

## CHAPTER 4

### CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT EVALUATION

#### 4.1 DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE UNDER CEQA

The proposed project is a joint project by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and is subject to state and federal environmental review requirements. Project documentation, therefore, has been prepared in compliance with both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). FHWA's responsibility for environmental review, consultation, and any other action required in accordance with NEPA and other applicable federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 USC 327, (July 1, 2007). Caltrans is the lead agency under both CEQA and NEPA.

One of the primary differences between NEPA and CEQA is the way significance is determined. Under NEPA, significance is used to determine whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), or some lower level of documentation, would be required. NEPA requires that an EIS be prepared when the proposed federal action (project) *as a whole* has the potential to “significantly affect the quality of the human environment.” The NEPA determination of significance is based on context and intensity; CEQA is based on a similar concept—the environmental setting. Some impacts determined to be significant under CEQA may not be of sufficient magnitude to be determined significant under NEPA. Under NEPA, once a decision is made regarding the need for an EIS, it is the magnitude of the impact that is evaluated and no judgment of its individual significance is deemed important for the text. NEPA does not require that a determination of significant impacts be stated in the environmental documents.

CEQA, on the other hand, does require Caltrans to identify each “significant effect on the environment” resulting from the project and ways to mitigate each significant effect. If the project may have a significant effect on any environmental resource, then an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must be prepared. Each and every significant effect on the environment must be disclosed in the EIR and mitigated if feasible. In addition, the CEQA Guidelines list a number of mandatory findings of significance, which also require the preparation of an EIR. There are no types of actions under NEPA that parallel the findings of mandatory significance of CEQA. This chapter discusses the effects of this project and CEQA significance.

#### 4.2 LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Impacts determined to be less than significant under CEQA include the following resources: Consistency with State, Regional, and Local Plans and Programs; Parks and Recreational Facilities; Growth; Farmlands; Relocations; Environmental Justice; Utilities/Emergency Services; Traffic & Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities; Visual/Aesthetics; Cultural Resources; Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff; Geology and Soils; Paleontology; Hazardous Waste/Materials; Air Quality; Noise; Plant Species; Animal Species; Invasive

Species; and Energy. In addition, state listed species under CESA would not be significantly impacted because no take would occur under California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) Code 2080.1. Please refer to the discussion in Chapter 3 specific to each resource for more detailed analysis.

### **4.3 SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS UNDER CEQA**

#### **Riparian and Wetland Communities**

##### **Existing Alignment Alternative**

As discussed in Section 3.20.3, the Existing Alignment Alternative would permanently impact 7.42 hectares (18.33 acres) of southern cottonwood willow riparian forest, 0.001 hectare (.003 acre) of disturbed wetland, 1.25 hectares (3.09 acres) of southern coast live oak riparian forest, 0.05 hectare (0.13 acre) of southern willow scrub, 0.45 hectare (1.11 acres) of mulefat scrub. It would temporarily impact 5.80 hectares (14.32 acres) of southern cottonwood willow riparian forest, 0.62 hectare (1.54 acres) of disturbed wetland, and 0.003 hectare (0.007 acre) mulefat scrub. Impacts to riparian habitat under the jurisdiction of the CDFG would be considered significant.

##### **Southern Alignment Alternative**

The Southern Alignment Alternative would permanently impact 8.56 hectares (21.13 acres) of southern cottonwood willow riparian forest, 0.05 hectare (0.12 acre) of disturbed wetland/giant reed, 1.94 hectares (4.85 acres) of southern coast live riparian forest, 0.01 hectare (0.02 acre) of southern willow scrub, 0.52 hectare (1.29 acres) of mulefat scrub, and 0.26 hectare (0.63 acre) of coastal and valley freshwater marsh. It would temporarily impact 3.86 hectares (9.53 acres) of southern cottonwood willow riparian forest, 0.28 hectare (0.70 acre) of disturbed wetland/giant reed, 0.01 hectare (0.04 acre) of southern willow scrub, 0.02 hectare (0.05 acre) of mulefat scrub, and 0.11 hectare (0.25 acre) of coastal and valley freshwater marsh. Impacts to riparian habitat under the jurisdiction of the CDFG would be considered significant.

