Addendum to the Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project EIS/EIR

Salton Sea Management Program Updated Phase I: 10-Year Plan Project

SCH # 2010061062

Salton Sea, Imperial and Riverside Counties, California

PREPARED FOR

California Natural Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, California 95814

PREPARED BY

Tetra Tech
301 E Vanderbilt Way, Suite 400
San Bernardino, California 92408

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition
ACEC	(BLM) Area of Critical Environmental Concern
APE	Area of Potential Effect
BLM	U.S. Bureau of Land Management
BMPs	best management practices
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CH4	methane
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CNRA	California Natural Resources Agency
CO	carbon monoxide
CO2e	carbon dioxide equivalent
Corps	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
CRAM	California Rapid Assessment Method
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CVCC	Coachella Valley Conservation Commission
CVMSHCP	Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DFG	California Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly Department of Fish and Game)
DDE	dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
DWR	(California) Department of Water Resources
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS/EIR	Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
FUDS	Formerly Used Defense Sites
GHG	greenhouse gas
gpm	gallons per minute
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICAPCD	Imperial County Air Pollution Control District

Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition
IID	Imperial Irrigation District
IPaC	Information for Planning and Consultation
KGRA	Known Geothermal Resource Area
Leq	equivalent sound level
LIDAR	Light Detection and Ranging
LOP	Letters of Permission
LOS	Level of Service
LRP	Long Range Plan
LVSP	Lithium Valley Specific Plan
MEC	munitions and explosives of concern
MM	mitigation measure
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOx	nitrogen oxides
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O_3	ozone
O&M	operations and maintenance
PEIR	Programmatic Environmental Impact Report
PFYC	Potential Fossil Yield Classification
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or smaller
PM_{10}	particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or smaller
ppm	parts per million
PRMMP	Paleontological Resources Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
PVC	polyvinyl chloride
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCH	Species Conservation Habitat
SERP	(CEQA) Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects
SOx	sulfur oxides
SSA	Salton Sea Authority
SSMP	Salton Sea Management Program
SSP	Salton Sea Program
SSTB	Salton Sea Test Base
SVP	Society for Vertebrate Paleontology
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
UXO	unexploded ordnance
WDR	Waste Discharge Requirement
WRO	Water Rights Order

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This environmental document is an Addendum, prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), to the Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat (SCH) Project Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR), certified in August 2013 (Approved Project) (California Natural Resources Agency 2013). An Addendum was prepared for the Approved Project EIS/EIR in September 2017, which expanded the scope of the SCH EIS/EIR to analyze the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) *Salton Sea Management Program Phase I: 10-Year Plan* (10-Year Plan or SSMP) (CNRA 2017). The analysis included additional locations and increased acreage for ponds and associated infrastructure along with additional dust suppression measures located on exposed lakebed. The purpose of the SSMP is to implement habitat projects and dust suppression projects around the perimeter of the Salton Sea to reduce the effects of the receding Sea in areas of lakebed that have been, or will be, exposed at the Sea by 2028. The 10-Year Plan was developed in response to Water Rights Order (WRO) 2017-0134 issued by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) which set annual restoration acreage targets for the state and a framework for Salton Sea restoration efforts. The order requires the State of California, through the CNRA, to restore approximately 29,800 acres of exposed lakebed of the Salton Sea through habitat and dust suppression projects by December 31, 2028, with at least half of the acreage (14,900 acres) required to be for habitat projects including ponds and wetland enhancement projects that benefit fish and wildlife that depend on the Salton Sea ecosystem. The remaining 14,900 acres would be for dust suppression projects that may also have habitat benefits in exposed lakebed areas. The restoration acreage targets in WRO 2017-0134 were included in the SSMP 10-Year Plan.

In 2021, the SSMP 10-Year Plan (CNRA 2021) was updated to include additional areas around the Sea and was subject to review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in the *Final Environmental Assessment for Salton Sea Management Program Phase 1: 10-Year Plan Imperial and Riverside Counties, California* (10-Year Plan EA) (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and CNRA 2024). Figure 1 shows the Updated 10-Year Plan boundary, which is the subject of this Addendum, and which is consistent with the area analyzed in the 10-Year Plan EA.

Some projects that have been constructed, or which are under construction, have been subject to review under CEQA through Addendums to the SCH EIS/EIR (CNRA 2017, 2021, 2022, and 2024):

- *CEQA Addendum/Findings Analysis for the Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project EIS/EIR*, 2017 (prepared for the 2017 SSMP Phase I: 10-Year Plan)
- *CEQA Addendum/Findings Analysis for the Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project EIS/EIR, Salton Sea Management Plan/ U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Vegetation Enhancement Project, Clubhouse, Tule Wash, and Bombay Beach Sites*, 2020
- *CEQA Addendum/Findings Analysis for the Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project EIS/EIR, North Lake Pilot Demonstration Project, 2022*
- *CEQA Addendum/Findings Analysis for the Salton Sea Species Conservation Habitat Project EIS/EIR, Salton Sea Management Plan, Vegetation Enhancement Project, Imperial Irrigation District Parcels at Clubhouse and Tule Wash Sites: Clubhouse D, Clubhouse E, and Tule Wash Parcel G*, 2024

In addition, CNRA obtained CEQA coverage for one project, the Bombay Beach Wetland Enhancement Project, through a CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) (California Department of Fish and Wildlife [CDFW] 2022).

Figure 2 shows the 10-Year Plan boundary, the entirety of which has been subject to review under NEPA, and it shows the areas within the 10-Year Plan boundary that have already been subject to CEQA review from at least one of the CEQA Addendums and the SERP. CNRA is seeking to provide CEQA coverage for the remaining areas around the Sea that are within the Updated 10-Year Plan area. The addition of specific habitat projects (including aquatic resource creation/ enhancement and wetland enhancement) and vegetation projects (including vegetation enhancement, dust suppression, and limited wetland enhancement) areas would not have any

significant environmental impacts beyond those already addressed in the Approved Project EIS/EIR (hereafter referred to as EIS/EIR) or the 2017 CEQA Addendum or cause a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects. These activities are consistent with the SCH Project. Even though these projects are proposed on lands owned by multiple property owners, including federal landowners, they are subject to CEQA review because the project proponent is CNRA, a state agency.

Under the CEQA Guidelines Section 15164, an addendum to a previously certified EIR is prepared if some changes in the adopted project are proposed and none of the conditions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 would occur.

As discussed in Section 1.3 of the EIS/EIR (CEQA Project Goals and Objectives/NEPA Purpose and Need), the SCH Project's goals are two-fold: (1) develop a range of aquatic habitats that will support fish and wildlife species dependent on the Salton Sea; and (2) develop and refine information needed to successfully manage the Approved Project habitat through an adaptive management process. The SCH Project is located at the south end of the Sea and encompasses dry lakebed that has been and will be converted into aquatic habitat to support bird and fish populations at the Sea, and control dust emission from the exposed lakebed.

The updated SSMP 10-Year Plan's stated goals are three-fold: (1) develop a range of aquatic habitats that will support fish and wildlife species dependent on the Salton Sea; (2) develop a range of dust suppression projects to address air quality concerns at the Salton Sea; and (3) develop and refine information needed to successfully manage the Approved Project habitat through an adaptive management process. Aquatic habitat creation and restoration, as well as vegetation enhancement and dust suppression activities, that comprise the updated SSMP 10-Year Plan, are consistent with the goals of the SCH EIS/EIR.

Figure 1. Project Location Overview



Figure 2. CEQA and NEPA Coverage for 10-Year Plan Area



2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section describes the proposed modifications to the SCH Project addressed in this Addendum (Modified Project). As with the SCH Project, the Modified Project would be in areas that are included in the Updated 10-Year Plan (CNRA 2021), which describes developing and implementing 29,800 acres of habitat restoration and dust suppression projects on lakebed areas that have been, or will be, exposed at the Salton Sea by about the year 2028. At least 14,900 acres of projects permitted under the SSMP 10-Year Plan would be aquatic habitat restoration projects that convert exposed lakebed areas either to pond habitat suitable for fish and wildlife, or to wetland habitats. While all the aquatic habitat projects would suppress dust, their primary function would be to provide habitat for fish and wildlife. Dust suppression projects may also have habitat benefits by establishing vegetation or creating freshwater wetlands on exposed areas, but they would be designed primarily to suppress fugitive dust emissions for improved air quality. Likewise, the SSMP 10-Year Plan provides for multiple benefit projects that combine dust suppression with habitat restoration to the extent practicable.

In this document, the two categories of projects will be referred to as habitat projects and dust suppression projects. Habitat projects include aquatic resource creation/ enhancement and wetland enhancement). Dust suppression projects include vegetation enhancement, dust suppression, and limited wetland enhancement. These habitat and dust suppression projects are in accordance with WRO 2017-0134 at various locations on exposed playa (lakebed) around the perimeter of the Salton Sea. These activities are consistent with the SCH Project. This section identifies potential project locations and describes proposed project activities that are evaluated in this Addendum.

2.1 PROPOSED PROJECT (MODIFIED PROJECT)

The Salton Sea, located in southern Riverside and northern Imperial counties in Southern California, is California's largest lake. The planning area for the proposed Modified Project is 68,241 acres, covering the area between the 2003 water surface elevation (-228 feet mean sea level [NAVD 1988]) and the projected 2028 water surface elevation (-247.5 mean sea level [NAVD 1988]) (Figure 1). CNRA is in the process of implementing 29,800 acres of habitat and dust suppression projects within the planning area which would meet the goals and objectives of the SSMP 10-Year Plan and to meet the restoration requirements of the WRO. As described in Section 1.0, some project areas within the 10-Year Plan boundary totaling approximately 34,129 acres have already been subject to CEQA review (Figure 2). This Addendum analyzes projects that could occur in the remaining planning area acreage of 34,112 acres. There is some overlap between areas covered in the two CEQA documents as the types and locations of projects envisioned when the SCH EIS/EIR was prepared have evolved. This document ensures that CEQA coverage is complete for the entire 68,241-acre planning area.

Within the planning area, CNRA identified 33,663 acres as current and future potential project areas, as shown in Figures 3 and 4 and categorized as:

- Projects in Planning/Construction (23,093 acres), shown in yellow
- Future Planned Projects (10,570 acres), shown in blue
- Unnamed Project Areas (36,065 acres), shown in purple

CNRA has also categorized those same potential project areas by potential types of projects in Figures 5 and 6:

- Habitat Projects (19,870 acres) broadly defined as the creation of aquatic resource habitat or enhancement of existing wetlands, shown in orange
- Dust Suppression Projects (13,794 acres) defined as dust suppression and vegetation enhancement projects, shown in green
- Unnamed Project Areas (36,065 acres), shown in purple

However, all projects may include features of both habitat and dust suppression projects, depending on particular site conditions. Associated project infrastructure, such as access areas, staging areas, and/or visitor facilities could be located outside the exposed lakebed areas shown in Figure 1. No projects are currently proposed within the remaining planning area (36,065 acres) identified as “Unnamed Project Area” in Figures 3 through 6.

The Salton Sea Known Geothermal Resource Area (KGRA) shown in Figures 3 through 6 is an area designated by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) as an area with potential for development of geothermal energy sources. There are currently 10 geothermal plants operating in the Salton Sea KGRA, most of which started production before 2000. More recently, the area is being studied for lithium extraction from the brine found in the same areas as the geothermal projects. Any SSMP projects proposed within the KGRA would be designed so as not to block geothermal development/access to known geothermal resources when feasible and would include coordination with Imperial County prior to implementation.

The amounts, types, and locations of habitat and vegetation projects would be based on the location and availability of a water supply, suitable soils, and landscape/habitat compatibility. To the extent feasible, naturally forming wetlands along the exposed lakebed at the outlets of drains and other drainages will be avoided, preserved, or enhanced. Construction of habitat projects would begin in areas of exposed lakebed near water sources and would move downslope as the Sea recedes and more lakebed becomes exposed over time. Construction of habitat and dust suppression projects in areas that eventually become exposed lakebed, but are currently under water, would begin when portions of those areas are dry enough to allow equipment access. In some locations, habitat conversion could occur from wetlands to open ponded habitat but the total amount of aquatic habitat around the Salton Sea will increase as a result of implementing the SSMP. The SSMP strives to provide multi-benefit projects that combine dust suppression with habitat enhancement.

The purpose of the Modified Project is to create projects that provide wildlife habitat and suppress dust. Some public use activities would be prioritized to the extent they are compatible with the purpose and need of the Modified Project and with the management of the dust suppression areas and aquatic habitat ponds. Such activities, if determined to be compatible, may include picnicking, hiking, bird-watching, non-powered watercraft use, and hunting.

In addition to project implementation, operations and maintenance (O&M) activities are required to maintain the integrity and functionality of the Modified Project throughout the life of the Project.

2.2 MODIFIED PROJECT FEATURES AND ACTIVITIES

Some of the Modified Project features and activities apply to both habitat and dust suppression projects, and others apply only to habitat projects. Multiple projects will be implemented over time and facility siting for each project will be determined in consideration of environmental, physical, and other constraints. As discussed in Section 2.1, all projects may include features of both habitat and dust suppression projects, depending on particular site conditions.

Table 1 provides a list of potential project features and activities that may occur under habitat projects, including aquatic resource creation/ enhancement and wetland enhancement projects. Table 2 provides a list of potential project features and activities that may occur under dust suppression projects, including vegetation enhancement, dust suppression, and limited wetland enhancement projects.

Table 1. Typical Project Features and Activities for Habitat Projects

Habitat Project Features and Activities

• Habitat restoration and water quality improvement projects within the SSMP 10-Year Plan (Projects).
• Construction, enhancement, or removal of berms, including permanent berms for water diversion, temporary diversion during construction, earthen berms, installation of hard substrate or other material on berms, such as riprap, geotextile, and/or fill materials.
• Creation of pond habitat at different water depths and timing of inundation, including mudflats and shallow water, mid-depth habitat, deep-water habitat, swales or channels, and bottom hard substrate.
• Installation of features to support bird nesting, resting, and foraging habitat, including floating islands, islands, snags or other vertical structures, areas of seasonal flooding.
• Creation of permanent vegetated wetlands, seasonally flooded habitats, terraced wetlands, and brine pools.
• Removal or installation of water conveyance and supply systems to provide water supply to the Projects, including:
  ○ Sedimentation/mixing basins, weirs and other structures in waterways to divert water,
  ○ Placement of check dams,
  ○ Water storage tanks,
  ○ Installation, sampling and gaging monitoring and supply wells,
  ○ Drilling new groundwater wells,
  ○ Solar pump stations and well pumps installation,
  ○ Inflow and outflow structures,
  ○ Dredge channels to pump stations or project infrastructure.
• Removal or installation of water dispersal and retention structures, including:
  ○ Shallow earthen swales,
  ○ Bunds and micro-catchments,
  ○ Check dams, weirs, and concrete pipe culverts,
  ○ Retention basins,
  ○ Storage basins,
  ○ Irrigation network and furrows,
  ○ Pumps and other water control infrastructure,
  ○ Prefabricated concrete box/arch culvert (or bridge footing/abutment, etc.).
• Installation of public amenities, passive recreation trails, ancillary public facilities within Project nexus, including hiking trails, picnic areas, parking, launch features for non-motorized boats, kayaks, paddle boards, passive recreation access compatible with an authorized aquatic resource habitat restoration or dust suppression project.
• Temporary construction, access roads (to the site as well as internal to each site), parking, temporary office space, and dewatering involving temporary structures, work, and discharges, including cofferdams, necessary for construction activities, staging, or access fills or dewatering of construction sites, provided that the associated primary activity is an authorized project.
  ○ Upon completion of construction, temporary fill must be entirely removed to an area that has no waters of the United States, dredged material must be returned to its original location, and the affected areas must be restored to pre-construction elevations.
• Linear crossings to construct, repair, or maintain roads for permanent access to aquatic restoration or dust suppression project sites.
• Crossings of those waters associated with the construction, maintenance, or repair of electrical and communication utility lines and poles. Oil and gas utilities and pipelines are excluded.

Habitat Project Features and Activities

- Maintenance and repair of existing or constructed SSMP-related features, including:
  - Construction feature repairs,
  - Sediment removal (excavation or dredging, retrenching, periodic drainage),
  - Facilities maintenance, including road, well, and irrigation repair,
  - Address potential for biological fouling at pipes and pumps in maintenance plans,
  - Invasive vegetation monitoring and control,
  - Repair of stormwater and erosion damage.
- Pre-construction survey and investigations activities:
  - Monitoring and investigation/data collection activities:
    - Geotechnical soil sampling and data collection,
    - Surface water sampling,
    - Sediment sampling,
    - Biological sampling,
    - Biological surveys,
    - Drilling and operating monitoring and production wells,
    - Stream gage or weir installation.
  - Road improvements, if necessary to perform monitoring or data collection activities.
- Compensatory mitigation.
- Only non-toxic and nonhazardous materials would be placed into the aquatic environment including:
  - Clean earthen fill material (backfill), including dredged or excavated source material,
  - Portland cement concrete or asphalt concrete,
  - Aggregate base material,
  - Ungrouted rock riprap slope protection (inert),
  - Galvanized corrugated metal pipe(s),
  - Rock-filled basket gabion(s),
  - Filter fabric,
  - Geotextile,
  - Prefabricated concrete box/arch culvert (or bridge footing/abutment, etc.).

Table 2. Typical Project Features and Activities for Dust Suppression Projects

- Water-reliant and waterless dust suppression techniques
- Establishment of (noninvasive) vegetation
- Removal of invasive vegetation
- Construction of shallow-water habitat
- Construction of freshwater wetlands
- Shallow flooding
- Stormwater spreading
- Temporary surface roughening
- Dust suppressant application
- Sand fencing
- Engineered roughening
- Gravel or other cover
- Enhancing soil crusts
- Irrigation lines
- Groundwater wells

The same features and activities listed in the Habitat Projects can also apply to Dust Suppression Projects.

