the project sites would be limited and similar to that generated from vehicles parked. The construction equipment would not introduce any new or substantially different glare as a result of vehicles located on the project sites. Additionally, the need for potential construction and temporary security lighting would introduce one or two light sources on the site, but views would be screened by existing vegetation and would not substantially change the character of the project area. These temporary additions of light or glare would result in a less than significant impact.

The addition of new permanent lighting at Site 5514 would consist of four new LED lights on the sides of Reservoir 5514-2 but would only be used when servicing the tank at night or during an emergency. New permanent lighting at Site 5513 would include area lighting at the new Southern California Edison meter/main, hydropneumatic tank, and booster station. Indoor lighting is also proposed at each enclosed building and the exterior booster station building lights will be controlled through a Hand-Off-Auto switch. The proposed project would be similar to the lighting of existing facilities, providing illumination of new facilities. These additional light sources would be screened from nearby receptors and would not substantially alter the existing lighting conditions. Lighting for the new facilities would be designed in such a way that it would be of the lowest illumination necessary for security and safety and would be shielded and directed downward to avoid light spillage or glare onto neighboring properties or the adjacent open space and existing vegetation would help shield potential glare. The proposed project would not adversely affect day or nighttime views within the project area and the impact on day or nighttime views would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

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

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## Discussion

The proposed project is located within a developed residential area. The proposed project would not be located on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Farmland of Local Importance, Grazing Land, or land with a Williamson Act contract (CDOC 2016, CDOC 2021). The project location does not include areas zoned for agricultural use, forest land, or timber lands (City of Rancho Mirage 2017).

### **a-e) No Impact**

The proposed project would be located solely on developed lands (CVWD-owned sites with existing water supply facilities and the adjacent paved roadway). The proposed project would not be located on, or adjacent to, Important Farmland, Williamson Act land, or land zoned for agricultural use. Therefore, the proposed project would not have the potential to convert Important Farmland or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural uses or a Williamson Act Contract.

There is no forest land at the proposed project sites or in the surrounding area, therefore the project would not cause loss or conversion of forest land. The proposed project would improve domestic water supply facilities, which would serve existing customers and existing water demands. The proposed project would not involve other changes in the environment (e.g., altering land use) that could result in conversion of agricultural land. Thus, the proposed project would have no impact on agriculture and forest resources.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.3 Air Quality

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
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 area is in the Coachella Valley region of the Salton Sea Air Basin under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (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. Air pollution in the project area is monitored at stations located in Palm Springs and Indio (SCAQMD 2018).

The NAAQS, which are required to be set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) under the Clean Air Act, provide public health protection, including protecting the health of sensitive populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly (US EPA 2021). Similarly, the CAAQS are established to protect the health of the most sensitive groups and are mandated by state law. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set NAAQS for six pollutants, which are called “criteria pollutants”: carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>), and sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). California has added three additional criteria pollutants: hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S), visibility reducing particles, and vinyl chloride. In

addition, California regulates about 200 different chemicals, referred to as toxic air contaminants (CARB 2021).

Depending on whether the NAAQS or CAAQS are met or exceeded, the SSAB is classified as being in “attainment” or “nonattainment.” The SCAQMD’s *2016 Air Quality Management Plan* (AQMP) assesses the attainment status of the Coachella Valley portion of the SSAB and provides a strategy for attainment of state and federal air quality standards (SCAQMD 2016). 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) *2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (SCAG 2016). The NAAQS and CAAQS attainment statuses for the Coachella Valley portion of the SSAB are listed in Table 3-1. As shown therein, the SSAB is in nonattainment for the state standards for 1-hour ozone, nonattainment for both the federal and state standards for 8-hour ozone, and nonattainment for respirable particulate matter, PM<sub>10</sub> (SCAQMD 2017). Thus, the Coachella Valley portion of the SSAB is required to implement strategies that would reduce pollutant levels to recognized standards. The AQMP provides a strategy for the attainment of state and federal air quality standards.

**Table 3-1: Criteria Pollutant Attainment Status - Coachella Valley Portion of the Salton Sea Air Basin**

<b>Pollutant</b>	<b>CAAQS</b>	<b>NAAQS</b>
O <sub>3</sub> (1-hour)	Nonattainment / (0.09 ppm)	--
O <sub>3</sub> (8-hour)	Nonattainment / (0.070 ppm)	Pending – Expect Nonattainment (Severe) / (0.070 ppm)
PM <sub>10</sub> (24-hour)	Nonattainment / (50 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Nonattainment (Serious) / (150 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
PM <sub>10</sub> (Annual)	Nonattainment / (20 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	--
PM <sub>2.5</sub> (24-hour)	--	Unclassifiable/Attainment / (35.0 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
PM <sub>2.5</sub> (Annual)	Attainment / (12 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Unclassifiable/Attainment / (12.0 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
CO (1-hour)	Attainment / (20 ppm)	Unclassifiable/Attainment / (35 ppm)
CO (8-hour)	Attainment / (9 ppm)	Unclassifiable/Attainment / (9 ppm)
NO <sub>2</sub> (1-hour)	Attainment / (0.18 ppm)	Unclassifiable/Attainment / (100 ppb)
NO <sub>2</sub> (Annual)	Attainment / (0.030 ppm)	Unclassifiable/Attainment / (53 ppb)
SO <sub>2</sub> (1-hour)	Attainment / (0.25 ppm)	Designations Pending / (75 ppb)
SO <sub>2</sub> (24-hour)	Attainment / (0.04 ppm)	Unclassifiable/Attainment / (0.14 ppm)
SO <sub>2</sub> (Annual)	--	Unclassifiable/Attainment / (0.03 ppm)
Lead (30-day average)	Attainment / (1.5 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	--
Lead (Rolling 3-month average)	--	Unclassifiable/ Attainment / (0.15 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
Sulfates (24-hour)	Attainment / (25 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	--
H <sub>2</sub> S (1-hour)	Unclassified / (0.03 ppm)	--

Vinyl Chloride (24-hour)	-- / (0.01 ppm)	--
Note: "--" indicates no standard. Source: SCAQMD 2017; CARB 2021; SCAQMD 2021.		

The SCAQMD provides numerical thresholds to analyze the significance of a project's construction and operational emissions on regional air quality. These thresholds are designed such that a project consistent with the thresholds would not have an individually or cumulatively significant impact on the SSAB's air quality. These thresholds are listed in Table 3-2.

**Table 3-2: SCAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds for Coachella Valley**

Pollutant	Mass Thresholds	
	Construction Thresholds (pounds/day)	Operation Thresholds (pounds/day)
NO <sub>x</sub>	100	55
ROG	75	55
PM <sub>10</sub>	150	150
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	55	55
SO <sub>x</sub>	150	150
CO	550	550
Lead	3	3
Toxic Air Contaminants	Maximum Incremental Cancer Risk ≥ 10 in 1 million Cancer Burden > 0.5 excess cancer cases (in areas ≥ 1 in 1 million) Chronic & Acute Hazard Index ≥ 1.0 (project increment)	
Odor	Project creates an odor nuisance pursuant to SCAQMD Rule 402	
GHG	10,000 MT/yr CO <sub>2</sub> e for industrial facilities	
Notes: (1) NO <sub>x</sub> (oxides of nitrogen) and ROG (reactive organic gases)/VOC (volatile organic compounds) are ozone precursors, which chemically react in the presence of sunlight to form ground-level ozone. (2) For Coachella Valley, the mass daily thresholds for operation are the same as the construction thresholds. Source: <a href="http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/scaqmd-air-quality-significance-thresholds.pdf">http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/scaqmd-air-quality-significance-thresholds.pdf</a>		

In addition, the SCAQMD has developed Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) in response to concern regarding exposure of individuals to criteria pollutants in local communities. LSTs have been developed for nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), CO, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. LSTs represent the maximum emissions from a project that will not cause or contribute to an air quality exceedance of the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard at the nearest sensitive receptor, taking into consideration ambient concentrations in each source receptor area, distance to the sensitive receptor, and project size. The use of LSTs is voluntary, to be implemented at the discretion of local agencies (SCAQMD 2021).

The SCAQMD LSTs are defined for 37 source receptor areas. The project site is in source receptor area-30 (SRA-30), Coachella Valley (SCAQMD 2008a). LSTs have been developed for emissions within construction areas up to five acres in size. SCAQMD provides lookup tables for sites that measure up to one, two, or five acres. Although the proposed project sites encompass a total area of approximately five acres, the disturbance area is anticipated to be limited to only a portion of each site. To take a conservative approach, the proposed project emissions have been analyzed against the LSTs for the one-acre site because the LSTs are lower for a smaller site. LSTs for construction on a one-acre site in SRA-30 are shown in Table 3-3. LSTs are provided for receptors at 25 meters (82 feet) from the project site boundary, which is the most conservative LST distance (LSTs range from 25 to 500 meters (82 to 1640 feet)). The closest sensitive receptors to the project site are the residences located adjacent to Sites 5514 and 5513.

**Table 3-3: SCAQMD LSTs for Construction and Operation**

<b>Pollutant</b>	<b>Allowable emissions from a one-acre site within SRA-30 for a receptor within 25 meters, or 82 feet (pounds/day)</b>
Gradual Conversion of NO <sub>x</sub> to NO <sub>2</sub>	132
CO	878
PM <sub>10</sub> - operation	1
PM <sub>10</sub> - construction	4
PM <sub>2.5</sub> - operation	1
PM <sub>2.5</sub> - construction	3
Source: (SCAQMD 2009)	

General Conformity with state implementation plans is a national Clean Air Act regulation that applies to most federal actions. For Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) funded projects, a Clean Air Act General Conformity analysis applies only to projects in a nonattainment area or an attainment area subject to a maintenance plan. It is only required for criteria pollutants for which an area has been designated nonattainment or maintenance. The General Conformity Rule ensures that actions taken by federal agencies in nonattainment and maintenance areas do not interfere with the State's plans to meet NAAQS. 40 CFR Part 93.153 defines de minimis levels, which are the minimum threshold for which a conformity determination must be performed. If the proposed project's annual emissions from construction and/or operation are below the applicable de minimis levels, the project is not subject to a General Conformity determination.

Based on the federal attainment statuses for the SSAB, the de minimis levels that apply to the SSAB are listed in Table 3-4. These levels apply to all direct and indirect annual emissions generated during construction and operation of the project.

**Table 3-4: General Conformity De Minimis Emission Rates for the Salton Sea Air Basin**

<b>Pollutant</b>	<b>SSAB NAAQS Attainment Status Designation</b>	<b>De Minimis Emission Rate (tons/year)</b>
Ozone (VOCs or NO <sub>x</sub> )	Severe Nonattainment	25
PM <sub>10</sub>	Serious Nonattainment	70
Note: NO <sub>x</sub> (oxides of nitrogen) and ROG (reactive organic gases)/VOC (volatile organic compounds) are ozone precursors, which chemically react in the presence of sunlight to form ground-level ozone. For the purposes of this analysis, the terms ROG and VOC are used interchangeably. Source: <a href="https://www.epa.gov/general-conformity/de-minimis-tables">https://www.epa.gov/general-conformity/de-minimis-tables</a>		

**a) Less than Significant Impact**

The applicable air quality plan for the region, the 2016 SCAQMP, forecasts growth in the area through 2031 at 12% for population, 16% for housing units, and 8% for daily vehicle miles traveled (SCAQMD 2016). Without additional control measures in the area, emissions of VOC and NO<sub>x</sub> are expected to decrease, while SO<sub>x</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> are expected to increase due increased population and activity (SCAQMD 2016).

Based on air quality modeling specific to the proposed project, the project’s emissions of these pollutants, as described in further detail below in item “(b),” are well below the thresholds for the region and within the forecasted emissions of the 2016 SCAQMP. Since the project is in the forecasted area of the 2016 SCAQMP and estimates are within the forecasted emissions, the project is considered consistent with the AQMP. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan, and impacts would be less than significant.

**b) Less than Significant Impact**

The proposed project would result in emissions of criteria pollutants from short-term construction activities and routine operation and maintenance activities. Construction emissions were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod 2016.3.2), which was developed by the SCAQMD and is used throughout California to quantify criteria pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs).

The CalEEMod emissions scenarios were based on project-specific information, found in Section 2 *Project Description*. In instances where project-specific information was not available (e.g., construction equipment horsepower, length of worker trips, soil moisture content), the analysis relied on CalEEMod default values for construction activities.

SCAQMD’s Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust) and Rule 403.1 (Supplemental Fugitive Dust Control Requirements for Coachella Valley Sources) require construction projects to implement measures to suppress fugitive dust emissions, such as watering of exposed soils and the preparation of a Fugitive Dust Control Plan. The construction contractor would be required to have a Fugitive Dust Control Plan approved by either the SCAQMD or Riverside County prior to grading or excavation activities.

## Construction Emissions

Air emissions of criteria pollutants during construction would result from the use of construction equipment with internal combustion engines, and offsite vehicles to transport workers, deliver materials to the site, and haul export material from the site. Project construction would also result in fugitive dust emissions, which would be lessened through the implementation of the fugitive dust control measures required by SCAQMD rules. Table 3-5 summarizes the maximum daily pollutant emissions during construction of the project.

**Table 3-5: Proposed Project Maximum Daily Construction Emissions (lbs/day)**

Emissions Source	NO <sub>x</sub>	ROG	CO	SO <sub>x</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>
<b>Total Maximum Daily Emissions</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>&lt;0.1</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>2.1</b>
<i>SCAQMD Regional Thresholds</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>75</i>	<i>550</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>150</i>
<b>Threshold exceeded?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>LST (onsite stationary emissions only)</i>	<i>132</i>	<i>--</i>	<i>878</i>	<i>--</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<b>Threshold exceeded?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

Notes: Emissions presented are the highest of winter or summer modeled emissions. Values may not sum due to rounding. See Appendix A for CalEEMod output sheets. Figures are from mitigated emissions scenario to account for standard dust control measures.

As shown in Table 3-5, project construction emissions would not exceed SCAQMD regional thresholds or LSTs. Therefore, impacts on regional air quality and local receptors due to construction-related air pollutant emissions would be less than significant.

## Operational Emissions

Long-term, operational emissions of criteria pollutants would result from emergency generator use and motor vehicle trips associated with operation and maintenance of the proposed pipeline, booster stations, and above ground storage tank. Criteria pollutant emissions associated with electricity usage, such as the electricity required to run the booster pumps, are modeled, evaluated, and permitted at the power plant producing the electricity. These facilities are subject to local, state, and federal control measures and local air district permitting and consider emissions associated with generation of electricity at the source, rather than use by the end user (e.g., use at the proposed project site). Thus, CalEEMod does not calculate or attribute emissions of criteria pollutants from electricity consumption to individual projects. Net increases in operational project emissions would be primarily attributable to the improvements at BS 5513 and new BS 5513-W.

CVWD would continue to operate its water system with no operational modifications; and therefore, the proposed project would not result in a change in existing operation and maintenance activities. Table 3-6 summarizes the maximum daily pollutant emissions during operation of the project.

**Table 3-6: Proposed Project Maximum Daily Operational Emissions (lbs/day)**

Emissions Source	NO <sub>x</sub>	ROG	CO	SO <sub>x</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>
<b>Total Maximum Daily Emissions</b>	<b>&lt;0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>&lt;0.1</b>	<b>&lt;0.1</b>	<b>&lt;0.1</b>	<b>&lt;0.1</b>
<i>SCAQMD Regional Thresholds</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>550</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>150</i>
<b>Threshold exceeded?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
<i>LST (onsite stationary emissions only)</i>	<i>132</i>	<i>--</i>	<i>878</i>	<i>--</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<b>Threshold exceeded?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

Notes: Emissions presented are the highest of winter or summer modeled emissions. Values may not sum due to rounding. See Appendix A for CalEEMod output sheets. Figures are from mitigated emissions scenario to account for standard dust control measures.

As shown in Table 3-6, project operational emissions would not exceed SCAQMD regional thresholds or LSTs. Therefore, impacts on regional air quality and local receptors due to operational-related air pollutant emissions would be less than significant.

### General Conformity Assessment

Table 3-7 summarizes the proposed project's total annual construction and operational emissions and compares those to the applicable de minimis threshold for the SSAB region. As shown in Table 3-7, the project's criteria air pollutant emissions would not exceed the applicable de minimis thresholds. Therefore, the general conformity requirements do not apply to these emissions and the project is exempt from a conformity determination.

**Table 3-7: Maximum Annual Project Emissions Compared to De Minimis Thresholds (tons/year)**

Emissions Source	NO <sub>x</sub>	VOC	PM <sub>10</sub>
Maximum construction emissions	2	<1	<1
Maximum operational emissions	<1	<1	<1
<i>De Minimis Threshold</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>70</i>
<b>Threshold exceeded?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

Notes: Notes: NO<sub>x</sub> (oxides of nitrogen) and ROG (reactive organic gases)/VOC (volatile organic compounds) are ozone precursors, which chemically react in the presence of sunlight to form ground-level ozone. For the purposes of this analysis, the terms ROG and VOC are used interchangeably.  
Sources: <https://www.epa.gov/general-conformity/de-minimis-tables>

Therefore, the project would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant, and impacts would be less than significant.

### c) Less than Significant Impact

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. While there are single-family residences adjacent to the proposed

project sites, the closest school is the Rancho Mirage Elementary School located approximately 2 miles southeast of the project area.

As discussed under Impact “(b)” above, the project’s construction and operational emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD regional thresholds or LSTs, which are set at levels that protect public health. Furthermore, construction emissions would be temporary and would be distributed amongst the two project sites and small portion of Thunderbird Road, which would further distribute concentrations to lower levels at a particular location during the 11-month construction period. In addition, concentrations of construction emissions or the limited operational emissions would be dispersed to even lower levels before they traveled the 2-mile distance to the nearby elementary school. While single-family homes and to a much lesser degree the elementary school could be exposed to limited temporary construction air pollution emissions, emissions would not generate criteria pollutants, CO hot spots, or releases of toxic air contaminants in excess of applicable thresholds. The project would not introduce an activity such as a dry-cleaning facility, gas station, distribution center that is associated with levels of TAC and/or PM<sub>2.5</sub> that approach the thresholds of significance for cancer risk and hazard indices. The new diesel backup generator would be permitted by SCAQMD as a new stationary source and would be operated in accordance with its permit. The proposed Project would not exceed significant thresholds for TAC and PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions and mitigation would not be required.

CO hotspots have the potential to occur in traffic-congested roadways and intersections with poor circulation. The proposed project would involve minimal operations and maintenance trips. Furthermore, construction-related CO emissions would be below SCAQMD regional and LST thresholds. Therefore, the project would not have the potential to cause a CO hotspot on roadways adjacent to sensitive receptors and impacts would be less than significant.

#### **d) Less than Significant Impact**

As discussed under Impact “(c)” above, the proposed project has a limited potential to generate odorous emissions because construction activities would be temporary and distributed amongst the two project sites and a small portion of Thunderbird Road, which would further distribute concentrations to lower levels at a particular location during the 11-month construction period. While single-family homes and to a much lesser degree the elementary school could be exposed to odorous emissions from construction equipment, these emissions tend to dissipate quickly short distances from the construction site. Once operational, the project components including the two booster pump stations, above ground tank, and underground potable water pipelines would not be associated with odors. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in odors or emissions that would adversely affect a substantial number of people, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.4 Biological Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
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?	[ ]	[ X ]	[ ]	[ ]
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?	[ ]	[ ]	[ X ]	[ ]
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?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ 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, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? | [ ] | [ ] | [ X ] | [ ]   |

### Discussion

A *Biological Resources Technical Study* was prepared in August 2020 for the proposed project (Rincon Consultants, Inc. 2020). Biological conditions in the project area were evaluated by confirming applicable biological regulations, policies, and standards; reviewing biological literature pertinent to the site and vicinity; and conducting a reconnaissance-level biological survey of the proposed project location. The complete *Biological Resources Technical Study* is provided in Appendix B. The biological resources study area included all proposed work and staging locations (Site 5513, Site 5514, and adjacent roadways where pipeline installation would occur), as well as a 25-foot buffer around each site. The study area covered by the *Biological Resources Technical Study* is shown in Figure 3-4 and Figure 3-5.

The literature review included information from standard biological reference materials and regionally applicable regulatory guidance documents, as well as queries of several relevant scientific databases that provide information about occurrences of sensitive biological resources. Rincon reviewed the latest versions of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDDB) and Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Critical Habitat Portal and Information for Planning and Consultation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory (NWI), U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey, and California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants. A complete list of special status species previously documented within a 5-mile radius of the project site was compiled from the CNDDDB entries.

A field survey of the project area and associated biological resources was conducted on April 30, 2020. The biological resources study area was surveyed on foot by a biologist familiar with the biological resources located in the regional vicinity of the property. An inventory of all plant and wildlife species observed was compiled, the existing vegetation

communities were further classified, and the general site and habitat conditions were documented.

### *Conservation Areas*

The CVMSHCP/NCCP, which was approved in 2008 and updated in 2016, is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in the Coachella Valley region of Riverside County. The overall goal of the CVMSHCP/NCCP is to maintain and enhance biological diversity and ecosystem processes within the region while allowing for future economic growth (CVAG 2016). CVWD is a permittee under the CVMSHCP/NCCP.

The project site (and biological resources study) area is located within the planning boundary of the CVMSHCP/NCCP, and is adjacent to and partially within (project buffer) the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area. This conservation area abuts portions of the Thunderbird Heights residential development (as shown in **Figure 2-4**).

The project sites are located adjacent to this Conservation Area; and therefore, the project is required to adhere to the CVMSHCP's Land Use Adjacency Guidelines (described in Section 4.5 of the 2016 CVMSHCP/NCCP).

The biological resources study area included a 25-foot buffer around the Booster Station 5513 and Reservoir 5514 sites to address potential indirect project effects such as noise and dust (Biological Resources Technical Study, August 2020). Construction activities and staging would occur within the fenced sites and along the roadway for installation of 600-foot pipeline, and not encroach into the conservation area.

### *Habitat/Vegetation Communities*

Both project sites are located entirely within a developed residential area, and additional vegetation communities are present within the biological resources study area adjacent to the project sites. One land cover type and two native vegetation communities occur within the biological resources study area: developed land, creosote bush-brittle bush scrub, and smoketree wash woodland. The land cover and vegetation types are shown in Figure 3-4 and Figure 3-5.

