

4.3.12 Socioeconomics

Impact ECON-1: Temporary Effects on Regional Economics and Employment in the Delta Region during Construction of the Proposed Water Conveyance Facilities

The regional economic effects on employment and income in the Delta region during construction of Alternative 4A would be identical to those described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16, *Socioeconomics*, Section 16.3.3.9, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the water conveyance facilities proposed under these alternatives are identical. Under Alternative 4A, direct construction employment is anticipated to vary over the 14-year construction period with an estimated 66 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs in the first year and 486 FTE jobs in the final year of the construction period. Construction employment is estimated to peak at 2,278 FTE jobs in year 9. Total employment (direct, indirect, and induced) would peak in year 12, at 8,673 FTE jobs.

The footprint of conveyance and related facilities such as roads and utilities would remove some existing agricultural land from production, so the effects on employment and income would be negative. Direct agricultural employment would be reduced by an estimated 16 FTE jobs, while total employment (direct, indirect, and induced) associated with agricultural employment would fall by 57 FTE jobs. Based on the crop production values changes described in Impact ECON-6 for construction effects, the direct agricultural job losses would more likely be concentrated in the vegetable, truck, orchard, and vineyard crop sectors, which are relatively labor intensive, than in the grain, field, and forage crop sectors, where more jobs are mechanized. Mapbook Figures M14-7 and M14-8 in the Mapbook Volume of the Draft EIR/EIS display areas of Important Farmland and lands under Williamson Act contracts that could be converted to other uses due to the construction of water conveyance facilities for the Modified Pipeline/Tunnel alignment.

The Alternative 4A construction footprint would not result in the abandonment of any active producing natural gas wells in the study area, as described in Section 4.3.22, *Minerals*, Impact MIN-1 in this RDEIR/SDEIS. Therefore, this alternative would not be anticipated to result in the loss of employment or labor income associated with monitoring and maintaining these wells.

NEPA Effects: Because construction of water conveyance facilities would result in an increase in construction-related employment and labor income, this would be considered a beneficial effect. However, these activities would also be anticipated to result in a decrease in agricultural-related employment and labor income, which would be considered an adverse effect. Mitigation Measure AG-1, described in Chapter 14, *Agricultural Resources*, Section 14.3.3.2, Impact AG-1, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, would be available to reduce these effects by preserving agricultural productivity and compensating offsite.

CEQA Conclusion: Construction of the proposed water conveyance facilities would temporarily increase total employment and income in the Delta region. The change would result from expenditures on construction, increasing employment, and from changes in agricultural production, decreasing employment. Changes in recreational expenditures and natural gas well operations could also affect regional employment and income, but these have not been quantified. The total change in employment and income is not, in itself, considered an environmental impact. Significant environmental impacts within the meaning of CEQA would only result if the changes in regional economics cause reasonably foreseeable physical impacts. Such environmental effects are discussed in other sections throughout this RDEIR/SDEIS. Removal of agricultural land from production is

1 addressed under Impacts AG-1 and AG-2 in Section 4.3.10, *Agricultural Resources*, of this
2 RDEIR/SDEIS; changes in recreation related activities are addressed under Impacts REC-1 through
3 REC-4 in Section 4.3.11, *Recreation*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS; abandonment of natural gas wells is
4 addressed under Impact MIN-1 in Section 4.3.22, *Mineral Resources*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS. When
5 required, DWR would provide compensation to property owners for economic losses due to
6 implementation of the alternative. While the compensation to property owners would reduce the
7 severity of economic effects related to the loss of agricultural land, it would not constitute mitigation
8 for any related physical impact. Measures to reduce these impacts are discussed under Impact AG-1
9 in Chapter 14, *Agricultural Resources*, Section 14.3.3.2, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS.

10 **Impact ECON-2: Effects on Population and Housing in the Delta Region during Construction of** 11 **the Proposed Water Conveyance Facilities**

12 Effects on population and housing in the Delta region during construction of Alternative 4A would
13 be identical to those described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16, *Socioeconomics*, Section 16.3.3.9, in
14 Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the water conveyance facilities proposed under these
15 alternatives are identical.

16 Construction of conveyance facilities would require an estimated peak of 2,278 workers in year 9 of
17 the assumed 14-year construction period. It is anticipated that many of these new jobs would be
18 filled from within the existing five-county labor force; however, it is anticipated that some
19 specialized workers may be recruited from outside the five-county region and would relocate to the
20 area. An estimated 30% of workers could come from out of the Delta region, suggesting that
21 approximately 690 workers could relocate to the Delta region at the peak of the construction period.
22 However, this additional population would constitute a minor increase in the total 2025 projected
23 regional population of 4.6 million and be distributed throughout the region. Changes in demand for
24 public services resulting from any increase in population are addressed under Impacts UT-1 through
25 UT-6 in Section 4.3.16, *Public Services and Utilities*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS.

26 Changes in housing demand are based on changes in supply resulting from displacement during
27 facilities construction and changes in housing demand resulting from employment associated with
28 construction of conveyance facilities. As described under Impact LU-2 in Section 4.3.9, *Land Use*, of
29 this RDEIR/SDEIS, construction of water conveyance facilities under Alternative 4 would conflict
30 with approximately 19 residential structures. The physical footprints of the three intake facilities,
31 along with associated work areas, are anticipated to create the largest disruption to structures,
32 conflicting with 12 of these residences.

33 The construction workforce would most likely commute daily to the work sites from within the five-
34 county region; however, if needed, there are about 53,000 housing units available to accommodate
35 workers who may choose to commute on a workweek basis or who may choose to temporarily
36 relocate to the region for the duration of the construction period, including the estimated 690
37 workers who may temporarily relocate to the Delta region from out of the region. In addition to the
38 available housing units, there are recreational vehicle parks and hotels and motels within the five-
39 county region to accommodate any construction workers. As a result, and as discussed in more
40 detail in Section 4.3.26, *Growth Inducement and Other Indirect Effects*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS,
41 construction of the proposed conveyance facilities is not expected to substantially increase the
42 demand for housing within the five-county region.

43 **NEPA Effects:** Within specific local communities, there could be localized effects on housing.
44 However, given the availability of housing within the five-county region, predicting where this

1 impact might fall would be speculative. In addition, new residents would likely be dispersed across
2 the region, thereby not creating a burden on any one community. Because these activities would not
3 result in permanent concentrated, substantial increases in population or new housing, they would
4 not be considered to have an adverse effect.

5 **CEQA Conclusion:** Construction of the proposed water conveyance facilities would result in minor
6 population increases in the Delta region with adequate housing supply to accommodate the change
7 in population. Therefore, the minor increase in demand for housing is not anticipated to lead to
8 reasonably foreseeable adverse physical changes constituting a significant impact on the
9 environment.

10 **Impact ECON-3: Changes in Community Character as a Result of Constructing the Proposed** 11 **Water Conveyance Facilities**

12 **NEPA Effects:** Effects related to changes in community character in the Delta region during
13 construction of Alternative 4A would be identical to those described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16,
14 *Socioeconomics*, Section 16.3.3.9, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the water conveyance
15 facilities proposed under these alternatives are identical.