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Figure 3. Current and Future Projects (North)

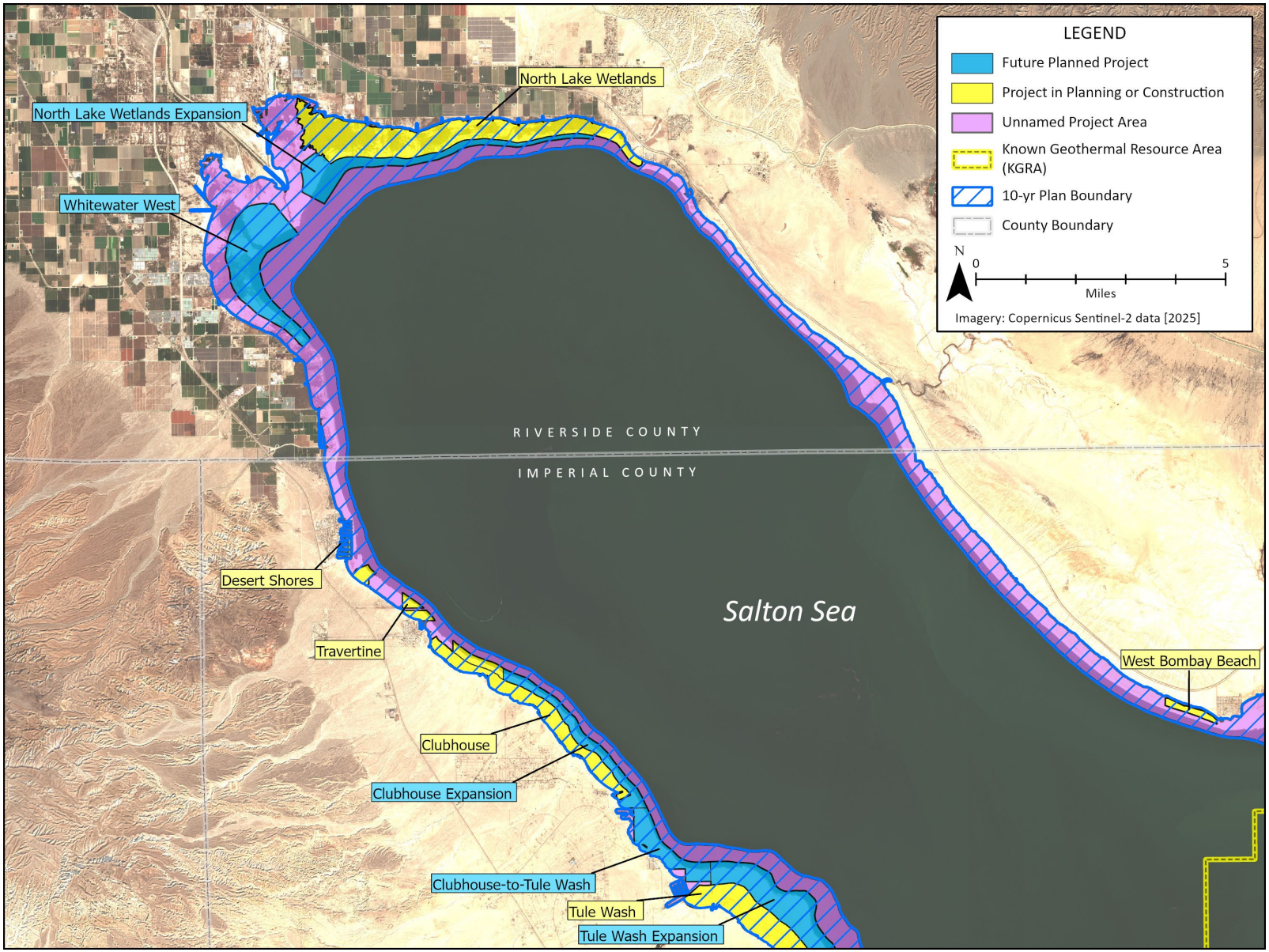


Figure 4. Current and Future Projects (South)

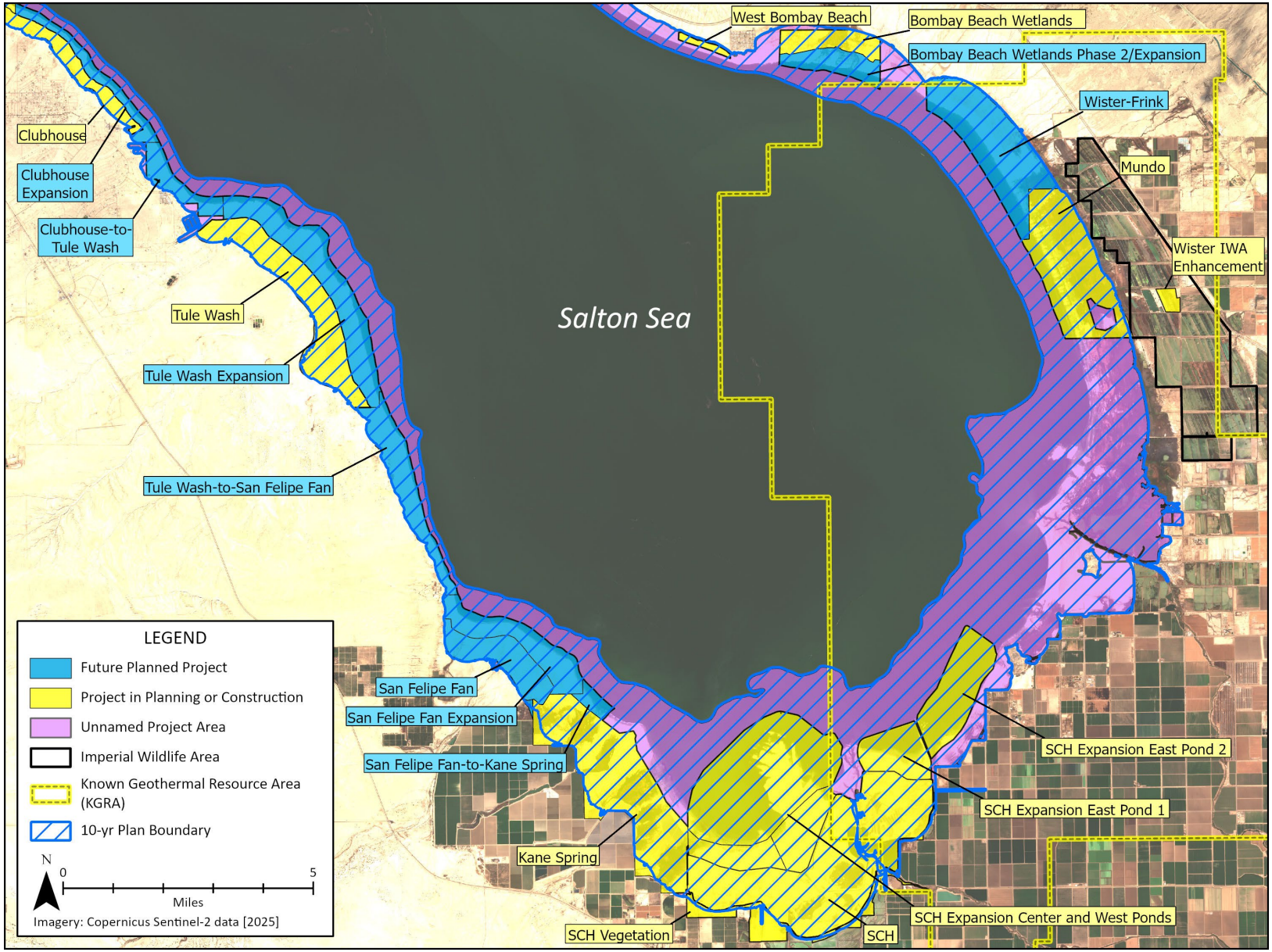


Figure 5. Project Types (North)

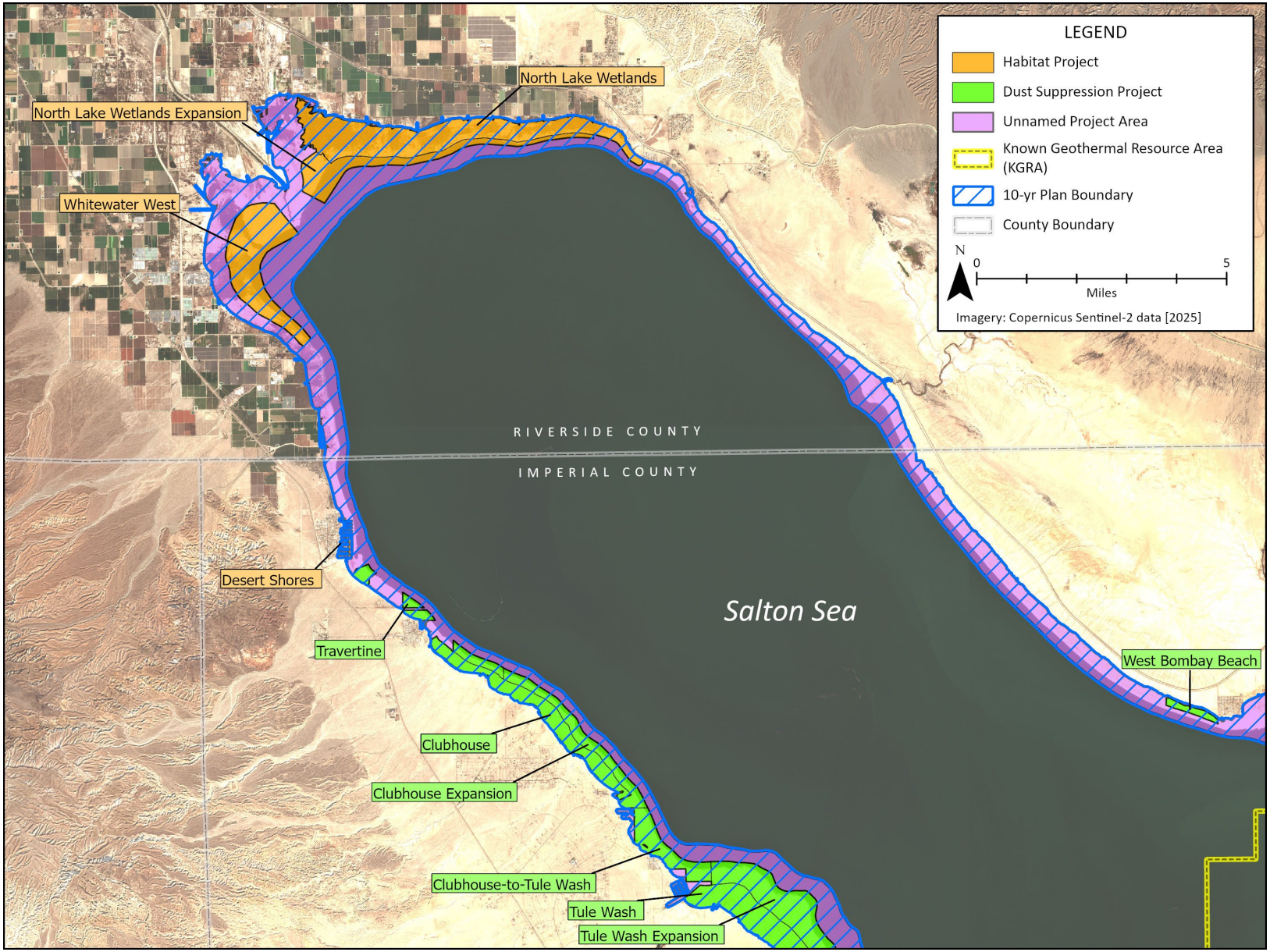
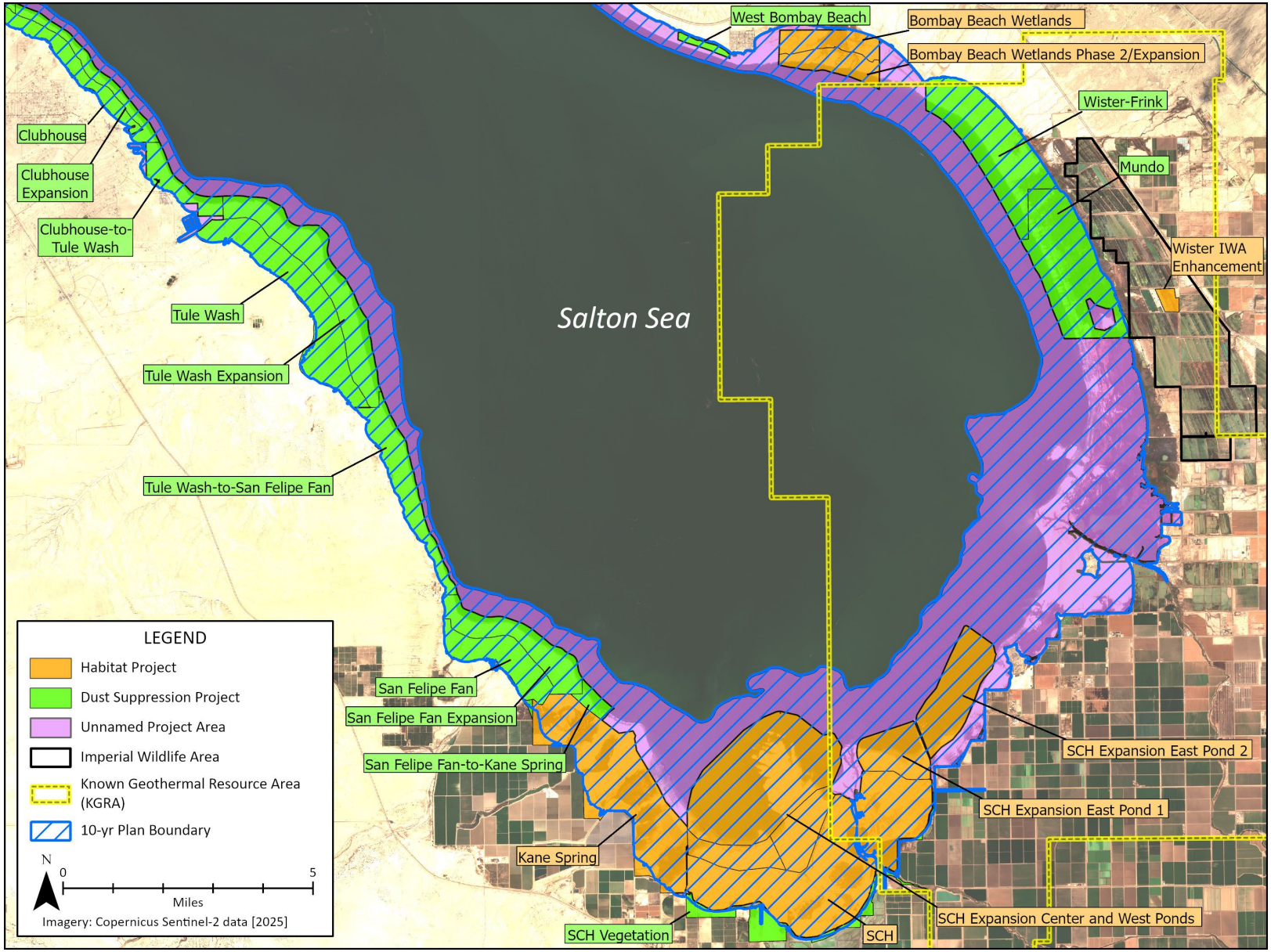


Figure 6. Project Types (South)



2.3 CONSTRUCTION

Habitat and dust suppression projects would be constructed on exposed lakebed. Aquatic habitat projects would require construction of berms to hold back water, habitat islands for birds, and associated water management (supply and control) features. Wetland creation and enhancement projects would entail constructing features to retain and spread natural surface water flows. Dust suppression projects may include surface roughening, engineered roughening, or enhancing soil crusts. Vegetation enhancement projects (part of the dust suppression category) include enhancing existing vegetation and establishing new vegetation through active planting and initial watering through placement of buried irrigation lines, as well as removing invasive vegetation.

Temporary construction facilities including a trailer, staging areas, and parking would be required for each project. Facilities would require electricity, but other needs such as sewerage and drinking water would be supplied by temporary and self-contained systems (e.g., portable toilets and bottled water). Installation of groundwater wells to provide a reliable source of water for vegetation projects would require a secure area to accommodate a drill rig and associated equipment, an area to safely discharge drilling mud and water associated with well completion, and piping and associated infrastructure to connect the well to irrigation systems. All construction materials used would be free from pollutants in toxic amounts. The use and maintenance of access roads outside the project area boundaries may be required to facilitate construction and O&M of the projects. Access roads inside project areas would also be needed for construction and O&M.

Best management practices (BMPs) would be used to minimize effects on the environment during construction, operations, and maintenance. All applicable permits from federal, State, and local agencies would be applied for and any conditions associated with the permits would be implemented. BMPs for all parts of project construction and O&M would be designed to meet regulatory standards.

2.4 OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Several permanent employees would be required to manage and maintain the habitat and dust suppression projects. The final operation of projects would be determined on a project-by-project basis, incorporating adaptive management and lessons learned from continuing operations of projects. The differing operational needs of habitat and dust suppression projects are described below.

2.4.1 Habitat Projects

Aquatic Pond Projects

The main water parameters in aquatic restoration projects that are subject to change include salinity, residence time, and depth. They can be controlled by changing the amount and salinity of water delivered in varying ratios to the project ponds, the flow-through outflow to the Sea from individual ponds, and the total storage in the ponds.

The biotic community (e.g., algae, invertebrates, fish, and birds) would respond in varying ways to these operations and other environmental conditions. These operations, ecological responses to the operations, and other key indicators or events at the ponds (e.g., water temperature, salinity, bird feeding or reproduction success, fish populations) would be monitored. Any necessary adjustments to operations would be made through a monitoring and adaptive management program similar to the plan that California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has developed for the SCH Project.

Wetland Enhancement Projects

For wetland enhancement projects, a five-year maintenance period would follow project installation, with the intensity of maintenance over this period expected to lessen each year as invasive species are removed and

controlled and native plants become established. The maintenance contractor would work with a restoration ecologist to determine appropriate measures and the priority of maintenance activities during different periods of the project. The primary maintenance obligations include invasive plant management; trash removal; fencing, signage, and access road inspections and repair; reseeding; seed collection; sediment maintenance; and sensitive species avoidance.

2.4.2 Dust Suppression Projects

Routine operations of these projects are mostly passive, except for areas that require pumped groundwater to establish or maintain vegetation. Access roads would need to be maintained, and irrigation systems in these areas would need routine maintenance until vegetation is established and active irrigation is no longer required. An important component of the operations for these projects is the need for air emissions monitoring to ensure that the projects are meeting their designed emissivity reduction targets. Although day-to-day operations are not needed for these projects, they require maintenance on a quarterly to an annual cycle to ensure performance. Additional planting, seeding, irrigation and monitoring of plant growth may be needed depending on how well the native plants are getting established and if any storm or other unforeseen events damage the irrigation system or take out dust suppression features such as straw bales, furrows, or other surface roughening.

2.5 MONITORING AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

An adaptive management plan would be developed and implemented to guide evaluation using specific benchmarks and metrics, improve the management of newly created habitat and areas where dust suppression is ongoing, and inform future habitat restoration and dust suppression activities. New information including the adaptability of wildlife species or climate change effects on the project would be used along with information from prior projects to inform future project design to adaptively manage habitat and dust suppression projects to maximize benefits. The adaptive management plan would provide a flexible decision-making framework for ongoing knowledge acquisition, monitoring, and evaluation to continuously improve management planning and project implementation to achieve specified objectives and to schedule maintenance and trigger emergency repairs. The information obtained would be used to measure project effectiveness, refine management of project areas, reduce uncertainties about key issues, and implement subsequent project stages at the Salton Sea.

Different monitoring and adaptive management needs are associated with the different project types, with an overview for each provided below.

2.5.1 Habitat Projects

Aquatic Pond Projects

Each aquatic habitat pond or set of ponds would be operated and monitored to evaluate project effectiveness and address key uncertainties about habitat function. A monitoring program would be implemented to collect data necessary to operate the ponds (e.g., flow and salinity), evaluate their effectiveness (e.g., water quality parameters such as dissolved oxygen and temperature, presence and abundance of fish and bird species), and assess status of threats (e.g., selenium concentration in water, sediment, and bird eggs). The frequency of data collection and evaluation would be guided by the purpose and need for monitoring. For example, operational triggers such as water supply flow rates would be monitored daily, while status of target resources would be monitored seasonally or annually. An overall data review would be conducted annually to evaluate project status and performance. A decision-making framework would be established to provide recommendations to project managers for maintaining or adjusting operations.

Wetland Enhancement Projects

For wetland enhancement projects, post-construction performance monitoring would be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the project's activities and track progress toward project objectives, to trigger maintenance or adaptive management if progress is not on track or threats are detected, and to inform future planning and design.

Project performance may be evaluated based on both the degree to which the site achieves conditions similar to the baseline data and the observed trend and rate of ecological improvement, such as increasing native vegetation cover or decreasing invasive plants, indicating progress toward the desired habitat outcome.

Performance criteria are specific, quantifiable metrics that assess progress toward project objectives or detect conditions that trigger maintenance or adaptive management. Methods to monitor performance criteria may include qualitative methods such as general site inspections and invasive plant surveys, and quantitative methods such as photo documentation, vegetation mapping, wetland delineation, and California Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM) analyses.

Reporting could include maintenance monitoring reports and annual reports by a restoration ecologist, with progress towards restoration goals evaluated using performance criteria and results of monitoring activities.