**Figure 3-4: Land Cover and Vegetation at Site 5513**



**Figure 3-5: Land Cover and Vegetation at Site 5514**



## *Wildlife*

The biological resources study area and surrounding areas provide habitat suitable for wildlife species that commonly occur in southern California suburban areas. Wildlife observed within or adjacent to the study area included bird species such as lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*), Costa's hummingbird (*Calypte costae*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), and common raven (*Corvus corax*).

## *Special Status Plants and Sensitive Plant Communities*

Ten special status plant species have been previously documented by the CNDDDB and CNPS's Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants within a 5-mile radius of the project area. However, none have a moderate or high potential to occur within the biological resources study area based on the existing developed nature of the project sites, the prior disturbance of the adjacent drainage feature (dry wash), lack of suitable soils, inappropriate hydrologic conditions, and absence of appropriate vegetation communities in the study area. In addition, many of the species' CNDDDB occurrences are historical, dating from the early to mid-1900s. No special-status plant species were detected within the study area during the survey.

Plant communities are considered sensitive biological resources if they have limited distributions, have high wildlife value, include sensitive species, or are particularly susceptible to disturbance. According to the CNDDDB, no sensitive plant communities are recorded within a 1-mile radius of the project area. No sensitive plant communities were observed within the biological resources study area during the survey. The *Biological Resources Technical Study* concluded that no adverse impacts to sensitive plant communities from the project would occur. More detail on the evaluation of these species is found in Appendix B.

## *Special Status Wildlife*

The CNDDDB documented 15 special-status wildlife species within 5 miles of the biological resources study area. These species were evaluated for their potential to occur within the study area. The assessment was based upon the presence of suitable habitat as identified during surveys and existing knowledge of species occurrences and distributions in the region. Of the 15 species evaluated, none have a moderate or high potential to occur within the study area based on low habitat quality in the developed areas, lack of suitable vegetation that would support special-status wildlife species, and regular maintenance of the grounds or other disturbance from frequent human activity.

While native vegetation does exist within the study area's 25-foot buffer, the habitat quality is low relative to species requirements, and many CNDDDB occurrences are historical (dating from the early to mid-1900s). Therefore, special-status wildlife species either have a low potential or are not expected within the biological resources study area buffer. While a portion of Site 5514 biological resources study area's 25-foot buffer extends beyond the fencing and into the CVMSHCP/NCCP Conservation Area and designated critical habitat for Peninsular bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*), the

proposed project footprint is separated from these areas by chain link fences, which create a barrier preventing large mammals from entering the project site. Additionally, located outside the fencing, outside the biological resources study area, and within the CVMSHCP/NCCP Conservation Area is a wildlife drinker. A wildlife drinker, or guzzler, is a structure such as a water trough that is installed in wilderness environments, especially arid regions, to provide a reliable water source to wildlife.

### *Nesting Birds*

While not all birds are designated as special-status species, destruction of their eggs, nests, and nestlings is prohibited by federal and state law. Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code specifically protects birds of prey, and their nests and eggs, against take, possession, or destruction. Section 3503 of the California Fish and Game Code also incorporates restrictions imposed by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act with respect to migratory birds (which consists of all native bird species). The biological resources study area provides suitable nesting habitat for numerous species of birds common in the area and nesting birds are likely to be present within the biological resources study area during the bird nesting season (January 1 through July 1 for raptors, February 1 through August 31 for burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), and March 1 through September 15 for passerines).

### *Jurisdictional Resources*

Potential impacts to water bodies and wetlands are regulated by multiple federal and State agencies. Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act establishes a program to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill materials into “waters of the United States.” Section 404 permits are administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Section 401 of the Clean Water Act further regulates the discharge of dredged or fill materials and is administered in California by the SWRCB and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs). CDFW’s Lake and Streambed Alteration Program (California Fish and Game Code Section 1600) is focused on protection and conservation of fish and wildlife resources within the bed, channel, and bank of “waters of the State.”

Areas potentially subject to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, RWQCB, and CDFW jurisdiction were assessed during the literature review and field visit; however, a formal jurisdictional delineation was not performed. The biological resources study area contains dry, partially channelized ephemeral washes within the 25-foot buffer of both sites, but outside of the proposed project disturbance areas.

The ephemeral feature at Site 5513 is partially channelized with constructed concrete and rock slopes (Figure 3-6). Vegetation within the bed consists of a small immature occurrence of smoketree wash woodland. The ephemeral feature at Site 5514 has a partial concrete angled embankment (Figure 3-7). Both ephemeral features are within the biological study area but outside of the project footprint or disturbance area. Creosote bush and brittle bush scrub is present within the Site 5514 ephemeral feature. Water was not present in either feature at the time of the survey. Design of the drainages appears to contribu

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te to managing stormwater runoff from surrounding mountain slopes to protect the water utility facilities and residential development.

Jurisdictional waters referred to as “Waters of the United States” are defined by the Clean Water Act and jurisdictional assessments determined by guidance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Case law also plays a large part in connecting the statutory definition to the regulatory guidelines. The U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona’s August 30, 2021, order vacating and remanding the 2020 Navigable Waters Protection Rule (2020 Rule) in the case of *Pascua Yaqui Tribe v. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* has halted implementation of the 2020 Rule and reverted the interpreted definition of “Waters of the U.S.” to rely on the pre-2015 regulatory regime until further notice (EPA 2021). . The pre-2015 regime is implemented under guidance from the 2007 *Rapanos v. United States* and 2008 *Carabell v. United States* U.S Supreme Court decisions which states jurisdictional waters generally will not include ditches excavated wholly in and draining only uplands and that do not carry a relatively permanent flow of water. Under the rule, the ephemeral washes at Site 5513 and Site 5514 would not be considered waters of the U.S. under USACE jurisdiction. The drainages may be subject to the jurisdiction of the CDFW (Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code) and RWQCB (Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act) given the presence of bed and bank and potential surface flow connection in a typical year. However, the project footprint for the construction activities and staging would occur within the fenced sites and along the roadway for installation of the 600-foot pipeline and are not located within a drainage area or its embankment.

Figure 3-6: View looking east at Booster Station 5513



**Figure 3-7: View looking northeast at Reservoir 5514-1**



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## **Wildlife Corridors, Linkages, and Preserves**

Wildlife movement and habitat fragmentation are important issues in assessing impacts to wildlife. Habitat fragmentation occurs when a proposed project results in a single, unified habitat area being divided into two or more areas in such a way that the division isolates the two new areas from each other. Isolation of habitat occurs when wildlife cannot move freely from one portion of the habitat to another or from one habitat type to another, as in the fragmentation of habitats within and around “checkerboard” residential development. Habitat fragmentation also can occur when a portion of one or more habitats is converted into another habitat, as when annual burning converts scrub habitats to grasslands habitat.

The biological resources study area is adjacent to a natural landscape block<sup>1</sup> and approximately 2.7 miles northeast of an essential habitat connectivity corridor mapped by the CNDDDB BIOS in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains. However, the project footprint and the study area are also largely on existing disturbed sites as shown on Figure 3-4 and Figure 3-5.

While a small portion of the Site 5514 biological resources study area’s 25-foot buffer extends beyond the fence line and includes the toe of the mountain slopes that are potentially connected to this landscape block the proposed disturbance footprint is contained within the fenced area, and no construction or staging would occur within the conservation area. The natural landscape block and connectivity corridor would not be impacted.

The Site 5513 biological resources study area does not extend to the toe of adjacent mountains slopes, is adjacent to the CVMSHCP/NCCP Conservation Area and does not overlap with the location of the wildlife drinker. Both project sites are within previously developed, fenced, parcels and routinely managed, urbanized, residential area that offers little to no value to wildlife movement. The proposed project disturbance areas are subject to frequent human disturbance that do not provide significant linkage to wildlife habitat.

### **a) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**

As summarized above and detailed in Appendix B, the biological resources study area does not provide suitable habitat for most special-status plant species given the disturbance history of the study area, lack of suitable soils, inappropriate hydrologic conditions, or absence of appropriate vegetation communities. Additionally, no special-status plant species have a moderate or high potential to occur within the study area. As

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<sup>1</sup>A natural habitat area defined by ecological conditions such as low fragmentation, high integrity of resources, and independent of ownership; identified by CDFW in essential habitat connectivity mapping. <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning/Connectivity/CEHC>).

a result, project impacts to special-status plant species are not expected and no mitigation measures are recommended.

The biological resources study area does not provide suitable habitat for most special-status wildlife species given their known distributions and habitat requirements relative to existing site conditions that include existing development, low quality habitat relative to species needs, site fencing that keeps out large animals, and regular maintenance or other disturbance from frequent human activity. No special-status wildlife species were identified to have a moderate or high potential to occur within the study area. Project impacts are limited to previously disturbed areas with high human activity. As a result, no direct impacts to special-status species are expected.

Water supply to the wildlife drinker, if interrupted could result in an indirect impact to species; however, the proposed project would not disrupt water supply to the drinker or drinker functionality. Since no special-status wildlife species were identified to have a moderate to high potential to occur on the disturbed project site, the potential for indirect impacts (such as noise) to impact wildlife is very limited and would be less than significant.

Additionally, implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would ensure compliance with the CVMSHCP/NCCP Land Use Adjacency Guidelines and further reduce the potential for impacts to special-status wildlife.

Nesting bird habitat is present within and adjacent to the biological resources study area, particularly within landscape trees. Since nesting bird species are protected by the California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503 and 3503.5, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act the project may impact nesting birds through injury, mortality, or disruption of normal adult behaviors which could result in the abandonment or harm to eggs and nestlings if initial ground disturbance and vegetation/tree trimming or removal is required during the nesting bird season. Construction occurring within the vicinity of nesting birds may also indirectly impact individuals with construction noise, dust, and vibration from equipment. To ensure compliance with California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503 and 3503.5, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would be implemented. This measure would require a nesting bird and raptor pre-construction survey if project-related activities occur during the bird breeding season, and appropriate avoidance and monitoring of nests found (if applicable). Thus, potential impacts to nesting birds would be avoided or reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1.

## **b) No Impact**

No sensitive vegetation communities were documented within or adjacent to the biological resources study area. Furthermore, project impacts are limited to previously developed areas with high human activity. Therefore, the proposed project does not have the potential to result in direct or indirect impacts to sensitive vegetation communities. The proposed project would have no impact on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community.

### **c) Less Than Significant Impact**

Ephemeral features potentially under the jurisdiction of the CDFW and RWQCB are present within the biological resources study area's 25-foot buffer, but outside of the proposed project footprint associated with the construction and staging areas. The proposed project activities would be contained within the fenced parcels and outside the slopes and beds of these features and, therefore, direct impacts are not anticipated.

Construction activities could result in indirect impacts (e.g., oil leaks from vehicles, soil erosion) that, if they were to escape the proposed disturbance area, could affect potential jurisdictional features and be potentially significant; as such, project contractor would be required to comply with the NPDES Construction General Permit which would require development of a construction Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP would include best management practices (BMPs) to control storm water discharges and would avoid indirect impacts to potential jurisdictional waters. Erosion control BMPs that may be used include silt fences, sandbags, certified weed-free straw wattles and straw bales, and other control measures as needed. These construction BMPs are required by the NPDES Construction General Permit and would limit the potential for project activities to have an indirect effect on the surrounding water features; and therefore, potential indirect impact to a water body would be less than significant with adherence to the conditions of the NPDES Construction General Permit and BMPs in the SWPPP. No mitigation would be required.

Since the project does not directly impact state or federally protected wetlands through direct removal, filling, or hydrological interruption, and the potential for indirect effects is limited to stormwater runoff controlled by regulatory permit conditions, the potential for the project to have a substantially adverse effect on jurisdictional waters is low and would result in no impact. Similarly, the proposed project would have no impact on a jurisdictional water or mapped wetland.

### **d) Less Than Significant Impact**

While the project biological resources study area extends beyond the fence line and into areas connected to a natural landscape block and an essential habitat connectivity corridor, the proposed project footprints are located within previously developed and routinely managed areas that offer little to no value to wildlife movement. As described in the discussion section above, the nearest essential habitat connectivity corridor is 2.7 miles away from the proposed project sites and the project would not interfere with wildlife movement within this corridor. In addition, water supply to the wildlife drinker adjacent to the study area would not be interrupted by project activities and wildlife movement would not be negatively impacted if there was a loss of this water source.. The proposed project is not anticipated to have an incremental effect on localized and urban adapted wildlife movement or create habitat fragmentation in the region, nor is it anticipated to have a significant impact on regional wildlife movement. Direct impacts to wildlife movement as a result of project implementation would be less than significant. No additional lighting is proposed, and no enclosed nocturnal noise generating activities are proposed. The encasement of booster stations within noise attenuating structures would limit outside

noise levels around the clock and would not generate significant amounts of nocturnal noise. Therefore, indirect impacts to wildlife movement would be less than significant.

#### **e) No Impact**

The city of Rancho Mirage does not have additional local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. In addition, no protected trees are proposed for removal. Thus, the proposed project is not expected to conflict with any local policies or ordinances and there would be no impact.

#### **f) Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**

The proposed project sites are located within the planning boundary of the CVMSHCP/NCCP and adjacent to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area. The CVMSHCP/NCCP Conservation Objectives for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area are focused on conserving specific acreages of different types of habitats within the Conservation Area boundary. Project activities at both sites would be contained within the fenced area and would not directly affect habitat within the Conservation Area. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the conservation objectives. However, because the project sites are located adjacent to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, the project is also required to adhere to the CVMSHCP's Land Use Adjacency Guidelines as described in Section 4.5 of the 2016 CVMSHCP/NCCP.

The CVMSHCP/NCCP Land Use Adjacency Guidelines, listed in the bullets below, address potential indirect effects associated with drainage, toxicstoxicstoxics, lighting, noise, invasive species, barriers, and grading/land development. The discussion following the bullet evaluates the potential for the proposed project to conflict with each guideline.

- *Drainage - Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate plans to ensure that the quantity and quality of runoff discharged to the adjacent Conservation Area is not altered in an adverse way when compared with existing conditions. Stormwater systems shall be designed to prevent the release of toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials or other elements that might degrade or harm biological resources or ecosystem processes within the adjacent Conservation Area.*

The project would require grading and site work which could result in minor alterations to existing site drainage patterns and, as described in *Section 3.10 (c) Hydrology and Water Quality* and *Section 3.9 (b) Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, if not properly mitigated could result in the release of toxins, chemicals, or petroleum products. Therefore, compliance with Mitigation Measure BIO-2 which incorporates the CVMSHCP/NCCP Land Use Adjacency Guidelines would reduce this potential conflict by requiring documentation that adverse alteration to drainage quantity or quality would be less than significant level.

- *Toxics - Land uses proposed adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that use chemicals or generate bioproducts such as manure that are potentially toxic or may adversely affect wildlife and plant species, habitat, or water quality shall incorporate measures to ensure that application of such chemicals does not result in any discharge to the adjacent Conservation Area.*

As described in *Section 3.10 (c) Hydrology and Water Quality* and *Section 3.9 (b) Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, the project could result in the use of chemicals during fueling or maintenance that could adversely affect wildlife or plant species or water quality if not properly mitigated. Therefore, compliance with Mitigation Measure BIO-2 which incorporates the CVMSHCP/NCCP Land Use Adjacency Guidelines to require documentation that the project would not discharge these materials into the Conservation Area which would reduce this potential conflict to a less than significant level.

- *Lighting - For proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area, lighting shall be shielded and directed toward the developed area. Landscape shielding or other appropriate methods shall be incorporated in project designs to minimize the effects of lighting adjacent to or within the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.*

The proposed project involves introduction of a limited amount of new permanent site lighting as described in *Section 2.6 Proposed Project Description*. Lightning would be installed similar to existing site lighting to avoid conflicts with the nearby Conservation Area. Potential conflicts with the lighting guideline would be avoided by documentation of design measures which incorporate and specify that site lighting shall not result in a substantial increase in direct or unshielded lighting within the Conservation Area. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2 any potential impact from a conflict would be reduced to a less than significant level.

- *Noise - Proposed Development adjacent to or within a Conservation Area that generates noise in excess of 75 dBA  $L_{eq}$  hourly shall incorporate setbacks, berms, or walls, as appropriate, to minimize the effects of noise on the adjacent Conservation Area in accordance with the guidelines to be included in the Implementation Manual.*

As discussed in *Section 3.13 Noise* the proposed project would not create a permanent increase in noise levels above the existing conditions and, therefore, would not have a permanent potential conflict with this noise guideline. However, as described in *Section 3.13* the project may have the potential to generate temporary construction noise in excess of 75 dBA  $L_{eq}$  hourly at the Conservation Area boundary. Construction equipment is anticipated to generate a maximum of 90 dBA at 50 feet. While construction equipment use duration estimates shown in Table 3-15 indicate that maximum noise levels in excess of 75 dBA could be sustained for up 8 hour durations, it is anticipated that there will be pauses and breaks in equipment use throughout the day, which would reduce the hourly average noise levels. However, give

n the proximity to the Conservation Area, these average hourly noise levels still could exceed the 75 dBA  $L_{eq}$  threshold that would indicate a conflict with this noise guideline. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would require noise reduction techniques that maintain sustained hourly noise levels at the Conservation Area boundary to levels at or less than 75 dBA  $L_{eq}$  which would document the project's compliance with the noise reduction guidelines and would therefore limit any potential conflict with this noise guideline.

- *Invasives - Invasive, non-native plant species shall not be incorporated in the landscape for land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area. Landscape treatments within or adjacent to a Conservation Area shall incorporate native plant materials to the maximum extent feasible; recommended native species are listed in Table 4-112 of the CVMSHCP/NCCP. The plants listed in Table 4-113 of the CVMSHCP/NCCP shall not be used within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. This list may be amended from time to time through a Minor Amendment with Wildlife Agency Concurrence.*

The project proposes new vegetation for site screening and landscaping which could potentially conflict with this policy if any plants listed in Table 4-113 of the CVMSHCP/NCCP were used. Mitigation Measure BIO-2 will be implemented to prohibit the use of the species from Table 4-113 and to recommend the native species listed in Table 4-112 of the CVMSHCP/NCCP are incorporated into the project as feasible.

- *Barriers - Land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area shall incorporate barriers in individual project designs to minimize unauthorized public access, domestic animal predation, illegal trespass, or dumping in a Conservation Area. Such barriers may include native landscaping, rocks/boulders, fencing, walls and/or signage.*

For security of CVWD's facilities, Sites 5513 and 5514 have existing fences to prevent unauthorized access, trespassing, dumping, etc. The proposed project would include minimal alterations to existing fencing at Site 5514 to add a new gate at the vehicle access point. Besides this alteration, the perimeter fences at Site 5513 and Site 5514 would remain as-is and would continue to limit access to the sites. However, to document consistency with the barriers guideline, Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would be required to avoid removal of existing barriers separating the project area and the Conservation Area. With mitigation any potential impact would be less than significant.

- *Grading/Land Development - Manufactured slopes associated with site development shall not extend into adjacent land in a Conservation Area.*

The proposed project would require limited grading within the project footprint which does not extend into the Conservation Area. However, given the proximity to the Conservation Area, Mitigation BIO-2 would be required to document consistency with the grading/land development guidelines and would require that no slopes extend into the adjacent Conservation Area. Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would be required to

mitigate any potential conflict and when implemented any potential impact would be less than significant.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would document the proposed project's consistency with the CVMSHCP/NCCP Land Use Adjacency Guidelines as well as the overall CVMSHCP/NCCP. Thus, potential impacts to the CVMSHCP/NCCP would be avoided or reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-2.

Mitigation Measures:

**Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Nesting Birds**

If construction occurs within the bird breeding season (typically January 1 to September 15 to account for both passerines and raptors), then no more than 1 week prior to initiation of ground disturbance and/or vegetation removal, a nesting bird and raptor pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within the disturbance footprint plus a 100-foot buffer (500 feet for raptors), where feasible. If the proposed project is phased or construction activities stop for more than one week, a subsequent pre-construction nesting bird and raptor survey will be required prior to each phase of construction.

Pre-construction nesting bird and raptor surveys shall be conducted during the time of day when birds are active and shall factor in sufficient time to perform this survey adequately and completely. A summary of results of the nesting bird and raptor survey results shall be submitted to the lead agency for review and approval prior to ground and/or vegetation disturbance activities.

If nests are found, their locations shall be flagged. An appropriate avoidance buffer ranging in size from 25 to 50 feet for passerines, and up to 500 feet for raptors. These avoidance buffers shall be determined based upon the species and the proposed work activity. The avoidance buffers shall be determined and demarcated by a qualified biologist with exclusion construction fencing or other suitable flagging. Active nests shall be monitored until it has been determined that the nest is no longer being used by either the young or adults. No ground disturbance shall occur within this buffer until the qualified biologist confirms that the breeding/nesting is complete and all the young have fledged. If no nesting birds are observed during pre-construction surveys, no further actions would be necessary.

**Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Compliance with CVMSHCP/NCCP the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan's Land Use Adjacency Guidelines**

CVWD shall demonstrate compliance with the CVMSHCP/NCCP Section 4.5 Land Use Adjacency Guidelines by implementing the following measures prior to final design and/or for inclusion in the contractor specifications:

- ***Drainage: Alterations to site drainage or runoff quality shall not alter quantity or quality of drainage.***
  - Design plans shall maintain existing site drainage patterns that would result in similar quantities and locations as existing site runoff.
  - The Contractor shall not introduce toxins, chemicals, petroleum products, exotic plant materials, or other elements that would be allowed to enter site runoff.
- ***Toxics: The proposed project shall not release toxins into the environment such they could affect the nearby Conservation Area.***
  - The Contractor shall not use chemicals or generate bioproducts on-site that would be discharged to or have the potential to be released to the adjacent Conservation Area.
- ***Lighting: The proposed project shall not result in a substantial increase in direct or unshielded lighting within the Conservation Area.***
  - Site lighting shall be selected to be down facing, shielded, and use warm toned light.
  - Site lighting shall be located at points screened from or facing away from the Conservation Area to the maximum extent feasible. If not feasible, landscape screening shall be implemented where Conservation Area ambient light levels are substantially increased as a result of the new site lighting.
- ***Noise: Sustained hourly construction noise levels over 75 dBA  $L_{eq}$  at the edge of the Conservation Area shall be avoided.***
  - CVWD shall review the contractor's schedule, and work with the contractor to identify when construction activities could result in levels of noise of 75 dBA  $L_{eq}$  or greater (measured at the boundary of the Conservation Area) that would be sustained for durations greater than one hour.
  - If sustained noise levels are anticipated, the contractor shall implement noise control measures to help attenuate sound. Potential measures consistent with the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines may include but are not limited to setbacks, berms, sound walls, or other physical barriers to help attenuate sound.
- ***Invasives: Introduction of prohibited species listed on Table 4-113 of the CVMSHCP/NCCP shall be prohibited and native species from Table 4-112 of the implementation measures shall be selected for site vegetation.***
  - Design plans shall incorporate native species as listed in Table 4-112 of the CVMSHCP/NCCP and shall avoid use of any invasive species listed on Table 4-113.
  - The Contractor shall certify all equipment has been cleaned and is clear of foreign soils that potentially contain invasive species that could be introduced on site.
- ***Barriers: Removal of existing barriers separating the project area and the Conservation Area shall be avoided.***

- The Contractor shall refrain from modifying any access to the Conservation Area. All fencing into a conservation area shall be avoided throughout construction and project implementation.
- *Grading/Land Development: Extend slopes associated with development into the adjacent Conservation Area shall be prohibited.*
  - The Contractor shall be responsible for site grading, which shall not extend slopes beyond the project site or into the Conservation Area.

