

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA) is proposing modifications to Phase 2 of the Natomas Levee Improvement Program (NLIP), Landside Improvements Project previously addressed in the *Environmental Impact Report on the Natomas Levee Improvement Program, Landside Improvements Project* (“2007 Landside EIR,” State Clearinghouse No. 2007062016), certified in November 2007. As the lead agency for complying with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), SAFCA has determined that the proposed modifications to the Phase 2 Project may have significant effects on the environment. Because the proposed modifications are minor, SAFCA has determined that a supplemental document is the appropriate CEQA document to make the previous 2007 Landside EIR adequately apply to the project in the changed situation. This *Supplement to the Natomas Levee Improvement Project Landside Improvement Project Environmental Impact Report* (Phase 2 Project SEIR, or SEIR) focuses on the significant effects on the environment that would potentially result from the project modifications not previously addressed in the 2007 Landside EIR.

This SEIR does not address changes in the remaining phases of the NLIP Landside Improvements Project (e.g., Phases 3 and 4) that have occurred since the certification of the 2007 Landside EIR. Any such changes will be addressed in the project-level environmental review for the Phase 3 and Phase 4 Projects. A joint EIS/EIR is being prepared for the Phase 3 Project. An additional joint EIS/EIR will be prepared in early 2009, when the site-specific details of the Phase 4 Project are available.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The 2007 Landside EIR provides a full description of the Phase 2 Project, which consists of the following components:

- ▶ levee raising and seepage remediation: Natomas Cross Canal (NCC) south levee;
- ▶ levee raising and seepage remediation: Sacramento River east levee, Reach 1 through 4B;
- ▶ improvements to major irrigation and drainage infrastructure; and
- ▶ right-of-way acquisition.

This SEIR analyzes the following modifications to the Phase 2 Project:

- ▶ construction of cutoff walls in place of seepage berms for several areas between Reaches 1 through 4A along the Sacramento River east levee;
- ▶ cutoff wall construction on a 24-hours-per-day, 7-days-per-week (“24/7”) basis;
- ▶ a change in the baseline at the Sacramento International Airport north bufferlands from active rice cultivation to idle conditions;
- ▶ additional details regarding construction of new collection facilities for storm drainage to convey surface water beneath Garden Highway to the Sacramento River; and
- ▶ the addition of 90 acres of high-quality foraging habitat that would be created or preserved by acquisition and reclamation of land used for borrow materials.

Although the Notice of Preparation for the SEIR discussed the potential use of the Dunmore and Sutter Pointe borrow sites, these sites have since been eliminated from the proposed Phase 2 Project modifications and are not analyzed in this SEIR.

MAJOR CONCLUSIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed Phase 2 project modifications could result in significant environmental effects on several resources, but all of these effects were evaluated and mitigation measures were identified, where feasible, in the 2007 Landside EIR for similar project features. The majority of the impacts due to the proposed Phase 2 Project modifications would be temporary, construction-related effects that would be less than significant or would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through the application of mitigation. Overall, there are no new significant environmental effects that were not identified in the 2007 Landside EIR, or any substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects in the 2007 Landside EIR.

Table ES-1, included at the end of this Executive Summary, summarizes the proposed project's environmental impacts, the level of significance of each impact before implementation of mitigation, recommended mitigation measures, and the level of significance of each impact after mitigation.

SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

The proposed project modifications would result in the following significant and unavoidable impacts, all of which were identified in the 2007 Landside EIR and mitigated to the degree feasible:

- ▶ Potential Construction Impacts on CA-SAC-485/H
- ▶ Damage to or Destruction of Other Identified Prehistoric Cultural Resources
- ▶ Generation of Temporary, Short-Term Construction Noise

Where feasible mitigation exists, it has been included to partially reduce these impacts; however, the mitigation would not be sufficient to reduce the impacts to a less-than-significant level.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND NEXT STEPS

This SEIR will be used by the SAFCA Board of Directors (Board) when considering approval of the proposed project modifications.

In accordance with CEQA review requirements, this Draft SEIR is being distributed for public and agency review and comment for a 45-day period, which ends on January 2, 2009. SAFCA will hold one or more public meetings during the comment period—including a meeting to be held during the regular December 11, 2008, meeting of the SAFCA Board—at which it will receive input from agencies and the public on the Draft SEIR. In addition, written comments from the public, reviewing agencies, and stakeholders will be accepted throughout the public comment period.