2.5.2 Dust Suppression Projects

In addition to monitoring vegetation projects to ensure that establishment of vegetation is occurring as planned and that engineered surface roughening features (straw bales, furrows, etc.) remain in place, monitoring is required to evaluate performance effectiveness of these projects to meet air quality regulations. In most areas, strong winds capable of generating saltation activity and fugitive dust suspension in the air may occur from a predominant direction, and mass transport occurs along that direction. To determine the magnitude of the mass transport and effectiveness of control areas, the saltation activity and dust concentration upwind and downwind of the project areas must be measured. For this monitoring, required measurements would include: (1) saltation activity (frequency and magnitude), (2) ambient concentrations of airborne particulate matter ≤10 micrometers (PM_{10}), and (3) meteorology (i.e., wind speed, wind direction, relative humidity, temperature, barometric pressure, precipitation, and soil moisture). A 360-degree camera could also be used to collect a time series of high-resolution panoramic photos to aid in dust source area identification. Light Detection and Ranging (also known as LIDAR) from an airborne platform could be carried out on a regular basis to inform adaptive management planning and project effectiveness over time as well as provide data on elevational change in the control areas. In addition, for projects that contain ponded water, measurements would be made for concentrations of potential toxic substances such as selenium in water, sediment, and bird eggs.

2.6 LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT

For all projects, DWR, under the umbrella of CNRA, would assume responsibility for long-term site management following successful completion of performance monitoring periods. Periodic inspections would inform routine operations and maintenance and any needed adaptive management actions to ensure continued ecological functioning and dust suppression success.

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3.0 FINDINGS

This section describes the environmental impacts of the proposed Modified Project (developing and implementing aquatic habitat restoration projects and dust suppression projects at various locations on exposed playa (lakebed) around the perimeter of the Salton Sea) in the context of the Approved Project EIS/EIR, the SSMP 10-Year Plan which was addressed in a 2017 CEQA Addendum to the EIS/EIR, and the updated SSMP 10-Year Plan as described in Section 2.0. The order of discussion follows the environmental analysis categories that were analyzed in the EIS/EIR. The impact numbers and impact names in the following sections (e.g., Impact AES-1) refer to those in the EIS/EIR. The **bold text** identifies the impact from the EIS/EIR, followed by the analysis for the Modified Project (not bold). The impacts have been separated into two categories for each issue area: "Applicable Impacts" and "Not Applicable Impacts" to clarify which impacts from the EIS/EIR are relevant to the Modified Project. An explanation of each impact from the EIS/EIR is provided to support the determination of whether or not the impact is applicable to the Modified Project.

No new significant impacts would occur as a result of the Modified Project, nor would the severity of previously identified significant effects increase substantially so that the impact conclusion in the EIS/EIR would change. The Modified Project consists of aquatic habitat restoration projects and dust suppression projects at various locations on exposed playa around the Sea. These activities are consistent with those analyzed in the SCH EIS/EIR and in the 2017 Addendum that included the original SSMP 10-Year Plan. The Modified Project is in areas that are included in the updated SSMP 10-Year Plan.

Each impact discussion includes applicable mitigation measures (MMs) from the EIS/EIR to avoid or minimize potential environmental impacts. These are identified as "Existing Mitigation Measures" or "Existing Modified Mitigation Measures." New mitigation measures were added for biological resources (Section 3.4) and hazards and hazardous materials (Section 3.9). These are identified as "New Mitigation Measures." Each section discussion also notes if specific MMs from the EIS/EIR do not apply to the Modified Project.

3.1 AESTHETICS

Applicable Impacts

Impact AES-1: Project construction could temporarily degrade the scenic quality, character, or scenic vistas of the site and surrounding areas. The Modified Project would not result in any new impacts to aesthetic resources. Implementation of the Modified Project requires similar construction activities and equipment within the Approved Project site already analyzed in the EIS/EIR. Construction activities for proposed habitat and dust suppression projects would temporarily degrade the scenic quality and character of the locations and surrounding areas of these activities. As described in the EIS/EIR, construction impacts on scenic vistas would be temporary and less than significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact AES-2: The SCH ponds would enhance the scenic quality and character of the site and surrounding areas. Impact AES-2 would be applicable to habitat projects because new ponds or enhanced wetlands would attract birds and improve the overall visual qualities of the surrounding area, which would have a beneficial impact. Impact AES-2 would not be applicable to dust suppression projects because they would not substantially change the visual character of project areas. Upon completion of construction activities, fugitive dust emissions in the immediate areas of the Modified Project site would be reduced and visibility improved. As such, the scenic quality and character of the project sites and surrounding areas would be improved. As described in the EIS/EIR, the Modified Project would improve the overall scenic quality of the site, resulting in a beneficial impact. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact AES-3: Other SCH facilities would be compatible with the existing character of the surrounding area. Facilities required to operate the habitat projects would be small in scale and indistinguishable from facilities in the surrounding agricultural areas. Dust suppression projects would not require any new facilities that

conflict with the visual character of the surrounding areas. For all types of projects, there may be installation of public amenities including passive recreation trails, picnic areas, and passive recreation access. These amenities are compatible with existing aquatic resource habitat restoration or dust suppression/ vegetation enhancement projects. The Modified Project would be compatible with the existing character of the surrounding undeveloped areas around the Sea, and impacts would be less than significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Inapplicable Impact

Impact AES-4: Some construction activities may occur at night, requiring lighting. Construction required to implement the Modified Project would only occur during daytime hours. No nighttime construction lighting would be needed. Therefore, no impacts associated with night lighting would occur. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts to Aesthetic Resources compared to the Approved Project. No mitigation is required and all Aesthetic Resources impact conclusions from the EIS/EIR remain unchanged.

3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Applicable Impacts

Impact AG-1: Construction of the diversion and conveyance facilities and brackish water pipeline maintenance would temporarily disrupt agricultural production but would not permanently convert Farmland to nonagricultural use. The Modified Project does not include construction of diversion and conveyance facilities or maintenance of a brackish pipeline that would convert existing farmland to non-agricultural uses. Any water supply lines for ponds or vegetation enhancement projects would not cross land in active agricultural production. Approximately 169 acres of the habitat project areas in the Modified Project are located on Prime Farmland or Farmland of Local Importance. In Riverside County, this includes approximately 153 acres of Farmland of Local Importance at the northern end of the Salton Sea, and no Prime Farmland. In Imperial County, this includes approximately 13 acres of Farmland of Local Importance (east of Bombay Beach Wetlands) and approximately 3 acres of Prime Farmland in slivers along two roads in the SCH and Kane Spring areas adjacent to existing farm fields. This amount is negligible when compared to the more than 300,000 acres of Prime Farmland and more than 250,000 acres of Farmland of Local Importance in production in Imperial County and Riverside County and impacts would be less than significant. Vegetation projects located on recently exposed playa would not affect agricultural lands. As such, Impact AG-1, is less than significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Inapplicable Impacts

Impact AG-2: Construction of the sedimentation basin would result in the permanent conversion of a small amount of Farmland to nonagricultural use. The Modified Project does not include construction of a sedimentation basin. None of the proposed project areas that make up the Modified Project include Farmland of Local Importance or Prime Farmland. As such, Impact AG-2 is not applicable to the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact AG-3: Construction of the sedimentation basin potentially would result in the permanent conversion of Williamson Act contract land to nonagricultural use. The Modified Project does not include construction of a sedimentation basin, and does not include any land subject to Williamson Act contracts. There are no Williamson Act lands within the 10-Year Plan area. As such, Impact AG-3 is not applicable to the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

Habitat and dust suppression projects associated with the Modified Project would be located on exposed playa and would not affect agricultural lands or forest resources. Habitat projects may affect a very small amount of agricultural land, but the impact would be less than significant. The Modified Project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts to Agricultural Resources or forested areas compared to the Approved Project. MM AG-1 included in the EIS/EIR pertains to Williamson Act contracts and is not applicable to the Modified Project. No mitigation is required.

3.3 AIR QUALITY

Applicable Impacts

Impact AQ-1: Emissions from Project construction and maintenance are accounted for in applicable air quality plans and would not conflict with or obstruct their implementation. Implementation of the habitat and dust suppression projects on exposed lakebed would be completed as needed to reduce adverse air quality and health effects associated with the receding Sea. Emissions from construction and maintenance are accounted for in applicable air quality plans, including those of the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Construction and maintenance activities would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of these air quality plans, even with modifications that include additional habitat restoration or dust suppression projects and associated infrastructure. Because general estimated basin wide construction-related emissions are included in ICAPCD's and SCAQMD's emission inventories, and because all required emissions reduction measures would be implemented, construction activities would not prevent attainment or maintenance of state or federal ozone (O_3) or particulate matter standards within the Salton Sea Air Basin. The Modified Project also would not increase population or vehicle miles traveled beyond those for the Approved Project and beyond projections in local plans, because none of the projects would result in the construction of housing or places of permanent employment resulting in an increased population. Workers hired for these projects would either be from the local/regional population in Imperial or Riverside counties, or temporary skilled workers brought in from elsewhere for large aquatic habitat projects (like SCH) . In addition, the modified Project would not result in the operation of any stationary emissions sources or long-term operation of area or mobile emission sources. Therefore, the Modified Project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of an applicable air quality plan and impacts would be less than significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact AQ-2: The SCH ponds would cover more playa than would be exposed as a result of the Project, reducing the potential for wind-blown fugitive dust. More playa is exposed as the Salton Sea recedes. The 10-Year Plan planning area encompasses 68,241 acres, of which approximately 44,202 acres were exposed by a receding Salton Sea as of 2025. Once all 29,800 acres of projects are implemented as part of the 10-Year Plan (including those already under construction), this would constitute approximately 43 percent coverage of areas exposed at the Sea between about 2003 and 2028. The Modified Project would address and help to offset the increase in wind-blown fugitive dust emissions associated with the receding Sea. Implementation of habitat and dust suppression projects as part of the Modified Project would provide a reduction in wind-blown fugitive dust emissions at various locations within the 34,112 acres associated with the Modified Project area, which is much larger than the 3,770 acres for the Approved Project. Therefore, the Modified Project would result in a beneficial impact associated with reduction of potential for wind-blown fugitive dust. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion of a beneficial impact remains unchanged.

Impact AQ-3: The Project would contribute incrementally to violations of Federal and State O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ standards and exceed ICAPCD's NO_X and PM_{10} thresholds during construction. Construction activities for the Modified Project would contribute incrementally to violations of Federal and State 0_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ standards and exceedance of ICAPCD's and SCAQMD's peak daily NOx and PM_{10} thresholds. These contributions would occur primarily through diesel engine exhaust and fugitive dust emissions from vehicles

(such as water trucks) used during project installation activities. Implementation of the Modified Project would occur intermittently over the course of several years, so the increase in construction emissions would be temporary and would not exceed the daily construction limits as outlined in the EIS/EIR for the Approved Project.

As discussed in the EIS/EIR, this would be a significant and unavoidable impact, and this conclusion would not be affected by the changes associated with the Modified Project. Although the total emissions could be greater than those described in the EIS/EIR, the daily emissions, which are the basis for the significance determination, would be spread out over a longer period of time (5 years as opposed to 2 years), and they would be distributed between the north and south ends of the Salton Sea and subject to the thresholds of two air districts. Thus, the increase in daily emissions would not represent a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified significant effect, nor would the overall total emissions represent a significant increase.

To minimize construction emissions, the Modified Project would be required to comply with all minimization measures required for all projects by the ICAPCD or SCAQMD. For example, the Modified Project would be required to comply with ICAPCD's Regulation VIII, Fugitive Dust Control Measures, as discussed in the EIS/EIR, as well as the SCAQMD's Rule 403, Fugitive Dust. In addition, ***MM AQ-1*** and ***MM AQ-2***, described in the EIS/EIR (and modified here to include SCAQMD), would be implemented to further minimize significant impacts associated with NO_X, O_3 and fugitive dust emissions during construction activities, thus rendering the changes consistent with the original Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact AQ-4: The Project would contribute incrementally to violations of Federal and state O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ standards during operations but would not exceed any regulatory thresholds. The Modified Project would require occasional trips to each site for routine maintenance and to evaluate the effectiveness of the habitat and dust suppression projects and to make changes or modifications to the features of the projects, as applicable. Routine maintenance activities required during ongoing operation of the Modified Project would be intermittent and would require a negligible number of vehicles and personnel to implement and, therefore, would not exceed ICAPCD's or SCAQMD's thresholds for operations. In addition, the Modified Project would not include stationary sources that would contribute to long-term emission of air contaminants. Operation of the Modified Project would result in a reduction in fugitive dust emissions within the project area as compared to not implementing the Modified Project.

As shown in Table 3, the operational emissions for the previously Approved SCH Project were calculated to be well under the daily operations thresholds established by the ICAPCD and SCAQMD. The Approved Project (SCH Alternative 3) was the largest alternative analyzed in the EIS/EIR, which would require more active operation and maintenance activity than the remaining projects that would be part of the Modified Project because of the need to monitor and maintain a large pumping system as well as monitor water quality and success of habitat islands in the ponds. Operational emissions from the Modified Project would occur in two different air districts. NO_X emissions come the closest to approaching the thresholds, but to exceed the NO_X thresholds, more than 2.6 times the daily emissions would need to be generated in either the ICAPCD or SCAQMD. This would not occur because operations and maintenance for most projects would take place intermittently over time, and there is not a direct, proportionate link between the amount of acreage that would be included in the modified SCH Project and the amount of maintenance that would occur on a daily basis. Once projects are implemented, operation and maintenance activities would be intermittent, short in duration, and would require limited equipment quantities. As such, operation of the Modified Project would not contribute air emissions within the project area that would exceed regulatory thresholds. Impacts would be less than significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Table 3. Emissions and Significance Thresholds for Operations of Approved Project

Criteria Pollutant	ICAPCD	SCAQMD	Approved Project (SCH Alternative 3 from EIS/EIR)
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) as Methane (CH_4)	55	55	2.4
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	550	550	8.9
Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx as NO_2)	55	55	20.5
Sulfur Dioxide (SOx as SO_2)	150	150	0
Particulates (PM_{10})	150	150	0.8
Particulates ($PM_{2.5}$)	-	55	0.7
Lead	-	3	NA

Impact AQ-5: Project construction would result in a cumulatively considerable/significant net increase in emissions. The EIS/EIR indicated that Project construction would result in a cumulatively considerable/significant net increase in emissions, which is a significant unavoidable impact, and this impact conclusion would not change or be cumulatively more considerable as a result of the Project modifications. There would be a negligible increase in emissions from the Modified Project. The Modified Project would still result in a significant unavoidable impact should other projects be under construction at the same time. Emissions from operations and maintenance of the habitat and dust suppression projects would not be cumulatively considerable/significant because they would be mobile, intermittent, and minor, as discussed in the EIS/EIR. To reduce a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact from construction emissions, similar to the Approved Project, the Modified Project would be required to comply with all minimization measures required for all projects by the ICAPCD and SCAQMD. In addition, ***MM AQ-1*** and ***MM AQ-2***, described in the EIS/EIR, would be implemented to further reduce significant cumulative air emissions during construction activities. The incremental increase in emissions from the Modified Project would not result in cumulative impacts substantially more severe than the impacts analyzed in the EIS/EIR. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact AQ-6: Project emissions from construction and maintenance would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. The Modified Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. The Modified Project sites are located in sparsely populated and sometimes agricultural areas. No houses, parks, schools, libraries, senior facilities, day care centers or hospitals are located within 1,000 feet of any project areas. Access routes would be in sparsely populated areas. Therefore, due to relatively low mass emissions, dispersion over a wide geographic area, lack of proximate receptors, and intermittent occurrence, impacts from construction and maintenance of the Modified Project would continue to be less than significant. In addition, implementation of the control measures for fugitive dust identified in ***MM AQ-1*** and for diesel exhaust described in ***MM AQ-2*** would further reduce any potential impacts associated with fugitive dust and diesel particulate matter, respectively. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact AQ-7: The Project could result in localized odors during construction, operations, and maintenance. The Modified Project could result in localized odors during construction activities associated with diesel-powered equipment. The construction areas for the Modified Project are in sparsely populated areas

adjacent to the Salton Sea. Access roads and construction areas would not be located near sensitive receptors that would be impacted by odors from diesel-powered construction equipment. As such, the Modified Project would not result in any new impacts associated with objectionable odors. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact AQ-8: The Project would have a minor effect on the microclimate near the Salton Sea. Modifications to the SCH Project would continue to have a minor effect on the microclimate near the Salton Sea, which would be a less-than-significant impact. When the Sea recedes as described in the No Action Alternative, the microclimate is expected to change and result in exposed playa. The Modified Project would alleviate the changes to a larger extent than the original Project because it would replace a greater portion of what otherwise would be exposed playa with aquatic habitat, enhanced wetlands, or dust suppression projects in upland areas. This would result in an increased beneficial effect on the environment. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Existing Modified Mitigation Measures

Modified text from the EIS/EIR mitigation measures is provided *in italics*.

MM AQ-1 **Implement fugitive PM_{10} control measures.** The following measures will be incorporated into the construction contract specifications in order to reduce PM_{10} emissions from fugitive dust, in addition to those measures that are required for all projects by the ICAPCD *and SCAQMD*:

- Water exposed soil with adequate frequency for continued moist soil (at least twice daily and indicated by soil and air conditions).
- Replace ground cover in disturbed areas as quickly as possible.
- Limit vehicle speed for all construction vehicles to 15 miles per hour on any unpaved surface at the construction site.
- Develop a trip reduction plan to achieve a 1.5 average vehicle ridership for construction employees.