### 3.5 Cultural Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
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 Study* was prepared in February 2021 for the proposed project (Rincon 2021). Cultural resources were identified and evaluated through a cultural resources records search, outreach to local interested parties and Native American contacts, historical map and imagery review, field survey of the proposed project area, and professional archaeologist evaluation. The complete *Cultural Resources Study* is provided in **Appendix C**. The Area of Potential Effects (APE) included all proposed work and staging locations (Site 5513, Site 5514, and adjacent roadways where pipeline installation would occur) and extended to a depth of 12 feet at Site 5513, 15 feet at Site 5514, and 5 feet where pipeline installation would occur. The APE is shown in Figure 3-8.

**Figure 3-8: Area of Potential Effects**



### *Cultural Resources Records Search*

The California Historical Resource Information System (CHRIS) records search was obtained from the Eastern Information Center (EIC) on May 12, 2020. The records search was conducted to identify any previously conducted cultural resources studies and previously recorded cultural resources within the APE and a 1-mile radius surrounding it. The EIC records search indicated that 20 cultural resources studies have been previously

conducted within 1 mile of the APE. Of these studies, one was in the APE but did not result in the identification of any cultural resources. A total of seven previously recorded cultural resources were identified within 1 mile of the APE, none of which are located within the APE.

To supplement the CHRIS search, the following inventories were reviewed: the National Register of Historic Properties (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), lists of California Historical Landmarks and Points of Historical Interest, and the Built Environment Resources Directory for Riverside County. All supplemental reviews were negative for the APE.

### *Section 106 Outreach*

Native American outreach was initiated in November 2019. *Section 3.18, Tribal Cultural Resources* provides an overview of the tribal outreach and consultation conducted for proposed project under AB 52.

Rincon Consultants contacted the following local interested parties to request information on known or potential historic or cultural resources located in or near the APE: Coachella Valley Historical Society, Inc. (CVHS), the Historical Society of Palm Desert (HSPD), and the city of Rancho Mirage. Rincon prepared outreach letters to the above-listed contacts on May 22, 2020; due to COVID-19 pandemic considerations and business closures, letters were sent via email. Two responses were received from this outreach effort, summarized below and documented in **Appendix C**:

On May 23, 2020, HPSD responded via email noting that, while the proposed project is located on an alluvial fan developed at the mouth of Bradley Canyon and may have furnished seasonal water historically, it was not large enough to constitute a year-round water source, resulting in low potential for a historic village site and moderate potential for a historic gathering camp site. Based on the locations of the APE, HPSD recommended limited monitoring. At this time, given the disturbed and previously studied nature of the site and in review of the cultural resource materials prepared for the project including the registered professional archeologists report conclusions, CVWD has elected to decline this recommendation. In the event, an unanticipated discovery is made in the field, the project would comply with State-mandated recovery actions.

On June 28, 2020, Ben Torres, on behalf of the city of Rancho Mirage, responded via email, noting two designated historical resources in the area of the APE. He stated further that since the APE is outside of the designated resources, he did not anticipate a potential impact to cultural resources.

### *Historical Imagery Review*

A review of historical aerial images to ascertain the developmental history of the APE. Aerial imagery depicts initial development of Thunderbird Heights by 1953 and continuing residential development and densification in the following decades. Site 5514 was established by 1959 and Site 5513 was established by 1979.

## *Field Survey*

A pedestrian field survey was conducted on April 30, 2020 and identified no cultural resources in the APE (Rincon 2021). The field survey indicated the presence of historic period infrastructure within both portions of the APE. Site 5513 and Site 5514 were therefore recorded on California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Forms and evaluated for listing in the NRHP, CRHR and in the city of Rancho Mirage Register of Historic Resources. As a result of the evaluation, the two sites are recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP, CRHR and the city of Rancho Mirage Register of Historic Resources. They are therefore not considered historic properties for the purposes of Section 106 or historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

### **a) No Impact**

Based on the results of the *Cultural Resources Study*, there would be no effect on historic resources, as no historic properties exist within the APE.

### **b) Less Than Significant Impact**

The results of the cultural resources records search, Native American and local interested party outreach, historical imagery review, and field survey identified no archeological resources within the APE. The APE has been previously disturbed by construction of the roadways and tanks and by the placement of existing subsurface utilities and the nearby storm drainage channel. These results indicate that the APE is not highly sensitive for buried archaeological remains and there is a very low probability of finding previously undiscovered resources on site. If previously unknown resources are uncovered, Public Resource Code section 21082, CVWD protocols, and professional archaeological standards would be followed to stop work, evaluate the resources for eligibility, and if eligible treat the resource to the satisfaction of professional archaeological standards. .

Given the disturbed and previously studied nature of the site, combined with limited ground disturbing activities and standards for identification and evaluation of previously undiscovered resources no substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resources would be expected and any impacts would be considered less than significant.

### **c) Less Than Significant Impact**

The unanticipated discovery of human remains is also a possibility during ground disturbing activities. CVWD will comply with applicable regulations if human remains are unearthed during construction activities. The following notifications will apply, depending on the nature of the find:

- If the find includes human remains, or remains that are potentially human, a no-work radius will be established and CVWD shall ensure reasonable protection measures are taken to protect the discovery from disturbance (AB 2641). CVWD shall notify the Riverside County Coroner, who will then have two working days to make a determination of significance (pursuant to Section

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7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code and Section 27941 of the Government Code). The provisions of Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code (PRC), and AB 2641 will be implemented.

- If the Coroner determines the remains are Native American and not the result of a crime scene, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which then will designate a Native American Most Likely Descendant for the project (Section 5097.98 of the PRC). The designated Most Likely Descendant will have 48 hours from the time access to the property is granted to make recommendations concerning treatment of the remains.
- If the landowner does not agree with the recommendations of the Most Likely Descendant, the Native American Heritage Commission can mediate (Section 5097.94 of the PRC). If no agreement is reached, the landowner must rebury the remains where they will not be further disturbed (Section 5097.98 of the PRC). This will also include either recording the site with the Native American Heritage Commission or the appropriate information center; using an open space or conservation zoning designation or easement; or recording a reinterment document with the county in which the property is located (AB 2641).
- Work may not resume within the no-work radius until the lead agencies, through consultation as appropriate, determine that the treatment measures have been completed to their satisfaction.

Compliance with applicable regulations would ensure that impacts to human remains are less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.6 Energy

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

Electricity services within the project area are provided through a cooperative agreement between the Rancho Mirage Energy Authority (RMEA) and Southern California Edison (SCE). The RMEA is a locally run, not-for-profit power program created by the city of Rancho Mirage and overseen by the Rancho Mirage City Council. RMEA supplies powers to homes and businesses in Rancho Mirage and offers the opportunity for residents to replace SCE electricity with up to 100% renewable energy (RMEA 2018). SCE still delivers the power over their lines and wires and billing is coordinated through RMEA. Natural gas services within the project area are provided by Southern California Gas Company. Since RMEA is specific to Rancho Mirage, the proposed project components are powered by electricity provided by the cooperative RMEA and SCE agreement. CVWD’s facilities in the eastern Coachella Valley are powered by electricity supplied by the Imperial Irrigation District, and CVWD facilities within the remaining service area are powered by electricity provided by SCE. Electrical facilities would be updated at Booster Station 5513 and new electrical facilities would be constructed at the new Booster Station 5513-W, including a transformer (see *Section 2.6.2 BS 5513 Upgrades and New BS 5513-W*). CVWD will continue to consult with RMEA and SCE staff related to the design, installation, or improvements to the new and/or improved project features.

Electricity consumption during operation of the proposed project would be attributable primarily to the existing BS 5513 and new BS 5513-W. The new pressure reducing station and new electrical equipment at Site 5513 would maximize pumping efficiencies and improve system reliability by combining the existing electrical panels with one new motor control center and SCADA cabinet. Current operational energy demand at BS 5513

ranges from approximately 30 kilowatts (kW) to 85 kW which equates to approximately 19,000 kW hours (kWh) per month or 225,000 kWh per year. Operational energy demand at BS 5513-W is estimated to be similar. At Site 5514, the existing BS 5514 would be demolished and would no longer consume energy. Reservoir 5514-2 would be equipped with a mixing system which would have negligible energy use.

### a) Less than Significant Impact

Construction of the proposed project would involve construction-related fossil fuel consumption from operation of diesel-powered construction equipment, worker vehicle trips, and material hauling and delivery. Table 3-8 and Table 3-10 summarize the anticipated construction fleet for the proposed project. Table 3-9 and Table 3-11 summarize the estimated material delivery and hauling truck trips, and worker vehicle trips for each type of construction activity.

**Table 3-8: Site 5513 Construction Fleet Summary**

Construction Phase	Duration (days)	Anticipated Fleet	Usage (hours/day)
Demolition	16 days	1 Concrete/Industrial Saw	8
		1 Rubber Tired Dozer	1
		2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	6
		1 Water Truck	8
Site Preparation	2 days	1 Grader	8
		1 Tractor/Loader/Backhoe	8
		1 Water Truck	8
Grading	3 days	1 Concrete/Industrial Saw	8
		1 Rubber Tired Dozer	1
		2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	6
		1 Water Truck	8
Building Construction	160 days	1 Crane	4
		2 Forklifts	6
		2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	8
		1 Water Truck	8
Paving	8 days	4 Cement and Mortar Mixers	6
		1 Paver	7
		1 Roller	7
		1 Tractor/Loader/Backhoe	7
		1 Water Truck	8
Architectural Coating	8 days	1 Air Compressor	6

Sources: CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2 default values; see **Appendix A** for model output.  
 Note: Anticipated fleet approximations based on standard categories of typical construction equipment and usage per day estimations are conservative to cover the variety of equipment classes required by construction.

**Table 3-9: Site 5513 Construction Trip Summary**

<b>Construction Phase</b>	<b>Duration (days)</b>	<b>Daily Worker Vehicle Trips (11 miles each)</b>	<b>Daily Vendor Trips (5.4 miles each)</b>	<b>Daily Hauling Truck Trips (20 miles each)</b>
Demolition	16 days	10	0	5
Site Preparation	2 days	5	0	0
Grading	3 days	10	0	24
Building Construction	160 days	10	0	0
Paving	8 days	18	0	0
Architectural Coating	8 days	6	0	0

Sources: CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2 default values; see **Appendix A** for model output.

**Table 3-10: Site 5514 Construction Fleet Summary**

<b>Construction Phase</b>	<b>Duration (days)</b>	<b>Anticipated Fleet</b>	<b>Usage (hours/day)</b>
Demolition	18 days	1 Concrete/Industrial Saw 1 Rubber Tired Dozer 2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes 1 Water Truck	8 1 6 8
Site Preparation	2 days	1 Grader 1 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes 1 Water Truck	8 8 8
Grading	4 days	1 Concrete/Industrial Saw 1 Rubber Tired Dozer 2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes 1 Water Truck	8 1 6 8
Building Construction	183 days	1 Crane 2 Forklifts 2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes 1 Water Truck	4 6 8 8
Paving	9 days	4 Cement and Mortar Mixers 1 Paver 1 Roller 1 Tractor/Loader/Backhoe 1 Water Truck	6 7 7 7 8
Architectural Coating	9 days	1 Air Compressor	6
Sources: CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2 default values; see <b>Appendix A</b> for model output. Note: Anticipated fleet approximations based on standard categories of typical construction equipment and usage per day estimations are conservative to cover the variety of equipment classes required by construction.			

**Table 3-11: Site 5514 Construction Trip Summary**

<b>Construction Phase</b>	<b>Duration (days)</b>	<b>Daily Worker Vehicle Trips (14.6 miles each)</b>	<b>Daily Vendor Trips (6.2 miles each)</b>	<b>Daily Hauling Truck Trips (20 miles each)</b>
Demolition	18 days	10	0	9
Site Preparation	2 days	5	0	0
Grading	4 days	10	0	0
Building Construction	183 days	10	1	0
Paving	9 days	18	0	0
Architectural Coating	9 days	2	0	0

Sources: CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2 default values; see **Appendix A** for model output.

The proposed project would implement typical construction practices such as excavation/shoring, grading, foundation work, on-site piping installation and equipment installation, and surface restoration. As shown in the tables above, the proposed project would not require any 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 proposed project would be required to comply with the 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. As such, construction of the proposed project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy during construction.

Net increases in energy consumption during project operation would be primarily attributable to the improvements at BS 5513 and new BS 5513-W. The proposed project would have minimal daily energy demand associated with fossil fuels consumed for maintenance activities, including regular inspection trips (see *Section 2 Project Description*). The proposed project would implement typical operational practices compared to projects of similar type and size. In addition, the energy consumption of the proposed project is necessary to provide a safe and reliable drinking water supply for the Thunderbird Heights community. As such, operation of the project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy.

Therefore, neither construction or operation would result in wasteful consumption of energy resources, and impacts are less than significant.

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**b) Less than Significant Impact**

The *2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan* (CARB 2017) focuses on reducing energy demand, and GHG emissions, which result from mobile sources and land use development. The proposed 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 proposed project would not interfere with existing County or regional programs intended to reduce energy and improve water use efficiency and it would not result in emissions higher than the SCAQMD significance screening thresholds (see further analysis is *Section 3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions* of this document). In addition, operation of the proposed project would rely on electricity produced by the existing grid. As RMEA and SCE continue to transition to alternative energy sources, so would the electricity have used for the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and impacts would be less than significant.

*Mitigation Measures:* None required or recommended.

### 3.7 Geology and Soils

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
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 topsoil?	[ ]	[ ]	[ 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 wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? | [ ] | [ ] | [ ]   | [ X ] |
| f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?  | [ ] | [ ] | [ X ] | [ ]   |

**Discussion**

The Coachella Valley is located within California’s Colorado Desert Geomorphic Province, bordered to the west by the Peninsular Ranges, to the north by the Transverse Ranges, and to the east by the Mojave Desert. The Colorado Desert is a low-lying barren desert basin, portions of which are about 245 feet below sea level.

The majority of Southern California, including the Coachella Valley, is considered a seismically active region and is subject to risk from earthquakes and other geologic effects that are triggered by earthquakes such as ground shaking, fault rupture, landslides, liquefaction, and subsidence. Two of California’s most active faults, the San Andreas and San Jacinto faults, are located within proximity to the project area. The San Andreas and San Jacinto have been designated by the California Geological Survey as Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones. The San Andreas Fault runs through the Coachella Valley and is located approximately 5.5 miles northeast of the project area. The San Jacinto Fault is a major strike-slip fault zone located approximately 14 miles southwest of the project area (USGS 2021).

**a) Less than Significant Impact**

The primary seismic hazard to the proposed project is strong ground shaking from earthquakes produced by local and regional faults. 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 site. Seismically induced ground rupture could occur with the physical displacement of surface deposits in response to an earthquake’s seismic waves. Ground rupture is most likely along active faults, and typically occurs during earthquakes of magnitude five or higher. Ground rupture only affects the area immediately adjacent to a fault.

The proposed project is located approximately 5.5 miles from the San Andreas fault and approximately 14 miles from the San Jacinto fault, which are two of California's most active faults and are designated by the California Geological Survey as Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones. While the project site is near these active faults, according to the California Geologic Survey's *California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application* (CGS 2021), the project site is not located within a fault zone. Therefore, because the project site is not located within the San Andreas or San Jacinto fault zones, impacts related to ground rupture would be less than significant.

While the potential for ground rupture is low, the proximity to the two active fault zones, puts the project area at high risk for strong seismic ground shaking. Although there is a likelihood of strong seismic ground shaking in the project area, the proposed project would not introduce any land uses or attractions that would bring additional people to the area. While failure of the tank as the result of seismic activity could potentially result in the release of water into the surrounding neighborhood, the project would be designed in conformance with the strict seismic engineering standards which require the design to consider strong shaking events, and which would be stamped by a licensed professional engineer certifying that the design is sufficient to meet the current code. The structures are also not designed to house people, further limiting the potential adverse effects that could directly or indirectly occur as a result of the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would not directly or indirectly result in substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death due to seismic ground shaking and impacts would be less than significant.

#### **b) Less than Significant Impact**

The proposed project could result in minor erosion of soils on or offsite during project construction due to the presence of soil piles and exposed trenching during excavation activities if subjected to rain and not properly managed. However, construction of the proposed project would include best management practices (BMPs) as specified in the SWPPP to control wind or water erosion of exposed soils. The SWPPP would be prepared as part of required compliance with the Construction General Permit (Construction General Permit) (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000002). Some of the BMPs included in the SWPPP may include use of silt fences to prevent erosion and sedimentation into water bodies, covering of stockpiles, use of desilting basins, limitations on work during high-wind events, and post-construction revegetation and drainage requirements. Therefore, compliance with the Construction General Permit and implementation of BMPs to minimize the potential for soil erosion or topsoil loss during proposed project construction would reduce potential impacts to less than significant.

#### **c) Less than Significant Impact**

Although the proposed project is located at the base of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, the project disturbance area is relatively level with no slopes or hills. The existing site has been stable with no issues of lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. The proposed project would require excavation but would meet current design standards and geotechnical practices appropriate to stabilize the site to support

the new infrastructure. Therefore, construction of the proposed project would not result in impacts related to ground failure such as landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse and impacts would be less than significant.

#### **d) Less than Significant Impact**

Expansive soils are generally high in clays or silts that shrink or swell with variation in soil moisture content and can adversely affect the structural integrity of underground facilities including pipelines. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) *Web Soil Survey*, the project area is underlain primarily by a variety of cobbly, gravelly, and stony sand (USDA 2021). Design of the proposed pipelines, above ground storage tank, and booster station would adhere to CVWD's professional engineering standards, which provide regulations related to soils and foundations, to avoid adverse effects of potential expansive soils. The proposed project would not be located on expansive soil which could create risks to life or property and impacts would be less than significant.

#### **e) No Impact**

Septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems would not be a part of the proposed project. Therefore, the project would have no impact to septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems.

#### **f) Less than Significant Impact**

Significant paleontological resources are fossils or assemblages of fossils that are unique, unusual, rare, uncommon, diagnostically, or stratigraphically important, and those that add to an existing body of knowledge in specific areas, stratigraphically, taxonomically, or regionally. They include fossil remains of large to very small aquatic and terrestrial vertebrates, remains of plants and animals previously not represented in certain portions of the stratigraphy, and assemblages of fossils that might aid stratigraphic correlations, particularly those offering data for the interpretation of tectonic events, geomorphologic evolution, paleoclimatology, and the relationships of aquatic and terrestrial species (Riverside County 2002).

The proposed project area is located in the Salton Trough, a large tectonic depression that includes the Coachella and Imperial Valleys of southern California, and the western half of the Mexicali Valley and the Colorado River delta in Mexico (Alles 2011). Over the past 4.5 million years, the Salton Trough has been periodically inundated with fresh and brackish waters, influenced by the Gulf of California, the Colorado River, and ancient Lake Cahuilla. Lake Cahuilla was a former freshwater lake that periodically occupied a major portion of the Salton Trough during the Holocene, approximately 10,000 to 240 years ago (Deméré 2002).

According to the Geologic Maps of the Thousand Palms & Lost Horse Mountain and the Palm Desert & Coachella 15-minute quadrangles (Dibblee and Minch 2008), the project area is underlain by alluvial sand, gravel and clay of valley areas. These sedimentary deposits are generally too young to contain fossilized material.

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Project excavation is expected to reach depths of up to 15 feet below the ground surface and is therefore not expected to reach depths where sensitive paleontological resources would be expected to occur. In addition, the project would take place in areas already disturbed and impacted by human activity and the project area is underlain by geologic deposits that are generally too young to contain fossilized material. As a result, the potential for encountering fossil resources during project excavation or ground disturbance is low and impacts to paleontological resources would be less than significant.

### 3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

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

Pollutants that are known to increase the greenhouse effect in the earth’s atmosphere, thereby adding to global climate change impacts, are referred to as greenhouse gases (GHG). The State of California definition of GHGs in the Health & Safety Code, Section 38505(g) includes carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride. Some GHGs, such as CO<sub>2</sub>, occur naturally and are emitted to the atmosphere through natural processes. Water vapor is a GHG; however, it is short lived in the atmosphere and its atmospheric concentrations are largely determined by natural processes, such as oceanic evaporation. Other GHGs (e.g., fluorinated gases) are created and emitted solely through human activities. The most common GHGs that result from human activity are carbon dioxide, followed by methane and nitrous oxide.

The Global Warming Potential (GWP) measures how much energy the emissions of 1 ton of a gas will absorb over a given period, relative to the emissions of 1 ton of CO<sub>2</sub>. “Carbon dioxide equivalent” (CO<sub>2</sub>e) is the amount of GHG emitted multiplied by its GWP. CO<sub>2</sub> has a 100-year GWP of one; CH<sub>4</sub> has a GWP of 25; and N<sub>2</sub>O has a GWP of 298.

In 2005, Executive Order (EO) S-3-05 set GHG emission reduction targets: reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels by 2010; reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020; and reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Senate Bill (SB) 32, passed in 2016, required that CARB, in its next update to the AB 32 *Scoping Plan*, “ensure that statewide GHG emissions are reduced to at least 40 percent below the statewide GHG emissions limit no later than December 31, 2030 (SB-32 2016).” EO B-55 set a GHG emission reduction target for California to be carbon neutral by 2045.

