

4.0 Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This chapter evaluates the potential project-related environmental impacts that would occur with construction and operation of the project. As the project would occur within the right-of-way (ROW) of Rockville Road, its construction and operation would avoid many potential environmental impacts that might otherwise occur if the project crossed undisturbed ground. As a result, this draft EIR focuses on potential impacts for two key environmental topics: biological resources and cultural resources. The remaining California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) topics are grouped into a single section and are discussed at a lesser level of detail.

Section 4.1 and **Section 4.2** of this chapter are devoted to two main environmental issue areas: biological resources and cultural resources, respectively. Each of these sections include a full discussion of the existing environmental conditions in the project area, the project's consistency with regulations, the impacts resulting from implementation of the project, and mitigation measures to reduce significant impacts of the project, to the extent feasible. **Section 4.3** of this chapter addresses the remaining environmental issue areas (i.e., air quality, noise, etc.) at a lesser level of detail.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing conditions describe the current physical setting of the project area. The draft EIR provides information on existing resources and, when appropriate, discusses the methodology that was used to determine these existing conditions.

REGULATORY SETTING

The regulatory setting section provides a description of the relevant regulations and guidelines that pertain to the issue area. The section may contain information from a variety of sources, such as from the Solano County General Plan or other local, regional, state, or federal agency guidelines or regulations.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The evaluation of impacts considers the significance criteria and the level of environmental impact, and makes a determination as to whether the project would result

in a “significant impact,” a “less-than-significant impact,” a “beneficial impact,” or “no impact.” Under the CEQA Public Resources Code §21068, a significant impact is defined as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment.

Each impact section of this chapter is prefaced by a summary of the significance criteria, which are used to determine whether a potentially significant or significant impact is likely to occur with development of the project. These criteria are based on Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines*.

- **Significant:** A “significant” designation is used under circumstances where the environmental impacts would meet or exceed one of the significance criteria. For example, for a sensitive biological species, project impacts would be significant if there was a potential to harm members of the species, or to reduce their habitat.
- **Less-Than-Significant:** “Less-than-significant” impacts are those project-related effects that would not reach a level of significance. For example, for a sensitive biological species, impacts would usually be considered less than significant if the project does not contain suitable habitat, or if construction and operation would not reduce the extent of the habitat.
- **No Impact:** A “no impact” determination is made if the project would not result in any measurable effect to the resource. For instance, if a project area is nearly flat, then the site is not likely subject to slope instability, and the project would not result in harm to people or structures as a result of landslides.

Potentially significant and significant impacts are numbered and shown in bold type. Mitigation measures are provided that would reduce the effects of these impacts to a less-than-significant level. Following the discussion of mitigation measures, there is an evaluation of the “Significance After Mitigation”.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

A discussion of cumulative impacts is included at the end of each environmental issue section. These discussions summarize the potential cumulative physical environmental consequences associated with the project. When a cumulative impact is identified, the analysis considers whether the cumulative impact would be significant, and in that context, whether the project’s contribution to that impact would be cumulatively considerable.

CEQA requires an evaluation of a project’s contribution to cumulative environmental impacts. According to Section 15355 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, cumulative impacts are defined as “two or more individual effects which, when taken together, are considerable, or which can compound or increase other environmental impacts.” As stated in the Guidelines, an individual project may not have significant impacts; however, in combination with other related projects, these cumulative effects may be considerable. When evaluating cumulative impacts, CEQA recommends one of two methods:

1. projects to consider in the cumulative analysis include any past, present, and probable future projects that have been identified by local and regional planning departments and agencies, including projects outside the control of the lead agency, or
2. the cumulative analysis would consider buildout of an adopted general plan or related planning document, or would use a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified that described or evaluated regional or area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.

Both of the recommended methods of cumulative analysis were used in this draft EIR. A cumulative list of related projects proposed in the areas surrounding the project was generated through discussions with planning staff in Solano County, the City of Fairfield, and the Solano Transportation Authority. The cumulative analysis also considered the full buildout of the Solano County General Plan, Suisun Valley Specific Plan, and the Middle Green Valley Specific Plan.

Related Projects Considered in the Cumulative Analysis

The cumulative projects list incorporates reasonably foreseeable, relevant projects and focuses on those that, when combined with the project, could contribute to cumulative impacts.