16 Throughout the five-county Delta region, population and employment would expand as a result of
17 the construction of water conveyance facilities, as discussed under Impacts ECON-1 and ECON-2.
18 Agricultural contributions to the character and culture of the Delta would be likely to decline
19 commensurate with the projected decline in agricultural-related acreage, employment, and
20 production. This could result in the closure of agriculture-dependent businesses or those catering to
21 agricultural workers, particularly in areas where conversion of agricultural land would be most
22 concentrated, including near the intakes in the vicinity of Clarksburg and Hood and the expanded
23 Clifton Court Forebay east of Byron. Similar effects on community character could result from
24 anticipated changes to recreation in the study area. However, social influences associated with the
25 construction industry would grow during the multi-year construction period for water conveyance
26 structures under Alternative 4A.

27 Legacy communities in the Delta, which are those identified as containing distinct historical and
28 cultural character, include Locke, Bethel Island, Clarksburg, Courtland, Freeport, Hood, Isleton,
29 Knightsen, Rio Vista, Ryde, and Walnut Grove. These communities provide support services and
30 limited workforce housing for the area's agricultural industry. Some housing is also provided to
31 retirees and workers commuting to nearby urban areas including Sacramento. Construction
32 activities associated with water conveyance facilities would be anticipated to result in changes to
33 the rural qualities of these communities during the construction period (characterized by
34 predominantly agricultural land uses, relatively low population densities, and low levels of
35 associated noise and vehicular traffic), particularly for those communities in proximity to water
36 conveyance structures, including Clarksburg, Hood, and Walnut Grove. Effects associated with
37 construction activities could also result in changes to community cohesion if they were to restrict
38 mobility, reduce opportunities for maintaining face-to-face relationships, or disrupt the functions of
39 community organizations or community gathering places (such as schools, libraries, places of
40 worship, and recreational facilities). Under Alternative 4A, several gathering places that lie in the
41 vicinity of construction areas could be indirectly affected by noise and traffic associated with
42 construction activities, including Delta High School, the Clarksburg Library, Clarksburg Community
43 Church, Resurrection Life Community Church, Citizen Land Alliance, Discovery Bay Chamber of

1 Commerce, Courtland Fire Department, and several marinas or other recreational facilities (see
2 Chapter 15, *Recreation*, Table 15-15 in the Draft EIR/EIS).

3 Under Alternative 4A, additional regional employment and income could create net positive effects
4 on the character of Delta communities. In addition to potential demographic effects associated with
5 changes in employment, however, property values may decline in areas that become less desirable
6 in which to live, work, shop, or participate in recreational activities. For instance, negative visual- or
7 noise-related effects on residential property could lead to localized abandonment of buildings. While
8 water conveyance construction could result in beneficial effects relating to the economic welfare of a
9 community, adverse social effects could also arise as a result of declining economic stability in
10 communities closest to construction effects and in those most heavily influenced by agricultural and
11 recreational activities. Implementation of mitigation measures and environmental commitments
12 related to noise, visual effects, transportation, agriculture, and recreation, would reduce adverse
13 effects (see Appendix 3B, *Environmental Commitments*, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS).

14 **CEQA Conclusion:** Construction of water conveyance facilities under Alternative 4A could affect
15 community character in the Delta region. However, because these impacts are social in nature,
16 rather than physical, they are not considered impacts under CEQA. To the extent that changes to
17 community character would lead to reasonably foreseeable physical impacts involving population
18 growth, such impacts are described under Impact ECON-2 and in Section 4.3.26, *Growth Inducement*
19 *and Other Indirect Effects*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS. Furthermore, notable decreases in population or
20 employment, even if limited to specific areas, sectors, or the vacancy of individual buildings, could
21 result in alteration of community character stemming from a lack of maintenance, upkeep, and
22 general investment. However, implementation of mitigation measures and environmental
23 commitments related to noise, visual effects, transportation, agriculture, and recreation, would
24 reduce the extent of these effects such that a significant impact would not occur (see Appendix 3B,
25 *Environmental Commitments*, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS). Specifically, these include
26 commitments to develop and implement erosion and sediment control plans, develop and
27 implement hazardous materials management plans, provide notification of maintenance activities in
28 waterways, develop and implement a noise abatement plan, develop and implement a fire
29 prevention and control plan, and prepare and implement mosquito management plans.

30 **Impact ECON-4: Changes in Local Government Fiscal Conditions as a Result of Constructing** 31 **the Proposed Water Conveyance Facilities**

32 **NEPA Effects:** Effects related to changes in local government fiscal conditions during construction of
33 Alternative 4A would be identical to those described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16, *Socioeconomics*,
34 Section 16.3.3.9, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the water conveyance facilities
35 proposed under these alternatives are identical. Under Alternative 4A, publicly-owned water
36 conveyance facilities would be constructed on land of which some is currently held by private
37 owners. Property tax and assessment revenue generated by lands that would be transferred from
38 private to is estimated to total \$7.3 million over the construction period. Typically, decreases in
39 revenue could potentially result in the loss of a substantial share of some agencies' tax bases and
40 particularly for smaller districts affected by a project. However, California Water Code (Section
41 85089 subdivision 9b) specifies that the entities constructing and operating a new Delta conveyance
42 facility will fully mitigate for the loss of property tax revenues or assessments levied by local
43 governments or special districts. This Water Code requirement will ensure that tax revenues
44 forgone as a result of transferring land from private to public ownership will be fully offset. In
45 addition, as discussed under Impact ECON-1, construction of the water conveyance facilities would

1 be anticipated to result in a net temporary increase of income and employment in the Delta region.
2 This would also create an indirect beneficial effect through increased sales tax revenue for local
3 government entities that rely on sales taxes.

4 **CEQA Conclusion:** Under Alternative 4A, construction of water conveyance facilities would result in
5 the removal of a portion of the property tax base for various local government entities in the Delta
6 region. Over the construction period, property tax and assessment revenue generated by these
7 properties is estimated at \$7.3 million. These potential losses would be offset by the provisions in
8 the California Water Code that require entities constructing and operating new Delta conveyance
9 facilities to fully mitigate for the loss of property tax or assessments levied by local governments or
10 special districts. It is anticipated that the Water Code requirement will ensure that forgone tax
11 revenues will be fully offset. In addition, CEQA does not require a discussion of socioeconomic
12 effects except where they would result in reasonably foreseeable physical changes. The potential for
13 a physical change to the environment as a result of changes in tax revenues would be avoided by
14 offsetting the potential losses in tax revenues.

15 **Impact ECON-5: Effects on Recreational Economics as a Result of Constructing the Proposed**
16 **Water Conveyance Facilities**

17 **NEPA Effects:** Effects on recreational economics under Alternative 4A would be identical to those
18 described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16, Socioeconomics, Section 16.3.3.9, in Appendix A, because
19 the water conveyance facilities proposed under these alternatives are identical. As described and
20 defined under Impacts REC-1 through REC-4 in Section 4.3.11, *Recreation*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS,
21 construction of water conveyance facilities under Alternative 4A would include elements that would
22 be permanently located in two existing recreation areas. Additionally, substantial disruption of
23 other recreational activities considered temporary and permanent would occur in certain areas
24 during the construction period. Were it to occur, a decline in visits to Delta recreational sites as a
25 result of facility construction would be expected to reduce recreation-related spending, creating an
26 adverse effect throughout the Delta region. Additionally, if construction activities shift the relative
27 popularity of different recreational sites, implementation of Alternative 4A may carry localized
28 beneficial or adverse effects.