CARB adopted the *Scoping Plan* in December 2008 and a *Scoping Plan Update* in December 2017. The *Scoping Plan* contains the strategies California will implement to achieve reduction of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. In the *Scoping Plan*, “CARB recommends that lead agencies prioritize onsite design features that reduce emissions, especially from vehicle miles travelled (VMT), and direct investments in GHG reductions within the project’s region that contribute potential air quality, health, and economic co-benefits locally (CARB 2017).” In 2015, the County of Riverside adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to establish goals and policies that incorporate sustainability and GHG reduction targets into its management processes. The County set a goal to reduce emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, in line with the State’s AB 32 GHG reduction targets. The CAP was updated in 2019 to contain further guidance on Riverside County’s GHG Inventory reduction goals, thresholds, policies, guidelines, and implementation programs including 2030 thresholds to reduce emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels. The CAP elaborates on the County’s *General Plan* goals and policies relative to GHG emissions and provides a specific implementation tool to guide future decisions of the County. The County’s CAP includes a review process procedure for evaluating individual project GHG impacts and determining the significance under CEQA. The County’s CAP is qualified for CEQA tiering and streamlining of individual projects’ CEQA review. The County’s CAP has set a threshold of 3,000 metric tons (MT) CO<sub>2</sub>e per year to be used to identify projects that, when combined with the modest efficiency measures (e.g., energy efficiency matching or exceeding the Title 24 requirements in effect as of January 2017; water conservation measures that match the California Green Building Standards Code in effect as of January 2017) are considered less than significant.

On December 5, 2008, the SCAQMD Board approved interim CEQA GHG significance thresholds for stationary sources, rules, and plans using a tiered approach for determining significance. Tier 3, the primary tier the SCAQMD Board uses for determining significance, set a screening significance threshold of 10,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/year for determining whether a stationary source project would have a less than significant cumulative GHG impact (SCAQMD 2008b). While useful for a reference, this threshold is meant to apply to industrial projects where SCAQMD is the lead agency. Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, the County of Riverside screening level is used as a threshold to determine significance of the proposed project under CEQA.

In March 2013, the City of Rancho Mirage completed the *2013 Sustainability Plan: Leadership in Energy Efficiency* (Sustainability Plan). The Sustainability Plan is a framework for the development and implementation of policies and programs that will reduce the City’s greenhouse gas emissions. Along with the City’s Greenhouse Gas Inventory, Rancho Mirage is working towards the statewide target of 1990 levels by 2020, set by Assembly Bill 32. For Rancho Mirage to achieve the statewide target of 1990 levels by 2020, it will have to reduce emissions by 54,272 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e), a 19.8 percent reduction. However, to achieve stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would limit dangerous impacts to Earth’s climate system, a reduction in greenhouse gas levels to 7 percent below 1990 levels is recommended. Once implemented, the energy efficiency measures

presented in the Sustainability Plan will reduce the City's greenhouse gas emissions by 60,411 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e, 6,139 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e over the target amount of 54,272 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e. The surplus in greenhouse gas reductions over and above the target allows the city council and staff some flexibility in the selection and implementation of these measures (City of Rancho Mirage 2013b).

Climate change is a cumulative issue. Most projects do not generate sufficient GHG emissions to directly influence climate change by any noticeable degree; however, a project can contribute incrementally to cumulative effects that are significant. "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects, and probable future projects (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064[h][1]).

#### **a) Less than Significant Impact**

The proposed project would emit GHGs during both construction and operation. Construction emissions would occur from use of construction equipment and transportation of equipment and workers to and from the project sites. Operational emissions would occur from the electricity required to routinely maintain and operate the booster station pumps and underground pipelines, as well as from landscaping and maintenance activities of the sites, and use of the diesel generator. Maintenance activities would remain substantially similar to existing conditions and a less than significant increase in GHG emissions from operations is anticipated. The proposed project would not result in a net change in operation and maintenance activities and GHG emissions from mobile sources would, therefore, be negligible.

Modeling of air emissions from construction and operation was completed in CalEEMod version 2016.3.2, as described in *Section 3.3, Air Quality*. Details on construction, including timing, duration, equipment, and worker trips can be found in *Section 2.6 Proposed Project Description*. Operational emissions would result from upgrades to Booster Station 5513 and new operation of Booster Station 5513-W. No new operational activities, including vehicle trips, would be required, so there would be no additional GHG emissions due to maintenance. Additional project details necessary for GHG emission modeling were obtained from CalEEMod and engineer estimates (e.g., equipment horsepower, load factors, fleet mix, and vehicle emissions factors). CalEEMod utilizes widely accepted methodologies for estimating emissions combined with default data that can be used when site-specific information is not available. Sources of these methodologies and default data include but are not limited to the United States EPA AP-42 emission factors, CARB vehicle emission models, studies commissioned by California agencies such as the CEC and CalRecycle. The project's total construction and operational footprints were factored into the model to evaluate whether the estimated GHG emissions would exceed the established thresholds and therefore conflict with plans and efforts of reducing the emissions of GHGs.

While the proposed project is within the City of Rancho Mirage, the City's Sustainability Plan does not contain numerical thresholds in which the significance of individual projects can be evaluated against and also does not incorporate the more recent State goals from

SB 32. Whereas, the County’s CAP, as explained above, sets the numerical screening threshold of 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year in which the proposed project can be evaluated and significance can be determined. Project GHG emissions below this threshold, would be considered less than significant and would not require mitigation. A summary of the results of the inventory for GHG emissions, as shown in the CalEEMod output tables in Appendix A, are presented in Table 3-12, along with the significance threshold. Construction-related GHG emissions were amortized over a 30-year period and added to estimated annual operational GHG emissions, consistent with SCAQMD guidance (SCAQMD 2008b).

**Table 3-12: Proposed Project GHG Emissions per Year (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/year)**

Source	MTCO <sub>2</sub> e
Area	0.0
Energy	130.8
Mobile	0.7
Stationary	19.3
Amortized Construction Emissions	9.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>160.6</i>
Riverside County CAP Screening Threshold	3,000
Significant?	<i>No</i>

As shown in Table 3-12, the project is expected to generate approximately 160.6 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year from annualized construction, area, energy, stationary, and mobile sources. As such, the project GHG emissions would not exceed the threshold of significance set at 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year. Therefore, the proposed project would not generate significant GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that would have a significant impact on the environment; impacts would be less than significant.

**b) Less than Significant Impact**

As described above, AB 32, SB 32, California emission reduction programs, Sustainable Communities Strategy, CARB’s 2030 Scoping Plan, and Riverside County CAP, among others, set the standards for GHG policy and reaching a net reduction in GHG emissions. As a water storage and redundancy project with a relatively small footprint and limited changes from existing operations, the project has limited potential to generate GHG emissions in such a way that would conflict with these existing plans, policies, and regulations designed to reduce GHG emissions. The estimated GHG emissions associated with construction and operation of the proposed project would be 160.6 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e, and would not exceed the 3,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e per year screening threshold established by the County’s CAP. The project’s GHG emissions would not conflict with plans and policies adopted for the purpose of reducing GHGs emissions, including the Riverside County CAP and the *2030 Scoping Plan*. The *2030 Scoping Plan* focuses on reducing energy demand, and GHG emissions, which result from mobile sources and land use development. The proposed project would not involve a considerable increase in new vehicle trips or land use changes that would result in an increase in vehicle trips,

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such as urban sprawl. Therefore, the proposed project is not expected to interfere with the applicable plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions, including AB 32 and SB 32 and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
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?	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
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?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
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?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]

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

Hazardous materials are currently used within the project area for residential and construction activities. Through natural events, system failures, and accidents (spills), hazardous materials can become a risk to the environment and human health. Numerous local, state, and federal laws exist to regulate the storage, use, handling, and transportation of hazardous materials. To increase public safety and awareness of hazardous materials exposure risk, businesses and entities that manage, store, transport, or use hazardous materials are required to file reports with appropriate authorities and maintain emergency response plans in the event of a hazardous materials release.

A regulatory records search was performed for the project area using the SWRCB *GeoTracker* database and the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) *EnviroStor* database. These database records are a compilation of information from various sources listing potential and confirmed hazardous waste and hazardous substances sites in California. There are three closed leaking underground storage tank cleanup sites and no active leaking underground storage tank cleanup sites listed on the SWRCB's *GeoTracker* database within approximately 0.5 mile of the project sites (SWRCB 2021). There are no hazardous cleanup sites listed on the EnviroStor database within 0.25 mile of the proposed project (DTSC 2021).

The Riverside County *Emergency Operations Plan* is used as a reference tool for coordinating emergencies, ranging from localized events to catastrophic disasters, and establishes roles and responsibilities, assigns tasks, and specifies policies and general procedures (Riverside County 2019a).

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (Cal Fire) *Fire Resources Assessment Program* (FRAP) assesses the amount and extent of California's forests and rangelands, analyzes their conditions, and identifies alternative management and policy guidelines. Through the FRAP, Cal Fire produces maps designating very high fire hazard severity zones within State and Local Responsibility Areas. The project is located within the Western Riverside County's Local Responsibility Area, which designates the project area as a non-very high fire hazard severity zone (Cal Fire 2009). The project is not in a State Responsibility Area.

The Palm Springs International Airport is located approximately 6.5 miles northwest of the project area.

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**a) Less than Significant Impact**

Construction of the proposed project would temporarily increase the routine transport and use of hazardous materials commonly used in construction activities. Limited quantities of miscellaneous hazardous substances, such as gasoline, diesel fuel, hydraulic fluids, paint, and other similar materials, would be brought into the project area, used, and stored during construction of the proposed project. The proposed project would be required to comply with applicable standards, including Division 20, Chapter 6.5, Article 6.5, Article 6.6, and Article 13 of the California Health and Safety Code and Title 40 CFR Part 263, that regulate the transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials. Upon completion of construction, the proposed project would not result in additional operation and maintenance activities requiring the transport of hazardous materials. Therefore, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials and impacts would be less than significant.

**b) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**

Construction of the proposed project could create a hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials used in construction, which include diesel fuel and minor amounts of paints, fuels, solvents, and glues. The potential exists for accidents to occur during construction activities, which could result in the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 requires development of a Hazardous Materials Management Spill Control Plan that includes project-specific contingencies to limit any potential accidental releases of hazardous materials which would reduce impacts to less than significant levels. Upon completion of construction, the proposed project operation and maintenance would remain similar to existing conditions, with all fuels, solvents, lubricants, and other chemicals being stored in accordance with local and state regulations which would limit the potential impact of a release of hazardous materials associated with operations and maintenance into the environment to less than significant. With Mitigation Measure HAZ-1, impacts resulting from potential hazardous materials-related accidents during construction would be reduced to a less than significant level.

**c) No Impact**

The Project site is not located within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school. The Rancho Mirage Elementary School is located approximately 2 miles to the southeast of the project area but is separated from the project sites by undeveloped landscape including hills and valleys. Therefore, the proposed project would not have the potential to emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within 0.25 mile of an existing or proposed school and there would be no impact.

**d) No Impact**

The project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Additionally, there are no active leaking

underground storage tank cleanup sites listed on the SWRCB's GeoTracker database and there are no active hazardous materials cleanup sites listed on the DTSC's EnviroStor database within a 0.25 mile of the project area. Therefore, construction and operation associated with the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the release of existing materials related to a listed hazardous materials site and there would be no impact.

**e) No Impact**

The Palm Springs International Airport is located approximately 6.5 miles northwest of the project area. Neither construction or operation of the proposed project would create an aircraft safety hazard or expose residents or workers in the area to excessive aircraft noise. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact to an airport use plan.

**f) Less than Significant Impact**

Project construction activities would take place within city rights of way and CVWD-owned properties. As a result of the pipeline alignment, project construction would temporarily block access of one lane of Thunderbird Road and the intersection at Thunderbird Mesa Drive for approximately one week. No physical impediments associated with construction would obstruct emergency or evacuation access in a way that would significantly create delays or prevent response. The lane closure of the project would not conflict with the Riverside County *Emergency Operations Plan* because access would be maintained and emergency response as listed in the plan would not be prohibited. Long-term, the proposed project would not physically impair or otherwise interfere with emergency response or evacuation in the project vicinity as the majority of the project components would be located below-grade and ground surfaces would be returned to pre-construction conditions. Therefore, the likelihood of the project impairing or physically interfering with the Riverside County *Emergency Operations Plan* is low and impacts would be less than significant.

**g) Less than Significant Impact**

Cal Fire has identified wildfire risk areas through the Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps. The project sites are designated as non-very high fire hazard severity zone on the Western Riverside County Local Responsibility Area map. The project would be constructed within existing developed CVWD sites and within the Thunderbird Road right-of-way. Although the project sites are adjacent to wildlands, the closest very high fire hazard severity zone is approximately 0.2 miles to the southeast of Site 5514. The nearby hazard zone is approximately 5-acres and both Site 5513 and Site 5514 are separated from the zone by a partially lined wash and rocky sparsely vegetated hillside. Riverside County Fire Department Station 50 is located at 70801 SR 111 in Rancho Mirage, approximately 0.4 mile east of Site 5514 and 1 mile east Site 5513. Given that the proposed project sites are located in a non-very high fire hazard severity zone, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires and impacts would be less than significant. See also discussion in *Section 3.21, Wildfire*.

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Mitigation Measures:

**Mitigation Measure HAZ-1: Hazardous Materials Management and Spill Control Plan**

Prior to site mobilization, the construction contractor is required to submit to CVWD a Hazardous Materials Management Spill Control Plan that includes a project-specific contingency plan for hazardous materials and waste operations. CVWD will review and approve the plan. The plan shall be applicable to construction activities and shall establish policies and procedures according to applicable codes and regulations, including but not limited to the California Building and Fire Codes, and federal and California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations. Elements of the Plan shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- A discussion of hazardous materials management, including delineation of hazardous material storage areas, access and egress routes, waterways, emergency assembly areas, and temporary hazardous waste storage areas.
- Notification and documentation of procedures; spill control and countermeasures, including employee spill prevention/response training.

### 3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
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;	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
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	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]

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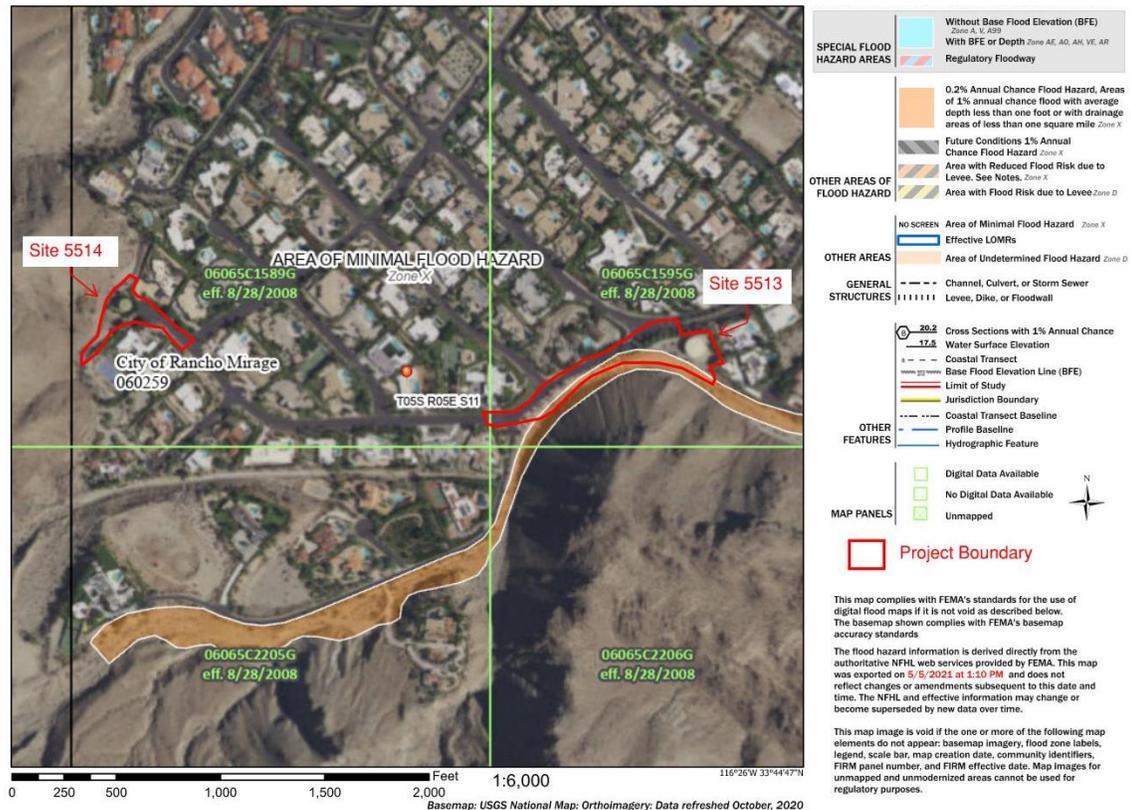
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	[ ]	[ ]	[ X ]	[ ]
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to Project inundation?	[ ]	[ ]	[ X ]	[ ]
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	[ ]	[ ]	[ X ]	[ ]

**Discussion**

The proposed project is located within the Whitewater River Watershed, which encompasses the entirety of the Coachella Valley. The drainage area of the Whitewater River Watershed is approximately 58 square miles and includes four sub-watersheds: Morongo, Shavers, San Gorgonio, and Coachella. The Whitewater River/Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel, approximately 0.5 mile east of the project site, is the primary drainage course in the Whitewater River Watershed. It runs southeast through the Coachella Valley and flows to the Salton Sea. There are no surface water bodies on the project sites, although ephemeral washes exist adjacent to the project sites.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program provides Flood Insurance Rate Maps that identify flood hazard areas, called Special Flood Hazard Areas. Special Flood Hazard Areas are defined as areas that will be inundated by the flood event having a 1 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year, also referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood. Moderate flood hazard areas are areas between the limits of base flood and the 0.2 percent annual chance (or 500-year) flood. The areas of minimal flood hazard are the areas outside the Special Flood Hazard Areas and moderate flood hazard areas (FEMA 2020). Special Flood Hazard Areas in the vicinity of the project sites are shown in Figure 3-9. As shown in Figure 3-9 a portion of Site 5513 is located in the 500-year flood hazard area.

**Figure 3-9: FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map**



The Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin (California Department of Water Resources Basin No. 7-21) underlies the Whitewater River Watershed. The Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin has an estimated storage capacity of 40 million acre-feet of water within the upper 1,000 feet (CVWD 2016). The Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin is divided into four subbasins: Indio (Basin No. 7-21.01), Mission Creek (No. 7-21.02), Desert Hot Springs (No. 7-21.03), and San Gorgonio (No. 7-21.04). The Indio Subbasin underlies the project site.

Natural groundwater recharge occurs from surface runoff and subsurface inflow; however, the Indio Subbasin is primarily recharged through groundwater replenishment efforts by CVWD and Desert Water Agency. CVWD operates and maintains three replenishment facilities within the Indio Subbasin: the Whitewater River Groundwater Replenishment Facility, the Thomas E. Levy Groundwater Replenishment Facility, and the Palm Desert Groundwater Replenishment Facility. These facilities recharge the groundwater basin with imported water.

The Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin is designated by the California Department of Water Resources as a medium priority basin and is subject to the provisions of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. CVWD is the Groundwater Sustainability

Agency (GSA) for a portion of the Indio Subbasin, including the area that underlies the project area. In 2016, CVWD and the three other GSAs submitted an Alternative Plan deemed functionally equivalent to a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for the Indio Subbasin, and in 2019 the Department of Water Resources determined that the Alternative GSP satisfies the objectives of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

The RWQCB's designated beneficial uses of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin include municipal and domestic supply, industrial service supply, and agricultural supply (RWQCB 2019). Groundwater supply used for potable uses is generally of high quality; however, CVWD treats delivered groundwater with free chlorine as a precautionary measure prior to distribution for potable use. Some areas of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin naturally contain elevated levels of salinity. In isolated areas, groundwater quality issues have occurred due to naturally occurring substances such as arsenic, chromium, and fluoride (CVWD 2016, CVWD 2011). Additionally, some localized areas have seen elevated nitrate levels.

#### **a) Less than Significant Impact**

Water quality standards governing surface and groundwater in the project area are found in the Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan (RWQCB 2019) and imposed by the federal Clean Water Act and State Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Potential impacts to water quality could occur during short-term construction activities from any uncontrolled construction-related pollutants and sediment in storm water discharges leaving the sites. However, the project is subject to compliance with the SWRCB's NPDES General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity (Construction General Permit) (Order 2009-0009-DWQ) to help protect water quality and maintain water quality standards. The Construction General Permit requires preparation and implementation of a SWPPP containing BMPs to control sediment and other construction-related pollutants in storm water discharges. Such BMPs would include, but are not limited to, general housekeeping practices such as sweeping up of site debris, proper waste disposal procedures, use of tarps on any stockpiles, containment of building materials, and inspection for leaks and spills from construction vehicles and equipment, as well as erosion and sediment controls, and spill response. With implementation of the SWPPP, stormwater discharges from the proposed project sites during construction are not expected to violate existing water quality standards or waste discharge requirements set by the RWQCB. Operation of the project would not involve any discharges to surface water or groundwater and thus would not violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise degrade surface water or groundwater quality. Impacts on water quality would be less than significant.

#### **b) Less than Significant Impact**

CVWD is an active participant in sustainable groundwater management of the Indio Subbasin, operating under the Alternative GSP, and compliant with achieving the objectives of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. As CVWD implements this Alternative GSP system-wide, individual system efficiency improvements like the

proposed project, play a role in achieving sustainable groundwater management. The proposed project does not expand the CVWD's service area or water rights and does not directly extract groundwater. The addition of the new storage tank would increase CVWD's ability to store pumped groundwater; however, all CVWD operations would occur in accordance with the Alternative GSP, which identifies a pathway for achieving sustainable groundwater management and would not result in the substantial decrease of groundwater supplies. The existing sites are not currently used for groundwater recharge. The majority of the sites are paved or covered with impervious surfaces which prohibit groundwater recharge. The addition of a second tank at Site 5514, with a footprint of approximately 2,000 square feet, would increase impervious areas by a small degree; however, this would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge as the existing site does not currently contribute substantially to groundwater recharge. CVWD has identified three active groundwater recharge areas within the service area and the project is not located within one of these recharge sites. Because the project is consistent with the Indio Subbasin Alternative GSP, the proposed project would not impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin and impacts on groundwater resources would be less than significant.