#### **Wetlands and Other Waters of the State**

##### **Existing Alignment Alternative**

As discussed in Section 3.21, the Existing Alignment Alternative would permanently impact 6.62 hectares (16.35 acres) of jurisdictional waters of the State. Direct temporary impacts to jurisdictional waters of the State would total 6.36 hectares (15.71 acres). These impacts are considered significant.

**Southern Alignment Alternative**

As discussed in Section 3.21.3, the Southern Alternative would permanently impact 11.1 hectares (27.45 acres) of jurisdictional waters of the State. Direct temporary impacts to jurisdictional waters of the State would total 8.34 hectares (20.6 acres). These impacts are considered significant.

**4.4 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS****Land Use****Southern Alignment Alternative**

As discussed in Section 3.1.2, the Southern Alignment Alternative would bisect the San Luis Rey Downs Golf Resort. Approximately 12.0 hectares (29.6 acres) would be converted to right-of-way and holes 3, 4, 13, 14, 15, and 16 would be directly impacted. In addition to those holes that would be removed, holes 2, 5, 6, 12, and 17 would be indirectly affected due to the proximity of the golf course to the alignment and the segmentation of the golf course. This could result in the conversion of a major recreational land use in the community. In addition to the physical loss of the golf course itself, land uses adjacent to the golf course, including residential communities, commercial golf suppliers, and a network of golf cart roads, are dependent on this recreational and resort use. This substantial change in land use would be inconsistent with both existing and planned land uses of that site and would be considered a significant impact.

**Community Character and Cohesion****Southern Alignment Alternative**

As discussed in detail in Section 3.6.3, the Southern Alignment Alternative would impact the San Luis Rey Downs Golf Resort, which plays an important role in maintaining community character and cohesion throughout the project area. It is a key gathering place in the community and the resort is used to host private functions such as weddings and other events. It hosts the local San Luis Rey Men's and Women's Clubs, which have over 500 members.

Several residential neighborhoods are located adjacent to the golf course and resort. The residents in these neighborhoods use golf carts to access adjacent residential areas and the resort. This reflects the rural and golf-centered lifestyle established by the presence of the resort. It therefore serves as not only a community resource, but also an integral part of the more immediate community character. It is a central facility maintaining community cohesion to neighborhoods within the immediate area.

The majority of resort patrons are residents of the surrounding communities, and the loss of more than half of the San Luis Rey Downs Golf Resort would affect community cohesion and character. As described above, residential neighborhoods within the area are linked with the golf

course, both physically and aesthetically. The local and regional populations identify San Luis Rey Downs Golf Resort as a major component of the community. Conversion of the western part of the golf course to right-of-way uses would alter the landscape as well as the overall sense of community among neighborhoods in proximity to the golf course.

If the proposed project results in the ultimate closure of the resort, it would result in a loss of an important community gathering space. Community functions and events, as well as the local San Luis Rey Men's and Women's Clubs, would no longer be served by the facilities at the resort. Two nearby golf courses serve the wider region, one of which is also a country club. However, many members feel a strong sense of belonging to San Luis Rey Downs Golf Resort with some having been members for over a decade.

The potential conversion of the golf course would have a substantial impact to Bonsall's community cohesion and it is therefore considered to be a significant impact.

### **Hydrology and Floodplains**

#### **Southern Alignment Alternative**

As discussed in Section 3.13, the total floodplain encroachment for the Southern Alignment Alternative is 23.31 hectares (57.61 acres) in size and approximately 1,617,000 cubic meters (2,115,000 cubic yards) in volume. The current design of the Southern Alignment Alternative is expected to increase the water surface elevation up to 0.94 meter (3 feet). Therefore, the associated risk associated with the probability of flooding attributable to the Southern Alignment Alternative is high.

The encroachment to Moosa Canyon Creek was also analyzed. A base flood in San Luis Rey River would have a backwater effect on Moosa Canyon Creek and increase the water surface elevation from 47.6 meters (157 feet) to 48.4 meters (159 feet). With this increase in water surface elevation, the risk associated with the probability of flooding attributable to the Southern Alignment Alternative at Moosa Creek is high.

The alterations of the historical river flow and encroachment into the base floodplain constitutes a significant floodplain encroachment.

## **4.5 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES**

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and secondary impacts generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. The following resources would be converted: wetlands, farmlands, homes, floodplain, and visual.