29 Access would be maintained to all existing recreational facilities, including marinas, throughout
30 construction. As part of Mitigation Measure REC-2, project proponents would enhance nearby
31 fishing access sites and would incorporate public recreational access into design of the intakes along
32 the Sacramento River. Implementation of this measure along with separate, non-environmental
33 commitments as set forth in Appendix 3B, *Environmental Commitments*, in Appendix A of this
34 RDEIR/SDEIS relating to the enhancement of recreational access and control of aquatic weeds in the
35 Delta would reduce these effects. Environmental commitments would also be implemented to
36 reduce some of the effects of construction activities on the recreational experience. Similarly,
37 mitigation measures proposed throughout other sections of this document, and listed under Impact
38 REC-2 in Section 4.3.11, *Recreation*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS would also contribute to reducing
39 construction effects on recreational experiences in the study area.

40 Construction of water conveyance structures would be anticipated to result in a lower-quality
41 recreational experience in a number of localized areas throughout the Delta, despite the
42 implementation of environmental commitments. With a decrease in recreational quality,
43 particularly for boating and fishing (two of the most popular activities in the Delta), the number of
44 visits would be anticipated to decline, at least in areas close to construction activities. Under this

1 alternative, recreational uses at Clifton Court Forebay and in small areas of the Cosumnes River
2 Preserve on Staten Island would be directly affected by construction activities. Six other recreational
3 sites or areas would experience periods of construction-related effects, including noise, access,
4 visual disturbances, or a combination of these effects. As described under Impact REC-2 in Section
5 4.3.11, *Recreation*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS, these include Clarksburg Boat Launch (fishing access),
6 Stone Lakes NWR, Wimpy's Marina, Delta Meadows River Park, Bullfrog Landing Marina, and Lazy M
7 Marina. Overall, the multi-year schedule and geographic scale of construction activities and the
8 anticipated decline in recreational spending would be considered an adverse effect. The
9 commitments and mitigation measures cited above would contribute to the reduction of this effect.

10 **CEQA Conclusion:** Construction of the proposed water conveyance facilities under Alternative 4A
11 could affect recreational revenue in the Delta region if construction activities result in fewer visits to
12 the area. Fewer visits would be anticipated to result in decreased economic activity related to
13 recreational activities. This section considers only the economic effects of recreational changes
14 brought about by construction of the proposed water conveyance facilities. Potential physical
15 changes to the environment relating to recreational resources are described and evaluated under
16 Impacts REC-1 through REC-4 in Section 4.3.11, *Recreation*, in this RDEIR/SDEIS.

17 **Impact ECON-6: Effects on Agricultural Economics in the Delta Region during Construction of** 18 **the Proposed Water Conveyance Facilities**

19 Effects on agricultural economics related to construction of Alternative 4A would be identical to
20 those described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16, *Socioeconomics*, Section 16.3.3.9, in Appendix A of
21 this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the water conveyance facilities proposed under these alternatives are
22 identical.

23 Construction of conveyance facilities would convert land from existing agricultural uses to project-
24 related construction uses, and agricultural land could also be affected by changes in water quality
25 and other conditions that would affect crop productivity. These direct effects on agricultural land
26 are described under Impacts AG-1 and AG-2 in Section 4.3.10, *Agricultural Resources*, in this
27 RDEIR/SDEIS. Total value of irrigated crop production in the Delta would decline on average by \$5.3
28 million per year during the construction period, with total irrigated crop acreage declining by about
29 4,700 acres. Other effects related to production costs, travel time, and loss of investments in
30 production facilities and standing orchards and vineyards would also occur as a result of facilities
31 construction.

32 **NEPA Effects:** Because construction of the proposed water conveyance facilities would lead to
33 reductions in crop acreage and in the value of agricultural production in the Delta region, this is
34 considered an adverse effect. Mitigation Measure AG-1, described under Impact AG-1 in Chapter 14,
35 *Agricultural Resources*, Section 14.3.3.2 in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, would be available to
36 reduce these effects by preserving agricultural productivity and compensating offsite.

37 **CEQA Conclusion:** Construction of the proposed water conveyance facilities would reduce the total
38 value of agricultural production in the Delta region. The removal of agricultural land from
39 production is addressed under Impacts AG-1 and AG-2 in Section 4.3.10, *Agricultural Resources*, in
40 this RDEIR/SDEIS. The reduction in the value of agricultural production is not considered an
41 environmental impact. Significant environmental impacts would only result if the changes in
42 regional economics cause reasonably foreseeable physical impacts. Such physical effects are
43 discussed in other chapters throughout this RDEIR/SDEIS. When required, DWR would provide
44 compensation to property owners for economic losses due to implementation of the alternative.

1 While the compensation to property owners would reduce the severity of economic effects related
2 to the loss of agricultural land, it would not constitute mitigation for any related physical impact.
3 Measures to reduce these impacts are discussed under Impact AG-1 in Chapter 14, *Agricultural*
4 *Resources*, Section 14.3.3.2 in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS.

5 **Impact ECON-7: Permanent Regional Economic and Employment Effects in the Delta Region** 6 **during Operation and Maintenance of the Proposed Water Conveyance Facilities**

7 While the specific criteria guiding operations of water conveyance facilities under Alternative 4A
8 would differ somewhat from those under Alternative 4, for the purposes of socioeconomic analysis,
9 it is assumed that operation and maintenance effects under Alternative 4A would be essentially
10 identical to those described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16, *Socioeconomics*, Section 16.3.3.9, in
11 Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the physical water conveyance facilities proposed under
12 these alternatives are identical and, in the context of the regional economy, operational outcomes
13 related to water supply, water quality, recreation, or fisheries would be similar between the two
14 alternatives. Ongoing operation and maintenance of facilities would result in increased
15 expenditures. The increased project operation and maintenance expenditures are expected to result
16 in a permanent increase in regional employment and income, including an estimated 129 direct and
17 183 total (direct, indirect, and induced) FTE jobs.

18 The operation and maintenance of conveyance and related facilities such as roads and utilities
19 would result in the permanent removal of agricultural land from production following construction,
20 and the effects on employment and income would be negative, including the loss of an estimated 11
21 agricultural and 39 total (direct, indirect, and induced) FTE jobs. Based on the permanent crop
22 production value changes described in Impact ECON-12, the agricultural job losses would more
23 likely be concentrated in the vegetable, truck, orchard, and vineyard crop sectors, which are
24 relatively labor intensive, than in the grain, field, and forage crop sectors, where more jobs are
25 mechanized. Mapbook Figures M14-7 and M14-8 in the Mapbook Volume of the Draft EIR/EIS
26 display areas of Important Farmland and lands under Williamson Act contracts that could be
27 converted to other uses due to the construction of water conveyance facilities for the Modified
28 Pipeline/Tunnel alignment.

29 **NEPA Effects:** Because continued operation and maintenance of water conveyance facilities would
30 result in an increase in operations-related employment and labor income, this would be considered
31 a beneficial effect. However, the long-term footprint of facilities would lead to a continued decline in
32 agricultural-related employment and labor income, which would be considered an adverse effect.
33 Mitigation Measure AG-1, described under Impact AG-1 in Chapter 14, *Agricultural Resources*,
34 Section 14.3.3.2 in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, would be available to reduce these effects by
35 preserving agricultural productivity and compensating offsite.

