CHAPTER 6.0
OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter addresses other topics required by CEQA and provides an overview of the environmental effects of the Enhancement Project, including impacts not found to be significant, significant irreversible environmental changes, growth-inducing impacts, and mandatory findings of significance. Cumulative impacts are discussed in Chapter 5 of this EIR. Additionally, this chapter includes an energy evaluation in accordance with Appendix F to the CEQA Guidelines.

The analysis of the issues addressed in this chapter does not substantially differ between the three proposed enhancement alternatives; rather, it is largely dependent on whether the project is constructed. Therefore, this analysis does not differentiate between the three enhancement alternatives, except where noted.

6.1 IMPACTS NOT FOUND TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines requires the identification of impacts of a project that were determined not to be significant and that were not discussed in detail in an impacts chapter of the EIR. This section presents a brief discussion of environmental issues that were not found to be significant for this project, including agriculture and forestry resources; mineral resources; population and housing; hydrology (flooding due to failure of a levee or dam); geology and soils (soils supporting the use of septic tanks); noise (noise related to public airports or private airstrips); public services (schools); and public health and safety (creation of a significant hazard through accident conditions, hazardous materials within one-quarter mile of a school, hazards related to public airports or private airstrips, and interference with emergency response or evacuation plans).

6.1.1 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

The project site is designated as Urban and Built-Up Land on the "Important Farmland in California" map prepared by the California Resources Agency pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (California Department of Conservation 2014b). Thus, no part of the Enhancement Project alternatives would be located on or near Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Additionally, the project study area is not developed for farming or agricultural use, and no Williamson Act contract is applicable to the project area (California Department of Conservation 2014c). Furthermore, no portion of the

project study area is zoned for or developed as forest land or timberland as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g) and Government Code Section 4526, respectively (Oceanside 1986; Carlsbad 2014c). Therefore, no impact to agriculture and forestry resources would occur.

6.1.2 MINERAL RESOURCES

The project study area includes the lagoon and the materials placement sites, which are designated as open space uses in both the Cities of Oceanside and Carlsbad (Oceanside 1986; Carlsbad 2014b). Neither of these cities identifies significant mineral resources in the project study area (Oceanside 2002a; Carlsbad 2006). Additionally, according to the State of California Department of Conservation, Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources, no wells exist within or adjacent to the project study area (California Department of Conservation 2014d). Furthermore, should any future mineral resource be discovered on or near the project study area, implementation of the Enhancement Project alternatives would not preclude the mineral's extraction. Therefore, the Enhancement Project alternatives would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site, or known mineral resources that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. No impact would occur.

6.1.3 POPULATION AND HOUSING

The Enhancement Project alternatives do not include any residential or commercial land uses and, therefore, would not result in a direct population increase from construction of new homes or businesses. Additionally, the Enhancement Project alternatives do not include extension of roads or other infrastructure that would result in indirect population growth. There are no existing residential uses within the project limits of disturbance; thus, the development of the Enhancement Project alternatives would not result in the displacement of existing housing, and no persons would be displaced. Construction of replacement housing would not be necessary. No impacts to population and housing would occur.

6.1.4 HYDROLOGY – FLOODING DUE TO FAILURE OF A LEVEE OR DAM

The lagoon basins are a natural collector of flood flows from the watershed. No levees or dams are located within the vicinity of the project study area whose failure would pose a risk of flooding. Additionally, as discussed in Section 3.2 Hydrology, channel improvements and other proposed enhancement activities would generally improve flood protection within the study area. Therefore, no impact resulting from failure of a levee or dam would occur.

6.1.5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS – SOILS SUPPORTING THE USE OF SEPTIC TANKS

No septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems are proposed; therefore, no impact associated with the use of such systems would occur.

6.1.6 NOISE – NOISE RELATED TO PUBLIC AIRPORTS OR PRIVATE AIRSTRIPS

There are no public airports or private airstrips located within 2 miles of the project study area (Airnav.com 2014). Additionally, no portion of the project study area is located within an airport land use plan. Further, the Enhancement Project alternatives would not include occupied facilities that would expose people to excessive noise levels related to aircraft use. Therefore, no impacts would occur related to exposing people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels from a public airport or private airstrip.