MM AQ-2 **Implement diesel control measures.** The following measures will be incorporated into the construction contract specifications in order to reduce PM_{10} and NO_X emissions from diesel engines, in addition to those measures that are required for all projects by the ICAPCD *and SCAQMD*:

- A schedule of low-emissions tune-ups will be developed, and such tune-ups will be performed on all equipment, particularly for haul and delivery trucks.
- Low-sulfur (≤ 15 ppm S) fuels will be used in all stationary and mobile equipment.
- Curtail construction during periods of high ambient pollutant concentrations as directed by the ICAPCD *and SCAQMD*.
- Reschedule activities to reduce short-term impacts to the extent feasible.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would contribute to additional but negligible cumulative construction impacts associated with the Approved SCH Project. Implementation of ***MM AQ-1*** and ***MM AQ-2***, included in the EIS/EIR, in addition to all applicable fugitive dust rules set forth by ICAPCD (Regulation VIII) and SCAQMD (Rule 403), would minimize cumulative construction air emissions. The Modified Project would not result in any new significant impacts to Air Quality not already identified in the EIS/EIR nor would it cause substantially more severe impacts for impacts already identified. The Modified Project would have a greater beneficial impact with regard to dust emissions because more exposed playa would be covered than under the original SCH Project.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

3.4.1 Biological Resources Information from EIS/EIR

The SCH EIS/EIR relied on the following references for information regarding wildlife, including special-status wildlife, within the Approved Project site and a buffer of 0.5 mile:

- The CDFW California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) Special Animals List, reviewed in 2010
- Birds of the Salton Sea (Patten et al. 2003) for descriptions of status and habitats on or adjacent to Project site (Patten et. al. provided a natural history for birds of concern associated with the alternatives analyzed in the EIS/EIR)
- Birds of North America Online for range and habitat descriptions from various authors
- Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County
- Sonny Bono National Wildlife Refuge occurrence data
- Studies on patterns of abundance, distribution, annual phenology, and habitat associations (Shuford et al. 2000)
- Observations of wildlife during focused surveys for Federally listed bird species (Dudek 2010) (the 2010 focused surveys that included least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) and southwestern flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) were conducted at the mouth of the Alamo River as part of the SCH EIS/EIR Alternatives 4, 5 and 6)

3.4.2 Updated Biological Resources Information

A review was conducted in April 2026 of the following databases of sensitive or special status biological species maintained by the CDFW, California Native Plant Society (CNPS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) for the 10-Year Plan area within a 0.5 mile buffer from the inland-most limit as shown in Figure 7:

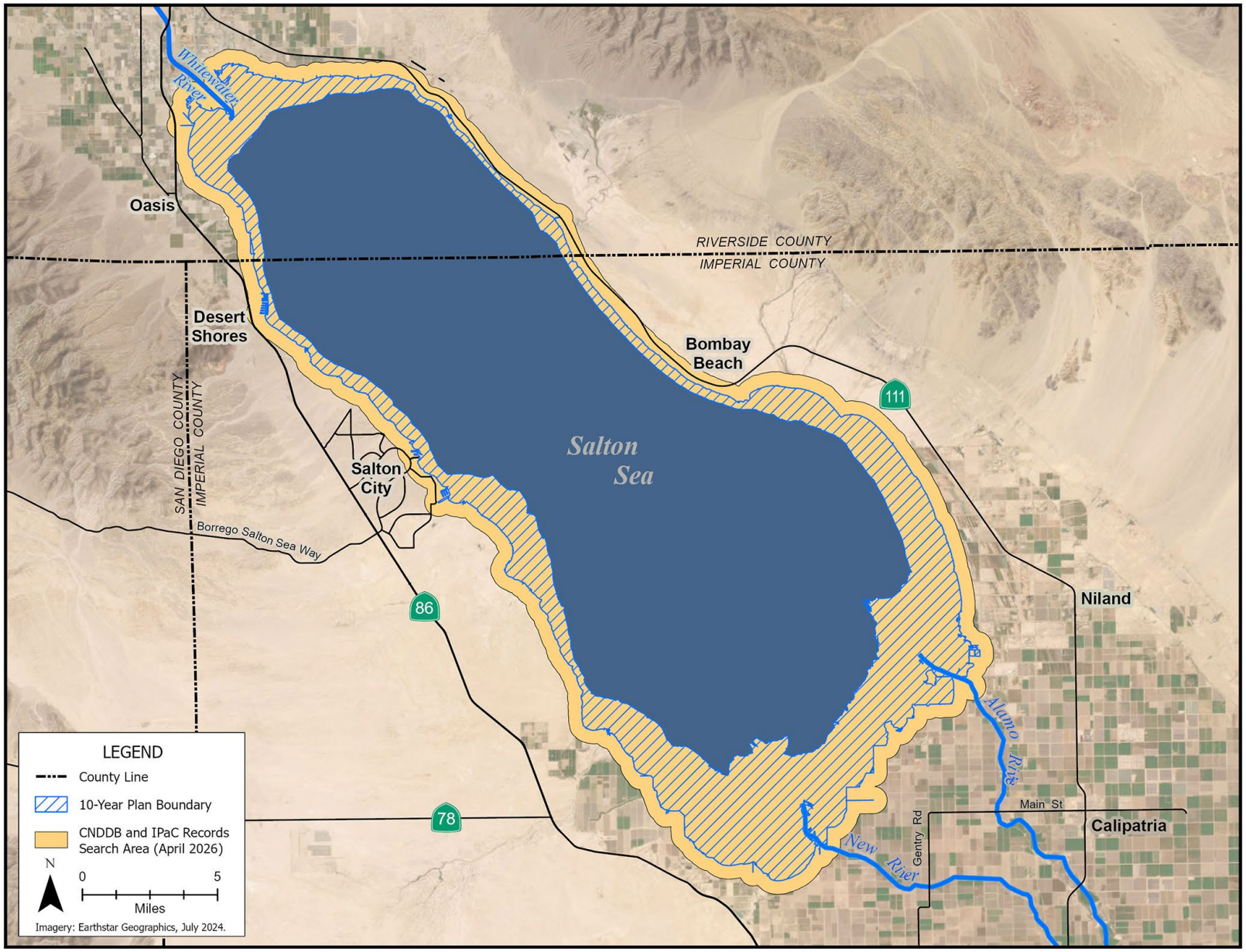
- CDFW CNDDB (CDFW 2026)
- CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants (CNPS 2026)
- USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) (USFWS 2026)

The CNDDB and IPaC database study areas include the 10-Year Plan boundary area plus a 0.5 mile buffer from the upland-most limit of the 10-Year Plan boundary. The IPaC database also provides a list of migratory Birds of Conservation Concern that have a probability of presence within the search radius. The CNPS database review study area was focused on the USGS quadrangles located within the CNDDB and IPaC database search areas. These databases are maintained to record the observations and locations of sensitive biological resources within California (CNDDB and CNPS) and the United States (IPaC). In addition, these databases help track imperiled species, confirm locations of previously recorded biological resources and assign standardized conservation rankings.

This information was used to develop a sensitive species list for the 10-Year Plan area to help with future reconnaissance level field surveys for each project as it is designed and implemented. Reconnaissance-level survey results may require completion of species-specific focused surveys to determine presence/absence of special status species. Results of the biological reconnaissance surveys and any needed focused species surveys will help inform project designs.

The database results are provided in Attachment 1 to this Addendum. The results were categorized by resource type, habitat and distribution for each resource, regulatory status as applicable, and occurrence probability for presence within the study area. A qualitative ranking for occurrence probability was applied based on the identified habitat type associated with the resource.

Figure 7. Biological Resource Records Search Area



The database searches completed for this Addendum are typical of searches conducted for biological resources in Southern California that may occur on potential project sites. Both searches included the CDFW CNDDB. The SCH EIS/EIR search did not include information from CNPS or iPac but did include additional information, particularly for birds, from other published resources and focused biological resources surveys conducted at the Alamo River. As the Salton Sea has receded, bird populations have shifted in the past 16 years from the date of the focused survey work completed by Dudek (2010) and more than 20 years from the publication of Patten et. al. (2003). This change is reflected in observed biological resources recorded in the databases reviewed for this Addendum.

As a result, the species lists overlap but are not exactly the same. In any case, biological resource surveys will be conducted for each individual project to determine the species that occur specifically on that site, and for which permits may need to be obtained from CDFW or USFWS. The database reviews provided in Attachment 1 may be useful for focusing project-specific surveys for sensitive biological resources.-

Applicable Impacts

Impact BIO-1a: Project construction and operation would affect habitat and individuals of desert pupfish and several special-status bird species. This impact applies to projects constructed in areas with wetlands and regulated waters. Similar construction and operational practices would be implemented to create the aquatic habitat ponds and enhanced wetlands as for the Approved Project. As a result, the same special-status bird species and, for some projects, desert pupfish (*Cyprinodon macularius)* would be present and would be similarly affected by construction and operation of the aquatic habitat ponds and enhanced wetlands as described in the EIS/EIR, although overall more individual special-status species could be affected. However, no new or more severe impacts on desert pupfish and special-status bird species would occur as a result of the Modified Project.

Associated infrastructure such as access roads and groundwater wells would be needed in similar types of geographic areas for all projects.

The same mitigation measures from the SCH EIS/EIR would be implemented (***MM BIO-1***, ***MM BIO-2***, ***MM BIO-3***, and ***MM BIO-4***), which would reduce impacts on desert pupfish and special-status bird species from potentially significant to less than significant because impacts would be avoided or minimized. In particular, ***MM BIO-1*** applies primarily to construction and maintenance of the drain interception ditches but would also apply to pond construction and maintenance activities to ensure protection of desert pupfish.

MM BIO-2 would be implemented through compliance with the pre-construction/maintenance survey plan for bird species prepared for the Modified Project to ensure impacts to special-status bird species would be minimized. Construction activities could generate noise sufficient to affect special status birds. ***MM BIO-3*** would be implemented to minimize construction-related impacts to special status bird species. ***MM BIO-4*** would protect water levels in marshes adjacent to project construction by proper design of interception ditches (if applicable). All impacts would be either less than significant or would be less than significant with mitigation. As such, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur to desert pupfish and special-status bird species as a result of the Modified Project, the EIS/EIR impact conclusion of this being a significant impact but mitigable to less than significant remains unchanged.

Impact BIO-1b: Project construction and operation would have minor effects on habitat and individuals of several special-status bird and mammal species. This impact applies primarily to projects constructed in upland areas. Similar to Impact BIO-1a, the special-status birds and mammal species described in the EIS/EIR could be affected by ground disturbance from construction and maintenance activities associated with the dust suppression projects, to the extent that construction occurs in the appropriate habitat for a particular species. Construction methods for dust suppression projects typically require less grading and disturbance than for habitat ponds.

While the EIS/EIR concluded that this impact was less than significant and no mitigation was required, the listing status of the burrowing owl has changed since preparation of the EIS/EIR. On October 15, 2024, the California

Fish and Game Commission approved naming burrowing owl as a Candidate for potential listing as a protected species under the California Endangered Species Act. ***MM BIO-2*** has been modified to address this species specifically. The EIS/EIR conclusion of this impact being less than significant remains unchanged, with the modification of ***MM BIO-2***.

Impact BIO-1c: Project operation would provide habitat for desert pupfish and several special-status bird species. Project operation of pond projects and wetland enhancement projects would continue to provide habitat for desert pupfish and several special-status bird species after the Salton Sea exceeds the water quality tolerances for these species. This would be a beneficial impact, and the benefits would be greater than under the Approved Project because more habitat would be provided. Implementation of the dust suppression projects would not affect desert pupfish because it would not affect the Salton Sea and the drains where they are located. The same birds described in the EIS/EIR could be affected by ground disturbance from construction and maintenance activities associated with the dust suppression methods to the extent that construction occurred in the appropriate habitat. No future exposed playa lands would have avian habitat that is not readily available in large quantities around the Salton Sea; therefore, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts on terrestrial birds would result from the implementation of dust suppression projects associated with the Modified Project. Impacts would not exceed those identified in the EIS/EIR, and some measures, such as vegetation enhancement as a dust suppression measure, potentially could be beneficial to many avian species at the Sea. The use of chemical suppressants and stabilizers would be limited to those that could be used without adversely affecting local wildlife. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion that these impacts are beneficial remains unchanged.

Impact BIO-2: Project construction and operation would cause a temporary disturbance or loss of riparian habitat and/or sensitive habitat. Construction and operation of the habitat ponds, wetland enhancement, and associated infrastructure could cause a temporary disturbance or loss of riparian habitat and/or sensitive habitat, similar to that described for the Approved Project in the EIS/EIR. This would continue to be a significant impact, but the Modified Project would not cause substantially more severe impacts beyond those already identified in the EIS/EIR. The same mitigation measure (***MM BIO-5***) would be implemented, which would reduce the impact to less than significant. The dust suppression projects would not substantially affect riparian or other sensitive habitat because they would be implemented on exposed playa. As a result, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts or substantial increase in severity of previously identified significant impacts to riparian or other sensitive habitat would occur because of the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact BIO-3a: Project construction would result in temporary disturbance of Federal Waters of the U.S. and minimal effects on wetlands. With the Modified Project, the construction of habitat ponds, enhanced wetlands, and associated infrastructure would result in temporary disturbance of Federal Waters of the U.S., which would be a less-than-significant impact. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion that impacts would be less than significant remains unchanged.

To further address potential impacts to Waters of the U.S. and waters of the state, DWR, under the umbrella of CNRA, would obtain the following permits as necessary for each project: Streambed and Lake Alteration Agreement with CDFW under Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code, a Section 401 Water Quality Certification or a certification from SWRCB for a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR), and a Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or Corps) under the Letters of Permission (LOP) procedures developed for the Salton Sea Management Program 10-Year Plan. If needed, permits would be obtained prior to work in jurisdictional waters (i.e., Waters of the U.S. or waters of the state).

Impact BIO-3b: Project operation would increase the amount of Federal Waters of the U.S. Once habitat projects are constructed, the Modified Project would have a greater net increase in Waters of the U.S. because more acres of habitat ponds would be constructed and wetlands would be enhanced to ensure their long-term viability. Implementation of most dust suppression projects would not substantively affect Waters of the U.S. or

wetlands. Therefore, no new impacts to Waters of the U.S. or wetlands would occur as a result of the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion that impacts would be beneficial remains unchanged.

Impact BIO-4: Project construction and operation would not interfere with movement of fish and wildlife species, but construction could remove snags for colonial nesting birds. Aquatic species would not be adversely affected by construction and operation of the Modified Project (desert pupfish are addressed under **Impact BIO-1**). No migratory fish are present, and construction of habitat ponds, wetlands, or vegetation projects would not interfere with movement of the nonnative aquatic species in the Salton Sea and New, Alamo, and Whitewater Rivers. Impacts on aquatic species movement would remain less than significant. Development of pond habitat around the Sea is designed to support populations of targeted fish species and therefore would have a beneficial impact on fish populations at the Sea. Potential impacts associated with the removal of snags (a standing dead or dying tree) would be as described in the EIS/EIR because similar conditions would be present. Implementation of dust suppression measures would not affect the movement of fish or aquatic species or the presence of snags. Implementation of ***MM BIO-5*** would ensure that impacts remain less than significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact BIO-5a: Project construction and operation could affect nesting by some common bird species and introduction of invasive species. As was the case with the Approved Project, the Modified Project could affect nesting by some common bird species unless mitigation measures are implemented. This would be a significant impact. Similarly, absent mitigation, invasive species could be introduced, spread, or otherwise established during construction or operations of the Modified Project. However, the proposed modifications would follow all mitigation requirements as originally proposed. During construction of any new habitat, contractors would implement mitigation measures ***MM BIO-2***, ***MM BIO-3***, and ***MM BIO-6***. As described in the EIS/EIR, with implementation of ***MM BIO-2*** and ***MM BIO-3***, residual impacts would be less than significant because disturbance of nesting birds would be avoided. Implementation of ***MM BIO-6*** would reduce residual impacts of invasive species to less than significant by minimizing the potential for introduction of such species. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact BIO-5b: Project construction and operation would have minor effects on common fish (native and nonnative), wildlife species, and native plant communities. Implementation of habitat and dust suppression projects would not affect most common fish or native plant communities because they would be located on unvegetated dry playa. However, construction and maintenance of these measures could result in temporary disturbances to terrestrial wildlife habitats through ground disturbance and noise, but this would be a less-than-significant impact. Implementation of ***MM BIO-2*** and ***MM BIO-5***, as well as new measures ***MM BIO-7*** and ***MM BIO-8***, would further ensure that impacts to terrestrial wildlife within or adjacent to the Modified Project site are avoided. As such, no significant impacts to wildlife species would occur with implementation of the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact BIO-5c: Project construction and operation would benefit common fish (native and nonnative) and wildlife species. Adding aquatic and terrestrial habitat acreage as part of the Modified Project would result in a beneficial impact on common fish and wildlife species, both native and nonnative. This beneficial impact would be greater than under the original SCH Project because more habitat would be restored**.** Dust suppression projects would not affect fish. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion that impacts would be beneficial to common fish and wildlife species remains unchanged.

Additional Considerations. A portion of the 10-Year Plan area at the north end of the Salton Sea is within the planning boundaries of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) and are part of the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel and Delta Conservation Area. The CVMSHCP is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in the Coachella Valley region of Riverside County. This area contains Core Habitat for desert pupfish and crissal thrasher (*Toxostoma crissale*), and it protects one of the two known Habitat areas in the Plan Area for Yuma clapper rail (now known as Yuma Ridgway's rail [*Rallus obsoletus yumanensis*]) and California

black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus)*. The area also contains suitable migration and breeding habitat for the riparian species covered by the plan and also provides Other Conserved Habitat for Le Conte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*), Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel (*Spermophilus tereticaudus* ssp. *chlorus*), and Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsi).* Projects proposed in this area may need to be undertaken in consultation with the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC).

Mitigation Measures

The implementation of ***MM BIO-1*** and ***MM BIO-4*** would ensure impacts to pupfish are avoided. The implementation of ***MM BIO-2***, ***MM BIO-3*** *and* ***MM BIO-5*** would ensure potential impacts to nesting birds and special-status bird species are avoided. Implementation of ***MM BIO-6*** would reduce residual impacts of invasive species to less than significant by minimizing the potential for introduction of such species. New measures ***MM BIO-7*** and ***MM BIO-8***, would further reduce potential impacts to sensitive plants and ensure that on-site workers are educated on sensitive species. Modified text from the EIS/EIR mitigation measures is provided *in italics*.

Existing or Modified Mitigation Measures

MM BIO-1 **Prepare and implement a desert pupfish protection and relocation plan.** This plan applies primarily to construction and maintenance of the drain interception ditches but will also apply to pond or wetland construction and maintenance activities as noted and will provide:

1. Protocols for preconstruction or premaintenance surveys to assess species presence and spawning within or immediately adjacent to work areas (e.g., in the drains/drain channels, along the shoreline if construction is in the "wet," and around the pond margins for maintenance);
2. Capture (e.g., trapping in the drains for construction and maintenance; or trapping, dip netting, and seining in the ponds if drained or if the water level is dropped) and transport methods to minimize handling and stress as well as exposure to heat, low DO, and crowding;
3. Identification of locations for release of captured desert pupfish;
4. Timing windows when construction or maintenance in shallow shoreline areas and in the drain mouths/channels may be conducted with minimal effects on desert pupfish spawning;
5. Protocols for maintenance activities in the drain interception ditches, such as a rotating schedule to ensure only a portion of the channel is maintained at one time, clearing only part of the vegetation at one time, and timing of maintenance to avoid peak spawning;
6. Maintenance protocol for the 1/8-inch mesh screen on the saline water intake until salinity reaches 68 ppt; and
7. Adaptive management procedures that include assessment of mitigation measure effectiveness, development of revised measures to improve effectiveness, and similar assessment of revised measures to verify effectiveness.

All desert pupfish mitigation measures will be in conformance with the Biological Opinion from USFWS for the *10-Year Plan* Project.

MM BIO-2 **Prepare and implement a preconstruction/maintenance survey plan for bird species.** The plan will include preparation of suitable habitat maps that are updated periodically to focus survey locations as well as survey methods consistent with current science and regulations. Adaptive management measures will also be included in the plan. The following describes the surveys and their timing for various bird species. *On October 15, 2024, the California Fish and Game Commission approved naming burrowing owl as a Candidate for potential listing as a protected species under the California Endangered Species Act. While specific survey requirements have*

not been updated, typically more stringent requirements regarding buffers have been implemented on other SSMP projects to ensure avoidance of impacts to burrowing owls.

Burrowing Owl. To avoid impacts on nesting or wintering burrowing owls within the Project impact area, conduct preconstruction (or pre-maintenance) surveys within suitable burrowing owl habitat that could be affected by Project activities. Surveys will be conducted using the latest protocol methods and with concurrence from CDFW; currently, methods described by the Department of Fish and Game Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation (DFG 2012) will be used. If burrowing owls are detected nesting or wintering within the Project impact area, a buffer will be established around the active burrow so that direct impacts on the burrow will be avoided. For construction during the breeding season (February through August), a buffer of 250 feet around the active nesting burrow will be maintained until breeding is complete and the young have fledged (can fly). For nonbreeding birds, the buffer will be 160 feet. If burrowing owls are detected occupying a burrow within the Project impact area at any time of year, the owls will be removed using passive methods during the nonbreeding season. Passive removal involves excluding owls from their occupied burrows and creating alternate natural or artificial burrows for them that are at least 160 feet from the impact area and that are within or contiguous to a minimum of 6.5 acres of foraging habitat for each pair (DFG 1995). Passive relocation may be implemented during the breeding season if a qualified biologist can verify through noninvasive methods, such as scoping, that breeding has not begun, or juveniles are foraging independently and able to fly. The unoccupied burrows would be collapsed in accordance with CDFW-approved guidelines (DFG 1995).

California Black Rail and Yuma Clapper Rail (now known as Yuma Ridgway's Rail). Conduct preconstruction (or premaintenance) focused surveys for California black rail and Yuma Ridgway's rail where Project features are within or immediately adjacent to suitable habitat. If California black rails or Yuma Ridgway's rails are detected within 500 feet of planned construction/maintenance activity locations, work within that distance of the birds will be avoided or rescheduled for after the birds complete nesting.

Nesting Birds. Conduct preconstruction (or premaintenance) surveys for all Project features within suitable habitat if construction or maintenance activities will take place during the breeding season. Breeding birds are protected under the Migratory Treaty Bird Act as described in Impact BIO-5a. Surveys will be conducted using methods approved by CDFW. If breeding birds are detected within the Project impact area, a protective buffer (100 to 500 feet, depending on species) will be provided until it is confirmed that breeding is complete.