36 **CEQA Conclusion:** Operation and maintenance of the proposed water conveyance facilities would
37 increase total employment and income in the Delta region. The net change would result from
38 expenditures on operation and maintenance and from changes in agricultural production. The total
39 change in income and employment is not, in itself, considered an environmental impact. Significant
40 environmental impacts would only result if the changes in regional economics cause reasonably
41 foreseeable physical impacts. Such physical effects are discussed in other chapters throughout this
42 RDEIR/SDEIS. Removal of agricultural land from production is addressed under Impacts AG-1 and
43 AG-2 in Section 4.3.10, *Agricultural Resources*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS; and changes in recreation
44 related activities are addressed under Impacts REC-5 through REC-8 in Section 4.3.11, *Recreation* in

1 this RDEIR/SDEIS. When required, DWR would provide compensation to landowners as a result of
2 acquiring lands for the proposed conveyance facilities. While the compensation to property owners
3 would reduce the severity of economic effects related to the loss of agricultural land, it would not
4 constitute mitigation for any related physical impact. Measures to reduce these impacts are
5 discussed under Impact AG-1 in Chapter 14, *Agricultural Resources*, Section 14.3.3.2 in Appendix A of
6 this RDEIR/SDEIS.

7 **Impact ECON-8: Permanent Effects on Population and Housing in the Delta Region during** 8 **Operation and Maintenance of the Proposed Water Conveyance Facilities**

9 While the specific criteria guiding operations of water conveyance facilities under Alternative 4A
10 would differ somewhat from those under Alternative 4, for the purposes of socioeconomic analysis,
11 it is assumed that operation and maintenance effects under Alternative 4A would be identical to
12 those described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16, *Socioeconomics*, Section 16.3.3.9, in Appendix A of
13 this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the physical water conveyance facilities proposed under these
14 alternatives are identical. Operations and maintenance of conveyance facilities would require
15 approximately 130 permanent new workers. Given the nature of those operation and maintenance
16 jobs, the existing water conveyance facilities already in the five-county region, the large workforce
17 in the region, and the large water agencies with headquarters in that region, it is anticipated that
18 most of these new jobs would be filled from within the existing five-county labor force; however, it
19 is anticipated that some workers with specialized skills may be recruited from outside the five-
20 county region and would relocate to the area. This additional population would constitute a minor
21 increase in the total 2025 projected regional population of 4.6 million and be distributed throughout
22 the region. Changes in demand for public services resulting from any increase in population are
23 addressed under Impact UT-7 in Section 4.3.16, *Public Services and Utilities* in this RDEIR/SDEIS. It is
24 anticipated that most of the operational workforce would be drawn from within the five-county
25 region. Consequently, operation of the conveyance facilities would not result in impacts on housing.

26 **NEPA Effects:** Because these activities would not result in concentrated, substantial increases in
27 population or new housing, they would not be considered to have an adverse effect.

28 **CEQA Conclusion:** Operation and maintenance of the proposed water conveyance facilities would
29 result in minor population increases in the Delta region with adequate housing supply to
30 accommodate the change in population and therefore significant impacts on the physical
31 environment are not anticipated.

32 **Impact ECON-9: Changes in Community Character during Operation and Maintenance of the** 33 **Proposed Water Conveyance Facilities**

34 **NEPA Effects:** While the specific criteria guiding operations of water conveyance facilities under
35 Alternative 4A would differ somewhat from those under Alternative 4, for the purposes of
36 socioeconomic effects, it is assumed that operation and maintenance effects under Alternative 4A
37 would be essentially identical to those described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16, *Socioeconomics*,
38 Section 16.3.3.9, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the physical water conveyance
39 facilities proposed under these alternatives are identical and, in the context of community character,
40 operational outcomes related to water supply, water quality, recreation, or fisheries would be
41 similar between the two alternatives. Throughout the five-county Delta region, population and
42 employment could slightly expand as a result of continued operation and maintenance of the water
43 conveyance facilities. Agricultural contributions to the character and culture of the Delta would be

1 likely to decline commensurate with the projected decline in agricultural-related employment and
2 production. This could result in the closure of agriculture-dependent businesses or those catering to
3 agricultural employees, particularly in areas where conversion of agricultural land would be most
4 concentrated, including near the intakes in the vicinity of Clarksburg and Hood and near the
5 expanded Clifton Court Forebay. Similar effects could accrue to areas disproportionately dependent
6 on existing recreational activities. However, influences associated with those hired to operate,
7 repair, and maintain water conveyance facilities would grow. To the extent that this anticipated
8 economic shift away from agriculture results in demographic changes in population, employment
9 level, income, age, gender, or race, the study area would be expected to see changes to its character,
10 particularly in those Delta communities most substantially affected by demographic changes based
11 on their size or proximity to water conveyance facilities.

12 While some of the rural qualities of Delta communities, including relatively low noise and traffic
13 levels, could return to near pre-construction conditions during the operational phase, other effects
14 would be lasting. For instance, the visual appearance of intakes and other permanent features would
15 compromise the predominantly undeveloped and agricultural nature of communities like
16 Clarksburg, Courtland, and Hood, which would be located closest to the permanent water
17 conveyance features. Lasting effects on areas made less desirable in which to live, work, shop, or
18 participate in recreational activities as a result of water conveyance facility operations could lead to
19 localized abandonment of buildings. Such lasting effects could also result in changes to community
20 cohesion if they were to restrict mobility, reduce opportunities for maintaining face-to-face
21 relationships, or disrupt the functions of community organizations or community gathering places
22 (such as schools, libraries, places of worship, and recreational facilities). While ongoing operations
23 could result in beneficial effects relating to the economic welfare of a community, adverse social
24 effects could linger in communities closest to character-changing effects and in those most heavily
25 influenced by agricultural and recreational activities. Implementation of mitigation measures and
26 environmental commitments related to noise, visual effects, transportation, agriculture, and
27 recreation would reduce adverse effects (see Appendix 3B, *Environmental Commitments*, in
28 Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS). Specifically, these commitments include notification of
29 maintenance activities in waterways, development and implementation of a noise abatement plan,
30 and preparation and implementation of mosquito management plans.

31 **CEQA Conclusion:** Operation and maintenance of water conveyance facilities under Alternative 4A
32 could affect community character in the Delta region. However, because these impacts are social in
33 nature, rather than physical, they are not considered impacts under CEQA. To the extent that
34 changes to community character would lead to reasonably foreseeable physical impacts involving
35 population growth, such impacts are described under Impact ECON-8 and in Section 4.3.26, *Growth*
36 *Inducement and Other Indirect Effects*, in this RDEIR/SDEIS. Furthermore, notable decreases in
37 population or employment, even if limited to specific areas, sectors, or the vacancy of individual
38 buildings, could result in alteration of community character stemming from a lack of maintenance,
39 upkeep, and general investment. However, implementation of mitigation measures and
40 environmental commitments related to noise, visual effects, transportation, agriculture, and
41 recreation, would reduce the extent of these effects such that a significant impact would not occur
42 (see Appendix 3B, *Environmental Commitments*, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS). Specifically,
43 these include commitments to develop and implement erosion and sediment control plans, develop
44 and implement hazardous materials management plans, provide notification of maintenance
45 activities in waterways, develop and implement a noise abatement plan, develop and implement a
46 fire prevention and control plan, and prepare and implement mosquito management plans.