## 4.6 CLIMATE CHANGE

While climate change has been a concern since at least 1988, as evidenced by the establishment of the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the efforts devoted to greenhouse gas (GHG)<sup>1</sup> emissions reduction and climate change research and policy have increased dramatically in recent years. In 2002, with the passage of Assembly Bill 1493 (AB 1493), California launched an innovative and proactive approach to dealing with GHG emissions and climate change at the state level. AB 1493 requires the Air Resources Board (ARB) to develop and implement regulations to reduce automobile and light truck GHG emissions; these regulations would apply to automobiles and light trucks beginning with the 2009 model year.

On June 1, 2005, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-3-05. The goal of this executive order is to reduce California's GHG emissions to (1) 2000 levels by 2010, (2) 1990 levels by the year 2020, and (3) 80 percent below the 1990 levels by the year 2050. In 2006, this goal was further reinforced with the passage of Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 sets the same overall GHG emissions reduction goals while further mandating that ARB create a plan, that includes market mechanisms and implement rules to achieve "real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases." Executive Order S-20-06 further directs state agencies to begin implementing AB 32, including the recommendations made by the state's Climate Action Team.

Climate change and GHG reduction is also a concern at the federal level; at this time, no legislation or regulations have been enacted specifically addressing GHG emissions reductions and climate change.

Caltrans and its parent agency, the Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency, have taken an active role in addressing GHG emission reduction and climate change. Recognizing that 98 percent of California's GHG emissions are from the burning of fossil fuels and 40 percent of all human-made GHG emissions are from transportation, Caltrans has created and is implementing the *Climate Action Program at Caltrans* (December 2006). Transportation's contribution to GHG emissions is dependent on three factors: the types of vehicles on the road, the type of fuel the vehicles use, and the time/distance the vehicles travel.

One of the main strategies in Caltrans' Climate Action Program to reduce GHG emissions is to make California's transportation system more efficient. The highest levels of carbon dioxide from mobile sources, such as automobiles, occur at stop-and-go speeds (0 to 25 miles per hour) and speeds over 55 miles per hour. Relieving congestion by enhancing operations and improving travel times in high congestion travel corridors would lead to an overall reduction in GHG emissions.

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<sup>1</sup> Greenhouse gases related to human activity, as identified in AB32, include: carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride, HFC-23, HFC-134a\*, and HFC-152a\*.

Caltrans recognizes the concern that carbon dioxide emissions raise for climate change. However, accurate modeling of GHG emissions levels at the project level, including carbon dioxide, is not currently possible. No federal, state, or regional regulatory agency has provided methodology or criteria for GHG emissions and climate change impact analysis. Therefore, Caltrans is unable to provide a scientific or regulatory-based conclusion regarding whether the project's contribution to climate change is cumulatively considerable.

Caltrans continues to be actively involved on the Governor's Climate Action Team as ARB works to implement AB 1493 and AB 32. As part of the *Climate Action Program at Caltrans*, Caltrans is supporting efforts to reduce vehicle miles traveled by planning and implementing smart land use strategies: job/housing proximity, developing transit-oriented communities, and high-density housing along transit corridors. Caltrans is working closely with local jurisdictions on planning activities; however, Caltrans does not have local land use planning authority. Caltrans is also supporting efforts to improve the energy efficiency of the transportation sector by increasing vehicle fuel economy in new cars, and light and heavy-duty trucks. It is important to note that the control of the fuel economy standards is held by the EPA and ARB. The use of alternative fuels is also being considered; Caltrans is participating in funding for alternative fuel research at the University of California Davis. The proposed project would also help reduce climate change through the use of landscaping, irrigation with reclaimed water when available, the use of Portland cement where appropriate, use of energy-efficient lighting, and idling restrictions for trucks and equipment during construction and maintenance activities.

To estimate the potential beneficial or negative effect of the proposed project on San Diego regional GHG levels, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) EMFAC 2007 vehicle emissions model for the San Diego Air Basin was used to calculate carbon dioxide emissions for the San Diego metropolitan area with and without the SR-76 Melrose to South Mission Road Project.