#### **c) Less than Significant Impact**

The proposed project would not result in a change in the local drainage patterns of the project area. As described in "(b)" above, change to impervious surface area of the site would be minor and would occur as a result of the construction of Reservoir 5514-2. The design of the proposed project would maintain the existing drainage patterns at each site, would not alter or substantially increase the amount of drainage from the site, and the ground surfaces would be restored to pre-construction conditions which were designed to accommodate site drainage. Additionally, all construction activities would be conducted in accordance with BMPs specified in the construction SWPPP to prevent erosion, siltation, and other construction-related pollutants (such as potential leaks from construction equipment). Overall, the proposed project would not create major changes to drainage or impervious surface area at the site. As a result, the proposed project would not: 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, and impacts would be less than significant.

#### **d) Less than Significant Impact**

As shown in Figure 3-9, the proposed project is not located within a Special Flood Hazard Area, but a portion of Site 5513 overlaps with the adjacent Moderate Flood Hazard Area (500-year flood zone). This flood area is primarily confined to the existing stormwater drainage. It extends into a portion of the onsite access road but does not extend into portions of the site where equipment is currently located or planned to be located. New infrastructure would not be located in the flood zone, and the project would not create chan

ges in existing conditions that would increase the risk of release of pollutants due to a large flood event. The proposed project is located approximately 70 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean and at an elevation of 280 feet above mean sea level, and thus would not be subject to tsunami hazards. A seiche is a wave that reverberates on the surface of water in an enclosed or semi-enclosed basin, such as a reservoir or lake, in response to ground shaking during an earthquake. According to the East Coachella Valley Area Plan, a seiche in the Salton Sea could cause flooding of areas immediately adjacent to the Sea (Riverside County 2016); however, the proposed project is located approximately 25 miles from the Salton Sea and at an elevation that makes the risk of inundation by a seiche very low. The proposed project would not include storage of potential pollutants on either site besides diesel fuel for the emergency generator, which would be safely stored and contained in a tank. The proposed project is not at risk of inundation from a tsunami, or seiche. The project facilities would not be located in a flood zone, and pollutants onsite would be limited and properly stored. Thus, the potential for release of pollutants due to project inundation would be less than significant.

#### **e) Less than Significant Impact**

The applicable plans are the Colorado River Basin Water Quality Control Plan, which designates water quality standards for the project area, and the Alternative GSP for the Indio Subbasin. CVWD is the Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the majority of the eastern portion of the Indio Subbasin, including the area that underlies the project sites. As discussed in impacts “(a)” and “(b)” above, the project is consistent with both plans’ and requirements regarding water quality and groundwater resources. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan and the impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None recommended or required.

### 3.11 Land Use and Planning

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

The proposed project is located in the city of Rancho Mirage, in the gated single-family residential neighborhood of Thunderbird Heights. The city of Rancho Mirage General Plan is the land use plan applicable to the project location and designates the site as R-L-2 (Residential very low density). The General Plan identifies the following goal related to domestic water supply:

- Goal PS&F 1: Water, sewer, and utility facilities that safely and adequately meet the needs of Rancho Mirage at build out.

#### a) No Impact

The project features are either fenced in or underground and not publicly accessible. They are also proposed for existing water conveyance infrastructure at CVWD-owned sites. The proposed project does not propose modifications to the surrounding properties, residences, or community. Access to residences would be maintained throughout the construction period and would not divide the community. Therefore, the project would not displace or divide an established community and no impact would occur.

#### b) No Impact

The proposed project does not propose land use changes or activities that would indirectly induce land use change. The current project site facilities operate within CVWD's authority and where applicable, consistent with city of Rancho Mirage. The proposed project would construct water storage and distribution facilities on sites that currently house similar facilities and does not propose any new features that introduce unmitigated significant impacts or could be inconsistent with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental

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effect. The proposed project would improve water supply reliability and fire flow but would not serve new areas or induce growth. The proposed project would support Goal PS&F-1 of the Rancho Mirage General Plan by improving the water supply system to better serve the community. The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation, and there would be no impact.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.12 Mineral Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
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?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ X ]
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?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ X ]

#### Discussion

Mineral resources of the Coachella Valley desert floor are a result of eroded materials from the surrounding hills and mountains and are limited to sands and gravel (City of Rancho Mirage 2017). According to the California Geological Survey, the project sites are within an area containing known or inferred mineral occurrences of undetermined mineral resource significance (MRZ-3) (CGS 2007). While important deposits of both minerals occur within the city of Rancho Mirage, there are currently no mines or extraction sites within the city (City of Rancho Mirage 2017).

#### **a, b) No Impact**

The project sites are not known to contain mineral resources of value significant to the region or state. Both sites are owned by CVWD, currently occupied with existing water storage and distribution infrastructure, unavailable for mineral extraction, and not located within a mineral resource recovery site.

As a result, the proposed project would not: 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 or 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. Therefore, no impacts would occur to mineral resources.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.13 Noise

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project result in:</b>				
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 can be defined as unwanted sound. Potential noise levels of the proposed project are compared to local ambient noise standards, within the context of the existing ambient noise setting. Ambient noise levels are defined as the all-encompassing noise level associated with a given environment. A decibel (dB) is a unit for measuring the intensity of a sound equal to the smallest difference normally detectable by the human ear. A-weighting (dBA) is an expression of the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by the human ear. Maximum sound level (LMAX) is the maximum sound level measured on a sound level meter. Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is a weighted average of noise level over time determined by taking the weighted sound level over 24 hours, plus 5 dB to evening sound levels and 10 dB to night levels. Day-Night Average Level (Ldn) is the average noise level over a 24-hour period, weighted by 10dB for events that take place during the night. For CNEL and Ldn, the decibels added to nighttime sound

are to account for humans’ greater sensitivity to nighttime noise. CNEL and Ldn are both used to describe annoyance due to noise and to establish land use planning criteria for noise. A series of land uses have been deemed to be noise sensitive by the Rancho Mirage General Plan, including residences, schools, libraries, churches, hospitals and nursing homes, and destination resort areas (City of Rancho Mirage 2017).

The  $L_{eq}(t)$ , or Time-Equivalent Sound Level, descriptor can also be used to account for sound fluctuation over time and accounts for noise fluctuations from moment to moment (such as with construction noise) by averaging the louder and quieter moments and giving more weight to the louder moments. It represents the equivalent continuous sound pressure level over a given period of time.  $L_{eq}$  is the sound exposure level over some time period normalized by that time. It can be obtained using short-term measurements. (FHWA 2021)

The noise chapters of the city of Rancho Mirage General Plan (City of Rancho Mirage 2017) and Riverside County General Plan (Riverside County 2015) provide a systematic approach to identifying and appraising noise problems in the community; quantifying existing and projected noise levels; addressing excessive noise exposure; and community planning for the regulation of noise. These include policies, standards, criteria, programs, diagrams, and maps related to protecting public health and welfare from noise (see Table 3-13).

**Table 3-13: Rancho Mirage Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Exposure – Range of “Normally Acceptable” Community Noise Exposure Levels (Ldn or CNEL, dBA)**

Land Use Category	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential, low density (single family, duplex, mobile homes)	■	■				
Residential, multi-family	■	■	■			
Transient lodging (motels, hotels)	■	■	■			
Schools, libraries, churches, hospitals, nursing homes	■	■	■	■		
Playgrounds, neighborhood parks	■	■	■	■		
Golf courses, riding stables, water recreation, cemeteries	■	■	■	■	■	
Office buildings, businesses, commercial, and professional	■	■	■	■	■	
Industrial, manufacturing, utilities, agriculture	■	■	■	■	■	■

Source: City of Rancho Mirage General Plan 2017

The city of Rancho Mirage Ordinance Chapter 8.45 Noise (Noise Ordinance) establishes standards regulating noise to protect health, safety, comfort, welfare, and quality of life of citizens. According to the Noise Ordinance, sound emanating from construction, alteration, repair, grading or improvement of any building, structure, road, or improvement to real property with any city permit or the operation of any equipment and machinery at any time within any zone by the city, its employees, or any agent or franchisee of the city the course of performing maintenance, construction or trash collection. (Ordinance 633 section 1 (Exhibit A), 1995) is exempt from the provisions of the Noise Ordinance. Additionally, Rancho Mirage Municipal Code restricts construction work to between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays (Section 15.04.030). According to the Noise Ordinance, the Low-Density Residential land use designation has a maximum decibel level set at 55 dBA for a cumulative period of more than 30 minutes in any hour from 7

a.m. to 6 p.m. Construction activities with any city permit would be exempt from this restriction.

Groundborne vibration can be described by both its amplitude and frequency. Amplitude may be characterized by peak particle velocity, which is measured in inches or millimeters per second. Vibration can be felt outdoors, but the perceived intensity of vibration impacts, including groundborne noise, is much greater indoors, due to the shaking of the structure. Some of the most common sources of vibration come from trains, transit vehicles, construction equipment, airplanes, and large vehicles. Several land uses are deemed especially sensitive to vibration by Riverside County and therefore have a lower vibration threshold. These uses include, but are not limited to, concert halls, hospitals, libraries, vibration-sensitive research operations, residential areas, schools, and offices (Riverside County 2015).

**Table 3-14: Reaction to Typical Vibration Levels**

Vibration Level Peak Particle Velocity (inches/second)	Human Reaction
0.0059-0.0188	Threshold of perception, possibility of intrusion
0.0787	Vibrations readily perceptible
0.0984	Continuous vibration begins to annoy people
0.1968	Vibrations annoying to people in buildings
0.3937-0.5905	Vibrations considered unpleasant when continuously subjected and unacceptable by some walking on bridges

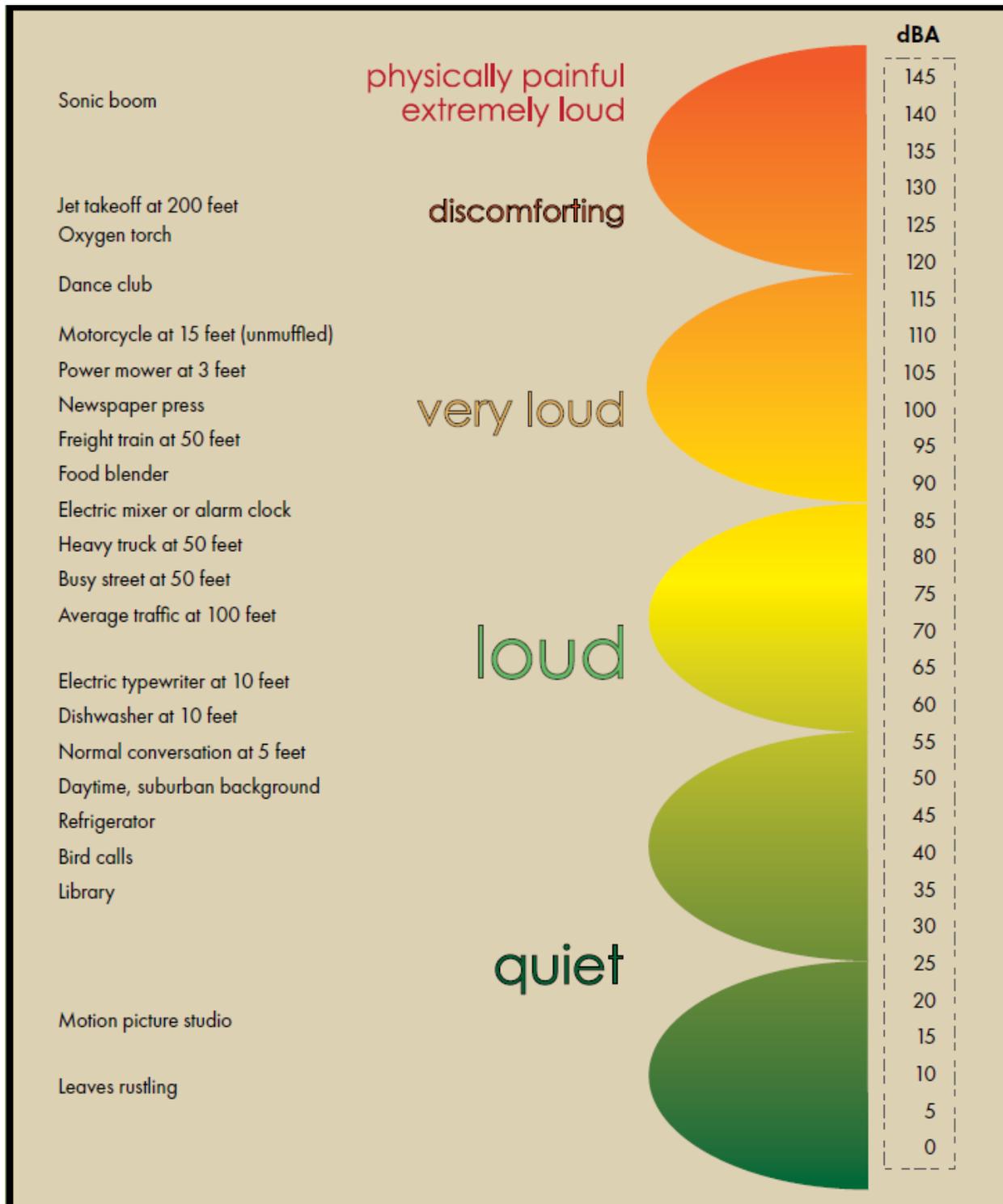
Source: Riverside County General Plan 2015

**a) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**

The effects of noise on people can be grouped into three general categories: subjective effects, such as annoyance and nuisance; interference with activities such as conversation and sleep; and physiological effects, for example, a startle or hearing loss. Adverse reactions to noise generally increase with an increase in the difference between background or ambient noise and the noise generated from a particularly intrusive source such as a barking dog, aircraft, industrial operations, or construction activity (City of Rancho Mirage 2017).

As described above, community noise in Rancho Mirage is measured using the 24-hour CNEL weighted average noise level. Figure 3-10 provides examples of the decibel level of various noise sources. Noise that is loud or has a short duration (e.g., barking dogs and low flying aircraft) may be disruptive, but generally has little impact upon the CNEL because it does not last long (City of Rancho Mirage 2017). Noise impacts from the proposed project would be almost exclusively from construction which is a considered an intrusive noise source (City of Rancho Mirage 2017).

**Figure 3-10: Noise Levels of Familiar Noise Sources**



Source: City of Rancho Mirage 2017

The project has the potential to expose people to noise resulting from construction and operation activities. Construction is anticipated to last 11 months and would result in temporary and periodic noise increases. Construction noise levels would fluctuate depending on the construction phase, equipment type, and duration of use; distance between noise source and receptor; and presence or absence of existing barriers between noise source and receptor. However, the duration would be limited to 11 months and would vary in noise intensity based on construction phase. As shown in Table 3-15, the anticipated construction equipment by phase of the project is broken out with conservative estimates of how frequently the equipment would be used on a given day. Table 3-15 also illustrates the typical noise level associated with each piece of equipment.

**Table 3-15: Noise Levels Generated by Typical Construction Equipment**

Construction Phase	Approximate Duration (days)	Anticipated Fleet	Conservative Usage Estimate (hours/day)	Typical Noise Levels (dBA, at 50 feet)
Demolition	16	1 Concrete/Industrial Saw	8	90
		1 Rubber Tired Dozer	1	82
		2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	6	84
		1 Water Truck	8	84
Site Preparation	2	1 Grader	8	85
		1 Tractor/Loader/Backhoe	8	84
		1 Water Truck	8	84
Grading	3	1 Concrete/Industrial Saw	8	90
		1 Rubber Tired Dozer	1	82
		2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	6	84
		1 Water Truck	8	84
Building Construction	160	1 Crane	4	81
		2 Forklifts	6	75
		2 Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	8	84
		1 Water Truck	8	84
Paving	8	4 Cement and Mortar Mixers	6	79
		1 Paver	7	77
		1 Roller	7	80
		1 Tractor/Loader/Backhoe	7	84
		1 Water Truck	8	84
Architectural Coating	8	1 Air Compressor	6	

Noise Level Source: (FHWA 2006a)

- Forklift noise level was assumed to be comparable to a man lift.
- Water truck noise level was assumed to be comparable to a tractor.

As shown in Table 3-15, the maximum noise generated during project construction at any given time would be 90dBA, comparing that value with the classifications of sound shown on Figure 3-10, the maximum noise levels of the project would fall in the “Loud” to “Very Loud” categories but would not reach levels of discomfort or physical harm even for the receptors closest to construction activities (closest receptors to Sites 5513 and 5514 are approximately 100 feet away). The distance from residences, vegetation, and topography offer some further natural sound attenuation. Pipeline construction would be limited to approximately one week duration. Similar to the temporary noise generated from a passing airplane or leaf blower described by the Rancho Mirage general plan, pipeline construction would have temporary loud volume but would not result in lasting alterations to ambient conditions. Thus, pipeline construction would not be anticipated to substantially increase average community CNEL noise levels.

The closest residences are approximately 100 feet from Sites 5513 and 5514 where there are vegetative visual screens present along the edge of the sites that may offer some construction noise attenuation. It is likely that distance, topography, and vegetation screening between the sites and nearest residences would offer a reduction of maximum noise levels from construction by at least 5 dBA. This would result in maximum noise levels of approximately 85 dBA outdoor of nearby residences which would further attenuate for indoor noise levels. With an outdoor maximum volume of approximately 85 dBA or less at 100 feet, construction activities would result in annoyance or nuisance to these residences for the duration of construction. The levels would not, however, go so far as to significantly impact conversations and would be during daytime hours to not impact sleep or create other physiological effects. Thus, project construction would not result in generation of a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the Project. Additionally, the standards of ambient noise levels at 55 dBA and 65 dBA CNEL established in the Rancho Mirage general plan and noise ordinance exempt construction activities, such as those generated from the proposed project, from adherence to the ambient standards. Therefore, the proposed project would not violate established noise standards as a result of construction activities and any impact is considered less than significant.

In addition to point source construction noise, truck traffic associated with hauling and delivery of materials and equipment would generate noise along haul routes. Construction would involve approximately 10 construction related round-trip trips per day. Noise-sensitive residential land uses are located adjacent to proposed project construction areas and along haul routes. These areas would be subject to truck noise during construction; however, like a dog bark or a passing plane would be temporary in nature and would not cause a substantial annoyance or interference with daytime activities of receptors nearby. Therefore, construction traffic would have a less than significant impact.

Once operational, the proposed project would generate a limited amount of noise from the new BS 5513-W. The booster station would be housed in a building similar to the existing BS 5513 and would not be expected to impact ambient noise conditions of the neighboring properties since the building is planned to be designed for noise attenuation. An emergency generator would also be installed at the site, which typically generates 73

dBA of noise at a distance of 50 feet (FHWA 2006a). The emergency generator would be operated on an as-needed basis during a power outage, as well as weekly during daytime hours for 15 minutes for testing purposes. The generator would be housed within a building, which would provide significant noise attenuation (FHWA 2006b) and would not be expected to impact ambient noise conditions. Operational vehicle maintenance trips on local roads would occur during daytime hours consistent with the Noise Ordinance. Therefore, the project's long-term and short-term noise impacts would be less than significant.

The proposed project would not generate substantial levels of temporary or long term increases in ambient noise levels that would violate the local general plan guidance or the local noise ordinance, therefore, the project's impacts are less than significant.

**b) Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated**

Construction also has the potential to cause groundborne vibration and groundborne noise. Generally, a project would result in a significant impact if it produced groundborne vibration levels equal to or in excess of 0.1968 in/sec peak particle velocity (the level at which vibrations begin to annoy people in buildings, see Table 3-16). Additionally, a peak particle velocity of greater than 0.2 inches/second would have the potential to cause physical damage to non-engineered structures (FTA 2018). Typical vibration levels for common pieces of construction equipment at a 25-foot range are shown in Table 3-1616.

**Table 3-16: Typical Construction Equipment Vibration Levels**

Equipment	Typical Vibration Source Levels peak particle velocity at 25 feet (in/sec)
Vibratory roller	0.210
Loaded trucks	0.076
Jack hammer	0.035
Small bulldozer	0.003

Source: Source: FTA 2018.

As shown in Table 3-16, a vibratory roller used during construction within 25 feet of residences has the potential to cause disturbance to sensitive receptors. According to the Federal Transit Administration Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (FTA), groundborne vibration attenuates rapidly based on peak particle velocity of the equipment and distance from the equipment to the receiver. Groundborne vibration from a vibratory roller would attenuate to below 0.1968 inches per second peak particle velocity to reach a less than significant level at a distance of less than 30 feet (FTA 2018). Although residences are generally setback greater than 30 feet from the roadway and construction areas, property lines about the project area and could be subject to minimal groundborne vibration which if not mitigated has a low potential to cause disturbance to the properties. Since, groundborne vibrations would not fully attenuate at this distance, impacts could be potentially significant. Mitigation Measure NOI-1, which requires the construction contractor to implement vibration controls during construction if the human annoyance threshold of 0.1968 inches per second peak particle velocity would occur at a residence, would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

Once operational, the proposed Reservoir 5514-2, BS 5513-W, and pipeline would not create a permanent source of groundborne vibration, other than vehicles associated with occasional maintenance trips (such as loaded trucks) and do not have the potential to generate significant levels of long term groundborne vibrations.

As described, potential impacts from construction-related groundborne vibration would be potentially significant if heavy equipment use is required within 30 feet of residences or other occupied structures. However, with implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1, construction-related vibration levels would be reduced to less than significant.

### **c) No Impact**

The Palm Springs International Airport is located approximately 6 miles northwest of the proposed project sites. The proposed project is not located within an airport land use plan area or within 2 miles of a public airport and would not expose those living or working near an airport to excessive noise levels. The proposed project would have no impact on noise exposure in the vicinity of an airport.

#### Mitigation Measures:

To reduce possible construction-related vibration impacts, the project shall implement practical vibration control measures listed in Mitigation Measure NOI-1. Impacts are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

#### **Mitigation Measure NOI-1: Vibration Control During Construction**

CVWD shall incorporate the following vibration control measures into the construction contract specifications to be implemented by CVWD and the construction contractor as required:

- CVWD's Project Manager shall coordinate with the contractor to identify any changes in construction equipment or use locations that would generate groundborne vibration in excess of human annoyance (a peak particle velocity of 0.1968 inches per second) at residential structures.
- If equipment vibration would exceed 0.1968 inches per second at a residential receptor the contractor shall work with CVWD's Project Manager to identify if feasible equipment substitutions are possible. If no feasible equipment substitutions are possible, CVWD shall:
  - Notify any residential owners with structures within 30 feet of the area in which the vibration causing equipment would be used.
  - With the landowner's permission, a licensed professional shall conduct an assessment of structural integrity and note any preexisting damage prior to use of vibratory equipment.
  - If the equipment would generate vibration exceeding the threshold within 30 feet of the residence, the contractor shall install vibration monitors at the location of structures to monitor groundborne vibration levels at the structure for the duration of activity within 30 feet.