1 **Impact ECON-10: Changes in Local Government Fiscal Conditions during Operation and**
2 **Maintenance of the Proposed Water Conveyance Facilities**

3 **NEPA Effects:** Effects on local government fiscal conditions during operation and maintenance of
4 Alternative 4A would be similar to those described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16, *Socioeconomics*,
5 Section 16.3.3.9, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the physical water conveyance
6 facilities proposed under these alternatives are identical. While Alternative 4A would not be
7 associated with a 50-year permit term, forgone revenue is estimated to be the same as for
8 Alternative 4 (\$44.1 million) over a 50-year period. These decreases in revenue could potentially
9 result in the loss of a substantial share of some agencies' tax bases, particularly for smaller districts
10 affected by Alternative 4A. However, as discussed under Impact ECON-4, California Water Code,
11 requires that entities constructing and operating a new Delta conveyance for offsetting the loss of
12 property tax or assessment revenues. The requirement will ensure that forgone tax revenues
13 resulting from transferring lands for private to public ownership will be fully offset.

14 **CEQA Conclusion:** Under Alternative 4A, the ongoing operation and maintenance of water
15 conveyance facilities would reduce t property tax revenue levels for various local government
16 entities in the Delta region. Over a 50-year period, property tax and assessment revenue forgone is
17 estimated at \$44.1 million. These potential losses would be offset by the provisions in the Water
18 Code that require entities constructing and operating new Delta conveyance facilities to fully
19 mitigate for the loss of property tax assessments levied by local governments or special districts. It
20 is anticipated that the Water Code requirement will ensure that forgone tax revenues will be fully
21 offset. Furthermore, CEQA does not require a discussion of socioeconomic effects except where they
22 would result in reasonably foreseeable physical changes. The potential for physical change to the
23 environment as a result of changes would be avoided by offsetting the losses in tax revenues.

24 **Impact ECON-11: Effects on Recreational Economics during Operation and Maintenance of the**
25 **Proposed Water Conveyance Facilities**

26 **NEPA Effects:** As discussed under Impacts REC-5 through REC-8 in Section 4.3.11, *Recreation*, in this
27 RDEIR/SDEIS, operation and maintenance activities associated with the proposed water conveyance
28 facilities under Alternative 4A are anticipated to create minor effects on recreational resources.
29 Maintenance of conveyance facilities, including intakes, would result in periodic temporary but not
30 substantial adverse effects on boat passage and water-based recreational activities. As discussed in
31 Impact REC-7 in Chapter 15, *Recreation*, of the Draft EIR/EIS, most intake maintenance, such as
32 painting, cleaning, and repairs, would be done with barges and divers, and could cause a temporary
33 impediment to boat movement in the Sacramento River in the immediate vicinity of the affected
34 intake structure and reduce opportunities for waterskiing, wakeboarding, or tubing in the
35 immediate vicinity of the intake structures. However, boat passage and navigation on the river
36 would still be possible around any barges or other maintenance equipment and these effects would
37 be expected to be short-term (2 years or less). Although water-based recreation (e.g., boating,
38 waterskiing, wakeboarding) may be restricted at and in the vicinity of intakes, many miles of the
39 Sacramento River would still be usable for these activities during periodic maintenance events.
40 Additionally, implementation of the environmental commitment to provide notification of
41 maintenance activities in waterways (Appendix 3B, *Environmental Commitments*, in Appendix A of
42 this RDEIR/SDEIS) would reduce these effects. Because effects of facility maintenance would be
43 short-term and intermittent, substantial economic effects are not anticipated to result from
44 operation and maintenance of the facilities.

1 **CEQA Conclusion:** Operation and maintenance activities associated with the proposed water
2 conveyance facilities under Alternative 4A are anticipated to create minor effects on recreational
3 resources and therefore, are not expected to substantially reduce economic activity related to
4 recreational activities. This section considers only the economic effects of recreational changes.
5 Potential physical changes to the environment relating to recreational resources are described and
6 evaluated in Impacts REC-5 through REC-8 in Section 4.3.11, *Recreation*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS.

7 **Impact ECON-12: Permanent Effects on Agricultural Economics in the Delta Region during**
8 **Operation and Maintenance of the Proposed Water Conveyance Facilities**

9 Effects on agricultural economics during operation and maintenance of Alternative 4A would be
10 similar to those described for Alternative 4 in Chapter 16, *Socioeconomics*, Section 16.3.3.9, in
11 Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the physical water conveyance facilities proposed under
12 these alternatives are identical and, in the context of the regional agricultural economy, outcomes
13 related to water quality would be similar between the two alternatives.

14 During operation and maintenance of conveyance facilities existing agricultural land would be in
15 uses that include direct facility footprints and associated permanent roads and utilities. Agricultural
16 land could also be affected by changes in water quality and other conditions that would affect crop
17 productivity. These direct effects on agricultural land are described in Impacts AG-1 and AG-2 in
18 Section 4.3.10, *Agricultural Resources*, in this RDEIR/SDEIS. Total value of irrigated crop production
19 in the Delta region would decline on average by \$3.6 million per year during operation and
20 maintenance, with total irrigated crop acreage declining by about 3,400 acres. Other effects related
21 to production costs, travel time, crop yields, and crop selection could also occur during operation
22 and maintenance activities. If operation of the proposed conveyance facilities increases salinity in
23 part of the Delta, crops that are more sensitive to salinity could shift to other lands in the five-county
24 Delta region. See Section 4.3.10, *Agricultural Resources*, Impact AG-2, in this RDEIR/SDEIS for
25 further discussion of effects from changes in salinity.

26 **NEPA Effects:** The footprint of water conveyance facilities would result in lasting reductions in crop
27 acreage and in the value of agricultural production in the Delta region; therefore, this is considered
28 an adverse effect. Mitigation Measure AG-1, described under Impact AG-1 in Chapter 14, *Agricultural*
29 *Resources*, Section 14.3.3.2 in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, would be available to reduce these
30 effects by preserving agricultural productivity and compensating offsite.

31 **CEQA Conclusion:** During operation and maintenance of the proposed water conveyance facilities
32 the value of agricultural production in the Delta region would be reduced. The permanent removal
33 of agricultural land from production is addressed under Impacts AG-1 and AG-2 in Section 4.3.10,
34 *Agricultural Resources*, of this RDEIR/SDEIS. The reduction in the value of agricultural production is
35 not considered an environmental impact. Significant environmental impacts would only result if the
36 changes in regional economics cause reasonably foreseeable physical impacts. Such effects are
37 discussed in other chapters throughout this RDEIR/SDEIS. When required, DWR would provide
38 compensation to property owners for economic losses due to implementation of the alternative.
39 While the compensation to property owners would reduce the severity of economic effects related
40 to the loss of agricultural land, it would not constitute mitigation for any related physical effect.
41 Measures to reduce these impacts are discussed in Chapter 14, *Agricultural Resources*, Section
42 14.3.3.2, Impact AG-1, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS.

