

1 TRANS-1 and TRANS-2). Detailed information on the updated traffic modeling results can be found
 2 in Appendix 19A, *Air Quality Analysis Methods*, Section 22A.1 in Appendix A. This revised
 3 construction noise assessment is included for Alternative 4A in Section 4.3.19, for Alternative 2D in
 4 Section 4.4.19, for Alternative 5A in Section 4.5.19, and for the remainder of the alternatives in
 5 Chapter 23, *Noise* in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS (refer to Impact NOI-1). Traffic volumes on
 6 certain segments and construction noise levels at some receptor locations increased, relative to the
 7 DEIR/EIS. Traffic mitigation to enhance capacity of congested roadway segments and improve the
 8 physical condition of affected roadway segments would be pursued, in addition to limits on
 9 construction hours and activity. Noise-reducing measures would also be implemented to reduce
 10 construction-related noise and vibration levels. However, impacts would remain significant and
 11 unavoidable, consistent with what was presented in the DEIR/EIS.

12 **2.4 Revised Project Descriptions and Enhanced** 13 **Level of Detail**

14 The RDEIR/SDEIS includes a number of revisions to the project description and an enhanced level of
 15 detail for Alternative 4. These include more explanation regarding the analysis of water conveyance
 16 facilities, updates to CM2–CM21, clarification on the role of the Bureau of Reclamation, and the use
 17 of CM3–CM11 to offset impacts related to CM1. As explained above, the RDEIR/SDEIS also includes
 18 new sub-alternatives 4A, 2D, and 5A. The project descriptions for these sub-alternatives are
 19 included in Section 4, *New Alternatives: Alternatives 4A, 2D, and 5A*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS.

20 **2.4.1 Analysis of Water Conveyance Facility Impacts**

21 Each component feature of the water conveyance facilities is analyzed at a resource-specific level,
 22 based on complete water conveyance facility project footprints developed by DWR’s Division of
 23 Engineering. Analyses of Alternatives 4, 4A, 2D, and 5A in the RDEIR/SDEIS reflect GIS data from
 24 DWR that incorporate recent revisions to the alignment of water conveyance features and
 25 associated lands required for construction. The features in this GIS dataset, which represents each
 26 conveyance facility component (e.g., intakes, intermediate forebay, tunnels, spoils areas), were
 27 overlaid onto resource-specific GIS data layers to identify physical effects of conveyance facility
 28 construction. This GIS-based approach facilitated both a component-specific, or project-level,
 29 analysis of the individual features of the conveyance facilities, as well as a program-level analysis of
 30 construction of the conveyance facilities in aggregate. For example, the local effects on parcels of
 31 agricultural land associated with construction of a particular intake facility can be assessed through
 32 GIS analysis; at the same time, the overall temporary and permanent loss of agricultural lands
 33 associated with construction of the conveyance facilities as a whole can be aggregated to convey a
 34 comprehensive picture of the effects on the resource.

35 **2.4.2 Updates to Conservation Measures, Environmental** 36 **Commitments, and Avoidance and Minimization** 37 **Measures**

38 The RDEIR/SDEIS reflects changes made to the conservation measures and avoidance and
 39 minimization measures (AMMs) for Alternative 4 and, where applicable, Alternatives 4A, 2D, and 5A.

1 These revisions are made to ensure that CM2–CM21 are described consistently where needed in the
 2 RDEIR/SDEIS and reflect additional detail that may have been developed since publication of the
 3 Draft BDCP. A discussion of the conservation measures and AMMs that have been substantively
 4 changed and that would potentially affect the characterization of impacts can be found in Appendix
 5 D.

6 The list of environmental commitments incorporated into all of the action alternatives (i.e., all
 7 alternatives except for the No Action/No Project Alternative) was updated extensively to account for
 8 refined project engineering. Like the formal mitigation measures prescribed in the Draft EIR/EIS,
 9 these environmental commitments, which sometimes take the form of best management practices
 10 (BMPs), were intended to avoid or minimize potential adverse effects (a NEPA term) and potential
 11 significant impacts (a CEQA term). Both DWR and the federal Lead Agencies were aware that, in
 12 many instances, the environmental commitments, as well as related “avoidance and minimization
 13 measures,” functioned as *de facto* mitigation measures. The Draft EIR/EIS is therefore written with a
 14 recognition that, where appropriate and necessary, its text should explain how the environmental
 15 commitments and avoidance and minimization measures would function, and whether particular
 16 commitments or measures would or would not be effective in reducing various significant or
 17 adverse effects to less-than-significant or less-than-adverse levels. Despite these efforts in the Draft
 18 EIR/EIS, which was issued for public review in December 2013, several commenters have asserted
 19 that the document does not comply with the requirements subsequently announced by the
 20 California Court of Appeal in a January 2014 decision known as *Lotus v. Department of*
 21 *Transportation*.² In response to these comments, Appendix 3B (in Appendix A) has been significantly
 22 modified as part of this RDEIR/SDEIS. In addition to the refinements made to some of the
 23 environmental commitments, Appendix 3B as modified now includes, after each specific
 24 environmental commitment and avoidance and minimization measure, one or more narrative
 25 discussions explaining both how it reduces the severity of environmental effects and whether the
 26 level of impact reduction is sufficient to render the effects less than significant.

27 2.5 Analysis of Geotechnical Investigations

28 As described in Appendix 3B, *Environmental Commitments*, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, DWR
 29 will perform a series of geotechnical investigations along both the selected water conveyance
 30 alignment and at locations proposed for facilities or material borrow areas. The work to be
 31 performed will constitute a subsurface investigation program to provide information required to
 32 support the design and construction of the water conveyance facilities. Geotechnical investigations
 33 will be conducted to identify surface and subsurface conditions as necessary to complete design of
 34 the water conveyance facilities. The potential environmental effects resulting from conducting
 35 geotechnical investigations are described in Chapter 31, *Other CEQA/NEPA Required Sections*,
 36 Section 31.5.1.1, of the Draft EIR/EIS.

37 Following publication of the Draft EIR/EIS, DWR developed a Draft Geotechnical Exploration Plan
 38 (Phase 2) for the Alternative 4 conveyance alignment. The geotechnical investigation plan provides
 39 additional details regarding the rationale, investigation methods and locations, and criteria for
 40 obtaining subsurface soil information and laboratory test data (California Department of Water
 41 Resources 2014). Because this new information allows for a more detailed assessment of the

² 223 Cal.App.4th 645.