Transportation Projects

The following present and foreseeable development projects near the project area were included in the cumulative analysis:

- **Jameson Canyon Project** – the two-lane conventional highway State Route 12 (SR12) (Jameson Canyon Road) would be widened to a four-lane conventional highway, including improvements to the intersection of SR29 and SR12. This widening was analyzed in a mitigated negative declaration/environmental assessment that was certified by Caltrans in February 2008. The Jameson Canyon project is funded and is scheduled for construction starting in late 2010 or early 2011.
- **I80/I680/SR12 Interchange Project** – this project would construct additional capacity and new ramps connecting I-80, I-680, and SR 12 in the I-80/I-680/SR 12 interchange area. The Project Approval/Environmental Document (PA/ED) phase of the project is expected to be completed in early 2011. Design and construction of the interchange will be conducted in phases between 2011 and 2022.

Development Projects

The following present and foreseeable development projects near the project area were included in the cumulative analysis:

- **Rockville Trails Estates Residential Subdivision** – The 1,580-acre Rockville Trails Estates project site is located adjacent to the north of the project area, in the northeast region of the Green Valley Road/Rockville Road intersection. It includes 370 single-family residential lots, approximately 810 acres of recreation and open space opportunities, an on-site water supply facility, an on-site wastewater treatment plant, and an on-site fire station to serve the project and surrounding land uses. The final EIR for the Rockville Trails Estates project was adopted by the Solano County Planning Commission in September 2008. Since then, the principals of Rockville Trails Estates and the Green Valley Landowners Association continue to negotiate resolution of several issues related to the project. Local residents and members of the Sierra Club have filed suit against the County’s approval of the final EIR.
- **Tower Market #99 (Tower Mart) Project** – In 2007, Tower Energy proposed the redevelopment of a 6,000-square foot market and gas station on the southwest corner of the Rockville Road and Suisun Valley Road intersection. During the CEQA process, Native American burials were discovered beneath the project site. Since the burials could not be avoided, construction of the project included a comprehensive *Research Design and Data Recovery Plan* involving the removal of the existing burials and hand-excavation of other archeological artifacts. Construction of the new market and gas station was completed in 2009.
- **Woodcreek Residential Subdivision**– The 33-acre Woodcreek project is located on undeveloped land between Rockville Road, Oakwood Drive, and Suisun Valley Road. It includes 33 single-family residential lots. Domestic water would be provided to the proposed subdivision via the existing City of Vallejo water line system and Solano Irrigation District. The Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Woodcreek project was reviewed by the Solano County Planning Commission in February 2010, which recommended project approval to the Board of Supervisors. The Board is anticipated to make a formal decision on the project in March 2010.

Planned Development

Planned developments from the following documents were included in the cumulative analysis:

- **Solano County General Plan** - The Solano County General Plan (General Plan) is the guide for both land development and conservation in the unincorporated portions of the county. Planned land uses surrounding the majority of the project

area include rural residential development and the preservation of the Rockville Hills Park. No major water infrastructure improvements are identified in the General Plan.

The General Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on August 5, 2008 and came before the voters as Measure T on the November 4, 2008 ballot. Measure T was passed by the voters, confirming the approval of the new General Plan.

- **Suisun Valley Strategic Plan** – Suisun Valley is one of 10 agricultural regions in western Solano County identified in the General Plan. The Strategic Plan for this region provides guidance to the County and stakeholders on the actions appropriate to accomplish the agricultural vision for the area. Rockville Road provides access to Suisun Valley at the eastern terminus of the project. No new land uses are proposed in the vicinity of the project; however, the Strategic Plan does identify a future 30-inch water main (‘Fairfield Water Main’) approximately 1-mile south of the project site that would run east-west along the south side of Solano Community College. The public review draft of the Strategic Plan was published in October 2009, and is currently in its final planning stages.
- **Middle Green Valley Specific Plan** - Pursuant to the General Plan, the Middle Green Valley Specific Plan is being prepared for approximately 1,905 acres located along Green Valley Road. The northeastern expanse of the Specific Plan area is located adjacent to the west of Rockville Hills Park, approximately 100 feet south of the project area. Land uses proposed in the areas closest to the project include rural farmlands, agricultural preserves, open lands, and agricultural watershed. The proposed water supply infrastructure for the Specific Plan consists of a municipal connection to the City of Fairfield water systems and/or the establishment of onsite groundwater well systems to serve the development areas proposed to the southwest of Green Valley Road. The public review draft of the Specific Plan was published in December 2009, and is currently in its final planning stages.

References

California Department of Transportation (2008). *State Route 12 Jameson Canyon Road Widening & State Routes 29/12 Interchange Project, Final Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration and Environmental Assessment with Finding of no Significant Impact.*

Solano County (2010). *Suisun Valley Strategic Plan, Public Review Draft.*

Solano County (2009). *Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Middlefield Green Valley Specific Plan.*

Solano County (2008a). *Solano County General Plan.*

References Continued

Solano County (2008b). *Rockville Trails Estates Residential Subdivision, Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report.*

Solano County (2008c). *Tower Market #99 Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration.*