6.1.7 PUBLIC SERVICES – SCHOOLS

As previously discussed, the Enhancement Project alternatives do not include development of residential uses and would not generate any new permanent residents that would increase the demand for schools; no impact would occur.

6.1.8 PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY – CREATION OF A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD THROUGH ACCIDENT CONDITIONS/HAZARDOUS MATERIALS WITHIN ONE-QUARTER MILE OF A SCHOOL/HAZARDS RELATED TO PUBLIC AIRPORTS OR PRIVATE AIRSTRIPS/ INTERFERENCE WITH EMERGENCY RESPONSE OR EVACUATION PLANS

Several schools are located within one-quarter mile of the project study area. As discussed in Section 3.15 Public Health and Safety, project design features would be implemented to ensure the safe handling of any hazardous materials. Additionally, construction activities would occur in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations pertaining to hazardous materials. Therefore, impacts to schools would be less than significant.

No public airports or private airstrips are located within 2 miles of the project study area (Airnav.com 2014). Therefore, the Enhancement Project alternatives would not result in a safety hazard related to such uses; no impact would occur.

In the event of an emergency, major roadways within the study area would be used as evacuation routes. As discussed in Section 3.10 Traffic and Circulation, construction activities would not generate traffic volumes that could cause poor traffic operating conditions in the project study area. Additionally, long-term roadway closures would not be necessary as part of the

enhancement project and traffic in both directions would be maintained during Carlsbad Boulevard Bridge construction activities; thus, adequate emergency access would be maintained throughout the construction period, as well as during proposed periodic maintenance activities. Therefore, the Enhancement Project alternatives would not interfere with emergency response or evacuation plans. The impact would be less than significant.

6.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Public Resources Code Section 21100(b)(2)(B) and Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines require that an EIR analyze the extent to which the Enhancement Project's primary and secondary effects would impact the environment and commit nonrenewable resources to uses that future generations will not be able to reverse. Construction of the Enhancement Project would result in the use of nonrenewable resources, including fossil fuels, natural gas, water, and building materials, such as concrete. Additionally, electrical power would be used for lighting and potentially for dredge operations, depending on the type of equipment used. Energy resources would be required to power the pumps at the intakes and to transport dredged materials to placement sites. The Enhancement Project alternatives do not represent an uncommon construction project that would use an extraordinary amount of raw material in comparison to other enhancement projects of similar scope and magnitude. As such, the Enhancement Project alternatives are not anticipated to consume substantial amounts of energy or use other resources in a wasteful manner. Although the Enhancement Project alternatives would result in the consumption of nonrenewable resources, the impact would not be considered significant.

Irreversible changes to the natural environment would occur within the lagoon in the areas to be dredged and excavated. Many soil and aquatic bottom-dwelling organisms (e.g., plants and invertebrates) in the lagoon would be destroyed by construction activities. It is anticipated that recolonization and recovery of biological communities would occur, although the length of time can vary (e.g., 1 to 2 years), and the species occurring would be determined by the type of habitat created. Although the Freshwater, Saltwater, and Hybrid Alternatives would result in the loss of some biological resources, the three build alternatives would create a net gain in more biologically productive habitat than currently exists in the project area. Additionally, materials placement activities within the littoral zone in Oceanside and Carlsbad would result in increased protection of existing beaches, and allow for continued or enhanced recreational opportunities in these areas. Thus, the change to the natural environment would not be considered significant.

6.3 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of the ways in which a project could induce growth. This includes ways in which a project would foster economic or population

growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines states that an EIR should:

> *"Discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth… Increases in the population may tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects. Also discuss the characteristic of some projects which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment."*

Induced growth is any growth that exceeds planned growth and results from new development that would not have taken place without the implementation of a proposed project. Typically, the growth-inducing potential of a project would be considered significant if it results in growth or population concentration that exceeds those assumptions included in pertinent master plans, land use plans, or projections made by regional planning authorities. However, the creation of growth-inducing potential does not automatically lead to growth, whether it would be below or in exceedance of a projected level.