Following consideration of these comments, SAFCA will prepare written responses to comments on significant environmental issues, and prepare a final SEIR (Final SEIR) that will describe the disposition of any significant environmental issues raised in the comments on the Draft SEIR. Written responses must be provided to public agencies on comments made by those agencies at least 10 days before the SEIR can be certified. Following this 10-day period, the SAFCA Board will consider certifying that the Final SEIR has been prepared in compliance with CEQA, and will rely on the certified Final SEIR when considering project approval (i.e., approval of the project modifications).

In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, if the SAFCA Board decides to approve the proposed project modifications analyzed in this SEIR, it will make written findings with respect to each significant environmental effect identified in the SEIR. In addition, if the SAFCA Board decides to approve the project but determines that it would have significant unavoidable environmental effects, the Board will adopt a “Statement of Overriding Considerations” that explains why the benefits of the project outweigh its significant effects on the environment, based on information in the SEIR and other information in the project record.

At the time of project approval, the SAFCA Board must also adopt a mitigation monitoring and reporting program for those measures that it has adopted and incorporated into the project to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. Following project approval, a notice of determination documenting the decision will be issued.

Table ES-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures			
Issue Area Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance after Mitigation
Hydrology and Water Quality			
Impact 3.2-a. Possible Effects on Water Quality from Stormwater Runoff from Garden Highway Drainage Outlets to the Sacramento River	Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.2-a: Implement Standard Best Management Practices and Comply with NPDES Permit Conditions	Less than significant
Impact 3.2-b. Possible Effects on Groundwater	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	Less than significant
Impact 3.2-c. Cumulative Effects on Groundwater	Less than significant	No mitigation is required	Less than significant
Terrestrial Biological Resources			
Impact 3.3-a. Loss of Sensitive Habitats	Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.3-a: Minimize Effects on Sensitive Habitats, Develop a Habitat Management Plan to Ensure Compensation for Unavoidable Adverse Effects, and Comply with Section 404, Section 401, and Section 1602 Permit Processes	Less than significant
Impact 3.3-b. Disturbance and Loss of Giant Garter Snake Habitat	Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.3-b: The following mitigation measure from the 2007 Landside EIR would be applied: <i>Mitigation Measure 3.7-d: Minimize the Potential for Direct Loss of Giant Garter Snake Individuals, Develop a Management Plan in Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and Obtain Incidental Take Authorization</i>	Less than significant
Impact 3.3-c. Loss of Swainson's Hawk Habitat and Potential Disturbance of Nests	Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.3-c: The following mitigation measure from the 2007 Landside EIR would be applied: <i>Mitigation Measure 3.7-f: Minimize Potential Impacts on Swainson's Hawk, Monitor Active Nests during Construction, Develop a Management Plan in Consultation with DFG, and Obtain Incidental Take Authorization</i>	Less than significant

Table ES-1 Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures			
Issue Area Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measure	Level of Significance after Mitigation
Cultural Resources			
Impact 3.4-a. Changes to Elements of Reclamation District (RD) 1000	Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.4-a: Incorporate Mitigation Measures to Documents Regarding Any Elements Contributing to RD 1000 and Distribute the Information to the Appropriate Repositories	Less than significant
Impact 3.4-b. Potential Construction Impacts on CA-SAC-485H	Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.4-b: Avoid Ground Disturbance near Known Prehistoric Archaeological Site CA-SAC-485/H to the Extent Feasible and Prepare and Implement a Historic Properties Treatment Plan	Significant and unavoidable
Impact 3.4-c. Damage to or Destruction of Other Identified Prehistoric Cultural Resources	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.4-c: Evaluate NLIP-7 and NLIP-22. If the Resources are Eligible, Avoid Disturbance to the Extent Feasible, and Prepare and Implement a Historic Properties Treatment Plan	Significant and unavoidable
Impact 3.4-d. Damage to or Destruction of Previously Undiscovered Cultural Resources	Potentially Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.4-d: Conduct Additional Backhoe and Canine Forensic Investigations As Appropriate	Significant and unavoidable
Impact 3.4-e. Damage to or Destruction of Previously Undiscovered Interred Human Remains	Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.4-e: The following mitigation measure from the 2007 Landside EIR would be applied: <i>Mitigation Measure 3.8-e: Halt Work Within 50 Feet of the Find, Notify the County Coroner and Most Likely Descendant, and Implement Appropriate Treatment of Remains</i>	Significant and unavoidable
Noise			
Impact 3.5-a. Generation of Temporary, Short-Term Construction Noise	Significant	Mitigation Measure 3.5-a: The following mitigation measure from the 2007 Landside EIR would be applied: <i>Mitigation Measure 3.12-a: Implement Noise-Reducing Construction Practices, Prepare a Noise Control Plan, and Monitor and Record Construction Noise Near Sensitive Receptors</i>	Significant and unavoidable