1 **Impact ECON-13: Effects on the Delta Region's Economy and Employment Due to the**
2 **Implementation of Environmental Commitments 3, 4, 6-12, 15, and 16**

3 In the Delta region, spending on conservation actions would include construction, operation, and
4 maintenance activities that would convert or disturb existing land use. The effects on the economy
5 of the Delta region would be similar in kind, though not in magnitude, to those estimated for
6 Alternative 4. As described under Section 4.1, *Introduction*, Alternative 4A would include
7 substantially less habitat enhancement and restoration. Additionally, under Alternative 4A,
8 Conservation Measures 2, 5, 13, 20, and 21 would not be implemented. In general, changes in
9 regional economic activity (employment and income) would include increases from the construction
10 and operation and maintenance-related activity, declines resulting from agricultural or other land
11 uses converted or impaired, changes in recreation spending that could be positive or negative
12 depending on the specific restoration action, and declines from abandonment of natural gas wells.
13 As discussed in Section 4.3.22, *Minerals*, Impact MIN-5, in this RDEIR/SDEIS, operations of natural
14 gas wells in the Delta region would be affected where wells are located in restoration areas to be
15 inundated. In areas that would be permanently inundated at restoration sites, producing natural gas
16 wells may be abandoned.

17 **NEPA Effects:** Because implementation of conservation actions would be anticipated to result in an
18 increase in construction and operation and maintenance-related employment and labor income, this
19 would be considered a beneficial effect. However, implementation of these components would also
20 be anticipated to result in a decrease in agricultural-related and natural gas production-related
21 employment and labor income, which would be considered an adverse effect. Mitigation Measure
22 AG-1, described in Chapter 14, *Agricultural Resources*, Section 14.3.3.2, Impact AG-1, in Appendix A
23 of this RDEIR/SDEIS, would be available to reduce these effects by preserving agricultural
24 productivity and compensating offsite. Additionally, measures to reduce impacts on natural gas
25 wells are discussed in Chapter 26, *Mineral Resources*, Section 26.3.3.2, Impact MIN-5, in Appendix A
26 of this RDEIR/SDEIS.

27 **CEQA Conclusion:** Implementation of the proposed conservation actions would affect total
28 employment and income in the Delta region. The change in total employment and income in the
29 Delta region is based on expenditures resulting from implementation of the habitat enhancement
30 and restoration activities and any resulting changes in agricultural production, recreation, and
31 natural gas production. The total change in employment and income is not, in itself, considered an
32 environmental impact. Significant environmental impacts within the meaning of CEQA would only
33 result if the changes in regional economics cause reasonably foreseeable physical impacts. Such
34 environmental effects are discussed in other chapters throughout this RDEIR/SDEIS. Removal of
35 agricultural land from production is addressed in Section 4.3.10, *Agricultural Resources*, Impacts AG-
36 3 and AG-4; changes in recreation-related activities are addressed in Section 4.3.11, *Recreation*,
37 Impacts REC-9 through REC-11; and abandonment of natural gas wells is addressed in Section
38 4.3.22, *Minerals*, Impact MIN-5. When required, the project proponents would provide compensation
39 to property owners for economic losses due to implementation of the alternative. While the
40 compensation to property owners would reduce the severity of economic effects related to the loss
41 of agricultural land, it would not constitute mitigation for any related physical impact. Measures to
42 reduce these impacts and impacts on natural gas wells are discussed in Chapter 14, *Agricultural*
43 *Resources*, Section 14.3.3.2, Impact AG-1, and Chapter 26, *Mineral Resources*, Section 26.3.3.2, Impact
44 MIN-5, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS.

1 **Impact ECON-14: Effects on Population and Housing in the Delta Region as a Result of**
2 **Implementing Environmental Commitments 3, 4, 6-12, 15, and 16**

3 **NEPA Effects:** In the Delta region, implementation of habitat enhancement and restoration activities
4 could increase employment and convert land from existing uses, including possible displacement of
5 residential housing and business establishments. The effects on population and housing in the Delta
6 region would be similar in kind, though substantially smaller in magnitude, to those described for
7 Alternative 4. In general, the changes in population and housing would include increases in
8 population from the construction and operation and maintenance-related activity and declines in
9 residential housing and business establishments as a result of lands converted or impaired. Because
10 these activities would not result in concentrated, substantial increases in population or new
11 housing, they would not be considered to have an adverse effect.

12 **CEQA Conclusion:** Implementation of the proposed habitat enhancement and restoration activities
13 could affect total population and housing in the Delta region. The change in total population and
14 housing in the Delta region is based on employment resulting from implementation of the proposed
15 conservation activities. The change in population and housing is expected to be minor relative to the
16 five-county Delta region, and dispersed throughout the region. Therefore, significant impacts on the
17 physical environment are not anticipated to result.

18 **Impact ECON-15: Changes in Community Character as a Result of Implementing**
19 **Environmental Commitments 3, 4, 6-12, 15, and 16**

20 **NEPA Effects:** As noted under Impacts ECON-13 and ECON-14, conservation activities designed to
21 restore, conserve, or enhance natural habitat would be anticipated to create economic effects similar
22 in kind, if not in magnitude, to those described for Alternative 4, including increases to employment
23 and changes in land use that could trigger the disruption of agricultural and recreational economies.
24 They could also affect the possible displacement of residences and businesses. The effects these
25 activities would create with regard to community character would depend on the nature of each
26 measure along with its specific location, size, and other factors that are not yet defined.

27 Under Alternative 4A, temporary construction associated with implementation of these measures
28 could lead to demographic changes and resulting effects on the composition and size of Delta
29 communities. Earthwork and site preparation associated with environmental commitments could
30 also detract from the rural qualities of the Delta region; however, their implementation would take
31 place in phases over time, which would limit the extent of effects taking place at any one point in
32 time.

33 Implementation of these measures could also alter community character over the long term.
34 Conversion of agricultural land to restored habitat would result in the erosion of some economic and
35 social contributions stemming from agriculture in Delta communities. However, in the context of the
36 Delta region, a substantial proportion of land would not be converted. Additionally, restored habitat
37 could support some rural qualities, particularly in terms of visual resources and recreational
38 opportunities. These effects could attract more residents to some areas of the Delta, and could
39 replace some agricultural economic activities with those related to recreation and tourism. To the
40 extent that agricultural facilities and supportive businesses were affected and led to vacancy,
41 alteration of community character could result from these activities. However, protection of
42 cultivated lands would ensure the continuation of agricultural production on up to 10,100 of acres
43 in the Delta. If necessary, implementation of mitigation measures and environmental commitments
44 related to transportation, agriculture, and recreation would be anticipated to reduce these adverse

1 effects (see Appendix 3B, *Environmental Commitments*, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS).
2 Specifically, these include commitments to develop and implement erosion and sediment control
3 plans, develop and implement hazardous materials management plans, provide notification of
4 maintenance activities in waterways, develop and implement a noise abatement plan, develop and
5 implement a fire prevention and control plan, and prepare and implement mosquito management
6 plans.