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- If vibration levels, shown by vibration monitoring, exceed 0.1968 inches per second, a follow-up structural integrity assessment shall be conducted by a licensed professional to compare before and after results. If damage occurred as a direct result of construction- related groundborne vibration, CVWD shall determine fair market value of repairing damage caused and provide compensation to the structure owner.

### 3.14 Population and Housing

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
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)?	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]

#### Discussion

The proposed project is located in the city of Rancho Mirage, Riverside County, California. The project sites are within the gated residential neighborhood of Thunderbird Heights, which is bordered by SR 111 on the east; residential, recreational, and commercial areas to the north, and open space to the south and west. Both project sites are located along Thunderbird Road and are zoned as very low density residential (R-L-2) (City of Rancho Mirage 2013a). The proposed project would improve the reliability of water supply, pressure, and storage for the portions of CVWD’s Cove Community system within the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood.

#### a) Less than Significant Impact

The proposed project involves improvements of CVWD’s existing municipal water storage infrastructure to ensure a reliable water supply for the existing Thunderbird Heights neighborhood within CVWD’s Cove Community System. Recent modeling work conducted for CVWD’s water system indicates that there is a 1.7 MG storage deficit in a portion of the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood (Akel 2017). The proposed project would add 0.5 MG of storage to help alleviate the storage deficit and provide greater redundancy to the drinking water system and availability of flows for fire suppression. The project would serve the existing neighborhood and therefore, would not induce substantial unplanned population growth, directly or indirectly, in the project area. Impacts would be less than significant.

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**b) No Impact**

The proposed project would involve construction and demolition of water supply infrastructure at two CVWD sites to alleviate water storage deficiencies and would not require additional land acquisition or right-of-way that would displace existing people or housing. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact related to displacement of people or construction of new housing elsewhere.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.15 Public Services

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
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:	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
i) Fire protection?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
ii) Police protection?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
iii) Schools?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
iv) Parks?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]
v) Other public facilities?	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]

### Discussion

The Riverside County Fire Department, in cooperation with the State of California (Cal Fire), provides fire protection and emergency services to the city of Rancho Mirage (City of Rancho Mirage 2020a). Riverside County Fire Department Station 50 is located at 70801 SR 111 in Rancho Mirage, approximately 0.4 miles and 1 mile east of Site BS 5514 and BS 5513, respectively.

The Riverside County Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement services, and the California Highway Patrol provides traffic enforcement services within the project area. The Palm Desert Police Station contracts with the City of Rancho Mirage to provide police services (City of Rancho Mirage 2020b). The Palm Desert Police Station is located at 73-705 Gerald Ford Drive in Palm Desert, approximately 6 miles and 6.4 miles east of Site BS 5514 and BS 5513, respectively.

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There are no schools located within the project area. The Rancho Mirage Elementary School is located approximately 1.9 miles and 2.3 miles southeast of Site BS 5514 and BS 5513, respectively.

There are no parks located within the project area. The Rancho Mirage Community Park is located at 71560 San Jacinto Drive approximately 1.4 miles and 1.8 miles southeast of Site BS 5514 and BS 5513, respectively.

**a) No Impact**

The proposed project would not change existing demand for public services (e.g., fire and police protection, schools, parks, libraries, or health clinics) because the proposed project would serve existing demand within the Thunderbird Heights community and would not significantly or directly induce population growth (see *Section 3.13 Population and Housing*). In addition, the project would introduce water supply redundancy and provide some fire flows that would improve or assist public firefighting services. No operational modifications are proposed, and therefore no new operation and maintenance activities would be required that would result in an increase in the need for new staff from public protection services entities. Implementation of the proposed project would not change the demand for any public services and would not require additional equipment or resources for those public service providers. No impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.16 Recreation

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
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 sites are within the residential neighborhood of Thunderbird Heights and are zoned as very low density residential (City of Rancho Mirage 2013a). The neighborhood is bordered by SR 111 on the east; residential, recreational (golf course), and commercial areas to the north, and open space to the south and west. There are no parks, trails, or designated bicycle paths within the project area.

#### a, b) No Impact

Proposed project improvements to the CVWD’s water supply infrastructure would not increase the use of existing parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated, as the proposed project would supply existing demand from the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood. The proposed project would not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment and no impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.17 Transportation

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

The project is located within the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood of Rancho Mirage in Riverside County. SR 111 is located approximately 0.3 miles and 0.8 miles northeast of Site BS 5514 and BS 5513, respectively.

Transportation in the Coachella Valley is planned through the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) in a regional effort. The RCTC plans and implements transportation and transit improvements and assists local governments with funding for local streets and roads to promote accessible transportation throughout Riverside County. RCTC's current Congestion Management Program (CMP) was adopted in December 2011 and was incorporated into RCTC's Long Range Transportation Study (LRTS). The LRTS, which was published in December 2019, took a comprehensive review of projects on the state highway, regional arterials, rail and bus, freight network, and active transportation to identify transportation improvements. According to the 2019 LRTS, the CMP minimum level of service (LOS) threshold has been met for much of the CMP system, and in cases where the CMP minimum threshold has been exceeded there have been overriding considerations (e.g., construction, traffic diversions, etc.) or project

improvements were already planned. No roadway segments in the project area were identified with current deficiencies using Highway Capacity Model-based Level of Service results from the Southern California Association of Governments 2016 PM peak period LOS traffic model (RCTC 2019).

The CVAG *Transportation Prioritization Study* (CVAG 2017a) was developed for the evaluation of the regional transportation system needs within the Coachella Valley and to assist CVAG in making funding decisions. The CVAG *Active Transportation Plan* (CVAG 2017b) provides goals and objectives related to alternative transportation within the Coachella Valley and was prepared in conjunction with the *Transportation Prioritization Study*. The *Transportation Prioritization Study* identifies roads within the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood as minor roadways (CVAG, 2017a).

The SCAG *Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (RTP/SCS; SCAG 2020) identifies strategies to meet mobility of all modes, legislative, financial and air quality requirements in the six counties of Southern California. It is updated every four years, most recently in September 2020. The Coachella Valley Link trail is the most noteworthy trail in the region inspiring active transportation (SCAG 2020).

The proposed project is located in the gated community of Thunderbird Heights, meaning there is no through traffic and all pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic is limited to Thunderbird Heights residents and guests. There are no rail systems or mass transit routes in proximity of the project sites.

#### **a) Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated**

As described in *Section 2.6 Proposed Project Description*, construction is anticipated to last 11 months and occur on weekdays between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. and during construction, the project is estimated to generate up to ten round-trip vehicle trips per day.

All construction, staging, and disturbance activities would occur within CVWD-owned properties (Site 5513 and Site 5514) and city rights-of-way (Thunderbird Road). There are no designated bike lanes or sidewalks within the community and the project would remain consistent with applicable bicycle and pedestrian master plans. In addition, the project would have no impact to transit facilities because there are no bus stops or routes within the project area.

Construction of the proposed project may necessitate individual traffic lane closures for pipeline installation. While single lane closures have the potential to cause minor traffic related impacts and delays, the pipeline installation would only require temporary, partial closure of Thunderbird Road for two to five days total (during daytime hours). In addition, although construction of the project would generate up to ten round-trip trips per day, the screening threshold established by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) for small projects states that "projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less-than significant transportation impact" (OPR 2018). Construction trips generated for this project would total 5% of the threshold

set by OPR and roadway surfaces would be restored to their original condition upon completion of project construction. Standard CVWD construction practices include traffic control requirements and include requirements that emergency crews have access, as needed, and that the contractor coordinates the location of the work daily for routing of emergency vehicles. Traffic control would also require the contractor to make reasonable efforts, wherever possible, to provide landowners access to their property during execution of the work. The contractor may be required to implement a traffic control plan approved by the city of Rancho Mirage. As such, temporary construction impacts are not expected to have a significant impact to transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and the project would remain consistent with remaining plans including the RCTC CMP, the CVAG studies, and the SCAG RTP/SCS.

Once operational, the project would not conflict with these regional transportation plans because the project is an infrastructure project that occurs below ground and on CVWD properties that would have no permanent impacts to transportation or circulation system planning. CVWD would continue to operate its water system with no operational modifications using standard vehicles. Long-term impacts on the circulation system plans would be less than significant.

Although construction impacts would not be substantial, construction of the proposed project may necessitate temporary individual traffic lane closures. In order to mitigate the potential traffic impacts to the community and its residents, the project contractor shall be required to provide written project notice including schedule and contact information to the HOA community and nearby residences 14-days prior to site mobilization (Mitigation Measure TRA-1). Therefore, with adherence to Mitigation Measure TRA-1, the proposed project would not conflict with a circulation plan, ordinance, or policy, and traffic impacts would be less than significant.

#### **b) Less than Significant Impact**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) stipulates criteria for analyzing transportation impacts in terms of “vehicle miles traveled” for land use projects and transportation projects. VMT refers to the amount and distance of automobile travel attributable to a project.

Construction of the proposed project would involve up to ten round-trip vehicle trips per day associated with workers, delivery of construction supplies and equipment, and hauling materials to and from the site. These trips would be temporary over the 11-month duration of construction and would not result in a perceivable increase in vehicle miles traveled within the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood. As stated under Impact “(a)” above, the VMT screening threshold established by the OPR for small projects is 110 or less trips per day to be presumed less than significant. Truck trips associated with operation and maintenance would be limited and incorporated into CVWD’s existing operation and maintenance program. Therefore, the project would not be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) and impacts would be less than significant.

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**c) Less than Significant Impact**

The project work includes restoring the condition and original grade of the Thunderbird Road right of way after installation of the project components, and thus would not have a permanent impact on geometric roadway or site design. In addition, the transportation of construction equipment or other materials is not anticipated to create a road hazard because of the low volumes of existing vehicles within the neighborhood which is limited to the Thunderbird Heights residents and their guests. CVWD would continue to operate its water system using standard vehicles with no operational modifications and would not introduce incompatible uses to roadways. Therefore, the proposed project would have less than significant impacts related to transportation hazards.

**d) Less than Significant Impact**

Construction of the project would generate trips associated with construction crews and materials deliveries and may necessitate short-term individual traffic lane closures which have the potential to result in inadequate access for emergency vehicles. Standard CVWD construction practices require emergency access be maintained, as needed, and that the contractor coordinate daily work locations to facilitate emergency vehicle routing. Traffic control would also require the contractor to make reasonable efforts, wherever possible, to provide landowners access to their property during execution of the work. The contractor may be required to implement a traffic control plan approved by the city of Rancho Mirage. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

In order to mitigate the potential traffic impacts to the community and its residents, the project shall implement written project notice measure Mitigation Measure TRA-1. Impacts are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

**Mitigation Measure TRA-1: 14-day, Written Project Notice**

The contractor shall be required to provide written project notice including schedule and contact information to the HOA community and nearby residences (within 500 feet of project boundaries) 14-days prior to site mobilization. A copy of all project notice documents shall be approved by CVWD's project manager in advance of site mobilization.

### 3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant 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 (c) 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

AB 52 was enacted July 1, 2015 and expanded CEQA by defining a new resource category called tribal cultural resources. AB 52 establishes that a project that could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resources may have a significant effect on the environment. AB 52 also establishes a formal consultation process for California tribes regarding tribal cultural resources. Under AB 52, lead agencies are required to begin consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project. Native American tribes are required to request notice of projects proposed within the jurisdiction of the lead agency. Initial outreach to Native American contacts was conducted as part of a Cultural Resources Study, which was prepared in February 2021 for the proposed project (Rincon 2021) and is provided in Appendix C.

On May 24, 2021, CVWD via sent certified-mail, formal Assembly Bill (AB) 52 consultation letters to the eight (8) local Native American tribal governments that have previously requested to consult under AB 52. As of July 1, 2021, CVWD environmental staff received written formal request for consultation from the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indian tribe (ACBCI). CVWD has consulted with the ACBCI [via telephone consultations in May and June 2021] and all parties' interests have been satisfied.

*Section 3.5, Cultural Resources* provides an overview of the cultural resources records search that was conducted for the proposed project on May 12, 2020. The search indicates that 20 cultural resources studies have been previously conducted within 1mile of the APE. Of these studies, one includes the current APE but did not result in the identification of any cultural resources. A total of seven previously recorded cultural resources were identified within 1 mile of the APE, none of which are located within the APE. No cultural resources were identified during the field survey.

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted on November 1, 2019, to request a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search of the APE and a 0.5-mile radius surrounding it, as well as a list of Native American groups, and/or individuals culturally affiliated with the project vicinity, who may have knowledge of cultural resources in the APE. The results of the SLF search were negative and 23 Native American contacts who may have knowledge of cultural resources of Native American origin within the APE were identified. Two formal responses to this outreach effort were received, which are summarized below and documented in Appendix C:

- On May 23, 2020, an email was received from Erica Pinto, on behalf of the Jamul Indian Village, stating that the Tribe deferred to Riverside County Tribes for comment on the proposed project.
- On July 10, 2020, a letter was received from the ACBCI requesting a copy of records search with associated survey reports and site records from the information center, a cultural resources inventory of the project area by a qualified archaeologist prior to any development activities in the area, and copies of any cultural resource documentation (report and site records) generated in connection

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with this project. CVWD followed up with the ACBCI to provide the requested materials noted above in May and June 2021.

**ai-aii) Less than Significant Impact**

The results of the cultural resources records search, outreach to Native American tribes and local interested parties, historical imagery review, and a field survey identified no archaeological resources within the APE (Rincon 2021).

The APE has been previously disturbed by construction of the roadways and residences, grading and excavation for the cement lining of the stormwater channels in the immediate project area, excavation and grading for the existing CVWD facilities on the project sites 5513 and 5514, and by the placement of other existing subsurface utilities. These results indicate that the APE is not highly sensitive for buried archaeological remains. However, ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed project could have the potential to unearth previously unknown resources. As described in Section 3.5 *Cultural Resources*, in the event that cultural resources are unearthed during project construction, Public Resource Code section 21082 state-mandated action(s), CVWD protocols, and professional archaeological standards would be followed to stop work in the immediate area, evaluate the resources for eligibility, and if eligible treat the resource to the satisfaction of professional archaeological standards.

The disturbed and previously studied nature of the site, combined with limited ground disturbing activities and standards for identification and evaluation of previously undiscovered resources ensure that no substantial adverse change in the significance of tribal cultural resources would occur and any impacts are considered are less than significant.

*Mitigation Measures:* None required or recommended.

### 3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Would the Project:</b>				
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]	[ ]

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## Discussion

### Water Supply

Water supply services for the project area are provided by CVWD. CVWD delivers irrigation and potable water, collects, and recycles wastewater, provides regional storm water protection, and replenishes the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin and is the largest water supplier in the Coachella Valley. CVWD's pressurized pipeline domestic water distribution systems have 30 pressure zones and consist of approximately 96 groundwater production wells, 2,000 miles of pipeline, and 135 million gallons of storage in 61 enclosed reservoirs. In 2015, CVWD provided 92,974 acre-feet of water to 212,871 residents through 107,358 active meters. CVWD's irrigation system consists of 485 miles of buried pipelines, 19 pumping plants, and 1,300 acre-feet of storage and provides approximately 392,000 acre-feet per year of Colorado River water and blended recycled water to over 1,100 customers covering approximately 76,354 acres. CVWD's water supplies come from groundwater, recycled water, imported water from the State Water Project (via the California Aqueduct) and the Colorado River via the Coachella Canal, a branch of the All-American Canal. All potable water is pumped from the groundwater basin. Imported and recycled water supplies are used to meet non-urban water demands and for groundwater replenishment (CVWD 2016).

### Wastewater and Recycled Water

CVWD provides wastewater collection and treatment services in the Coachella Valley. CVWD's wastewater collection system consists of approximately 1,100 miles of 6-inch through 36-inch diameter sewers and includes 35 sewage lift stations and associated force mains. The system contains trunk sewers, generally 10-inches in diameter and larger, that convey the collected wastewater flows to CVWD's treatment facilities. CVWD operates five water reclamation plants (WRPs), two of which (WRP-7 and WRP-10) generate recycled water for irrigation of golf courses and large landscaped areas. WRP-4 became operational in 1986 and serves communities from La Quinta to Mecca. WRP-4 effluent is not currently recycled; however, it will be recycled in the future after obtaining an approved wastewater change petition and tertiary treatment is constructed. The other two WRPs serve isolated communities near the Salton Sea. A sixth WRP (WRP-9) was decommissioned in July 2015 (CVWD 2016).

### Stormwater

CVWD provides regional flood protection for its stormwater unit within the Coachella Valley. CVWD's stormwater unit extends from the Whitewater River Spreading Area to Salton City, encompassing approximately 378,000 acres. CVWD's regional flood control system consists of a series of debris basins, levees, and stormwater channels that divert floodwaters from the canyons and alluvial fans surrounding the Coachella Valley to the 50-mile Whitewater River/Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel that flows to the Salton Sea (CVWD 2016).

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## Solid Waste

The Riverside County Department of Waste Resources (RCDWR) operates six landfills that serve Riverside County. The Lamb Canyon landfill located at 16411 Lamb Canyon Road, Beaumont, CA 92223 is the closest to the project sites, approximately 43 miles west of the proposed project (RCDWR 2021).

## Utilities

Electricity services within the project area are provided through a cooperative agreement between the Rancho Mirage Energy Authority (RMEA) and SCE. Southern California Gas Company provides natural gas services within the project area.

### **a) Less than Significant Impact**

The proposed project would construct approximately 600 linear feet of pipelines, a booster station, an above ground storage tank, associated onsite piping, meters, hydrants and valves, and upgrade an existing booster station to alleviate the storage deficit and to provide greater redundancy to CVWD's drinking water system and flows for fire suppression. The improvements would serve the existing Thunderbird Heights community. The proposed project would not require or result in the construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities beyond the proposed project improvements to CVWD's potable water system serving existing customers in the Thunderbird Heights community and would not result in significant environmental effects as documented throughout this IS/MND. Additionally, as discussed in *Section 3.15 Population and Housing*, the proposed project would not directly induce population growth that would require new or expanded utilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

### **b) No Impact**

Construction of the proposed project would require a minimal water supply for purposes such as dust control and concrete mixing and would be provided by existing CVWD sources. However, Operation of the Project would not directly or indirectly induce unplanned population or employment growth that would require or result in the construction of a new or expanded water infrastructure. The proposed project is intended to improve water supply reliability to the existing Thunderbird Heights community and would not generate an increased demand for water supply. Additionally, according to CVWD's 2015 Urban Water Management Plan (CVWD 2016), there will be sufficient supplies to meet projected demands through 2040 in normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years the project. No impacts to water supplies would occur.

### **c) No Impact**

As discussed under Impact "(a)" above, construction and operation of the proposed project would not directly or indirectly induce unplanned population or employment growth that would require or result in the construction of a new or expanded wastewater collection

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infrastructure or treatment services. The proposed project would not generate wastewater affecting capacity of wastewater treatment facilities, and there would be no impact.

**d, e) Less than Significant Impact**

Construction and implementation of the proposed project is not anticipated to generate a significant amount of solid waste. To the extent feasible, excavated soil would be reused on site. The construction contractor(s) would be required to dispose of excavated soil and solid wastes in accordance with local solid waste disposal requirements. Waste material may be hauled to the Lamb Canyon landfill or the Coachella Transfer Station located at 87011 Landfill Road, Coachella, CA 92236.

Solid waste generation would be limited to construction-related activities and would not affect available solid waste disposal capacity in the region. Wastes generated during construction activities are required to be disposed of in accordance with all applicable federal, State, and local statutes and regulations and no long-term solid waste generation would be associated with the proposed project. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: None required or recommended.

### 3.20 Wildfire

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Project:</b>				
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

Cal Fire's *Fire and Resource Assessment Program* assesses the amount and extent of California's forests and rangelands, analyzes their conditions, and identifies alternative management and policy guidelines. Maps are used in the *Fire and Resource Assessment*

*Program* to identify areas of very high fire hazard severity zones within Federal, State and Local Responsibility Area. The project is located within the Western Riverside County's Local Responsibility Area, which designates the project area as a non- very high fire hazard severity zone (Cal Fire 2009).

**a) Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated**

Construction of the proposed project may necessitate individual traffic lane closures which could temporarily impact emergency response vehicle access or emergency evacuations. Standard CVWD construction practices include traffic control requirements which would require that emergency crews have access, as needed, and that the contractor coordinates the location of the work daily for routing of emergency vehicles. Traffic control would also require the contractor to make reasonable efforts, wherever possible, to provide landowners access to their property during execution of the work. The contractor may be required to implement a traffic control plan approved by the city of Rancho Mirage. In addition, although construction impacts would not be substantial, any temporary individual traffic lane closures on Thunderbird Road could impact emergency response or evacuation plans. Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would be implemented in order to mitigate the potential impacts associated with traffic delays that may interfere with emergency response or evacuation. Under Mitigation Measure TRA-1, the project contractor shall be required to provide written project notice including schedule and contact information to the HOA community and nearby residences 14-days prior to site mobilization. Therefore, with adherence to Mitigation Measure TRA-1, the proposed project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan and impacts would be less than significant.

**b) No Impact**

The proposed project is located within Western Riverside County Local Responsibility Area and designated as non- very high fire hazard severity zone. The proposed project is not located on a slope and would not generate new occupants to the area, thus would not exacerbate wildfire risks, including increase exposure to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. The project would provide additional water storage that is needed in the area for system reliability, but also available as firefighting flow which would be a benefit to addressing wildfire risk. There would be no impacts.

**c) No Impact**

Construction of BS 5513-W would include all necessary appurtenances including a new transformer. While failure of the transformer could potentially result in an accidental fire, the project would be designed in conformance with engineering standards and stamped by a licensed professional engineer certifying that the design is sufficient to meet the current code. No other features are anticipated to exacerbate fire risk. Construction of new Reservoir 5514-2 would actually provide a benefit to having additional flows available for firefighting fire. No new operational modifications are proposed under the project. The proposed project does not require the installation or maintenance of associated

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infrastructure that may exacerbate wildfire risk or impacts to the environment. No impacts would occur.