The model used a regional GHG emissions estimation method. The SANDAG "Reasonably Expected" Series 10 2015 and 2030 regional travel demand models were utilized for the land use and local street network assumptions for the two build and No Build scenarios. The travel demand models were run on Transcad version 4.7/Build268 travel demand modeling software, and model outputs were post-processed using SANDAG's "postlodm3v48" program to generate annual-basis "burden.wis" input files for the EMFAC2007 v2.3 program. The CARB EMFAC2007 program was then used to generate regional fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions with and without the two build scenarios for each respective time horizon.

Regional fuel consumption estimates for the Existing Alignment Alternative incorporated travel along the improved SR-76 roadway, and regional fuel consumption for the Southern Alignment Alternative took into account both travel along the proposed SR-76 roadway as well as the existing SR-76 roadway, which was assumed to continue to operate as a County-maintained local access road. The results of the regional fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions models are shown below in Table 4.6-1.

**Table 4.6-1**  
**Average Difference in Regional CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions**

<b>Alternative</b>	<b>Model Year</b>	<b>Fuel Consumption (gal)</b>	<b>Efficiency/ Fuel Savings (gal/day)</b>	<b>Regional CO<sub>2</sub> Annual Emission (average tons/day)</b>	<b>Difference in Regional Emissions (vs. No Build) (tons/day)</b>
No Build	2015	5,146,680	-	50,490	-
Existing Alignment	2015	4,984,020	162,660	49,030	1,460
Southern Alignment	2015	4,986,090	160,590	49,050	1,440
No Build	2030	6,067,080	-	59,860	-
Existing Alignment	2030	5,918,740	148,340	58,410	1,450
Southern Alignment	2030	5,835,090	231,990	57,580	2,280

Compared to the No Build Alternative, implementation of the Existing Alignment Alternative is estimated to reduce 2030 CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the San Diego region by up to 1,450 tons per day. The Southern Alignment Alternative would result in a potential 2,280 ton per day decrease. In 2015, the interim estimated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions are estimated to be 1,460 and 1,440 tons per day for the Existing and Southern Alignment Alternatives compared to the No Build Alternative, respectively. These decreases would be due to the decreased congestion along the corridor, decreased diversions of vehicle trips to alternate routes, and improved travel times along the corridor and the local street network. Therefore, despite the localized increase in traffic levels along the proposed alignment, regional transportation efficiency would be increased and overall carbon dioxide emissions would be reduced.

#### **4.7 MITIGATION MEASURES FOR SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS UNDER CEQA**

##### **Riparian and Wetland Communities and Wetlands and Other Waters of the State**

Section 3.21 of this document discusses wetlands and other waters of the State. The proposed project has been designed to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands and jurisdictional waters wherever possible. Alignment alternatives were developed to follow existing roadway right-of-way along SR-76 and Old River Road. Design iterations developed during the planning stages of the proposed project resulted in shifts to further reduce impacts to sensitive wetlands and waters. The proposed project mitigation measures and the requirement for the project to have a net benefit result in project impacts being mitigated to a level below significance.

Any permanent impacts to jurisdictional waters of the State would require mitigation formalized in the conditions of the terms of a Streambed Alteration Agreement with CDFG pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code.

Environmental consequences of the project on wetland resources would be avoided and reduced to the extent feasible through project design. Additional measures to further avoid and reduce impacts to these sensitive resources would be incorporated into project implementation for both alternatives via responsible preconstruction planning and construction activities. Such measures

would include, but not be limited to, preconstruction meetings, contractor awareness programs, temporary fencing and signage of all sensitive resource areas immediately adjacent to proposed project footprint, the presence of biological monitors during the construction activities adjacent to wetlands, and the implementation and strict adherence to standard Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Development of the proposed project would lead to unavoidable permanent and temporary, direct, and indirect impacts to jurisdictional wetland and water resources in the project area. These impacts would be considered adverse. The following mitigation measures are proposed:

- All impacts to CDFG wetlands would require compensatory mitigation. Temporary impacts to CDFG jurisdiction could be compensated via in-kind, on-site mitigation via restoration of the same habitat type that was temporarily disturbed. For the project it is also anticipated that all direct permanent impacts to CDFG jurisdictional wetlands would be mitigated in-kind at an on-site mitigation area(s) through some combination of creation, restoration, and enhancement. However, not all permanent impact mitigation may be possible on-site.