7 **CEQA Conclusion:** Implementation of habitat enhancement and restoration activities under
8 Alternative 4A could affect community character within the Delta region. However, because these
9 impacts are social in nature, rather than physical, they are not considered impacts under CEQA. To
10 the extent that changes to community character are related to physical impacts involving population
11 growth, these impacts are described in Section 4.3.26, *Growth Inducement and Other Indirect Effects*,
12 in this RDEIR/SDEIS. Furthermore, notable decreases in population or employment, even if limited
13 to certain areas, sectors, or the vacancy of individual buildings, could result in decay and blight
14 stemming from a lack of maintenance, upkeep, and general investment. However, implementation of
15 mitigation measures and environmental commitments related to noise, visual effects,
16 transportation, agriculture, and recreation, would reduce the extent of these effects such that a
17 significant impact would not occur (see Appendix 3B, *Environmental Commitments*, in Appendix A of
18 this RDEIR/SDEIS). Specifically, these include commitments to develop and implement erosion and
19 sediment control plans, develop and implement hazardous materials management plans, provide
20 notification of maintenance activities in waterways, develop and implement a noise abatement plan,
21 develop and implement a fire prevention and control plan, and prepare and implement mosquito
22 management plans.

23 **Impact ECON-16: Changes in Local Government Fiscal Conditions as a Result of Implementing**
24 **Environmental Commitments 3, 4, 6–12, 15, and 16**

25 As discussed in relation to construction of water conveyance facilities, habitat restoration and
26 enhancement activities under Alternative 4A would also take place, in part, on land held by private
27 owners and from which local governments derive revenue through property taxes and assessments.
28 In particular, environmental commitments related to protection and restoration of natural
29 communities would require the acquisition of multiple parcels of land.

30 The loss of a substantial portion of an entity's tax base would represent an adverse effect on an
31 agency, resulting in a decrease in local government's ability to provide public goods and services.
32 Under Alternative 4A, property tax and assessment revenue forgone as a result of environmental
33 commitment implementation is estimated to reach \$13.4 million as a result of implementing
34 Environmental Commitments 3, 4, 6-12, and 16. Decreases in revenue could potentially represent a
35 substantial share of individual agency tax bases, particularly for smaller districts affected by large,
36 contiguous areas identified for habitat restoration.

37 Additionally, installation of non-physical fish barriers at Georgiana Slough may require that land
38 currently on property tax rolls be acquired and eventually removed from the tax base. The fiscal
39 effects stemming from this activity are, however, anticipated to be minor based upon the relatively
40 small areas of land necessary for its implementation.

41 **NEPA Effects:** Effects on local government fiscal conditions during operation and maintenance
42 Environmental Commitments 3, 4, 6-12, 15, and 16 is estimated to total \$13.4 million. However, as
43 discussed under Impact ECON-4, California Water Code, requires that entities constructing and
44 operating a new Delta conveyance for offsetting the loss of property tax or assessment revenues.

1 The requirement will ensure that forgone tax revenues resulting from transferring lands for private
2 to public ownership will be fully offset and an adverse impact on local agency tax revenues would be
3 avoided.

4 **CEQA Conclusion:** Under Alternative 4A, implementation of habitat enhancement and restoration
5 activities would result in the removal of a portion of the property tax base for various local
6 government entities in the Delta region. Over a 50-year period, property tax and assessment
7 revenue forgone is estimated to reach \$13.4 million, compared with annual property tax revenue of
8 more than \$934 million in the Delta counties (California State Controller’s Office 2012). These
9 potential losses would be offset by the provisions in the Water Code that require entities
10 constructing and operating new Delta conveyance facilities to fully mitigate for the loss of property
11 tax assessments levied by local governments or special districts. It is anticipated that the Water
12 Code requirement will ensure that forgone tax revenues will be fully offset. Furthermore, CEQA does
13 not require a discussion of socioeconomic effects except where they would result in physical
14 changes. The potential for a physical change to the environment attributable to foregone tax
15 revenues would be avoided by offsetting the loss of those revenues.

16 **Impact ECON-17: Effects on Recreational Economics as a Result of Implementing**
17 **Environmental Commitments 3, 4, 6–12, 15, and 16**

18 **NEPA Effects:** Implementation of habitat enhancement and restoration activities under this
19 alternative would be anticipated to create an adverse effect on recreational resources by limiting
20 access to facilities, restricting boat navigation, and disturbing fish habitat while restoration activities
21 are taking place. These measures may also permanently reduce the extent of upland recreation sites.
22 However, these components could also create beneficial effects by enhancing aquatic habitat and
23 fish abundance, expanding the extent of navigable waterways available to boaters, and improving
24 the quality of existing upland recreation opportunities. Therefore, the potential exists for the
25 creation of adverse and beneficial effects related to recreational economics. Adverse effects would
26 be anticipated to be primarily limited to areas close to restoration areas and during site preparation
27 and earthwork phases. These effects could result in a decline in visits to the Delta and reduction in
28 recreation-related spending, creating an adverse economic effect throughout the Delta. Beneficial
29 recreational effects would generally result during later stages of restoration implementation as
30 environmental conditions supporting recreational activities are enhanced. These effects could
31 improve the quality of recreational experiences, leading to increased economic activities related to
32 recreation, particularly in areas where habitat enhancement or restoration could create new
33 recreational opportunities.

34 **CEQA Conclusion:** Site preparation and earthwork activities associated with a number of
35 environmental commitments would limit opportunities for recreational activities where they occur
36 in or near existing recreational areas. Noise, odors, and visual effects of construction activities would
37 also temporarily compromise the quality of recreation in and around these areas, leading to
38 potential economic impacts. However, over time, implementation could improve the quality of
39 existing recreational opportunities, leading to increased economic activity. This section considers
40 only the economic effects of recreational changes brought about by implementation of habitat
41 enhancement and restoration activities. CEQA does not require a discussion of socioeconomic effects
42 except where they would result in reasonably foreseeable physical changes. Potential physical
43 changes to the environment relating to recreational resources are described and evaluated in
44 Section 4.3.11, *Recreation*, Impacts REC-9 through REC-11 in this RDEIR/SDEIS.

1 **Impact ECON-18: Effects on Agricultural Economics in the Delta Region as a Result of**
2 **Implementing Environmental Commitments 3, 4, 6-12, 15, and 16**

3 **NEPA Effects:** Habitat enhancement and restoration activities would convert land from existing
4 agricultural uses. These direct effects on agricultural land are described qualitatively in Section
5 4.3.10, *Agricultural Resources*, Impacts AG-3 and AG-4 in this RDEIR/SDEIS. Effects on agricultural
6 economics would include effects on crop production and agricultural investments resulting from
7 restoration actions on agricultural lands. The effects would be similar in kind to those described for
8 lands converted due to construction and operation of the conveyance features and facilities. The
9 total acreage and crop mix of agricultural land potentially affected is not specified at this time, but
10 when required, the project proponents would provide compensation to property owners for losses
11 due to implementation of the alternative. Because implementation of habitat enhancement and
12 restoration activities would be anticipated to lead to reductions in crop acreage and in the value of
13 agricultural production in the Delta region, this is considered an adverse effect. Mitigation Measure
14 AG-1, described in Chapter 14, *Agricultural Resources*, Section 14.3.3.2, Impact AG-1, in Appendix A
15 of this RDEIR/SDEIS, would be available to reduce these effects by preserving agricultural
16 productivity and compensating offsite.