Western Snowy Plover. Conduct preconstruction (or pre-maintenance) focused surveys for western snowy plovers within suitable habitat that could be affected. Surveys will be conducted using current USFWS methods and/or methods approved by CDFW. If western snowy plovers are detected within the Project impact area, construction or maintenance activities will be conducted under a qualified biologist's supervision so that direct impacts are avoided. If breeding snowy plovers are detected within the Project impact area, construction or maintenance will be postponed and a protective buffer provided until it is confirmed that breeding is complete.

Updated requirements (clarifications) as of April 2026:

- *A Bird Nesting Plan will be submitted and implemented at each site prior to construction.*
- *Within 30-days and again within 24-hours prior to ground disturbing activities, a nesting bird survey should be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if western snowy plover, burrowing owl or other nesting birds are present. If present, buffer zones based on the sensitivity of the nesting bird will be established to avoid direct and indirect impacts.*

- *For all sites, a protocol burrowing owl survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist to determine if burrowing owls are present within the project area or in a buffer zone adjacent to the project area. This can be done within 30 days of the start of construction, as described in the previous measure. If present, buffer zones based on the sensitivity of the nesting bird should be established to avoid direct and indirect impacts.*

MM BIO-3 **Conduct noise calculations/measurements and implement noise attenuation measures, if needed.** Based on equipment specifications, calculate or measure the distance from equipment where noise would be greater than or equal to 60 dBA equivalent sound level (Leq). This would also include multiple noise sources, if applicable. Then, use that distance to determine where noise could exceed 60 dBA Leq within known or potential nesting habitat adjacent to the Project footprint. If any such overlaps occur, schedule work to avoid the breeding season in those areas. If construction must occur during the breeding season at those sites, monitor nesting activity to determine if any effects are occurring. If effects are observed, implement noise attenuation measures such as noise walls and hay bales. Monitor the noise and bird behavior to verify that attenuation measures are successful. Develop and implement additional protection measures if monitoring shows that impacts are still occurring. If noise would be less than 60 dBA Leq, no additional measures are required. (Note: The threshold of 60 dBA Leq used here to protect bird nesting is a conservative estimate of the level above which adverse effects could occur. The actual threshold varies by species and type of noise.).

MM BIO-4 **Design interception ditches to avoid alteration of water levels in adjacent marshes.** Design of the interception ditches will balance local surface and subsurface water movement so that the amount of water in adjacent marshes is not affected.

MM BIO-5 **Prepare and implement a Habitat Protection, Mitigation, and Restoration Program.** Plan preparation will be complete prior to commencement of construction. The restoration program will address the following considerations:

1. Avoidance of sensitive and riparian habitats to the greatest extent feasible, including avoidance of disturbances in or near these habitats during the bird breeding season.
2. Quantifying maximum area of naturally occurring plant communities that could be temporarily and permanently removed for construction of Project facilities, by plant community.
3. Restoration at a minimum rate of 1:1 for nonnative plant communities (i.e., tamarisk woodland or scrub) and 3:1 for native plant communities temporarily removed during Project construction, or as required in Project permits. Habitats restored at 1:1 will be preferentially restored where they were removed, unless it is infeasible or a more desirable off-site location is identified. Species to be used in restoration may include either those that were removed or native species are used to replace nonnative species, mitigation ratios can be reduced. For restoration of tamarisk temporarily removed, natural colonization of the disturbed area is likely to occur and no planting may be needed. The area would still be monitored to document restoration. Permanently removed riparian habitat within the pond area would be replaced by aquatic habitat of equal surface area with a similar or greater ecological value.
4. Identification of locations for on- and off-site restoration, including funding for land purchases and/or easements and agreements with property owners to complete the restoration.
5. Use of only local native seed (or propagule) sources for native species used in restoration.
6. Details on propagation, planting/seeding, irrigation, maintenance (including weed control for species that could interfere with restoration), site access, remedial measures, monitoring,

reporting, and photo-documentation. These details will be specific to each site if more than one planting area or type is addressed in the plan.

7. Performance criteria to be met for each habitat type being restored.
8. Monitoring, with a funding source, until performance criteria are met, which may be for a minimum of 5 years.

MM BIO-6 **Clean equipment prior to site delivery.** Specifications for ensuring that all equipment, personal gear, and materials brought to the site are clean and free of invasive plants (including seeds) and animals will be included in all construction and maintenance contracts. Equipment, gear, and other materials will be inspected to verify that it is clean.

New Mitigation Measures

The following additional measures would be implemented to further protect biological resources at the Project sites. These new measures are not considerably different from existing measures and will not conflict with existing measures. Rare plant surveys would only be conducted if biological reconnaissance surveys and record search results warranted such surveys for a particular project:

MM BIO-7 **Rare plant surveys.** For all sites, the plant surveys shall be performed not less than 30 days prior to the initiation of project activities. Survey results shall be considered valid for up to one year. To the extent possible, surveys shall be performed during the flowering period for plants with a high probability of occurrence on site. Impacts to special status plant species shall be avoided and minimized by marking the special status plant location(s) with global positioning system (GPS), fencing plant(s) with sand-permeable fencing, and avoiding impacts to plant(s) by establishing a 20-foot buffer (no work) area around plant(s). If impacts to special status plant species cannot be avoided, CDFW, and USFWS shall be consulted to develop a strategy to transplant or replace plants (seeding or containerized plants).

MM BIO-8 **Worker sensitivity training.** Construction worker sensitivity training will be conducted prior to the start of construction. Topics covered will include an overview of biological sensitivity, resource avoidance protocols, stop-work procedures in the event of unanticipated discoveries, and agency notification procedures.

Conclusion

The Modified Project, including the implementation of existing or modified mitigation measures and new mitigation measures, would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts to Biological Resources compared to the Approved Project.

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Applicable Impact

Impact CR-1: Ground-disturbing activities could change the significance of historical resources, damage unique archaeological resources, disturb human remains, eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory, and adversely affect historic properties. Based on several record searches, literature reviews, and consultation conducted for the 10-Year Plan area, the Salton Sea region is considered an "archeologically sensitive" area. Recent cultural resource surveys have been conducted along the Salton Sea shoreline of the 10-Year Plan area as shown in Figure 8. To date, based on these studies, cultural resources have been identified within the region. Ground-disturbing activities in the 10-Year Plan area not yet surveyed for cultural resources could result in disturbance or destruction of undiscovered cultural resources, including sites that may lie exposed on the dry lakebed as well as those that may lie buried beneath the exposed ground surface. The potential for effects is considered greatest in the habitat project areas as these involve extensive mechanical removal of vegetation, grading, and relatively deep subsurface mechanical excavations to create ponds, berms, retention basins, and other features. Ground-disturbing construction activities in dust suppression project areas could also disturb or destroy undiscovered cultural resources. Waterless techniques could include, for example, mechanical surface roughening, application of dust suppressants to the ground surface, installation of sand fencing, and use of gravel or similar materials to cover the ground surface. Water-reliant dust suppression techniques could include planting and irrigation of native vegetation, creating or enhancing shallow-water habitat and freshwater wetlands, and installation of groundwater production wells, among others. These activities have the potential to affect surface and sub-surface cultural resources. In addition, ground disturbance associated with the construction and use of access roads and staging areas located between public roads and specific construction sites located within the opportunity areas have the potential to disturb or destroy known and undiscovered cultural resources.

Project activities have the potential to affect cultural resources in the 10-Year Plan area, similar to those discussed in the SCH EIS/EIR for the Approved Project. Impacts would be potentially significant but mitigable with the implementation of modified ***MM CR-1***. As such, no new significant impacts to cultural resources would occur with implementation of the Modified Project and nor would a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects occur. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Existing Modified Mitigation Measure

Implementation of a construction survey, monitoring and inadvertent discovery plan would ensure the potential inadvertent discovery of cultural resources are properly treated, as required in ***MM-CR-1*** from the EIS/EIR. ***MM-CR-1*** has been updated for the Modified Project as shown in *italics* below.

MM CR-1: **Prepare and implement a survey plan and an inadvertent discovery plan.** A plan for the survey of project areas not previously surveyed would be prepared to facilitate identification of cultural resources prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities. A plan for the inadvertent discovery of cultural resources and human remains also would be prepared and would provide protocols for addressing the discovery of cultural resources and human remains including, but not limited to, monitoring; immediately halting all construction in the vicinity of a discovery; investigation of the discovery by an archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Professional Qualifications in order to evaluate the eligibility of the resources pursuant to CRHR and NRHP criteria; and implementation of California Health and Safety Code section 7050.5, CCR section 15064.5(d) and (e), and, if applicable, 36 CFR part 800.13. Resources considered significant would be avoided or subject to a data recovery program. The data recovery program would be designed in consultation with appropriate state (i.e., Office of Historic Preservation) and Federal agencies and include excavation of an archaeological site to recover any buried artifacts or other data.

In addition, the following measures would be included in the survey plan and inadvertent discovery plan:

- *Construction worker sensitivity training will be held prior to the start of construction. Topics covered will include an overview archaeological sensitivity in the Area of Potential Effect (APE), resource avoidance protocols, stop-work procedures in the event of unanticipated discoveries, and agency notification procedures. Tribal representatives will be invited to provide a sensitivity training from a Tribal perspective.*
- *Avoidance of all cultural resources identified as a result of cultural resource surveys, including a 100-foot buffer (or larger based on consultation with agencies and Tribes). If work will occur within the vicinity of identified resources (e.g., within 200 feet), the 100-foot buffer around the resources will be flagged as an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) to ensure avoidance. Flagging must be removed as soon as the work is completed in that area, or prior to weekends and then replaced the following work week.*
- *Full-time cultural resources and Tribal monitoring of all ground-disturbing activities.*

Conclusion

The Modified Project, including the implementation of the modified mitigation measure from the EIS/EIR, would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts to Cultural Resources compared to the Approved Project.

Figure 8. Cultural Resources Studies to Date (2021-2026)



3.6 ENERGY

Applicable Impact

Impact EN-1: Pumping would require power for the duration of the Project. The Modified Project may include installation and operation of pumps to supply habitat ponds and may include installation and operation of groundwater production wells to support vegetation enhancement (irrigation) at some sites. The energy needed for the Approved SCH Project was determined to be less than significant in the SCH EIS/EIR. This included pumps required to pump water from the Salton Sea and the New River to the SCH ponds. The SCH Project is currently using pumps capable of pumping 12,000 gallons per minute (gpm) for this purpose. For the Modified Project, there are no plans for additional large-scale pond projects such as the SCH. Smaller pond projects are part of the Modified Project, which would require much smaller pumps, if any, which would require less energy. Vegetation enhancement projects typically require pumps to get groundwater out of the ground and into the irrigation systems needed to get these projects established. These pumps operate at about 250 gpm, which would require much less energy than the pumps being used for the SCH Project. Over time, as the vegetation gets established, less groundwater would be needed and, therefore, energy consumption would overall decrease.

Power supply would be obtained from on-site solar-powered systems, diesel electric generators, or electric lines, depending on cost and proximity to the supply. In addition, energy would be required temporarily for construction of the Modified Project and would be limited to petroleum and/or diesel fuel to power construction equipment and worker vehicles. This would be a temporary and less-than-significant impact.

Overall energy use for the Modified Project would be comparable to the energy consumption for the Approved Project. As such, Impact EN-1 is applicable to the Modified Project. Overall energy use would not result in inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy and would not be significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion of a less-than-significant energy impact remains unchanged.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts to Energy Resources compared to the Approved Project.

3.7 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Applicable Impacts

Impact GEO-1: A seismic event could cause the berms to fail and damage the water diversion/conveyance structures. The Modified Project would include installation of berms and water conveyance systems for habitat projects that could fail during a seismic event, and water conveyance structures (irrigation systems) for vegetation projects that could be disrupted during a large seismic event. Once ponds are filled with water, berm failure could release water directly into the Salton Sea or on to exposed playa where it would then flow to the Sea. Regardless, this would not expose people, property, or structures to substantial adverse effects. A less-than-significant impact would occur, which is the same as described for the Approved Project. Irrigation systems would be installed mostly below ground, largely of plastic (PVC), and would not be conveying large amounts of water such that irreparable damage to the system would occur. There would be no new or more severe impacts on geology or soils than described for the Approved Project because similar types of pond or berm construction would occur in areas with similar geologic conditions. As such, Impact GEO-1 is applicable to the Modified Project, and the impacts would be less than significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion would remain unchanged.

Impact GEO-2: Best management practices would be used to prevent soil erosion and the loss of topsoil during construction. Modified Project activities would reduce and prevent soil erosion of the exposed playa. In addition, BMPs would be implemented during construction activities to minimize the potential for erosion and loss of topsoil during construction. Each project would be subject to the provisions of a Stormwater Management Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and would include measures such as preservation of existing vegetation to

the extent feasible, installation of silt fences, use of wind erosion control (e.g., geotextile or plastic covers on stockpiled soil), and stabilization of site ingress/egress locations to minimize erosion. The use of BMPs and following requirements in the SWPPP would ensure that impacts would be less than significant. Once a project is complete, erosion of the exposed playa would be significantly reduced, which would be a beneficial impact. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion would remain unchanged.

Impact GEO-3: The Project would be located on unstable soils, potentially affecting the stability of the berms. The Modified Project would include construction in areas with similar geologic and soil conditions as the Approved Project, as described for Impact GEO-1. A less-than-significant impact would occur. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact GEO-4: Construction would require the use of rock as riprap or pond substrate. Habitat projects may require rock or gravel from local sources to be used as substrate or riprap for the ponds or along berms, as described in the EIS/EIR. No new or more significant impacts would result from this additional application of rock associated with the Modified Project. More of these materials would be required due to the larger acreage involved, but they are in ready supply, and their use would not result in the loss of availability of a mineral resource that is of local or statewide importance. A less-than-significant impact would occur. This EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts to Geology and Soils compared to the Approved Project.

3.8 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Applicable Impacts

Impact GHG-1: The Project would generate minor amounts of GHG emissions during construction and operations, both directly and indirectly, that would not have a significant impact on the environment. The Modified Project would generate minor amounts of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions during construction activities. As discussed in the EIS/EIR, construction of the Approved Project would generate up to approximately 6,650 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO2e) over the course of 2 years, which is well below the 25,000 metric tons of CO2e threshold for which major facilities are required to report emissions. These emissions would be temporary and would cease upon completion of work. To date (2026), approximately 12,000 acres of SSMP projects have been subject to CEQA review and are either under construction or in the process of being permitted. This includes the SCH project and expansion areas (9,500 acres), Clubhouse (610 acres), Tule Wash (1,390 acres), West Bombay Beach (93 acres), and Bombay Beach Wetlands (577 acres). This leaves an additional approximately 17,000 acres of projects needed to meet the state's required restoration goals, and that requires analysis under CEQA (in this Addendum). This 17,000 acres is approximately 4 times the size of the original SCH project that was the subject of the SCH EIS/EIR (4,100 acres). Assuming these 17,000 acres would be constructed over the next 4 years (a conservative estimate), scaling up from the SCH project, this would result in an estimated total of 26,600 metric tons of CO2e emitted, with an annual average of 6,650 metric tons of CO2e, which is a comparable amount of GHG emissions to the Approved Project and, therefore, would be less than significant. In addition, the vegetation enhancement projects would have a small positive effect on GHG emissions by producing an uptake of GHGs as the vegetation flourishes.

As described in the EIS/EIR, the primary power demand during operations of ponds associated with aquatic habitat projects would result from pumping, and electric pumps were chosen over diesel to minimize air emissions. Alternative methods of diverting water relying on gravity are under consideration, though, which would reduce emissions. However, should electric pumps be used, indirect GHG emissions from the fossil fuel component of mixed electric power generation would increase as a result of the Modified Project. Indirect GHG emissions from electric power used by the pumping plants for the original SCH Project would estimated to be

about 2,280 metric tons of CO2e annually. Using the same methodology as for construction emissions, the estimated annual GHG emissions for the remaining 17,000 acres of project would be approximately 9,120 metric tons of CO2e (4 x 2,280). This is a very conservative estimate as the pumps and energy needed to operate the pumps for the SCH project is greater than for most other types of projects, as described in Section 3.6, Energy. This is below the 25,000 metric tons of CO2e threshold for major facilities. Power required to operate the Project pumps would increasingly come from sources that minimized the production of GHG emissions, and indirect emissions would be expected to decrease over time. Imperial Irrigation District's (IID's) current energy sources include ~27% (2024) non-carbon based and renewable energy sources (Power Content Label | Imperial Irrigation District), which reduce the carbon footprint of electricity demand attributed to the Modified Project.

For vegetation projects, power would be required for pumping groundwater from production wells to be distributed to on-site irrigation systems. As discussed in Section 3.8, Energy, power supply would be obtained from solar-powered systems, diesel electric generators, or electric lines, depending on cost and proximity to the supply. This would be an intermittent use, and would generate substantially less GHG emissions than the pumps needed for aquatic habitat projects.

As such, temporary GHG emissions resulting from construction activities would result in a less-than-significant, short-term increase in GHG emissions, and operation activities would result in a less-than-significant long-term increase in emissions. Even if construction and operational activities occurred at the same time for a few years, the resulting emissions of approximately 15,770 metric tons of CO2e (6,650 + 9,120), would remain well below the 25,000 metric tons of CO2e emissions that major facilities are required to report emissions. Impacts would remain less than significant. This EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact GHG-2: The Project would generate GHG emissions during construction and operations, but would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The Modified Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions for the reasons described in the EIS/EIR, and impacts would remain less than significant. This EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

GHG emissions generated during construction of the Modified Project would be temporary and cease upon completion of construction activities and would be less than significant. GHG emissions generated during operations would also be less than significant. This is consistent with the EIS/EIR.

