

## 6.0 ANALYSIS OF LONG-TERM EFFECTS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) discusses additional topics statutorily required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): significant and unavoidable environmental impacts and growth-inducing impacts.

### 6.1 Growth-Inducing Impacts

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.2[d], requires that an EIR evaluate a proposed action's potential to cause growth-inducing impacts. The growth-inducing impacts discussion should include direct and indirect ways the Project could foster economic or population growth, the construction of additional housing, or remove obstacles to population growth. CEQA Guidelines define a "growth-inducing impact" as follows:

*. . . the way in which a 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 . . . It is not assumed that growth in an area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.*

Direct growth-inducing impacts typically include the provision of public services, utilities, and roads to a previously undeveloped area. The introduction of infrastructure and services can result in growth inducing impacts by reducing development constraints for nearby areas, thereby inducing other landowners in the area to convert their properties to other uses. Direct growth inducing impacts can also result from growth in the surrounding population that taxes existing public services, or a particular development that increases the pace or density of surrounding developments.

CEQA Guidelines also specify that the environmental effects of induced growth are considered indirect impacts of the proposed action. The additional demand for housing, commodities and services that new development causes or attracts by increasing population in the area are examples of indirect growth-inducing impacts or secondary effects of growth.

If the growth is not consistent with or accommodated by local land use plans and growth management plans and policies for the area affected, then the growth inducement may constitute an adverse impact. Local land use plans provide for land use development patterns and growth policies that allow for the orderly expansion of urban development supported by adequate urban public services. A project that would conflict with the local land use plans (i.e., "disorderly" growth) could indirectly cause additional adverse environmental impacts and other public services impacts. To assess whether a growth-inducing project would result in adverse secondary effects, the growth accommodated by a project must be assessed to determine if it would or would not be consistent with applicable land use plans.

The proposed Project would involve the expansion of the Desert Valley Monofill (see Chapter 4.0, Project Description). This Project does not include the construction of any housing, no increase in permanent employment, nor otherwise result in direct growth inducement.

While the Project would require an amendment to Imperial County's General Plan Land Use Element to change the land use designation on the remainder of Section 33 from "Recreational/Open Space" to "Special Purpose Facility" and a Zone Change to change the zoning from S-2 (Open Space/Preservation) to M-2 (Medium Industrial), approval of a Conditional Use permit would enable the Project to be consistent with the General Plan.

With the exception of the installation of a new water well for onsite use only, the proposed Project would utilize existing infrastructure, such as roadways and IID's existing electrical distribution system, and would not support the development of adjacent properties by extending infrastructure to areas not previously served. Therefore, the proposed Project would have no indirect growth inducing effects.

## **6.2. Mandatory Findings Of Significance**

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15065, identify four mandatory findings of significance that have to be considered as part of the environmental review process. These findings are identified below with an analysis of the Project's relationship to these findings.

1. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, and 5.11 this Draft EIR, evaluate the Project's impacts on air quality, biological resources, cultural/tribal resources, geology and soil and hydrology/water quality, respectively. Mitigation measures in Section 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.7, and 5.11 are identified to reduce impacts to air quality, biological resources, cultural and paleontological resources, geology and soils, hydrology/water quality and tribal cultural resources. When the mitigation measures identified in these sections are implemented, impacts to the quality of the environment, habitat of fish and wildlife species, fish and wildlife species populations, plant and animal communities, the number and range of protected species, and cultural resources would be less than significant.

2. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals?

The Project would not result in the achievement of short-term environmental goals to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals. This Draft EIR includes analysis of the potential

short-term (construction phase) and long-term (operation and maintenance/post-closure phase) impacts that could occur as a result of implementation of the proposed Project. The analysis contained in Sections 5.1 through 5.12 is based on existing environmental setting conditions, policy and regulatory conditions, proposed Project's characteristics, and, where applicable, Project-specific technical studies detailing both long- and short-term potential impacts. The proposed Project would:

- be required to implement mitigation measures to reduce impacts to less than significant levels;
- be required to comply with all applicable regulatory requirements; and
- would require two (2) Conditional Use Permits (CUP) and other entitlements for approval.

Implementation of the proposed Project would not preclude the state from meeting its long-term environmental goals. Rather, since the monofill supports existing operations at geothermal plants in Imperial County, the proposed expansion would assist the state in meeting its long-term environmental goals for achieving greenhouse gas reductions in compliance with AB 32 by supporting the continued generation of renewable geothermal energy at the CalEnergy plants in Imperial County. Renewable energy generation supports California's renewable performance standard (RPS) goal of 33 percent renewable energy delivery by 2020, 60 percent by 2030 and 100 percent by 2040.

3. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future project.

Chapter 7 of this EIR evaluates the proposed Project's potential cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts related to each technical discussion area are evaluated. No cumulatively considerable impacts were identified.

4. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Potential human-related impacts are discussed and evaluated in Section 5.6, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, 5.10 Noise and 5.11 Transportation/Traffic. Each one of these sections identifies mitigation measures, where needed, to reduce significant impacts associated with these resource areas. Direct and indirect project impacts to human beings are anticipated to be less than significant upon implementation of the mitigation measures identified in these sections. The proposed Project would comply with all required regulatory/legal requirements and mitigation measures.

### **6.3. Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes**

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126(c), requires an EIR to discuss any irreversible changes to the environment possibly resulting from the implementation of the proposed Project. Irreversible commitments of several limited resources would result from the proposed Project. Such resources include, but are not limited to sand, gravel, petrochemicals construction materials, steel, copper, lead and other metals, and water consumption during construction and operation of the proposed Project.

During project operations, oil, gas, and other nonrenewable resources would be consumed. Therefore, an irreversible commitment of some nonrenewable resources would occur as a result of long-term project operations. However, the proposed Project would support the continued operation of renewable energy resources (geothermal energy) in the County. The Project facilitates the continued implementation of state goals and policies directed at moving away from reliance upon fossil fuels, and encouraging renewable energy. With implementation of mitigation measures identified in in Section 5.0 of this Draft EIR, no significant irreversible environmental changes would result.

### **6.4. Significant and Unavoidable Environmental Effects**

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.2(b), requires an EIR to address any unavoidable significant environmental effects, including those that can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Section 15093(a) of CEQA Guidelines allows the decision-making agency to determine if the benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts of implementing the project. A Statement of Overriding Considerations can be prepared by the County of Imperial to approve a project with unavoidable adverse impacts if it sets forth the specific reasons for making such a judgment.

The impact analysis, as detailed in Section 5.0 of this Draft EIR, concludes that no unavoidable significant impacts were identified. Where significant impacts have been identified, mitigation measures are proposed, that when implemented, would reduce the impact levels to less than significant. Thus, the proposed Project would not result in any significant and unavoidable adverse impacts.