17 **CEQA Conclusion:** Implementation of habitat enhancement and restoration activities would reduce
18 the total value of agricultural production in the Delta region. The permanent removal of agricultural
19 land from production is addressed in Section 4.3.10, *Agricultural Resources*, Impacts AG-3 and AG-4,
20 of this RDEIR/SDEIS. The reduction in the value of agricultural production is not considered an
21 environmental impact. Significant environmental impacts would only result if the changes in
22 regional economics cause reasonably foreseeable physical impacts. Such physical effects are
23 discussed in other chapters throughout this RDEIR/SDEIS. When required, the project proponents
24 would provide compensation to property owners for economic losses due to implementation of the
25 alternative. While the compensation to property owners would reduce the severity of economic
26 effects related to the loss of agricultural land, it would not constitute mitigation for any related
27 physical impact. Measures to reduce these impacts are discussed in Chapter 14, *Agricultural*
28 *Resources*, Section 14.3.3.2, Impact AG-1, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS.

29 **Impact ECON-19: Socioeconomic Effects in the South-of-Delta Hydrologic Regions**

30 As described in Section 4.3.26, *Growth Inducement and Other Indirect Effects*, in this RDEIR/SDEIS,
31 the operational components of water conveyance facilities under Alternative 4A could result in a
32 number of effects in areas receiving SWP and CVP water deliveries outside of the Delta. Generally,
33 these effects would be similar to those described for Alternative 4 (Operational Scenarios H3 and
34 H4) in Chapter 16, *Socioeconomics*, Section 16.3.3.9, in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS, because the
35 incremental change in Delta exports is similar, when compared to the relevant No Action condition.

36 Under Operational Scenario H3 as considered for Alternative 4A (at the ELT), Delta exports would
37 increase by 11% when compared to the No Action Alternative (ELT), as shown in Table B.1-3 in
38 Appendix B of this RDEIR/SDEIS. Under Operational Scenario H3 as considered for Alternative 4
39 (LLT), Delta exports would also increase by 11% when compared to the No Action Alternative (LLT),
40 as shown in Table 5-9 in Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS. Under Scenario H4 as considered for
41 Alternative 4A (ELT), Delta exports would decrease by less than 1% when compared to the No
42 Action Alternative (ELT), as shown in Table B.1-3 in Appendix B of this RDEIR/SDEIS. Under
43 Operational Scenario H4 as considered for Alternative 4 (at the late long-term), Delta exports would

1 decrease by 1% when compared to the No Action Alternative (LLT), as shown in Table 5-9 in
2 Appendix A of this RDEIR/SDEIS.

3 Changes in the amount, cost, or reliability of water deliveries could create socioeconomic effects in
4 the hydrologic regions. To the extent that unreliable or insufficient water supplies currently
5 represent obstacles to agricultural production, Alternative 4A may support more stable agricultural
6 activities by enabling broader crop selection or by reducing risk associated with uncertain water
7 deliveries. As a result of an increase in water supply and supply reliability, farmers may choose to
8 leave fewer acres fallow and/or plant higher-value crops. While the locations and extent of any
9 increases in production would depend on local factors and individual economic decisions, a general
10 increase in production would be anticipated to support growth in seasonal and permanent on-farm
11 employment, along with the potential expansion of employment in industries closely associated
12 with agricultural production. These include food processing, agricultural inputs, and transportation.

13 In contrast, decreased water deliveries may affect socioeconomics in hydrologic regions through
14 mechanisms similar to those described above; however, the effects would generally be reversed. For
15 example, it is reasonable to expect that reduced or less reliable water deliveries would result in
16 decreased agricultural production and, in turn, a reduction in both direct and indirect agricultural
17 employment. Economic and social patterns tied to predominant agricultural industrial activities and
18 land uses could erode, changing the character of agricultural communities in hydrologic regions. If
19 operation of water conveyance facilities under Alternative 4A reduced M&I deliveries to the extent
20 that it would, in the long run, constrain population growth, its implementation could reinforce a
21 socioeconomic status quo or limit potential economic and employment growth in hydrologic
22 regions. Such changes to agricultural production and population growth with its associated
23 economic activity could also lead to shifts in the character of communities in the hydrologic regions
24 with resultant beneficial or adverse effects.

25 Generally, these effects (both beneficial and adverse) would be most concentrated in hydrologic
26 regions where agriculture is a primary industry and where agricultural operations depend most
27 heavily on SWP and CVP deliveries.

28 **NEPA Effects:** Increases in average annual water deliveries to service areas could induce population
29 growth and new housing to accommodate growth. Such deliveries could also provide support for
30 water-intensive industries. Long-term water supply reliability is an important component in
31 enabling long-term population increases. However, other factors—including natural growth,
32 employment opportunities, local policy, and quality of life—are more likely to determine population
33 growth. Nonetheless, population growth could stimulate economic activity resulting from increased
34 demand for goods and services. This increased demand could create broad economic benefits for
35 regions whose growth is supported by increased deliveries under Alternative 4A.

36 Social changes, including changes in community character, could also result from an expansion in
37 population or economic activity linked to changes in water deliveries. For example, more stable
38 agricultural production and associated economic activities in areas where agriculture is a
39 predominant industry could strengthen and reinforce existing economic and social patterns and
40 institutions. Increased production could also intensify existing socioeconomic challenges, including
41 seasonal cycles in employment, housing demand, and provision of social services. In areas where
42 population growth would be enabled by increased water supplies or reliability, changes to
43 community character could result from an increased population, including the potential for changes
44 in urban form, environmental factors such as traffic or noise, demographic composition, or the rise

1 of new or broader economic or social opportunities. Again, the nature and extent of such changes
2 would be predominantly influenced by prevailing socioeconomic forces, rather than any specific
3 change associated with implementation of Alternative 4A.

4 Changes in agricultural production and population growth could also affect local government fiscal
5 conditions. Population growth would be anticipated to result in higher property and sales tax
6 revenue while increased agricultural activity could result in higher sales tax receipts for a local
7 jurisdiction. However, growth would also require expanded public services to meet the needs of a
8 larger population and a larger economic base. Expansion could require additional spending on
9 education, police and fire protection, medical services, and transportation and utility infrastructure.
10 Whether such growth would result in a long-term net benefit or cost would depend on a number of
11 factors including prevailing local service levels and tax rates, as well as the characteristics of the
12 growth.

13 Changes in water deliveries associated with operation of Alternative 4A could result in beneficial or
14 adverse socioeconomic effects in areas receiving water from the SWP and CVP. In hydrologic regions
15 where water deliveries are predicted to increase when compared with the No Action Alternative,
16 more stable agricultural activities could support employment and economic production associated
17 with agriculture. Where M&I deliveries increase, population growth could lead to general economic
18 growth and support water-intensive industries. Such changes could also lead to shifts in the
19 character of communities in the hydrologic regions with resultant beneficial or adverse effects.
20 Likewise, growth associated with deliveries could require additional expenditures for local
21 governments while also supporting increases in revenue.

22 **CEQA Conclusion:** As described above, the operational components of the proposed water
23 conveyance facilities could result in a number of socioeconomic effects in areas receiving SWP and
24 CVP water deliveries outside of the Delta. However, because these impacts are social and economic
25 in nature, rather than physical, they are not considered environmental impacts under CEQA. To the
26 extent that changes in socioeconomic conditions in the hydrologic regions would lead to reasonably
27 foreseeable physical impacts, such impacts are described in Section 4.3.26, *Growth Inducement and*
28 *Other Indirect Effects*, in this RDEIR/SDEIS.