3.9 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Applicable Impacts

Impact HAZ-1: Hazardous materials used during construction could be released into the environment. Similar types of hazardous materials would be used during implementation of the Modified Project as analyzed in the EIS/EIR, and BMPs would be implemented consistent with the required SWPPP for each individual project. As such, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts associated with accidental release of hazardous materials during construction would occur with implementation of the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact HAZ-2: Project construction could encounter contaminated soils during soil excavation. There is potential for worker exposure to known pesticide residues present in sediments within the project area. Compliance with ICAPCD and SCAQMD regulations for fugitive dust, which is mandatory, would reduce the potential for fugitive dust emissions at the construction site. This would also reduce the potential for worker exposure. As such, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts associated with contaminated soils during construction would occur with implementation of the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact HAZ-3: The ponds would attract birds in proximity to low-level military training routes. Aquatic habitat projects could include construction of ponds, similar to ponds for the SCH that would attract birds. However, the ponds would be adjacent to the shrinking Salton Sea in areas that were previously submerged and, therefore, would not change the existing conditions with respect to low-level military training routes in the area. As such, the EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact HAZ-4: Increased traffic and construction near roadways would not impair the implementation of an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. As described in the EIR/EIR, construction would take place in sparsely populated rural areas. Similar types of typical roadway safety precautions would be taken for the Modified Project as the EIS/EIR to ensure that traffic and construction near roadways would not impair the implementation of an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. As such, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts associated with implementation of an emergency response plan would occur with implementation of the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact HAZ-5: Project construction could increase the risk of wildland fire. Operation of construction equipment associated with the Modified Project could temporarily increase the risk of wildfire in the project area. However, there are no “Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone” or “Wildland Area that may Contain Substantial Forest Fire Risk and Hazard” designations within the project area. In addition, the project areas associated with the Modified Project site contain little to no vegetation that could act as fuel for a wildland fire. Nonetheless, all regulations requiring fire suppression equipment would be followed for the Modified Project during construction and maintenance activities as required under the EIS/EIR. As such, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts associated with risk of wildland fire would occur with implementation of the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact HAZ-6: Project construction could release air and dust-borne disease-causing viruses. Construction of the Modified Project would require ground-disturbing activities that could release air and dust-borne diseases such as valley fever into the air that could result in worker exposure. The EIS/EIR identified this as a significant but mitigable impact. Compliance with ICAPCD and SCAQMD regulations for fugitive dust, which is mandatory, would reduce the potential for fugitive dust emissions at the construction site. This would also reduce the potential for worker exposure. In addition, potential impacts would be localized and not expected to affect the general public. To ensure safety of workers during construction, implementation of ***MM HAZ-1*** would require worker training, which would include tips for recognizing symptoms and use of personal protective equipment. Implementation of these compliance measures and **MM HAZ-1** would reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The Modified Project would be subject to the same measures, resulting in the same less-than-significant impact conclusion. As such, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts associated with risk of release of air and dust-borne disease would occur with implementation of the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact HAZ-7: Project operation could increase breeding habitat for mosquito vectors but implementation of the Mosquito Control Plan would prevent threats to public health. Habitat pond projects, similar to ponds for the SCH, and wetland enhancement projects could increase breeding habitat for mosquito vectors in and near project sites. As discussed in the EIS/EIR, open water (such as could occur with the Modified Project) is not conducive to mosquito production. Open water should reduce the survival of immature mosquitos because of disturbance and drowning caused by wind-driven waves and high susceptibility to predators. However, areas in and near wetland enhancement projects could result in breeding habitat for mosquito vectors but, as discussed in the EIS/EIR, implementation of a Mosquito Control Plan, where applicable, would reduce such threats. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Inapplicable Impacts

Impact HAZ-8: Selenium and dichlorodiphenyldichloroethylene (DDE) levels in the SCH ponds could cause increased selenium and DDE levels in sport fish and waterfowl using the ponds. The Modified Project could include construction of ponds similar to the SCH project but the water supply for any new ponds

would not be from the New River, which contains selenium and DDE. Therefore, Impact HAZ-8 is not applicable to the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Other Potential Hazards

During and after World War II, the U.S. Navy established and used the Salton Sea Test Base (SSTB) , which encompassed over 20,000 acres on the west side of the Salton Sea, in the area identified as the Tule Wash-to-San Felipe Fan area in Figures 4 and 6. Operations at the facility included seaplane and bombing range operations, rocket development work, and testing of jet engine propellant mixtures. Full-time occupation of the facility was terminated in 1987. The facility was intermittently used in the early 1990s to support U.S. military training operations. In 2000, the Navy transferred ownership of most of the SSTB to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). While the property is under BLM jurisdiction, the Navy is responsible for evaluation and cleanup of residual site contamination. A portion of the former SSTB was designated as the Salton Sea Hazardous Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) by the BLM in 2016, and encompasses approximately 7,250 acres. It is closed to the public due to the continued risk of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and does not allow for any Right-of-Way projects (USACE and CNRA 2024).

In April 2000, the U.S. Navy prepared a *Decision Document for Unexploded Ordnance at Salton Sea Test Base* (U.S. Navy 2000) in which the U.S. Navy concluded that risk management actions that included recurring reviews, minimizing public access and soil disturbances, and notification requirements should occur prior to land use changes in areas with potential ordnances. The U.S. Navy also concluded that a secondary alternative (2-Foot Clearance) would be implemented to survey and remove or detonate in place any detected ordnance in the event that future changes in land use, such as construction of major facilities or development, would require the removal of unexploded ordnance. The reference to 2-foot clearance was not intended to imply that ordnance removal necessarily would be limited to the surface 2-foot layer. The U.S. Navy did commit to continuing to evaluate changes in the physical conditions of the Salton Sea shoreline, public accessibility, applicability of new technologies for detecting ordnance, and the on-going effectiveness of this response. The U.S. Navy conducted subsequent *Five-Year Review Reports* in 2013, 2018, and 2024 which concluded that warning signs needed to be better maintained and that the receding shoreline may expose newly accessible areas that may contain munitions and explosives of concern (MEC) (U.S. Navy 2013; 2018; 2024). A walkover and surface removal operation were conducted to support the 2024 Navy report, with approximately 320 pounds of material (primarily munitions debris and small arms ammunition) documented as safe was removed from the site and recycled. No MEC requiring special munitions disposal was found. Procedures identified in the original U.S. Navy report and subsequent reports are expected to reduce potential risks to public safety from encounters with ordnance and explosive waste. However, it is possible that some remnant ordnance is buried at depths in shoreline soils and/or the Sea Bed that exceed the sensitivity of currently available technology and would be undetectable during a clearance survey, yet still susceptible to disturbance by earth-moving equipment or placement of pilings or rock during construction.

The potential risks from UXO were not addressed in detail in the SCH Project EIS/EIR because the SSTB and any Salton Sea fixed bomb target sites were outside the SCH Project boundaries. Portions of the Modified Project, however, do encroach into areas that were bomb targets. Today, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) (specifically the Navy) is responsible for the environmental restoration (cleanup) of properties that were formerly owned by, leased to, or otherwise possessed by the United States and under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Defense prior to October 1986. Such properties are known as Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is DOD's lead agent for the FUDS Program, and the Corps executes the FUDS Program on behalf of the U.S. Army and DOD. The U.S. Army and DOD are dedicated to protecting human health and the environment by investigating and, if required, cleaning up potential contamination or munitions that may remain on these properties from past DOD activities (CNRA 2017).

Prior to any construction in an area that potentially could contain UXO, the CNRA and DWR would coordinate with the Corps Los Angeles District, to verify the current state of the bomb targets and determine what

remediation, if any, needs to occur prior to construction. No construction would begin before implementing any steps needed to project the health of construction workers and members of the public, as well as ecological receptors. Therefore, no new significant impacts related to UXO would occur as a result of the proposed modifications to the SCH Project (CNRA 2017).

Existing Mitigation Measure

Implementation of ***MM HAZ-1*** would improve worker safety regarding air and dust-borne disease.

MM HAZ-1 **Worker Training.** Worker training will be provided to workers who may be exposed to air-borne diseases during excavation activities. Training will include recognizing symptoms and use of personal protective equipment.

New Mitigation Measure

The following additional measure will be implemented to further protect worker safety at potential Project sites within or adjacent to the Salton Sea Hazardous ACEC. This new measure will not conflict with the existing measure.

MM HAZ-2 **Conduct Pre-Construction Site Remediation and Provide Worker Training for UXOs.** Prior to any construction in an area that potentially contains UXOs or munitions, a UXO-qualified DWR contractor shall coordinate with the Corps to verify the current state of the bomb targets and determine what remediation, if any, needs to occur prior to construction. If any UXOs or munitions are located during pre-construction surveys, the local bomb squad shall be contacted to identify the munition and deactivate and remove the UXO, if necessary.

No construction shall begin before providing worker training on how to "recognize, retreat and report" UXOs and munitions and implementing the remediation steps needed to project the health of construction workers and members of the public, as well as ecological receptors.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in any new significant impacts associated with Hazards or Hazardous Materials compared to the Approved Project.

3.10 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Applicable Impacts

Impact HYD-1: Project implementation would cause a reduction in the Salton Sea's water surface elevation. The Modified Project could include construction of aquatic resource ponds similar to the SCH ponds that would increase evaporation from the ponds which in turn would cause an incremental reduction in the Salton Sea's surface water elevation. This would be a less-than-significant impact even with the proposed modifications because the same volume of water would otherwise flow to the Sea where it would be subject to a similar evaporation rate. The Salton Sea will get smaller and shallower, regardless of whether the Modified Project is implemented. Implementation of habitat and dust suppression projects may result in an incremental decrease in surface water reaching the Sea but would not alter the inevitable receding of the Sea and would be a less-than-significant impact. Use of water for the Modified Project would be beneficial to the natural resources (fish and wildlife) and air quality in the area. As such, the EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact HYD-2: Project implementation would increase the Salton Sea's salinity. The Modified Project could include construction of aquatic resource ponds similar to the SCH ponds that could slightly increase salinity of the Salton Sea due to less saline water being contained in the ponds while the Sea gets saltier. Enhancement of existing wetlands could temporarily detain stormwater behind berms although hydraulic modeling conducted for the Bombay Beach Wetland Enhancement Project indicates that the majority (95% to 97%) of stormwater flows

would still go to the Sea (Jacobs 2025). This would be a less-than-significant impact even with the proposed modifications because the same volume of water would otherwise flow to the Sea where it would be subject to a similar evaporation rate. The Salton Sea will get more saline, regardless of whether the Modified Project is implemented. Implementation of habitat and dust suppression projects would divert surface water for the purpose of establishing vegetation and suppressing dust at each of the project sites. This may result in an incremental increase in the salinity of the Sea but would not alter overall salinity of the Sea and would be a less-than-significant impact. Use of water for the Modified Project would be beneficial to the natural resources (fish and wildlife) and air quality in the area. As such, the EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact HYD-3: Project operations would cause changes in Salton Sea water quality but would not violate established standards. The Modified Project would include operating projects adjacent to the receding Salton Sea. Some projects may include onsite groundwater wells that would be used to supplement surface water needed for the project. However, implementation of these projects, including installation of groundwater wells, would be subject to permitting by regulatory agencies to ensure that established water quality standards would not be violated. This would be a less-than-significant impact. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact HYD-4: Construction of the SCH ponds would temporarily degrade water quality at the Salton Sea. The Modified Project would include constructing projects adjacent to the receding Salton Sea which has the potential to affect water quality at the Sea. For each project, a SWPPP would be implemented for construction and maintenance activities, and these plans would address the potential for erosion and incorporate appropriate protections into construction activities and project design. Impacts would be similar to those described for the Approved Project in the EIS/EIR, and would be less than significant. This EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact HYD-5: Berm failure could increase erosion and sedimentation of the adjacent river and the Salton Sea. Potentially damaged berms from aquatic resource pond projects and wetland enhancement projects would be repaired promptly. Even with a berm failure, however, because the berms are downgradient of nearby canals and rivers, and any water released from the ponds would flow away from them, toward the Salton Sea. The analysis in the EIS/EIR applies to the Modified Project because impacts from the use of water from the New and Alamo Rivers would be as described in the EIS/EIR. It would also apply to water from the Whitewater River because there are no other downstream users of that water. This would be a less-than-significant impact. This EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

No new significant impacts on hydrology and water quality would occur as a result of the Modified Project, nor would a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects occur.

3.11 LAND USE AND PLANNING

Applicable Impacts

Impact LU-1: Given the implementation of mitigation measures identified in other sections of this Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report, the SCH Project would be compatible with the Imperial County General Plan and other applicable land use plans or policies. The Modified Project would include similar improvements as outlined in the EIS/EIR. The projects would be developed in coordination with ICAPCD, SCAQMD, and others, which would ensure that they are consistent with the plans and policies of these agencies, including Riverside County. In addition, as discussed in Section 3.4, Biology, a portion of the 10-Year Plan area at the north end of the Salton Sea is within the planning boundaries of the CVMSHCP and are part of the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel and Delta Conservation Area. The CVMSHCP is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional habitat conservation plan focusing on conservation of species and their associated habitats in the Coachella Valley region of Riverside County. Projects proposed in this area may need to be undertaken in consultation with the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC). In addition, the

Modified Project would comply with all applicable mitigation measures included in the EIS/EIR. As a result, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts associated with land use compatibility would occur with implementation of the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact LU-2: Restoration of habitat for birds that are dependent on the Salton Sea would not result in substantive conflicts with existing adjacent land uses. The Modified Project would be constructed within exposed playa adjacent to the Salton Sea. Except for the North Shore Beach and Yacht Club located at the east end of the North Lake Wetland Project area, which serves as a community center and local landmark, there are no developed land uses are located in proximity of the Modified Project locations, and the locations would not be adequate for future development. The North Lake Wetland Project would be designed in a way to complement (or at least not impede) the Yacht Club's existing community center use. As such, the Modified Project would not conflict with any existing or planned land uses. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact LU-3: The Project would be designed to minimize conflicts with future planned land uses. Implementation of the Modified Project would not interfere with the implementation of the future planned land uses around the Salton Sea since all projects would be constructed within exposed playa adjacent to the Sea. As such, the Modified Project would not conflict with any planned land uses. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

No new significant land use impacts or substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts would occur as a result of the proposed modifications to the Approved Project.

3.12 NOISE

Applicable Impacts

Impact NOI-1: Daytime construction and maintenance activities would cause a temporary increase in noise levels near the Project sites. Modified Project improvements would be limited to areas of exposed, dry playa adjacent to the Salton Sea. Similar construction equipment would be required as analyzed in the EIS/EIR for the Approved Project as for implementation of the various habitat and dust suppression projects that are part of the Modified Project. Project activities would occur in sparsely populated areas. No houses, parks, schools, libraries, senior facilities, day care centers or hospitals are located within 1,000 feet of any of the Modified Project areas. Similarly, the access routes are in sparsely populated areas with no sensitive receptors nearby. Maintenance activities would require only limited number of workers to come to the sites periodically (typically quarterly or annually). Noise impacts from construction and maintenance activities would be less than significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

However, construction activities could generate noise sufficient to affect special status birds or nesting birds. This is discussed in Section 3.4, Biological Resources, and is addressed in ***MM BIO-3, Conduct noise calculations/measurements and implement noise attenuation measures, if needed***. Implementation of this measure would ensure that noise impacts to wildlife would be less than significant.

Impact NOI-3: Construction truck traffic at some locations on local roads would cause a temporary increase in noise near residents. While Modified Project improvements would be limited to areas of exposed, dry playa adjacent to the Salton Sea, access to the project sites would be via local public roads. While there are no residents near the project areas that comprise the Modified Project, construction traffic for some projects could pass through residential communities. All truck trips would be temporary, take place within the hours allowed by Imperial and Riverside Counties and, to the extent practicable, follow routes to avoid residences. As such, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts associated with temporary noise increases from construction traffic would occur with implementation of the Modified Project, and impacts would remain less than significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Inapplicable Impacts

Impact NOI-2: Dredging could extend beyond the hours typically allowed by Imperial County. The Modified Project would not require dredging. As such, Impact NOI-2 is not applicable to the Modified Project. This EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact NOI-4: Noise from installation of the seawater pipeline and associated pump could exceed Imperial County's construction thresholds. The Modified Project would not require installation of seawater pipeline. As such, Impact NOI-4 is not applicable to the Modified Project. This EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact NOI-5: Noise from operation of the seawater pump could exceed Imperial County's thresholds at Red Hill Park. The Modified Project would not involve operation of the seawater pump or be located near Imperial County's Red Hill Park. As such, Impact NOI-5 is not applicable to the Modified Project. This EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

The various habitat and dust suppression activities that would be required for implementation of the Modified Project would be constructed within exposed playa areas of the Salton Sea. Noise impacts due to construction traffic would be temporary and less than significant. No new significant noise impacts or substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified impact would occur as a result of the proposed modifications to the Approved Project.

3.13 PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Applicable Impact

Impact PALEO-1: Ground-disturbing activities could expose and damage undiscovered paleontological resources. Some of the project areas that comprise the Modified Project would be constructed in areas underlain by geologic formations with high sensitivity for presence of paleontological resources. As such, ***MM PALEO-1*****,** ***MM PALEO-2*** and ***MM-PALEO 3*** would be implemented to ensure inadvertent finds of paleontological resources during ground disturbance are properly treated. Even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts associated with paleontological resources would occur with implementation of the Modified Project compared to the Approved Project. Impacts would remain potentially significant but reduced to less than significant with mitigation measures. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Existing or Modified Mitigation Measures

MM PALEO-1 and **MM PALEO-3** have been updated for the Modified Project as shown in *italics* below. **MM PALEO-2** remains the same from the Approved Project.

MM PALEO-1 **Prepare and implement a survey plan and a paleontological monitoring plan.** A plan for the survey of project areas will be prepared to facilitate identification of paleontological resources prior to initiation of ground-disturbing activities. Additionally, prior to construction, a certified paleontologist retained by the lead agencies will supervise monitoring of construction excavations and produce a *Paleontological Resources Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (PRMMP)*. Paleontological monitoring will include inspection of exposed rock units and microscopic examination of matrix to determine if fossils are present. The monitor will have authority to temporarily divert grading away from exposed fossils to recover the fossil specimens. Monitoring will take place on a full-time basis when construction *excavations occur in geologic units with moderate and high paleontological potential (Potential Fossil Yield Classification [PFYC] 3 and 4). For geologic units with low paleontological potential at the surface (PFYC 2), monitoring will take place on a full-time basis when construction* occurs at depths greater than 5 feet *below ground*

surface, part-time (4 hours a day) when excavations exceed 2 feet *below ground surface*, and on a spot-check basis on excavations less than 2 feet *below ground surface*. The paleontologist will document interim results of the construction monitoring program with monthly progress reports. Additionally, at each fossil locality, field data forms will record that locality, stratigraphic columns will be measured, and appropriate scientific samples will be submitted for analysis.

MM PALEO-2 **Conduct worker training.** Construction supervisors and crew will receive training by a certified paleontologist in the procedures for identifying and protecting paleontological resources, as well as procedures to be implemented in the event fossil remains are encountered during ground-disturbing activities.

MM PALEO-3 **Prepare and implement a paleontological resource data recovery plan.** If fossils are encountered during construction, construction activities will be temporarily diverted from the discovery, and the monitor will notify all concerned parties and collect matrix for testing and processing as directed by the Project paleontologist. To expedite removal of fossil-bearing matrix, the monitor will be empowered to request heavy machinery to assist in moving large quantities of matrix out of the path of construction to designated stockpile areas. Construction will resume at the discovery location once all the necessary matrix is stockpiled, as determined by the paleontological monitor. Testing of stockpiles will consist of screen washing small samples to determine if important fossils are present. If such fossils are present, the additional matrix from the stockpiles will be water screened to ensure recovery of a scientifically significant sample. Samples collected will be limited to a maximum of 6,000 pounds per locality. *The Project paleontologist will direct identification laboratory processing, cataloguing, analysis, and documentation of fossil collections. When appropriate, portions of rock or sediment samples will be submitted to commercial laboratories for microfossil, pollen, and/or radiometric dating analysis. Prior to construction, the lead agencies will enter into a formal agreement with a recognized museum repository. Further, they will create the fossil collections, appropriate field and laboratory documentation, and the final Paleontological Resource Recovery Report in a timely manner following construction. A final technical report will be prepared in accordance with the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) guidelines and lead agency requirements. The final report will be submitted to the lead agency and the curation repository.*

Conclusion

The Modified Project, including implementing new mitigation measures, would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts to Paleontological Resources compared to the Approved Project.

3.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Applicable Impacts

Impact POP-1: Out-of-town construction workers would cause a temporary, slight increase in Imperial County population. Many workers would be drawn from local populations in Imperial and Riverside Counties over the several years of construction. Some workers may come from outside Imperial or Riverside counties to conduct the work, thereby causing a temporary, slight increase in the population of these counties, although the work is temporary, and the number of jobs limited. This would be a less-than-significant and temporary impact. Long-term project maintenance would occur intermittently (some tasks would be conducted weekly or monthly and others quarterly or annually) and would require fewer people than during construction. This would be a less-than-significant impact. Therefore, no permanent impacts associated with a population increase would occur with implementation of the Modified Project. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact POP-2: Project operation would increase opportunities for passive recreational activity and research due at the SCH ponds, which could result in increased visitor days. Implementation of the Modified Project would enhance passive recreational opportunities such as birding, hiking, picnicking, and photography, and at some locations would include hiking trails, picnic areas, ancillary public facilities (such as interpretive panels), and launch features for non-motorized water craft. The Salton Sea area has historically attracted visitors for recreation, and the Modified Project would create habitat on the exposed lakebed capable of supporting more habitat for birds and wildlife. The Modified Project would not result in any long-term changes in population in the surrounding area. This would be a less-than-significant impact in terms of population in the area but a beneficial impact for those coming to Salton Sea. This EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

Construction activities associated with the Modified Project would be temporary. Long-term maintenance activities would be completed intermittently over several years as needed to maintain habitat and vegetation enhancement, as well as to keep dust suppression features in place. No long-term relocation of workers or their families would be required. No new significant impacts or substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts on population and housing would occur as a result of implementation of the Modified Project.