The project falls within the boundaries of the North San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Program (NCMSCP) and the San Diego Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP). For the MHCP, current creation/restoration mitigation ratios listed for areas designated as focused planning areas range from 2:1 to 4:1 for wetland habitats; these ratios also apply to select upland habitats. The CDFG also requires replacement of affected habitat. Impacts to sensitive habitat types could be mitigated through a combination of habitat creation, restoration or revegetation, or acquisition of in-kind habitat from an approved mitigation land bank. For the portion of the project that overlaps the MHCP, CDFG would likely require the mitigation ratios listed in the MHCP Subarea Plan to compensate for impacts to habitats they regulate. Ratios noted for the MHCP are anticipated to be inclusive of what would likely be proposed under the NCMSCP. All mitigation ratios would need to be negotiated with the resource agencies; however, for the purposes of this analysis, the mitigation ratios identified in the MHCP have been used.

- Direct temporary impacts to emergent wetlands (coastal and valley freshwater marsh) should be compensated at a minimum 1:1 mitigation ratio; direct permanent impacts to vegetated wetlands should be compensated at a minimum 1:1 mitigation ratio. Therefore, to minimally compensate for the direct permanent impacts of 0.04 hectare (0.1 acre) to emergent wetlands under the Build Alternatives, 0.04 hectare (0.1 acre) of wetland creation and/or restoration at a suitable site should be conducted and preserved. Temporary direct impacts could be mitigated at a 1:1 ratio via restoration, as needed, in place.
- Direct temporary impacts to other jurisdictional waters such as scrub-shrub wetland, disturbed wetland, unvegetated waters, and Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) should be compensated at a minimum 1:1 mitigation ratio; direct permanent impacts to these jurisdictional waters should be compensated at a minimum 1:1 mitigation ratio.



- Shading impacts on jurisdictional waters should be compensated at a 1:1 ratio; mitigation would be required for shading of open water and vegetated washes.
  - Because the riparian vegetation within the project study area provides nesting habitat for the least Bell's vireo, restoration/creation of riparian habitat along this portion of the San Luis Rey River would be preferred. Mitigation in or adjacent to the study area may provide additional habitat for the vireo and form a corridor connecting existing vireo habitat near SR-76 with the riparian woodland and scrub in the project area.
  - Creation of marsh should include salvaging any individuals of native hydrophytic vegetation that would be impacted during construction. In addition, multiple adjacent areas suitable for riparian restoration exist throughout the project study area.
  - Restoration and enhancement of wetland should include removing patches of giant reed and tamarisk scrub within the project study area and replacing with willow cuttings or cottonwood saplings and/or other suitable native hydrophytic vegetation.
  - Temporary impacts to CDFG jurisdictional waters would be mitigated in place, at a minimum, at a 1:1 ratio with the same habitat type that was temporarily disturbed, also known as in-kind mitigation.
  - Potential temporary indirect impacts would be mitigated through standard BMPs and implementation of an approved erosion control plan and an approved Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).
  - The final mitigation plan must be reviewed and approved by Caltrans and resource agencies prior to the initiation of construction. This plan would be implemented to measure success of the mitigation and allow sign-off by the requisite resource agencies upon completion of the monitoring period. At a minimum, a 2-year plant establishment period and 5-year habitat management and monitoring program would be implemented on the mitigation lands. Plant survival and growth would be sustained for at least two dry seasons without irrigation or human intervention. Irrigation would be gradually withdrawn from the mitigation sites. Invasive exotic plant species, including giant reed, tamarisk, fennel, and cocklebur, would be removed from all selected mitigation sites.
- Potential mitigation opportunities have been identified within the San Luis Rey River watershed. All of the mitigation opportunities discussed below have been identified as potential mitigation sites for impacts to waters of the State and riparian and wetland communities. These properties have been presented to the resource agencies and have been approved as early action mitigation projects to be completed in advance of the roadway construction. These sites are proposed as a comprehensive package that would preserve and enhance key parcels along the San Luis Rey River watershed and create new riparian and upland habitat to offset losses that would result from the project. Caltrans has acquired the Morrison parcel. The Pilgrim Mitigation Bank is currently owned by CDFG, and the remaining parcels remain in private ownership. Caltrans is

actively negotiating for purchase of these remaining parcels. Some or all of these parcels may be selected for acquisition to create an appropriate mitigation package. Caltrans would coordinate with other legal jurisdictions who would own and manage the sites in perpetuity. Caltrans would also provide an endowment for maintenance and monitoring.