**d) No Impact**

The project sites (CVWD sites and Thunderbird Road) are basically flat and are either unpaved or covered by concrete or asphalt. Vegetation within the CVWD sites function as vegetative screens. Although Site 5513 and Site 5514 abut hillsides, all construction or staging activity would occur within the project sites and would not disturb the hillsides. Where belowground pipeline is installed, surfaces would be restored to pre-construction conditions. Construction of the project would result in a minimal increase in impervious land surface and implementation of the proposed project would not impact site drainage. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to significant risks as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. No impacts would occur.

Mitigation Measures:

See Mitigation Measure TRA-1 under *Section 3.17 Transportation*

### 3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
<b>Does the Project:</b>				
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

#### a) Less than Significant Impact

The proposed project’s presence within existing roadway rights-of-way and existing CVWD-owned and, developed parcels limits the potential for habitat or environmental disturbances. Although the project sites are adjacent to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto

Mountains Conservation Area, project activities would be contained within the fenced CVWD-owned parcels and would have no direct impacts on the Conservation Area, thus limiting any direct impacts to habitat or populations of fish or wildlife species. As discussed in *Section 3.4 Biological Resources*, the project sites do not contain suitable habitat to support special status wildlife or plant species or sensitive plant or animal communities and no special status plant species were identified onsite. Previous site development, lack of suitable vegetation for wildlife species, regular site maintenance, and other disturbances from frequent human activity all limit the potential for impacts to fish or wildlife species habitat or populations. While the project site has the potential for nesting bird habitat, nesting birds are commonly found species and have the ability to migrate long distances and nest within a wide range of habitat. Given the project's small footprint, there is no potential to cause a nesting bird population to drop below self-sustaining levels. As described in *Section 3.4 Biological Resources*, indirect effects of the project would be limited. Short term construction noise could result in temporary impacts to wildlife populations in the Conservation Area, however, the duration, intensity, and frequency of potential noise generation would not be substantial enough to result in impacts to surrounding wildlife populations. In addition, the proposed project is not located in or near a riparian habitat or water body. Therefore, the proposed project does not have the potential to cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels or threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community. Similarly, the proposed project would be occur within the fencing of existing disturbed sites and, as such, would not have the potential to substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal.

As discussed in *Section 3.5 Cultural Resources*, the results of the cultural resources records search, Native American and local interested party outreach, historical imagery review, and field survey identified no historical or pre-historical California artifacts within the proposed project vicinity. In addition, the project sites have been previously disturbed by construction of roadways, a stormwater drainage channel, and/or subsurface utilities. The project therefore has no potential to eliminate major periods of California history or prehistory.

The project is entirely located within previously disturbed sites within the gated Thunderbird Heights community. Although the project is located adjacent to a Conservation Area, there are no nearby water bodies, and project activity would be limited to the previously disturbed area. Therefore, the project does not 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.

#### **b) Less than Significant Impact**

The proposed project would not result in individually limited or cumulatively considerable significant impacts. According to the CEQA Guidelines, 15065(a)(3), "cumulatively

considerable” means that the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. As described in *Sections 3.1 through Section 3.20*, all resource topics associated with the proposed project have been analyzed in accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines, and were found to pose no impacts, less than significant impacts, or less than significant impacts with mitigation incorporated. No potentially significant impacts would occur from project implementation. Impacts related to air quality were evaluated against thresholds designed to gauge an individual project’s cumulative impacts and were determined to be less than significant. Potential impacts on special status and protected species, including migratory birds, would be less than significant with mitigation. Likewise, the project’s potential impacts on unrecorded cultural resources and human remains would be less than significant with mitigation. Temporary impacts of construction related to handling hazardous materials, noise and vibration, and transportation circulation systems would also be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Cumulative projects consist of other CVWD domestic water supply projects. These include the Talavera Phase 1 Project, Ion Exchange Treatment Plant 7991 Replacement Project, Saint Anthony Mobile Home Park and Valley View Mobile Home Park Small Water System Consolidation Project, Dale Kiler Water Main Replacement Project, North Shore Water Main Replacement Project, Tank 7101-2 Construction Project, and Tanks 4711-3 and 4711-4 Replacement Project. These projects would be implemented on varying timelines and would not be located at or near the proposed project sites. The incremental impact of the proposed project together with impacts of these other cumulative projects in the region would be considered less than significant due to the large geographical area of the projects and the extended timeframe for development of the projects (that is, most projects would not occur simultaneously). Additionally, the cumulative projects would be required to comply with the same or similar regulations and mitigation measures that would reduce potential impacts. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project along with current and future projects would not result in cumulatively considerable significant impacts.

### **c) Less than Significant Impact**

The proposed project has limited potential to cause substantial adverse effects on human beings. As described throughout the previous sections in Chapter 3 of this document, potential impacts to humans arise from temporary construction-related impacts in areas such as risk of minor accidental spills, construction noise and groundborne vibration, and temporary single lane traffic closures. All of these impacts, while requiring mitigation have limited potential to cause more than temporary impacts. The quantities of gasoline, lubricants, and other potentially harmful hazardous materials are limited to that necessary to operate equipment, and as such would not be able to be spilled in a quantity that would result in an overall substantial adverse effect to human beings. Impacts from construction noise and vibration would be temporary, during daytime hours, and construction would not require equipment that generates excessive levels of prolonged noise. Traffic impacts are limited to the approximately weeklong in-road work and would only require closure of

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one lane. The project, once completed, would return the road to previous use and no lasting or substantially adverse impacts would occur. Other potential areas for adverse impacts to human beings could occur from rupture, contamination, or failure of project features, however, as discussed in Section 3.7 Geology and Soils and Chapter 2 Project Description, the project is designed to all current codes and standards to prevent rupture, contamination, or failure of water systems. Consequently, the proposed project would not result in any environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings directly or indirectly.

*Mitigation Measures*

None required.

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## 4. FEDERAL CROSS-CUTTING ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS EVALUATION

The proposed project may receive funding from the USDA and/or under a SWRCB program that also has a federal funding component and/or from a federal program overseen by the US EPA. Therefore, to assist in compliance with the federal environmental requirements, this document includes analysis pertinent to several federal cross-cutting regulations (also referred to as federal cross-cutters or CEQA-Plus). The basic rules for complying with cross-cutting federal authorities are set-out in the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund regulations at 40 CFR section 35.3575 and the USDA Environmental Policies and Procedures at 7 CFR section 1970. Federal cross-cutting topics are included in this report to satisfy the NEPA review requirements for federal funding.

This section describes the status of compliance with relevant federal laws, executive orders, and policies, and the consultation that has occurred or will occur in the near future. The topics are based on the USDA environmental policies and procedures and the SWRCB's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program Federal Cross-cutting Environmental Regulations Evaluation Form for Environmental Review and Federal Coordination.

### 4.1 Federal Endangered Species Act

Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act requires federal agencies, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat of these species. Under Section 7, a project that could result in incidental take of a listed threatened or endangered species must consult with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to obtain a Biological Opinion. If the Biological Opinion finds that the project could jeopardize the existence of a listed species ("jeopardy opinion"), the agency cannot authorize the project until it is modified to obtain a "non-jeopardy" opinion.

The SWRCB and/or USDA would act as the federal lead or responsible agency for the proposed project. The information contained within the environmental checklist and the Biological Resources Technical Study (Rincon 2020, Appendix B) may be used to support project compliance with the Federal Endangered Species Act and Migratory Bird Treaty Act. *Section 3.4, Biological Resources*, describes that the project sites do not contain suitable habitat for any special status plant or wildlife species (including federally listed species). While 10 special status plant species (one federally listed species) have been previously documented within a 5-mile radius of the project area by the CNDDDB and California Native Plant Society's Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants, it was determined that the proposed project sites do not contain suitable habitat to support special status plant species because of the disturbance history of the sites, lack of suitable soils, inappropriate hydrologic conditions, or absence of appropriate vegetation

communities. No special status plant species were observed within the project area during the field survey.

Special-status wildlife were evaluated for their potential to occur within the project area, including an additional buffer area, where direct or indirect impacts could occur. Although 15 special-status wildlife species (five federally listed species) were previously recorded within a 5-mile radius of the project area, the project area was determined to not provide suitable habitat to support any of the previously-documented special status wildlife species, primarily due to low habitat quality in the developed areas, lack of suitable vegetation that would support special-status wildlife species, and regular maintenance of the grounds or other disturbance from frequent human activity. Therefore, the proposed project is not expected to result in direct or indirect impacts to special-status plant or wildlife species, nor jeopardize any listed species and a no effect determination is anticipated. The proposed project would be in compliance with the Federal Endangered Species Act.

#### **4.2 National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106**

The purpose of the National Historic Preservation Act is to protect, preserve, rehabilitate, or restore significant historical, archaeological, and cultural resources. Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider effects on historic properties. Section 106 review involves a step-by-step procedure described in detail in the implementing regulations (36 CFR Part 800).

As described in *Section 3.5 Cultural Resources*, a cultural resource assessment for the proposed project was conducted, and is provided in Appendix C. The analysis includes a Section 106 evaluation for the proposed project and can be submitted as part of the consultation process with the State Historic Preservation Officer. Concurrence by State Historic Preservation Officer would ensure compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act.

A total of 20 cultural resources studies have been previously conducted within a 1-mile radius of the project's APE. Of these studies, one included portions of the project area, but did not result in the identification of any cultural resources. A total of seven previously recorded cultural resources were identified within a 1-mile radius of the APE. These sites are summarized in Appendix C; none intersect with the APE. The field survey identified no historic properties or archaeological resources in the APE area. CVWD would adhere to state-mandated, applicable cultural resources regulatory standards during construction in the event of unanticipated discovery of archaeological resources or human remains, as summarized in *Section 3.5 Cultural Resources*. Impacts to historical resources under CEQA would be less than significant and no effects to historic properties under the National Historic Preservation Act for the proposed project are expected.

#### **4.3 Federal Clean Air Act**

U.S. Congress adopted general conformity requirements as part of the Clean Air Act Amendments in 1990 and the US EPA implemented those requirements in 1993 (Sec.

176 of the Federal Clean Air Act (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] section 7506) and 40 CFR Part 93, Subpart B). General conformity requires that all federal actions “conform” with the State Implementation Plan as approved or promulgated by US EPA. The purpose of the general conformity program is to ensure that actions taken by the federal government do not undermine state or local efforts to achieve and maintain the NAAQS. Before a federal action is taken, it must be evaluated for conformity with the State Implementation Plan. All “reasonably foreseeable” emissions predicted to result from the action are considered. These include direct and indirect emissions and must be identified as to location and quantity. If it is found that the action would create emissions above de minimis threshold levels specified in US EPA regulations (40 CFR section 93.153(b)), or if the activity is considered “regionally significant” because its emissions exceed 10% of an area’s total emissions, the action cannot proceed unless mitigation measures are specified that would bring the proposed project into conformance.

As described in *Section 3.3 Air Quality*, the project area lies within the SSAB. The results of the air quality modeling showed that pollutant emissions would not exceed federal General Conformity de minimis thresholds (Appendix A). Accordingly, the proposed project would be in compliance with the Federal Clean Air Act.

#### **4.4 Coastal Zone Management Act**

The Coastal Zone Management Act, passed by Congress in 1972 and managed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, is designed to balance completing land and water issues in coastal zones. It also aims to “preserve, protect, develop, and where possible, to restore or enhance the resources of the nation’s coastal zone.” Within California, the Coastal Zone Management Act is administered by the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the California Coastal Conservancy, and the California Coastal Commission.

No portion of the proposed project is within the coastal zone. The project area is located approximately 70 miles east of the Pacific Coast. Therefore, the Coastal Zone Management Act does not apply to the proposed project.

#### **4.5 Farmland Protection Policy Act**

The Farmland Protection Policy Act requires a federal agency to consider the effects of its actions and programs on the nation’s farmlands. The Farmland Protection Policy Act is intended to minimize the impact of federal programs with respect to the conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. It assures that, to the extent possible, federal programs are administered to be compatible with state, local, and private programs, and policies to protect farmland.

As described in *Section 3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources*, the project area is located entirely within a developed residential area. No portion of the project would take place on agricultural lands, including those designated as important farmland or zoned for agricultural use. The proposed project would not result in land use changes and would,

therefore, not impact important farmland, conflict with agricultural zoning regulations, or result in other changes that would indirectly result in conversion of nearby farmland to non-agricultural use. Therefore, the proposed project would not adversely affect any farmland areas and the project lead agency would be in compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act.

#### **4.6 Executive Order 11988 – Floodplain Management**

Executive Order 11988 requires federal agencies to recognize the values of floodplains and to consider the public benefits from restoring and preserving floodplains.

As described in *Section 3.9 Hydrology and Water Quality*, the project is not located within a Federal Emergency Management Agency 100-year flood zone. Construction of the proposed project would not create major changes to drainage or impervious surface areas at the existing project sites and therefore would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding. As such, the lead agency would be in compliance with this Executive Order.

#### **4.7 Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and Executive Order 13168**

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act prohibit the take of migratory birds (or any part, nest, or eggs of any such bird) and the take and commerce of eagles. Executive Order 13168 (Sep 22, 2000) requires that any project with federal involvement address impacts of federal actions on migratory birds.

As described in *Section 3.4 Biological Resources*, the proposed project would have less than significant impact on nesting birds because CVWD would implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1 and standard practices for minimization of impact to nesting birds, including those required under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Thus, the proposed project would be in compliance with this Executive Order.

#### **4.8 Executive Order 11990 – Protection of Wetlands**

Under Executive Order 11990 (May 24, 1977), federal agencies must avoid affecting wetlands unless it is determined that no practicable alternative is available.

As described in *Section 3.4 Biological Resources*, the proposed project sites are not located in or near a riparian habitat or sensitive natural community. While non-wetland features potentially under the jurisdiction of CDFW and RWQCB exist near the proposed project sites, project activities are to be contained outside the slopes and beds of these features and, therefore, direct impacts are not anticipated. The proposed project does not have the potential to result in direct or indirect impacts to jurisdictional areas, wetlands, other waters, or riparian habitats. There would be no impacts to wetlands and the proposed project would be in compliance with Executive Order 11990.

#### **4.9 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act**

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was passed in 1968 to preserve and protect designated rivers for their natural, cultural, and recreational value.

There are no designated Wild and Scenic Rivers within the project area, nor would any designated rivers be adversely affected by the proposed project. As a result, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act does not apply to the proposed project.

#### **4.10 Safe Drinking Water Act – Source Water Protection**

Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act established the US EPA's Sole Source Aquifer Program. This program protects communities from groundwater contamination from federally-funded projects.

Within US EPA's Region 9, which includes California, there are nine sole source aquifers. None of these sole source aquifers are located within the project area. Therefore, the Sole Source Aquifer Program does not apply to the proposed project, and the project would be in compliance with Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

#### **4.11 Executive Order on Trails for America in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

The Executive Order on Trails for America (January 18, 2001) requires federal agencies to protect, connect, promote, and assist trails of all types throughout the United States. According to the trails map in the Riverside County Eastern Coachella Valley Area Plan (Riverside County 2019b), there are no trails within the project area. As a result, no adverse effects on trails would occur and the lead agency is in compliance with this Executive Order.

#### **4.12 Executive Order 13007 – Indian Sacred Sites**

Sacred sites are defined in Executive Order 13007 (May 24, 1996) as "any specific, discrete, narrowly delineated location on federal land that is identified by an Indian tribe, or Indian individual determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion, as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance to, or ceremonial use by, an Indian religion; provided that the tribe or appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion has informed the agency of the existence of such a site."

As discussed in *Section 3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources*, results of the Sacred Lands File Search by the Native American Heritage Commission, Native American and local interested party outreach, historical imagery review, and field survey identified no archeological resources within the project area. The project area has been previously disturbed by construction and is not highly sensitive for buried archaeological remains, and is not located on federal lands. However, ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed project could have the potential to unearth previously unknown resources. In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during project construction, CVWD will comply with Section 21082 of the Public Resources Code, temporarily suspend all earth

disturbing work within a 100-foot radius of the discovery and retain a qualified professional archaeologist to evaluate the significance of the find, which would ensure that impacts to archaeological resources are less than significant.

As a result, no adverse effects on Indian sacred sites would occur and the project would be in compliance with this Executive Order.

#### **4.13 Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act**

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) of 1976 as amended (16 U.S.C. section 1801 et seq.), is the primary act governing federal management of fisheries in federal waters, from the 3-nautical-mile state territorial sea limit to the outer limit of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. It establishes exclusive U.S. management authority over all fishing within the Exclusive Economic Zone, all anadromous fish throughout their migratory range except when in a foreign nation's waters, and all fish on the continental shelf. The Act also requires federal agencies to consult with NMFS on actions that could damage Essential Fish Habitat, as defined in the 1996 Sustainable Fisheries Act (Public Law 104-297).

The proposed project would not be located in or impact any U.S. federal waters regulated under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. As described in Section 3.4 Biological Resources, the proposed project is not expected to have adverse effect on resident or migratory fish, or fish habitat in the proposed project area. As a result, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act does not apply to the proposed project.

##### **4.13.1 Environmental Justice**

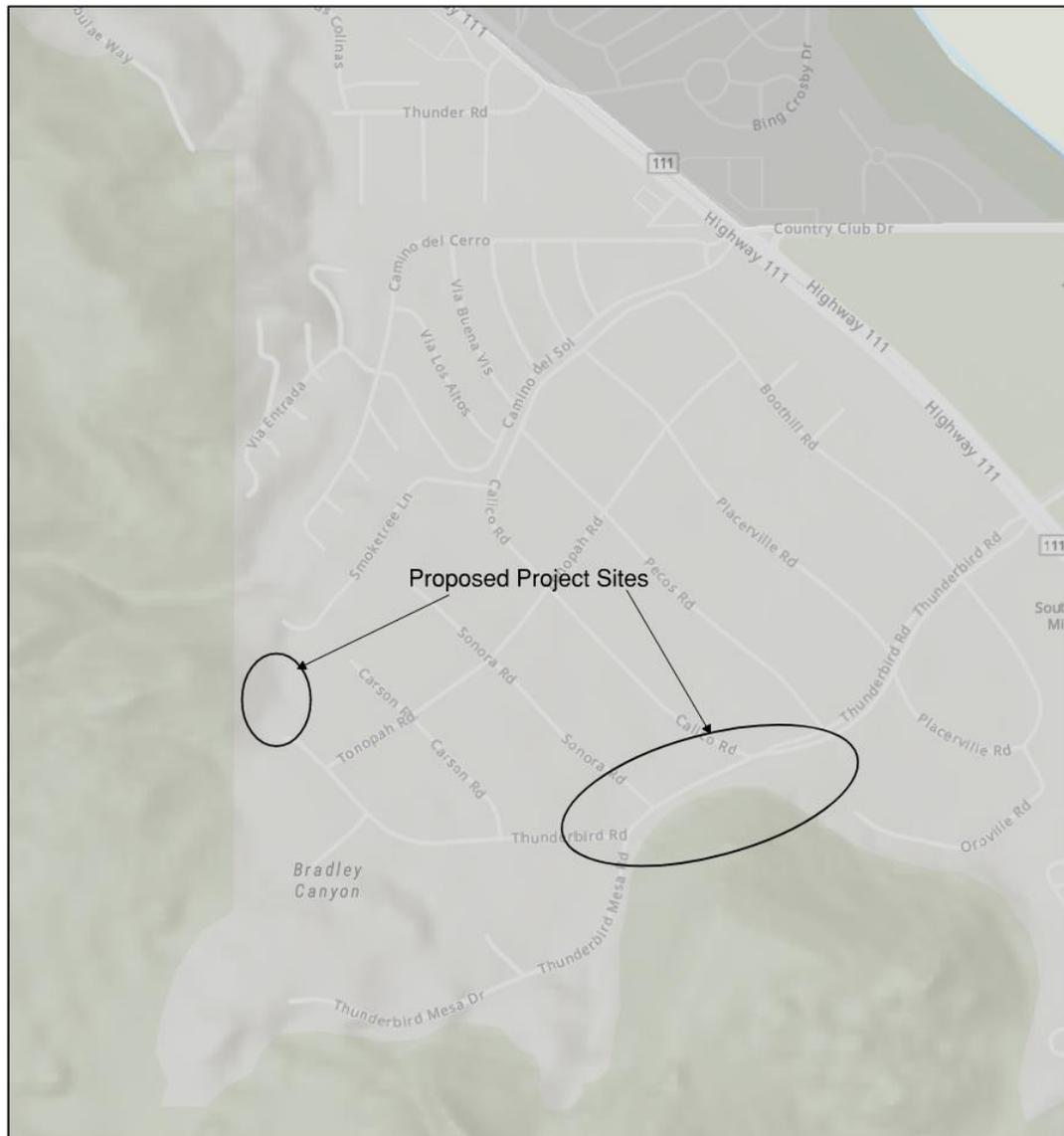
This section describes the existing socioeconomic resources in the proposed project area and the regulatory setting pertaining to environmental justice-related issues. This section also evaluates the potential for the proposed project to disproportionately affect minority or low-income groups. The US EPA defines environmental justice as:

“The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or economic groups should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, State, local, and tribal programs, and policies” (US EPA 2020a).”

According to US EPA guidelines, a minority population is present in a study area if the minority population of the affected area exceeds 50 percent, or if the minority population percentage of the affected area is meaningfully greater than the minority population percentage in the general population or other appropriate unit of geographic analysis. According to the US EPA's Environmental Screening and Mapping Tool (EJScreen) (US EPA 2020b), and as shown in Figure 4-1, the majority of the project area is in the less than

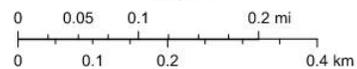
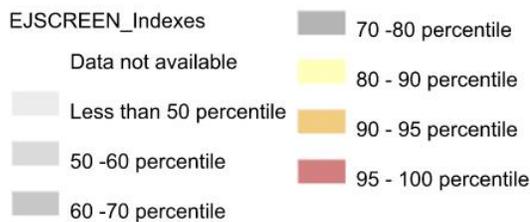
50th percentile for minority population. Therefore, the project area is not composed of a minority population exceeding 50 percent.