3.15 PUBLIC SERVICES

Applicable Impact

Impact PS-1: Construction and maintenance activities could result in increased demand for emergency services (police, fire, and trauma centers), as could increase use of the Project site by recreational visitors. Construction and O&M of habitat and dust suppression projects could result in a small temporary increase in demand for emergency services (police, fire, and trauma centers) during construction. The Modified Project does not include any unusually dangerous activities, and the increased demand associated with project activities would be within the capacity of local emergency service providers. The temporary increased demand would not be expected to affect the ability of providers to maintain their current level of service or require new or altered facilities. The Modified Project would not increase the demand for emergency or other services during construction in comparison to the Approved Project. This would be a less-than-significant impact. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

No new significant impacts on Public Services would occur as a result implementation of the Modified Project.

3.16 RECREATION

Applicable Impact

Impact REC-1: The SCH Project would create recreational opportunities at the pond sites. The Modified Project could create recreational opportunities (birding, hiking, picnicking, and photography) around the Salton Sea, especially near habitat projects that attract more wildlife, including birds. This is a beneficial effect, as described in the SCH EIRS/EIR. The Project is not specifically designed to accommodate recreation because the provision of recreational opportunities is not a Project goal. However, some recreational activities would be available to the extent that they are compatible with management of the restoration areas. Public access could be allowed to facilitate day use such as (or) including, hiking, bird-watching, and non-motorized watercraft use, where permitted in land use agreements. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

The Modified Project could create new sources of recreation around the Salton Sea. These impacts would be beneficial, as identified for the Approved Project. No new significant impacts on Recreation would occur as a result of the Modified Project.

3.17 TRANSPORTATION

Applicable Impacts

Impact TRAN-1: The SCH Project would increase traffic during construction and operations, but would not reduce the level of service of any roadways below the County of Imperial's standard (LOS C). The Modified Project could increase traffic on local roadways during construction, although construction equipment may be left out on site for several days at a time until a particular area has been completed. Habitat and dust suppression projects would be completed intermittently, and O&M activities would extend for at least 5 years or as need to maintain their restoration function. The minimal, short-term increase in traffic due to construction activities would not reduce the level of service of any roadways below Imperial or Riverside County standards. Minimal personnel would be needed to complete occasional maintenance activities over time to ensure that habitat and dust suppression projects continue to function as designed, and that there is adequate dust suppression on each project site. Therefore, the Modified Project would not result in a substantial increase in traffic. This would be a less-than-significant impact. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact TRAN-2: Construction/maintenance equipment and tractor trailers could be present in areas used by farm equipment, but would not pose a substantial safety hazard. Construction vehicles would use existing roadways to access the various project areas. All construction staging would be contained within each project area. As such, construction vehicles required for the Modified Project would not pose a safety hazard within proximity of agricultural lands or along public roads. This would be a less-than-significant impact. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact TRAN-3: Emergency vehicles would retain their ability to access the Project area during construction and operations despite increased traffic and construction near roadways. Construction vehicles would use existing roadways to access the various project areas. All construction staging would be contained within each project area. As such, all existing roadways would remain open and accessible to emergency vehicles during construction of the Modified Project. This would be a less-than-significant impact. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

Construction and maintenance activities associated with the Modified Project have the potential to temporarily increase traffic on local roads, but traffic levels would return to normal once construction or a specific maintenance activity is complete. No new significant impacts on Transportation would occur as a result of the proposed modifications to the Approved Project.

3.18 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Applicable Impacts

Impact UT-1: Dust suppression water would be required, but would not exceed supplies. The Modified Project would involve implementing habitat and dust suppression projects in the 10-Year Plan area. Beyond naturally occurring surface water to supply existing wetlands and to be used as a source for new ponds, these activities would require water for construction (dust suppression and pond creation) and maintenance (irrigation for vegetation establishment and pond filling).The water would come from stormwater runoff and would be supplemented by groundwater coming from new or existing wells within the 10-Year Plan area. Once habitat

projects are completed and vegetation established, they are not expected to require excessive amounts of water. Given that the Modified Project would be implemented over several years, demand in any given year of construction would likely be similar to the demand estimated for the Approved Project, which would be a less-than-significant impact. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Impact UT-2: Construction and operations would generate solid waste requiring disposal in landfills. Solid waste associated with the Modified Project would be limited to trash generated by workers and removal of existing debris within the project site that would need to be disposed of properly. As such, even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts would occur regarding solid waste generation compared to the EIS/EIR. Impacts would remain less than significant. The EIS/EIR impact conclusion remains unchanged.

Conclusion

The Modified Project would not result in new impacts to existing utilities and service systems. No new significant impacts on Utilities and Service Systems would occur as a result of the Modified Project.

3.19 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The Modified Project would not result in new significant cumulative impacts or increase the severity of cumulative impacts identified in the EIS/EIR. Cumulative impacts would be similar to those of the Approved Project because project-specific impacts would be similar, resulting primarily from construction activities, which would combine with those of other nearby projects in similar ways. Construction impacts associated with the Modified Project would be short-term and limited to intermittent work over a several-year construction period. Long-term impacts as a result of habitat and dust suppression projects would be beneficial to regional air quality, habitat, and recreational opportunities and would not contribute to adverse environmental impacts in combination with other projects. Two projects proposed in the Salton Sea area were considered for cumulative impacts.

As discussed in Section 2.1, the KGRA, shown in Figures 3 through 6, is an area designated by the USGS as an area with potential for development of geothermal energy sources. There are currently 10 geothermal plants operating in the Salton Sea KGRA, most of which started production before 2000. More recently, the area is being studied for lithium extraction from the brine found in the same areas as the geothermal projects. In particular, Imperial County prepared and released a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) in December 2025 for the proposed (Lithium Valley Specific Plan (LVSP) Project. The LVSP encompasses over 50,000 acres, mostly within the KGRA, and would serve as the primary guide for future development in the region to facilitate the transition to renewable energy and low-impact mineral recovery industries, while supporting sustainable development and healthy communities. Due to the size and scale of the projects associated with implementing the LVSP, the Draft PEIR identified significant and unavoidable impacts to aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, population and housing, tribal cultural resources, and transportation (Imperial County 2025a, 2025b). These impacts are associated with construction and operation of the LVSP, whereas the Modified Project's impacts are mostly associated with construction which are temporary, and long-term impacts are generally beneficial to the region's air quality and biological resources. While combining Modified Project impacts with the LVSP Project would result in some cumulative impacts, most of these impacts would occur as a result of the LSVP and not the Modified Project.

Another potential regional project being studied at the Salton Sea is a Feasibility Study being conducted as a joint effort by the Corps Los Angeles District, the Salton Sea Authority (SSA), and the Salton Sea Program (SSP) (the SSMP is transitioning to the SSP). DWR and the SSA represent the non-federal co-sponsors in the agreement with the Corps. The Feasibility Study officially began in March 2023. The Feasibility Study's goal is to recommend a restoration plan to Congress for Ecosystem Restoration at the Salton Sea. If a feasible and federally justified restoration solution is identified and approved, it has the potential to receive a 65% federal cost share for construction. The Feasibility Study builds upon the Phase 1: 10-Year Plan and the Long-Range Plan (LRP), which focuses on creating habitat and suppressing dust on exposed lakebed around the Salton Sea. The Study

evaluates different ecosystem restoration plans, referred to as “alternatives,” based on effectiveness, cost efficiency, acceptability, duration to achieve restoration benefits, and resiliency to future water supply scenarios. The Study also evaluates existing and future conditions at the Sea without these ecosystem projects. Impacts associated with implementing the final alternative associated with the Feasibility Study would be similar in nature and scope as those associated with the Modified Project, and most impacts would occur after the 10-Year Plan projects are under construction. In addition, the Corps would prepare a NEPA document for the project and CNRA (as project proponent) would prepare a CEQA document, thereby addressing potential project impacts at that time.

The conclusion that implementation of the Modified Project would result in temporary construction impacts and long-term beneficial impacts to air quality and biological resources remains the same. No significant cumulative impacts would occur.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

Section 15164 of the CEQA Guidelines describes the conditions under which an addendum to an EIR should be prepared as follows:

> (a) The lead agency or responsible agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred.

Section 15162 of the CEQA Guidelines calls for preparation of a subsequent EIR in limited circumstances, including "the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects…."

As discussed in Section 3, implementing the Modified Project, would result in impacts similar to those already analyzed in the SCH Project EIS/EIR and 2017 Addendum for the SSMP, and even though a negligible increase in impacts would occur, no new impacts would occur to trigger the need for preparing a subsequent EIR or a supplement to the EIR because:

- There are no substantial changes that would cause new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects, nor have substantial changes occurred to the circumstances under which the Project would be constructed.
- No new information of substantial importance has been identified that would result in significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or 2017 Addendum or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.
- Modified or added mitigation measures identified in this Addendum are not required, but are provided as additional measures to further reduce potential impacts.

Thus, this addendum meets the requirements under CEQA.

5.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

California Department of Water Resources

Megan Giglini, Program Manager I, Salton Sea Restoration Office

Melinda Dorin, Lead Manager, Salton Sea Restoration Office

Tetra Tech, Inc.