- The Morrison site totals about 60.0 hectares (148.28 acres) and is located southeast of Gird Road and SR-76 in Bonsall. This includes the 55.26-hectare (136.54-acre) Morrison parcel, and 4.75 hectares (11.74 acres) of Caltrans right-of-way located between the Morrison parcel and the alignment. The San Luis Rey River crosses the southern portion of this property, and both the arroyo toad and the endangered least Bell's vireo have been documented on-site. The Morrison parcel has approximately 1.13 hectares (2.8 acres) of freshwater marsh, 20.6 hectares (51.0 acres) of riparian forest, 29.95 hectares (74 acres) of riparian scrub, 1.46 hectares (3.6 acres) of disturbed habitat, and 2.14 hectares (5.3 acres) of nonnative grassland. Due to the presence of riparian habitat, the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher may use the site. Enhancement and restoration of the site may include removing exotics, maintaining and creating friable soils for toads, creating willow scrub in appropriate areas, controlling illegal access, installing controlled access for hiking and equestrian opportunities, and establishing a San Diego ambrosia population.
- The Singh property (Option A only) totals 24.28 hectares (59.99 acres) southeast of Sleeping Indian Road and North River Road. It is bisected by the San Luis Rey River in the northeastern area of Oceanside. Currently, the property is being used to grow row crops. Caltrans proposes to lower the topography to hydrologically functional elevations before planting the site. There is potentially 15.34 hectares (37.9 acres) of riparian habitat creation, 2.23 hectares (5.5 acres) of riparian and freshwater marsh restoration, and 5.46 hectares (13.6 acres) of coastal sage scrub buffer restoration.
- The Zwierstra property is located along the north side of the SR-76 between Melrose Drive and East Vista Way. It is about 7.84 hectares (19.38 acres), 1.62 hectares (4 acres) of which are riparian forest. The remainder has been in use as a dairy farm and a residence. There is the potential for 2.71 hectares (6.7 acres) of riparian habitat creation, 1.62 hectares (4.0 acres) of riparian restoration, and 2.83 hectares (6.99 acres) of upland restoration.
- The Pilgrim Creek mitigation bank is located along Pilgrim Creek, which is a tributary to the San Luis Rey River. The stretch of Pilgrim Creek on the site supports approximately 3.97 hectares (9.8 acres) of willow-dominated riparian habitat. Coastal sage scrub, including 14 hectares (34.6 acres) of restored habitat, covers the slope bordering the site to the west, and the center of the site supports riparian vegetation planted in 1996 within a 20.15-hectare (49.8-acre) restoration area as well as 0.60 hectare (1.5 acres) of freshwater marsh. An additional small cell of planted riparian vegetation lies between Pilgrim Creek and Douglas Drive on the east side of the creek. The site has 1.99 hectares (4.94 acres) of available mitigation credit.

### **Land Use and Community Cohesion and Character**

Under implementation of the Southern Alignment Alternative, significant impacts to land use and community character and cohesion would occur. There is potential for the eastern portion of the San Luis Rey Downs Golf Resort to continue as an executive course, which could also allow for the continued use of the country club, hotel, tennis courts, and swimming pool. The economic feasibility of this option is undetermined at this time. This would be determined through coordination with the owners.

Implementation of the San Luis Rey River Park Master Plan (see Appendix B of this FEIR/FEIS) could serve to improve community cohesion and character along the SR-76 corridor and in the study area. This project would permanently set aside riparian open space preserves and provide for both passive and active recreational uses within the study area and surrounding region. The San Luis Rey River Park would serve to improve community cohesion by providing needed recreational gathering places for individuals and families within the region. It could serve to minimize impacts to the San Luis Rey Downs Golf Resort. Sections 3.1 and 3.6 further discuss land use and community character and cohesion.

### **Hydrology and Floodplain**

As a means of offsetting potential floodplain impacts, standard engineering practices would be used, where feasible, to facilitate drainage. No other feasible mitigation to minimize the significant floodplain encroachment under the Southern Alignment Alternative has been identified. Section 3.13 further discusses hydrology and floodplains.

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