**Figure 4-1: US EPA EJScreen Map of Minority Population**



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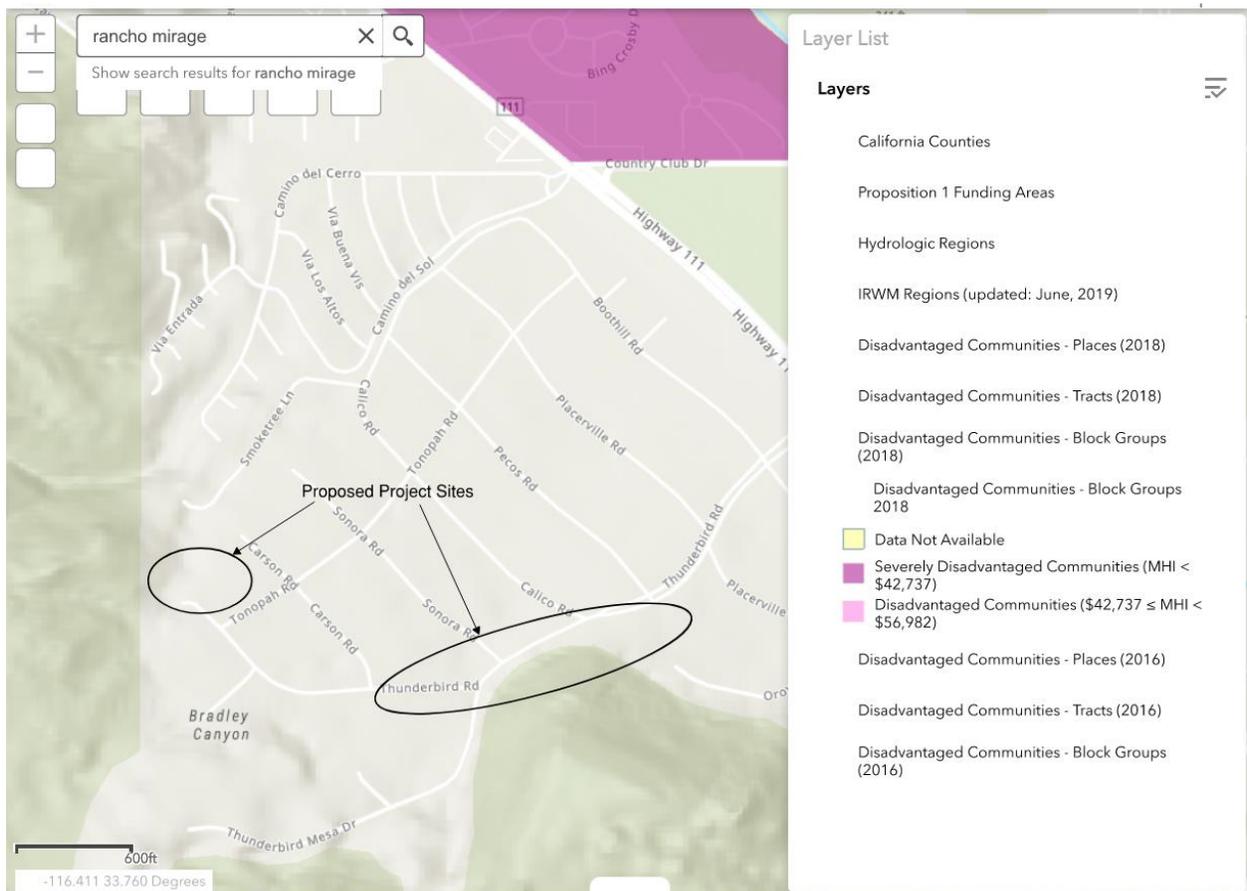


Sources: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap and the GIS user community, Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

US EPA guidelines recommend that analyses of low-income communities consider the U.S. Census Bureau’s poverty level definitions, as well as applicable state and regional definitions of low-income and poverty communities.

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) defines a disadvantaged community as a community with a median household income (MHI) less than 80 percent of the California MHI and a severely disadvantaged community is a community with an MHI less than 60 percent of the California MHI. According to 2014 to 2018 U.S. Census American Community Survey data, the statewide MHI was \$71,228. A disadvantaged community would therefore be a community with an MHI of \$56,982 or less and a severely disadvantaged community would be a community with an MHI of \$42,737. According to the DWR Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool (DWR 2020), the entire project area is not a disadvantaged community (Figure 4-2).

**Figure 4-2: DWR Disadvantaged Community Mapping Tool**



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## **Impact Analysis**

For the purposes of this analysis, an impact related to environmental justice would be significant if the proposed project would cause impacts to minority or low-income populations that are disproportionately high and adverse, either directly, indirectly, or cumulatively.

The proposed project would add storage capacity and make necessary equipment upgrades in order to provide more reliable and efficient water service in the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood. Although construction of the proposed project has the potential for direct short-term environmental effects as described in this document, (e.g., short term impacts on air quality, noise, etc.) they are not disproportionately high or adverse, nor would impacts occur to a minority or low-income population. The project would have the long-term positive effect of improving water delivery reliability for the community and reducing the need for emergency repairs and interruptions in water service.

Therefore, the proposed project would not result in any disproportionately high adverse impacts on minority or low-income communities and no adverse environmental justice impacts would occur.

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## 5. ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Alternatives Evaluated

The proposed project is described in detail in *Section 2*.

Under the No Project alternative, the existing equipment, system, and operations of Site 5513 and Site 5514 would remain. No action would be taken. Reservoir 5514-2 would not be constructed, BS 5513 would remain in need of replacement or repair, BS 5514 would not be demolished or relocated, and associated pipeline would not be replaced. A 0.6 MG storage deficit would remain in the lower portion of the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not provide necessary water reliability, efficiency, storage, pressure, and redundancy upgrades for the portions of CVWD's Cove Community system within the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood.

### 5.2 Selected Alternative

The No Project/No Action Alternative would not achieve the project objectives to improve the reliability of water supply, pressure, and storage for the portions of CVWD's Cove Community system within the Thunderbird Heights neighborhood. The proposed project is the recommended alternative because it is cost-effective, would provide CVWD with a long-term asset, and achieves the project objectives of improved water supply reliability, pressure, and storage.

Table 5-1 presents a summary of the environmental impacts of the proposed Project, the proposed Project with mitigation incorporated (if applicable), and the No Project/No Action Alternative. Table 5-1 summarizes the impacts as either No impact, Less than Significant Impact; Potentially Significant Impact; or Not Applicable (N/A).

**Table 5-1: Comparison of Alternatives – Environmental Impacts**

Issue Areas	Proposed Project IS/MND Findings – Without Mitigation	Proposed Project - With Mitigation	No Project/ No Action
<b>Aesthetics</b>			
Scenic vistas; Visual character and quality, Light and glare;	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No impact
Scenic resources along a State Scenic Highway	No impact	N/A	No impact
<p>The proposed project sites currently house water distribution facilities and aboveground steel water storage tanks. The proposed project would not substantially alter the visual character of the sites, and the sites would be screened from surrounding views by vegetation. There are no scenic highways in the project area. Construction would occur during daytime hours and any lighting necessary for construction would be directed towards installation activities and away from adjacent land uses. Permanent exterior building, reservoir, and area lighting would be of the lowest illumination necessary and would be shielded and directed downward. The proposed project would not result in significant temporary or permanent impacts on scenic vistas, visual character and quality, or light and glare. The No Project/No Action alternative would include no construction or new facilities; therefore, the No Project/No Action alternative would have no impact on scenic views or light and glare.</p>			
<b>Agriculture and Forestry</b>			
Convert farmland; Indirect conversion of farmland; Conflict with zoning for agricultural use; Loss of forest use; Conflict with zoning for forest use	No impact	N/A	No impact
<p>The proposed project would be located solely on developed lands (CVWD-owned sites with existing water supply facilities and the adjacent paved roadway). The proposed project would not be located on, or adjacent to, Important Farmland, Williamson Act land, or land zoned for agricultural use. Therefore, the proposed project would not have the potential to convert Important Farmland or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural uses or a Williamson Act Contract. There is no forest land at the proposed project sites or in the surrounding area, therefore the project would not cause loss or conversion of forest land. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not impact agricultural or forest land.</p>			
<b>Air Quality</b>			
Consistency with air quality plan; Non-attainment criteria pollutants; Sensitive receptors; Objectionable odors	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No impact
<p>The proposed project emissions estimates are within the 2016 SCAQMD forecast and would not conflict with the plan. Based on air quality modeling results, the proposed project construction emissions would not exceed regional or localized significance thresholds, nor would they exceed de minimis thresholds, so federal general conformity requirements do not apply. The proposed project would not generate substantial operational emissions and emissions would not exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for any criteria pollutants; therefore, sensitive receptors would not be impacted. Construction-related odors from diesel equipment would be temporary and, once operational, the project would not create objectionable odors. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not impact air quality.</p>			



Issue Areas	Proposed Project IS/MND Findings – Without Mitigation	Proposed Project - With Mitigation	No Project/ No Action
<b>Biological Resources</b>			
Sensitive species	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact
Wildlife Corridors; Habitat Conservation Plans or Natural Community Conservation Plans; Wetlands	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact	No impact
Sensitive habitat; Local policies and ordinances	No impact	N/A	No impact
<p>The project area does not contain suitable habitat for special status species or communities; however, it may provide nesting bird habitat. CVWD would comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and California Fish and Game Code Section 3503, therefore potential construction impacts on birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation. The proposed project site is not located in or near a riparian habitat or sensitive natural community. While non-wetland features potentially under the jurisdiction of the CDFW and RWQCB exist near the proposed project site, project activities are to be contained outside the slopes and beds of these features and, therefore, direct impacts would not occur. The implementation of a construction SWPPP would avoid potential indirect impacts of construction activities and reduce the potential for the release of hazardous materials. While the biological resources study area is adjacent to areas connected to a natural landscape block, the proposed project footprints are located within previously developed and routinely managed areas that offer little to no value to wildlife movement. The proposed project would not conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. While a small portion of the project area is adjacent to the CVMSHCP/NCCP Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area, project activities would be contained outside of the Conservation Area. Implementation of mitigation would require the project to comply with the CVMSHCP/NCCP Section 4.5 Land Use Adjacency Guidelines, through Mitigation Measure BIO-2, to avoid and minimize indirect effects to this Conservation Area. Although No Project/ No Action Alternative would not include construction and operation of new infrastructure and would not result in a significant impact to biological resources, however, regular maintenance at the existing project sites could include vegetation removal that may provide nesting bird habitat. Continued maintenance of the existing sites would be subject to compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.</p>			
<b>Cultural Resources</b>			
Historical resources	No impact	N/A	No impact
Archaeological resources: Human remains	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No impact
<p>No historic properties exist within the project area. The results of the cultural resources records search, Native American and local interested party outreach, historical imagery review, and field survey identified no archeological resources within the project area. Although the project area has been previously disturbed, there is a possibility of identifying unanticipated cultural resources during ground disturbing activities associated with the proposed project. In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during project construction, CVWD will comply with section 21082 of the Public Resources Code, temporarily suspend all earth disturbing work within a 100-foot radius of the discovery and retain a qualified professional archaeologist to evaluate the significance of the find, which would ensure that impacts to archaeological resources are less than significant. The potential for encountering human remains is low and compliance with applicable regulations would ensure that impacts to human remains are less than significant. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not impact cultural resources.</p>			



Issue Areas	Proposed Project IS/MND Findings – Without Mitigation	Proposed Project - With Mitigation	No Project/ No Action
<b>Energy</b>			
Wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	Less than Significant
Conflict with state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No Impact
<p>Construction of the proposed project would comply with required energy efficiency measures and operational energy use would be comparable to projects of similar type and size. Impacts associated with energy consumption would be less than significant. The proposed project would not conflict with state or local plans for energy efficiency and impacts would be less than significant. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not use energy for construction, and operational energy use would remain the same and therefore would have no impact. However, at some point in the future CVWD would need to address the supply reliability within the local system which could result in added energy use or inefficiencies in existing aging equipment if not addressed. However, CVWD’s mission to “meet the water-related needs of the people [...] proving high quality water at a reasonable cost” requires the district to address system deficiencies with the potential to increase rates of their rate payers and therefore the No Project/No Action Alternative could have an insignificant potential to result in inefficient or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.</p>			
<b>Geology and Soils</b>			
Geological hazards; Erosion and topsoil loss; Unstable soils; Expansive soils	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No Impact
Paleontological resources	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No Impact
Alternative wastewater disposal systems	No impact	N/A	No impact
<p>The proposed project is not located within a fault zone and the potential for ground rupture is low. While the proximity to two active fault zones puts the project area at high risk for strong seismic ground shaking, the project structures would be designed in conformance with seismic engineering standards and are not designed to house people. The project would minimize soil erosion via implementation of BMPs in a SWPPP prepared in accordance with the SWRCB’s Construction General Permit. Compliance with CVWD’s professional engineering standards would ensure less than significant impacts related to risks of unstable soils or geologic hazards. The project would not involve the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. The project may include excavation up to 15 feet deep for the booster station and is therefore not expected to reach depths where sensitive paleontological resources would be expected to occur. In addition, the proposed project area is located in an already disturbed area and underlain by geologic deposits that are generally too young to contain fossilized material. Therefore, impacts to paleontological resources are less than significant. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not require any construction or excavation and therefore would not impact geology and soils.</p>			
<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</b>			
GHG emissions; Conflict with GHG reduction plans	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No Impact



Issue Areas	Proposed Project IS/MND Findings – Without Mitigation	Proposed Project - With Mitigation	No Project/ No Action
<p>The proposed project’s maximum annual GHG emissions (including amortized construction emissions) would not exceed Riverside County’s or SCAQMD’s recommended annual threshold for CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions. GHG emissions of the proposed project would be less than significant, and the proposed project is not expected to interfere with the applicable plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions, including AB 32 and SB 32. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not impact greenhouse gas emissions.</p>			
<p><b>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</b></p>			
<p>Routine handling of hazardous materials; Emergency response or evacuation plans conflict; Wildland fire;</p>	<p>Less than Significant Impact</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>Accidental release of hazardous materials</p>	<p>Potentially Significant Impact</p>	<p>Less than Significant Impact</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
<p>Hazardous materials near schools; Listed hazardous materials sites; Airport safety hazard</p>	<p>No impact</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>No impact</p>
<p>The proposed project would include the routine transport and use of hazardous materials during construction and operation. Through compliance with all applicable local, State, and federal regulations governing transport and use of these materials, the impact would be less than significant. The project site is not near any active hazardous materials sites, is not within an airport influence area, and no schools are present near the project site; there would be no impact associated with these topics. The Project area is not in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and has a low risk of wildfire. There is a risk of accidental hazardous materials release during construction; mitigation requiring a Hazardous Materials Management and Spill Control Plan would reduce impacts to less than significant. Temporary blockage of one lane of Thunderbird Road and the intersection at Thunderbird Mesa Drive would occur for approximately one week and would not conflict with the Riverside County <i>Emergency Operations Plan</i>. Although the No Project/No Action Alternative would not require construction and operation of any new infrastructure unless system failure was imminent, operation and maintenance of the existing project sites requires the transportation and use of hazardous materials which pose a similar potential for spill scenarios as the proposed project. However, standard CVWD maintenance procedures would be followed, and no impact would occur..</p>			
<p><b>Hydrology and Water Quality</b></p>			
<p>Water quality standards or otherwise degrade water quality; Groundwater supply and recharge; Substantially alter drainage pattern; In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones risk release of pollutants; Conflict with or obstruct water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan</p>	<p>Less than Significant Impact</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>No impact</p>
<p>Excavation, grading, and other activities associated with construction of the proposed project would result in soil disturbance that could cause water quality violations through potential erosion and subsequent sedimentation of receiving water bodies. However, compliance with the SWRCB Construction General Permit, including implementation of BMPs outlined in a SWPPP, would result in less than significant impacts. The proposed project would not add or change existing uses of groundwater. The proposed project would slightly alter individual impervious surfaces (through replacement of old facilities), but the design of the proposed project would maintain the existing drainage pattern and impacts would be less than significant. The project would not have an impact related to flooding risks, or seiche, tsunami, or mudflows and would not be subject to inundation. The proposed project does not overlie a sole-source aquifer and is not located within a floodplain. The proposed project would not conflict with a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not impact hydrology and water quality.</p>			



Issue Areas	Proposed Project IS/MND Findings – Without Mitigation	Proposed Project - With Mitigation	No Project/ No Action
<b>Land Use and Planning</b>			
Divide an established community; Conflict with an applicable land use plan	No impact	N/A	No impact
<p>The proposed project is limited to existing CVWD-owned sites that are not publicly accessible and would not change existing access to the surrounding residences. During construction, temporary blockage of one lane of Thunderbird Road and the intersection at Thunderbird Mesa Drive would occur in order to install the new pipeline. Closures would occur on approximately two to five days and would be limited to daytime hours. Access to residences would be maintained throughout the construction period. The proposed project would construct water storage and distribution facilities on sites that currently house similar facilities. The proposed project would improve water supply reliability and fire flow but would not serve new areas or induce growth. The proposed project would not impact land use in the city of Rancho Mirage. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not impact land use and planning.</p>			
<b>Mineral Resources</b>			
Loss of availability of a known, valuable mineral resource or mineral resource recovery site	No impact	N/A	No impact
<p>The project sites are not known to contain mineral resources of value significant to the region or state; thus, there would be no impact. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not impact mineral resources.</p>			
<b>Noise</b>			
Substantial temporary or permanent increase in noise levels in excess of standards; Groundborne vibration	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact	No impact
Aircraft noise	No impact	N/A	No impact
<p>The proposed project would not generate substantial levels of temporary or permanent noise in violation of the City of Rancho Mirage's general plan or noise ordinance. Under the Noise ordinance, temporary construction activities such as the project's are exempt from the ambient noise standards. Although groundborne vibration from project construction would not reach a threshold damaging to modern structures, implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would reduce construction related vibration levels to less than significant. Minimal operational noise would be generated by BS 5513-W and would not be expected to impact ambient noise conditions of the neighboring properties. The proposed project site is outside the noise impact area for the Palm Springs International Airport. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not impact noise.</p>			
<b>Population and Housing</b>			
Population growth	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No impact
Displacement of housing or people	No impact	N/A	No impact
<p>The proposed project would not induce population growth, as it involves expansion of CVWD's municipal water storage infrastructure to ensure a reliable water supply for the existing Thunderbird Heights neighborhood. The proposed project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth and would involve CVWD-owned land that would not require additional land acquisition or right-of-way that would displace existing people or housing. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not impact population and housing.</p>			



Issue Areas	Proposed Project IS/MND Findings – Without Mitigation	Proposed Project - With Mitigation	No Project/ No Action
<b>Public Services</b>			
Substantial adverse impacts associated with new or altered governmental facilities or public services	No impact	N/A	No impact
The project would not require or include new or altered governmental facilities. There would be no impacts to public services associated with the proposed project. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not impact public services.			
<b>Recreation</b>			
Increase use of existing recreational facilities; Include or require expansion of facilities	No impact	N/A	No impact
The project area does not include any recreational facilities. The proposed project would not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of facilities that would impact the environment. The No Project/No Action Alternative would not impact recreation.			
<b>Transportation</b>			
Circulation system performance; Emergency access	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant Impact	No impact
Consistency with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 subdivision (b) (VMT); Traffic hazards	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No impact
Construction is anticipated to last 11 months and would generate only minimal vehicle trips for construction workers, delivery of materials, and hauling. The proposed project would generate less VMT than the presumed 110 trips per day significance threshold (OPR 2018). The proposed project operational VMT would be minimal and be incorporated into CVWD's existing operation and maintenance program. The completed project would not result in traffic hazards. Although the project would not result in any permanent traffic impacts, pipeline installation would require temporary, partial closure of Thunderbird Road for two to five days in total which could temporarily impact the Thunderbird Heights community, its residents, and emergency access. Implementation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would require the project contractor to provide written notice to the HOA community and nearby residences and would result in a less than significant impact to circulation system performance and emergency access. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not impact transportation.			
<b>Tribal Cultural Resources</b>			
Tribal cultural resources	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No impact
No tribal cultural resources have been identified at the proposed project site; however, there is the potential for undiscovered resources to be encountered during construction. In the event that cultural resources are unearthed during project construction, CVWD will comply with Section 21082 of the Public Resources Code, temporarily suspend all earth disturbing work within a 100-foot radius of the discovery and retain a qualified professional archaeologist to evaluate the significance of the find, which would ensure that impacts to archaeological resources are less than significant. The potential for encountering human remains is low and compliance with applicable regulations would ensure that impacts to human remains are less than significant. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not impact tribal cultural resources.			
<b>Utilities and Service Systems</b>			
Construction of new utilities causing environmental effects; Solid waste capacity; Solid waste compliance	Less than Significant Impact	N/A	No impact



Issue Areas	Proposed Project IS/MND Findings – Without Mitigation	Proposed Project - With Mitigation	No Project/ No Action
Sufficient water supply; Wastewater treatment capacity	No impact	N/A	No impact
<p>The proposed project includes the expansion of CVWD’s potable water delivery system, but construction would not have significant environmental effects. No new wastewater, stormwater, power, or telecommunications facilities would be required beyond those included in the proposed project. The proposed project would serve the existing Thunderbird Heights community and would not directly induce population growth that would require new or expanded utilities. Construction of the proposed project would require a minimal water supply and would be provided by existing CVWD sources. Construction would generate a minimal amount of excess soil that would be reused on site to the extent feasible; no long-term solid waste generation would be associated with the proposed project. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not impact utilities and service systems.</p>			
<b>Wildfire</b>			
Impair an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant	No Impact
Exacerbate wildfire risk due to slope, prevailing winds, or other factors; Exacerbate wildfire risk due to required installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure; Expose people or structures to risks resulting from runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes	No Impact	N/A	No Impact
<p>The project area is not in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. In addition, the project sites are level and covered primarily by dirt, concrete, or asphalt and surfaces would be restored to pre-construction conditions. Thus, no impacts are expected related to exacerbation of wildfire risk. Although construction would be temporary, individual traffic lane closures have the potential to impact emergency response or evacuation plans. Implementation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would require the project contractor to provide written project notice and would reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The No Project/ No Action Alternative would not impact wildfires.</p>			

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## 6. REPORT PREPARATION

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**APPENDIX A: AIR QUALITY MODELING CALEEMOD DATA SHEETS**

**APPENDIX B: BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL STUDY**

**APPENDIX C: CULTURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT AND AB52  
CONSULTATION LETTER**