The environmental effects of induced growth are secondary or indirect impacts of a proposed project. Secondary effects of growth could result in significant, adverse environmental impacts, which could include increased demand on community or public services, increased traffic and noise, degradation of air and water quality, and conversion of agricultural land and open space to developed uses.

Enhancement of Buena Vista Lagoon and associated materials placement activities would not be considered growth inducing. The Enhancement Project alternatives would not include the construction of any residential uses or other uses that would result in an increase in the population of the project area. Construction and maintenance activities would require workers, although it is anticipated that most of these workers would come from the local workforce. While the Freshwater, Saltwater, and Hybrid Alternatives would enhance the existing ecological functions of the lagoon and continue to provide passive recreation opportunities, it is not anticipated that the proposed build alternatives would attract sufficient numbers of new visitors to induce expansion of existing tourist-related commercial uses. The Enhancement Project alternatives would not stimulate significant employment, involve development of new housing, or significantly affect the economy of the region. The materials placement component of the

Enhancement Project alternatives would result in a temporary increase in beach area and sand cover at the beach placement sites. This activity would have the beneficial effect of continuing or enhancing the recreational usage of the onshore placement sites. Nonetheless, localized recreational benefits would be temporary, as the material would be redistributed throughout the littoral system. Therefore, the Enhancement Project alternatives would not result in a direct significant growth-inducing impact in the project area. Further, as discussed in Section 3.14 Public Services and Utilities, neither construction nor long-term maintenance of the Freshwater, Saltwater, and Hybrid Alternatives would generate an increase in demand for public services and utilities. Therefore, the Enhancement Project alternatives would not indirectly result in a significant growth-inducing impact.

6.4 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

CEQA Guidelines Section 15065 requires that an EIR be prepared for projects that have the potential to:

- Substantially degrade the quality of the environment, threatening sensitive wildlife and/or plant species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods in California history or prehistory;
- Achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals;
- Result in cumulatively considerable environmental effects; or
- Cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

Notwithstanding the lead agency's decision to prepare an EIR, the following analysis describes how the Enhancement Project would result in a less than significant environmental effect per any of the mandatory findings listed above.

The lagoon contains sensitive vegetation communities and endangered Ridgway's rail habitat. Additionally, short-term impacts to birds may result from indirect noise impacts. A variety of project design features would be implemented during the construction phase to avoid or reduce impacts to sensitive species. However, as discussed in Section 3.5 Biological Resources, even with the inclusion of project design features, temporary impacts to sensitive vegetation communities and Ridgway's rail, as well as indirect noise impacts to birds would remain significant and unavoidable. Notwithstanding, no long-term, permanent significant impacts to sensitive species would occur.

As discussed in Section 3.7 Cultural Resources, the potential exists to encounter currently unknown cultural resources during implementation of the Enhancement Project alternatives. With implementation of Mitigation Measures Cultural-1 through Cultural-4, potential impacts to cultural resources would be reduced to a less than significant level and ensures that cultural resources data would be protected and preserved so that the critical information necessary to the future study of cultural resource sites and artifacts is not lost or destroyed.

As discussed in Sections 6.2 and 6.3, implementation of the Freshwater, Saltwater, or Hybrid Alternative would create a net gain in more biologically productive habitat than currently exists in the project area. Additionally, materials placement activities within the littoral zone in Oceanside and Carlsbad would result in increased protection of existing beaches, and allow for continued or enhanced recreational opportunities in these areas. Thus, the proposed enhancement and materials placement activities would achieve a long-term environmental benefit and many of the identified environmental impacts are short-term and would cease at the end of construction.

As discussed in the impact analysis contained within Chapter 3, mitigation measures and project design features would be implemented, which would reduce most of the Enhancement Project's potential effects to a less than significant level. Nonetheless, even after the implementation of project design features and mitigation measures, some impacts would remain significant and unavoidable, including temporary impacts to sensitive vegetation communities and Ridgway's rail, indirect noise impacts to birds, impacts to beach access across the open inlet created under the Saltwater and Hybrid Alternatives, loss of recreational freshwater fishing opportunities under the Saltwater and Hybrid Alternatives, temporary impacts related to bicycle and pedestrian access during construction of the Carlsbad Boulevard bridge under the Saltwater and Hybrid Alternatives, impacts related to construction emissions, and impacts resulting from nighttime construction noise.

The majority of these impacts, including cumulative impacts as described in Chapter 5, would be temporary, occurring only during construction activities, and would not result in long-term adverse effects on humans. A long-term impact is associated with creation of the open tidal inlet under the Saltwater and Hybrid Alternatives, which could create a safety risk for recreational users during certain tidal conditions of high water volume and velocities. No feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce this permanent effect under the Saltwater and Hybrid Alternatives. However, this risk is inherent among all similar lagoons in San Diego County that have an open tidal inlet. Thus, although the open inlet created under the Saltwater and Hybrid Alternatives would result in a new safety risk at this location, it would not pose a substantially unique risk that is not associated with other lagoons in the area with open tidal inlets and would only occur during periodic conditions. A second long-term impact is the loss of freshwater fishing opportunities that would occur with the introduction of saltwater conditions within the

lagoon under the Saltwater and Hybrid Alternatives. This is considered a significant impact as it is uncertain whether saltwater fish species targeted by recreational anglers would utilize the lagoon in sufficient numbers and size classes to provide viable recreational angling opportunities; however, the Enhancement Project incorporates a variety of features aimed at promoting the colonization of saltwater fish populations. While fishing opportunities in the lagoon may change or be less than current conditions, there would continue to be other fishing opportunities at inland waterbodies to provide freshwater fishing amenities. Therefore, the Enhancement Project alternatives would not result in a substantial, permanent adverse effect on humans.

6.5 CEQA APPENDIX F ENERGY EVALUATION

Public Resources Code Section 21100(b)(3) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4 require EIRs to describe, to the extent relevant and applicable, the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy caused by a project. Additionally, Appendix F to the CEQA Guidelines states that EIRs are required to include a discussion of the potential energy impacts of proposed projects, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy.

The Freshwater, Saltwater, and Hybrid Alternatives would result in the consumptive use of energy required to operate trucks, dredges, pumping equipment, grading equipment, and other construction equipment associated with the new Boardwalk (for all build alternatives) and replacement of the Carlsbad Boulevard bridge (for the Saltwater and Hybrid Alternatives only). Energy would be required for transportation, both of construction workforce and of materials to and from the site, as well as for construction operations. Energy sources such as gasoline and diesel oil would be used to power construction and maintenance equipment, and vehicles such as barges, trucks, and pumps. Electrical power would be used for lighting and, potentially, for dredge operations, depending on the type of equipment used.

The three build alternatives would require the use of energy for project implementation in a generally similar manner but would vary in degree. The Hybrid Alternative would require the highest level of energy consumption because it would involve the largest volume of dredged material and materials placement in addition to the construction of the Boardwalk, replacement of the Carlsbad Boulevard bridge, and construction of the new weir at the I-5 channel. The Saltwater Alternative would require similar energy consumption to that of the Hybrid Alternative although to a lesser degree as the Saltwater Alternative would involve a lower volume of material dredged and placed; it would also include construction of the Boardwalk and replacement of the Carlsbad Boulevard bridge. The Freshwater Alternative would require the

least amount of energy use for implementation as it would involve the lowest volume of material dredged and placed, and would only include construction of the Boardwalk.

Although no specific project design features are proposed to reduce energy impacts, the project alternatives have each been designed to minimize energy consumption whenever possible. The placement of dredged material on local beaches or in the littoral zone where the material can be pumped directly to its location, for example, minimizes the energy expenditure that would otherwise be required to haul the dredged material to a landfill or other disposal site. With the exception of periodic maintenance activities, once completed, the Enhancement Project alternatives would not generate additional daily vehicle trips, necessitate an increased demand for ongoing energy use, or require other energy-consuming activities.

The necessary energy consumption associated with the Enhancement Project would result in the positive benefits of enhancing the existing ecological and hydrological functions of the lagoon, increasing protection of existing beaches, and allowing for continued or enhanced recreational opportunities in these areas. Therefore, although the Enhancement Project alternatives would require the use of a variety of energy resources, the energy used for implementation of the Freshwater, Saltwater, or Hybrid Alternative would not be considered wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary, and the impact would be less than significant.

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