Mary McKinnon, Principal Environmental Analyst

Stephanie Pacheco, Soil Scientist

Jenna Farrell, MA, RPA, Principal Archaeologist

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ATTACHMENT 1

Potential Sensitive Biological Resources

Salton Sea Management Program

Updated 10-Year Plan Project

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Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Plants			
Chaparral sand-verbena (*Abronia villosa* var. *aurita*)[A,B]	Chaparral, coastal scrub, desert dunes; sandy soils.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 1B.1	**Potential** Annual herb that occurs in creosote scrub and desert dune habitats. Flowers January through September. Known from one record located in the Salton Sea State Recreation Area from 1949. This species may occur in undeveloped desert dune/sandy habitat located within the study area.
Singlewhorl burro bush (*Ambrosia monogyra*)[A]	Chaparral, Sonoran desert scrub. Sandy soils. 5 to 475 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.2	**Potential.** Perennial shrub that occurs in creosote scrub and sandy soils. Flowers August through November. This species may occur in undeveloped desert dune/sandy habitat located within the study area.
San Bernardino milk-vetch (*Astragalus bernardinus*)[A]	Joshua tree woodland, pinyon and juniper woodland. Granitic or carbonate substrates. 290 to 2,290 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 1B.2	**Low Potential.** Perennial herb that occurs in Joshua tree or juniper woodlands that blooms April through June. No suitable habitat for this species is likely present within the study area.
Salton milk-vetch (*Astragalus crotalariae*)[A]	Valleys, washes, in desert foothills or open, sandy, gravelly areas.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 4.3	**Potential.** Perennial herb that occurs in washes, sandy or gravelly habitats. Blooms January through April. This species may occur in undeveloped desert washes within the study area.
Harwood's milk-vetch (*Astragalus insularis* var. *harwoodii*)[A]	Sonoran Desert, sandy or gravelly areas.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS:2B.2	**Potential.** Annual herb that occurs in creosote scrub, desert dune habitats. Flowers January through May. This species may occur in undeveloped desert dune/sandy habitat within the study area.
Coachella Valley milk-vetch (*Astragalus lentiginousus* var. *coachellae*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub, desert dunes. Sandy flats, washes, outwash fans, sometimes on dunes. 35 to 695 meters.	Federal: FE State: ND CNPS: 1B.1	**Potential.** Annual or perennial herb that occurs in dune and sandy habitat in desert scrub. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat/sandy habitat within the study area.
Gravel milk-vetch (*Astragalus sabulonum)*[A]	Desert dunes, Mojavean Desert and Sonoran Desert scrub; sandy or gravelly flats, washes, roadsides.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.2	**Potential.** Annual herb that occurs in sandy, gravelly flats, washes, and roadsides. Blooms February through June. Due to its tolerance of disturbance, this species may be present in areas that have been previously disturbed, either due to human causes or natural processes. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat/sandy, gravelly disturbed habitat within the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Plants (continued)			
Triple-ribbed milk-vetch (*Astragalus tricarinatus*)[A]	Sonoran and Mojave Desert scrub, restricted to arid, sandy or gravelly canyons along washes.	Federal: FE State: ND CNPS:1B.2	**Potential.** Perennial herb that occurs in gravely and sandy areas in desert scrub and Joshua tree woodland. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat/sandy, gravelly habitat within the study area.
California ayenia (*Ayenia compacta*)[A]	Mojavean desert scrub, Sonoran desert scrub. Sandy and gravelly washes in the desert; dry desert canyons. 60 to 1,830 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.3	**Potential.** Perennial herb or shrub that occurs in desert scrub, gravelly washes. Blooms March through April. This species may occur in undeveloped habitat/gravelly washes associated with canyons within the study area.
Peirson's pincushion (*Chaenactis carphoclinia* var. *peirsonii*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub. Open rocky or sandy sites. 3 to 185 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 1B.3	**Potential**. Annual herb that occurs in desert scrub, rocky or sandy habitat. Blooms March through April. This species may occur in undeveloped rocky or sandy habitat within the study area.
Sand evening-primrose (*Chylismia arenaria*)[A.B]	Sonoran desert scrub. Sandy or rocky sites. 155 to 425 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.2	**Potential**. Annual or perennial herb that occurs in creosote bush scrub. Blooms November through May. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat/sandy, rocky habitat within the study area.
California saw-grass (*Cladium californicum*)[A]	Occurs in wetlands; freshwater marshes, alkali sink, wetland-riparian habitat.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.2	**Potential**. Perennial herb that occurs in wetlands/alkali sinks and wetland riparian habitat. Blooms June through September. This species may occur in marshes and wetland riparian habitat within the study area.
California ditaxis (*Ditaxis serrata* var. *californica*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub. On sandy washes and alluvial fans of the foothills and lower desert slopes. 60 to 705 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 3.2	**Potential**. Perennial herb that occurs in sandy washes and alluvial fan habitat. Blooms from March through December. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat/alluvial fan and sandy wash habitat within the study area.
Abrams' spurge (*Euphorbia abramsiana*)[A]	Mojavean desert scrub, Sonoran desert scrub. Sandy sites. -45 to 1,445 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.2	**Potential**. Annual herb that occurs in desert scrub/sandy habitats. Blooms from September through November. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat/sandy habitat within the study area.
Pink velvet mallow (*Horsfordia alata*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub. Rocky sites. 100 to 500 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 4.3	**Potential.** Perennial shrub that occurs in rocky desert habitat. Blooms in January. This species may occur in undeveloped rocky desert habitat within the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Plants (continued)			
Newberry's velvet-mallow (*Horsfordia newberryi*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub. Rocky sites. 3 to 800 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 3.2	**Potential.** Perennial herb that occurs in rocky desert habitat. Blooms in January. This species may occur in undeveloped rocky desert habitat within the study area.
Wright's Jaffueliobryum moss (*Jaffueliobryum wrightii*)[A]	Alpine dwarf scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland, Mojavean desert scrub. Dry openings, rock crevices, carbonate. 160 to 2,625 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.3	**Low Potential**. A moss that occurs in alpine dwarf scrub, pinyon-juniper woodland and desert scrub habitats. . No suitable habitat for this species is likely present within the study area.
Ribbed cryptantha (*Johnstonella costata*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub, Mojavean desert scrub, desert dunes. Sandy and gravelly places. -60 to 500 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 4.3	**Potential**. Annual herb that occurs in desert scrub habitat/sandy and gravely habitat. Blooms February through May. This species may occur in undeveloped sandy/gravelly desert habitat within the study area.
Winged cryptantha (*Johnstonella holoptera*)[A]	Mojavean Desert scrub, Sonoran Desert scrub.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 4.3	**Potential.** Annual herb that occurs in desert scrub habitat. Blooms February through May. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat within the study area.
Copper's rush (*Juncus cooperi*)[A]	Occurs in marshes and desert springs with alkaline and/or saline soils	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 4.3	**Potential**. Perennial herb that occurs in marshes and springs with alkaline/saline soils. Blooms April through May. This species may occur in marshes and wetland riparian habitat within the study area.
Parish's desert-thorn *(Lycium parishii*)[A]	Coastal scrub, Sonoran desert scrub. -3 to 570 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.3	**Potential**. Perennial shrub that occurs In desert scrub habitat. Blooms March through April. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat within the study area.
Torrey's box-thorn (*Lycium torreyi*)[A]	Mojavean desert scrub, Sonoran desert scrub. Sandy, rocky, washes, streambanks, desert valleys. -50 to 1,220 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 4.2	**Potential**. Perennial shrub that occurs In desert scrub/rocky wash habitat. Blooms March through May. This species may occur in undeveloped desert rocky wash habitat within the study area.
Slender-lobed four o'clock (*Mirabilis tenuiloba*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub. 300 to 1,095 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 4.3	**Potential.** Perennial herb that occurs in desert scrub habitat. Blooms March through May. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat within the study area.
Mud nama (*Nama stenocarpa*)[A.B]	Marshes and swamps. Lake shores, riverbanks, intermittently wet areas. -68 to 815 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.2	**Low Potential**. Annual or perennial herb that occurs on lake shores and intermittent wet/mesic habitat. Blooms January through July. No suitable habitat for this species is likely present within the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Plants (continued)			
Slender cottonheads *(Nemacaulis denudate* var. *gracilis*)[A]	Coastal dunes, desert dunes, Sonoran desert scrub. In dunes or sand. -45 to 745 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.2	**Potential**. Annual herb that occurs in desert dunes or sandy habitat. Blooms April through May. This species may occur in undeveloped desert dune habitat within the study area.
Narrow-leaf sandpaper plant (*Petalonyx linearis*)[A]	Mojavean Desert scrub, Sonoran Desert scrub; sandy or rocky canyons.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.3	**Potential.** Perennial shrub that occurs in creosote bush scrub. Blooms March through May. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat/sandy, rocky canyon habitat within the study area.
Sand food (*Pholisma sonorae*)[A]	Desert dunes, Sonoran desert scrub. Loose, deep sand dunes, usually on the more stable, windward face. 0 to 125 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 1B.2	**Potential**. Perennial herb that is a parasitic plant associated with various desert shrubs in loose, deep sand dune habitat. Blooms April through July. This species may occur in undeveloped desert sand dune habitat within the study area.
Thurber's pilostyles (*Pilostyles thurberi*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub. Sandy alluvial plains, sandstone talus. Parasite on Psorothamnus emoryi. -50 to 365 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 4.3	**Potential**. Perennial herb that is a parasitic plant associated with *Psorothamnus emoryi* in alluvial fan habitat. Blooms in January. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat where *Psorothamnus emoryi* is present.
Latimer's woodland gilia (*Saltugilia latimeri*)[A]	Chaparral, Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland. Rocky or sandy substrate; sometimes in washes, sometimes limestone. 120 to 2,200 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 1B.2	**Potential.** Annual herb that occurs in desert scrub habitat/rocky or sandy habitat or in washes. Blooms in May through June. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat/rocky or sandy habitat or in washes within the study area.
Orocopia sage (*Salvia greatae*)[A,B]	Mojavean Desert scrub, Sonoran Desert Scrub; broad alluvial bajadas and fans adjacent to desert washes in gravelly or sandy soils, rocky slopes of canyons.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 1B.3	**Potential.** Perennial shrub that occurs in desert scrub habitat/rocky or sandy habitat associated with washes. Flowers March through April. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat/alluvial bajadas or fans, sandy, gravelly rocky canyon habitat within the study area.
Cove's cassia (*Senna covesii*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub. Dry, sandy desert washes, slopes. 255 to 1,295 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.2	**Potential.** Perennial herb that occurs in desert scrub habitat/sandy wash habitat. Flowers March through June. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat/sandy wash habitat within the study area.
Broadleaf pondweed (*Stuckenia striata*)[A,B]	Marshes and swamps. Lakes, ponds, rivers, and drainage canals. -70 to 2,135 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 2B.3	**Potential.** Perennial herb that occurs in marshes and drainage canals. Blooms July through August. This species may occur in wetland/irrigation canals located within the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Plants (continued)			
Chocolate Mountains tiquilia (*Tiquilia canescens* var *pulchella*)[A]	Sonoran Desert scrub.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 3.2	**Potential.** Perennial herb or shrub that occurs in desert scrub habitat. Blooms March through May. This species may occur in undeveloped desert habitat within the study area.
Mecca-aster (*Xylorhiza cognata*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub. Steep canyon slopes, in sandstone and clay. 20 to 305 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 1B.2	**Potential.** Perennial herb that occurs in desert scrub habitat/steep canyon slopes. Blooms January through July. This species may occur in undeveloped desert steep canyon habitat within the study area
Orcutt's woody-aster (*Xylorhiza orcuttii*)[A]	Sonoran desert scrub. Arid canyons; often in washes. 0 to 365 meters.	Federal: ND State: ND CNPS: 1B.2	**Potential.** Perennial herb that occurs in desert scrub habitat/ canyon slopes and washes. Blooms March through April. This species may occur in undeveloped desert canyon and wash habitat within the study area
Birds			
Clark's grebe (*Aechmophorus clarkii*)[C]	Large inland freshwater lakes. In the autumn, migrate to the Pacific Coast moving into saltwater bays, estuaries, and open ocean waters.	Federal: BCC State: ND	**High Potential,** The Salton Sea and associated marshes may provide suitable habitat within the study area. for winter migrants
Western grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*)[C]	Inhabit large inland, freshwater lakes and swamps. Migrate to sheltered bays, estuaries and along the Pacific Coast.	Federal: BCC State: ND	**High Potential.** The Salton Sea and associated marshes may provide suitable habitat within the study area. for winter migrants.
Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*)[C]	Highly colonial species, most numerous in Central Valley and vicinity. Largely endemic to California. Habitat includes freshwater marshes and swamps.	Federal: BCC State: ST	**Low Potential.** Requires open water, protected nesting substrate, and foraging area with insect prey within a few kilometers of the colony. No suitable habitat for this species is located within the study area.
Mountain plover (*Anarhynchus montanus*)[B]	Short grasslands, freshly plowed fields, newly sprouting grain fields, and sometimes sod farms. Short vegetation, bare ground, and flat topography. Prefers grazed areas and areas with burrowing rodents.	Federal: ND State: Species of Special Concern	**High Potential.** Found in grassland/short vegetation habitats. Suitable habitat for this species is located within the study area.
Great egret (*Ardea alba*)[B]	Colonial nester in large trees. Rookery sites located near marshes, tide-flats, irrigated pastures, and margins of rivers and lakes.	Federal: ND State: ND	**High Potential.** Found in marshes and irrigated pastures. Suitable habitat is present within the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Birds (continued)			
Great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*)[B]	Colonial nester in tall trees, cliffsides, and sequestered spots on marshes. Rookery sites in close proximity to foraging areas: marshes, lake margins, tide-flats, rivers and streams, wet meadows.	Federal: ND State: ND	**High Potential.** Found in marshes and wet meadows and rookeries are located in sequestered areas. Suitable habitat is present within the study area.
Long-eared owl (*Asio otus*)[C]	Riparian bottomlands grown to tall willows and cottonwoods; also, belts of live oak paralleling stream courses.	Federal: BCC State: Species of Special Concern	**Low Potential.** Requires adjacent open land, productive of mice and the presence of old nests of crows, hawks, or magpies for breeding.
Western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia hypugaea*)[B]	Inhabit open, treeless areas with sparse vegetation. Ground-dwelling owls that rely on burrows for nesting and roosting and will utilize burrows created by other animals.	Federal: ND State: CT	**High Potential.** Found in habitats with minimal vegetation cover such as prairie, desert, and coastal grassland. Suitable burrowing habitat is present within the study area.
Costa's hummingbird (*Calypte costae*)[C]	Desert riparian, desert and arid scrub foothill habitats.	Federal: BCC State: ND	**Low Potential.** Suitable habitat includes Sonoran and Mojavean Deserts, chaparral and sage scrub habitat. Suitable habitat may potentially occur within the study area.
Western snowy plover (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*) (Interior Population)[B,C]	Sandy beaches, salt pond levees and shores of large alkali lakes; needs sand, gravelly or friable soils for nesting.	Federal: ND State: Species of Special Concern	**High Potential.** Suitable habitat includes coastal beaches as well as salt pond levees, river bars, and estuarine flats. Nesting by this species has been recorded within the study area.
Western snowy plover (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*) (Pacific Coast population)[B,C]	Sandy beaches, salt pond levees and shores of large alkali lakes; needs sand, gravelly or friable soils for nesting.	Federal: FT State: Species of Special Concern	**Low Potential.** Suitable habitat includes coastal beaches as well as salt pond levees, river bars, and estuarine flats. The Pacific Coast population of western snowy plovers is not known to inhabit areas as far inland as the Salton Sea.
Snowy egret (*Egretta thula*)[B]	Colonial nester, with nest sites situated in protected beds of dense tules. Rookery sites situated close to foraging areas: marshes, tidal-flats, streams, wet meadows, and borders of lakes.	Federal: ND State: ND	High Potential. Inhabits wetlands and marshes with dense tules. Suitable habitat is present within the study area.
Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*)[C]	Riparian woodlands in Southern California.	Federal: FE State: SE	**Moderate Potential.** Inhabits dense, shrub- and small tree-dominated areas around a water source, usually within riparian habitats. Suitable riparian habitat to support this species may be present within the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Birds (continued)			
Prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)[B]	Inhabits dry, open terrain, either level or hilly. Breeding sites located on cliffs. Forages far afield, even to marshlands and ocean shores.	Federal: ND State: ND	**Low Potential.** Inhabits a wide range of habitat types; however, nesting usually occurs in a crevice, pothole, or cliff ledge with an overhang. Suitable nesting sites for this species are not likely present within the study area and the species would likely only be found foraging or migrating through.
Gull-billed tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)[B,C]	Noted at Species Conservation Habitat (SCH) and Kane Spring sites. Only known breeding colonies at San Diego Bay and the Salton Sea; nests on low sandy islets. Known to feed on fishes at the mouth of the Colorado River and grasshoppers in alfalfa fields.	Federal: BCC State: ND	**High Potential.** Breeds on gravelly, sandy beaches. Known from six nearby records largely concentrated at the southern end of the sea, with one record located near the mouth of the Whitewater river. Suitable nesting colony habitat for this species is present within the study area.
Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)[C]	Ocean shore, lake margins, and rivers for both nesting and wintering. Most nests within 1 mile of water.	Federal: D, BCC State: FP	**Low Potential.** Nests in large, old-growth, or dominant live tree with open branches, especially ponderosa pine. Roosts communally in winter. Suitable nesting habitat and prey is not present within the study area.
Caspian tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*)[B]	Nests on sandy or gravelly beaches and shell banks in small colonies inland and along the coast. Inland freshwater lakes and marshes; also, brackish or salt waters of estuaries and bays.	Federal: ND State: ND	**High Potential.** Breeds on open ground, oftentimes islands, around large bodies of water, Suitable nesting colony habitat for this species is present within the study area.
Yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*)[B]	Summer resident; inhabits riparian thickets or willow and other brushy tangles near watercourses.	Federal: ND State: Species of Special Concern	**Moderate Potential.** Inhabits riparian corridors and densely vegetated shrubland and nests in low, dense vegetation. Suitable nesting habitat for this species may be present in the study area.
California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*) [B,C]	Inhabits freshwater marshes, wet meadows, shallow margins of saltwater marshes bordering large bays; needs water depths of ~1 inch that do not fluctuate during the year, dense plant cover for nesting habitat.	Federal: ND, BCC State: ST, FP	**High Potential.** Inhabits fresh and saltwater marshes with cattails, sedges, and other tall grasses. Known from many nearby records, largely concentrated along the southwestern edge of the Sea, with two outliers located near the Salton Sea State Recreation Area. Suitable marsh habitat for this species is present within the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Birds (continued)			
California gull (*Larus californicus*)[B]	Littoral waters, sandy beaches, waters and shorelines of bays, tidal mud-flats, marshes, lakes, etc. Colonial nester on islets in large interior lakes, either fresh or strongly alkaline.	Federal: ND State: ND	**High Potential.** Inhabits inland fresh or strongly alkaline lakes and sandy beaches. Suitable habitat is present for this species within the study area.
Gila woodpecker (*Melanerpes uropygialis*)[B]	In California, inhabits cottonwoods and other desert riparian trees, shade trees, and date palms. Cavity nester in riparian trees or saguaro cactus.	Federal: FE, BCC State: ND	**Moderate Potential.** Inhabits desert environments with trees for nesting near swales, arroyos, and riparian corridors. Suitable tree habitats for this species are potentially present within the study area.
Black-crowned night heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)[B]	Colonial nester, usually in trees, occasionally in tule patches. Rookery sites located adjacent to foraging areas: lake margins, mud-bordered bays, marshy spots.	Federal: ND State: ND	**High Potential**. Inhabits lake margins and marsh habitats including tule habitats. Suitable habitat for this species is present within the study area.
California brown pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis californicus*)[B]	Colonial nester on coastal islands just outside the surf line; nests on coastal islands of small to moderate size which afford immunity from attack by ground-dwelling predators.	Federal: D State: FP	**Moderate Potential.** Inhabits mainly coastal marine and estuarine habitats, sometimes inland wetlands habitats during the wintering season. Nesting colonies usually occur at the tops of tall trees and sometimes on steep, rocky slopes or ridges. Known from six nearby records located along the southern edge of the Sea. Suitable nesting colony habitat for this species may occur in sparse locations within the study area.
White-faced ibis (*Plegadis chihi*)[B]	Shallow freshwater marsh. Dense tule thickets for nesting, interspersed with areas of shallow water for foraging.	Federal: ND State: ND	**High Potential.** Inhabits marsh/riparian habitat with dense tule thickets. Suitable habitat for this species is present within the study area.
Black-tailed gnatcatcher (*Polioptila melanura*)[B]	Primarily inhabits wooded desert wash habitats; also occurs in desert scrub habitat, especially in winter. Nests in desert washes containing mesquite, palo verde, ironwood, acacia; absent from areas where salt cedar introduced.	Federal: ND State: ND	**Moderate Potential.** Inhabits desert wash habitat and may nest in tamarisk trees located within wetland/riparian habitats present within the study area. Suitable habitat for this species is present within the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Birds (continued)			
Lawrence's goldfinch (*Spinus lawrencei*)[C]	Nests in open oak or other arid woodland and chaparral, near water. Nearby herbaceous habitats are used for feeding.	Federal: BCC State: ND	**Low Potential.** Closely associated with oaks, broadleaved upland forest, chaparral, pinon and juniper woodlands, riparian woodland. Habitat for migrants is not likely present within the study area.
Yuma Ridgway's rail (*Rallus obsoletus yumanensis*)[B,C]	Nests in freshwater marshes along the Colorado River and along the south and east ends of the Salton Sea. Prefers stands of cattails and tules dissected by narrow channels of flowing water; principal food is crayfish.	Federal: FE State: ST, FP	**High Potential.** Inhabits marsh and swamp habitats with dense emergent vegetation. Known from many nearby records largely concentrated on the southern edge of the Sea between the Sonny Bono Salton Sea NWR and Bombay Beach. Suitable habitat for this species may occur in wetland habitat locations within the study area.
American avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*)[C]	Inhabits saline lakes, mudflats and shallow fresh or saltwater marsh habitats. Habitat. During non-breeding season, they migrate toward the southern U.S. coast, Mexico and California	Federal: BCC State: ND	**High Potential.** Inhabits saline lakes, mudflats and shallow fresh or saltwater marsh habitats. habitat Observations of this bird recorded in wetland habitat around the Salton Sea. Suitable habitat for this species may occur in wetland habitat locations within the study area.
Black skimmer (*Rynchops niger*)[B,C]	Spend entire lives in coastal areas or in inland locations with large lakes. Nest on open sandy areas, gravel or shell bars with sparse vegetation ore broad mats of wrack in salt marshes.	Federal: ND, BCC State: Species of Special Concern	**High Potential.** Nests in sparsely vegetated sandy and gravelly areas or on wide mats of dead vegetation. Known from four nearby records, one located on an artificial island east of the mouth of the Whitewater River, and the additional three located along the southern edge of the Sea (Mullet Island, south of Rock Hill, and the mouth of the New River). Suitable nesting colony habitat for this species is present in the study area.
Yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia*)[B]	Riparian plant associations in close proximity to water. Also nests in montane shrubbery in open conifer forests in Cascades and Sierra Nevada. Frequently found nesting and foraging in willow shrubs and thickets, and in other riparian plants including cottonwoods, sycamores, ash, and alders.	Federal: ND State: Species of Special Concern	**Moderate Potential.** Inhabits dense riparian areas usually dominated by willows. Suitable nesting habitat for this species may be present in the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Birds (continued)			
Crissal thrasher (*Toxostoma crissale*)[B]	Resident of southeastern deserts in desert riparian and desert wash habitats. Nests in dense vegetation along streams/washes; mesquite, screwbean mesquite, ironwood, catclaw, acacia, arrow weed, willow.	Federal: ND, BCC State: Species of Special Concern	**Moderate Potential.** Inhabits dense, scrubby vegetation within desert, foothill, and riparian scrub habitats. Known from only two historical records, one located approximately 1.5 miles off the south-eastern edge of the Sea in 1969 and the other approximately 4 miles off the northern edge in 1930. Suitable desert riparian habitat for this species may be present in the study area.
Le Conte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*)[B]	Desert resident; primarily of open desert wash, desert scrub, alkali desert scrub, and desert succulent scrub habitats. Commonly nests in a dense, spiny shrub or densely branched cactus in desert wash habitat, usually 2 to 8 feet above ground.	Federal: ND State: Species of Special Concern	**Moderate Potential (nesting).** Inhabits lowland deserts with sandy soils such as open flats, dunes, arroyos, and alluvial fans. Known from five nearby records mostly located around the southern end of the Sea. Suitable open desert habitat for this species may be present in the study area.
Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)[C]	Summer resident of southern California in low riparian in water or dry river bottoms below 2,000 ft; nests along margins of bushes or twigs projecting into pathways; usually willow *Baccharis* sp. or mesquite.	Federal: FE State: SE	**Moderate Potential.** Inhabits dense shrub and tree vegetation that is localized around riparian habitats. While the species is not known to inhabit the area, suitable riparian shrub habitat for this species is present in the study area.
Fish			
Desert pupfish (*Cyprinodon macularius*)[B,C]	Desert ponds, springs, marshes, streams and agricultural drains	Federal: FE State: SE	**High Potential.** Habitat consists of seeps, springs, slow-moving streams. Known from multiple records, located around the edges of the Sea, dated from 1985 to 2009. Suitable habitat for this species also consists of irrigation drains and associated shoreline pools/ponds currently (or historically) connected to the Salton Sea, marinas (Varner Harbor, North Shore Beach and Yacht Club), and nearshore areas of the Salton Sea.
Razorback sucker (*Xyrauchen texanus*)[B]	Found in the Colorado River bordering California; found in canals in Imperial county. Adapted for swimming in swift current but also needs quiet waters; spawns in areas of sand/gravel/rocks in shallow water.	Federal: FE State: SE, FP	**Low Potential**. Habitat consists of swift current streams with quiet waters for spawning. No suitable habitat for this species is found within the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Insects			
Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)[C]	Found in habitats with suitable host plants (*Asclepias* spp.) and nectar plants. In California, this insect overwinters in coastal groves.	Federal: PT State: ND	**Low Potential**. Habitat consists of native milkweed plants (*Asclepias* sp.) for caterpillars and plants that bloom at different times of year for nectaring adults. Also require trees/shrubs that provide protection from winds and predators and for overwintering non-migrating butterflies. No suitable habitat for this species is present within the study area.
Mammals			
Western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*)[B]	Many open, semi-arid to arid habitats, including conifer and deciduous woodlands, coastal scrub, grasslands, chaparral, etc. Roosts in crevices in cliff faces, high buildings, trees and tunnels.	Federal: ND State: Species of Special Concern	**Low Potential.** Inhabits areas with rock crevices for roosting and open areas, usually within desert scrub, chaparral, conifer and oak woodland habitats. Suitable rock crevice roosting habitat for this species is not likely present within the study area; however, roosting habitat is present nearby, and the species may be found in the study area foraging or as a flyover.
Western yellow bat (*Lasiurus xanthinus*)[B]	Found in valley foothill riparian, desert riparian, desert wash, and palm oasis habitats. Roosts in trees, particularly palms. Forages over water and among trees.	Federal: ND State: Species of Special Concern	**Moderate Potential.** Inhabits riparian corridors with trees, especially palm trees, for roosting within valley foothill, desert wash, and palm oasis habitats. Known to occur in abandoned date palm plantations. Roosting and foraging habitat for this species may be present in or adjacent to the study area.
Yuma hispid cotton rat (*Sigmodon hispid eremicus*)[B]	Along the Colorado River and in grass and agricultural areas near irrigation waters. Wetlands and uplands with dense grass and herbaceous plants. Makes runways through vegetation. Nests on surface and in burrows.	Federal: ND State: Species of Special Concern	**High Potential.** Inhabit areas with dense grass and other vegetation cover within wetland habitats. Known locations on the southern edge of the Sea in moist soils dominated by bulrush and saltgrass within an agricultural drainage canal. Suitable wet, densely vegetated habitat for this species is likely present within the study area.
American badger (*Taxidea taxus*)[B]	Most abundant in drier open stages of shrub, forest, and herbaceous habitats. Need sufficient prey, friable soils and open, uncultivated ground.	Federal: ND State: Species of Special Concern	**Low Potential.** Inhabits dry, open grasslands and other open areas with loose soil and a supply of rodent prey. Suitable dry grassland habitat for this species is not likely present within the study area.

Resource	Habitat and Distribution	Status Designation	Potential to Occur within the Study Area
Reptiles			
Desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*)[C]	Most common in desert scrub, desert wash, and Joshua tree habitats, occur in almost every desert habitat. Require friable soil for burrow and nest construction. Creosote bush habitat with large annual wildflower blooms preferred.	Federal: FT State: SE	**Low Potential.** Inhabits arid habitats with washes, alluvial fans, dunes, canyon bottoms, rocky hillsides, or creosote habitat with sandy/gravelly soils for burrowing. While suitable desert habitat for this species is not likely present within the study area, a desert tortoise was observed at the Clubhouse Site (33.32842, -115.94240) on 9/15/2023 likely due to being washed into the site via a wash as a result of Hurricane Hillary regional stormflow.
Flat-tailed horned lizard (*Phrynosoma mcallii*)[B]	Found in sandy desert flats with washes and sparse vegetation; fine windblown sand and high density of harvester ants (*Pogonomyrmex* sp.).	Federal: ND State: Species of Special Concern	**High Potential.** Inhabits sparsely vegetated areas with fine sand within dune, wash, and sandstone habitats. Known from many nearby records located along the southwestern and eastern edges of the Sea, as close as 0.5 mile to the shoreline. Records are dated from 1966 to 2015. Suitable sandy habitat is present within the study area. This species may occur in sites where the habitat is dominated by loose sand/sand dunes and is not likely to occur in exposed lakebed habitat.
Habitat			
Active Desert Dunes[B]	Federal: ND State: ND	**High Potential.** This habitat is found within the study area.	
Stabilized and Partially Stabilized Desert Dunes[B]	Federal: ND State: ND	**High Potential.** This habitat is found within the study area.	

Notes:
ND No Designation

Federal Status:
BCC Bird of Conservation Concern
D Delisted
FE Federally listed Endangered
FT Federally listed Threatened

State Status:
C Candidate
D Delisted
SE State listed Endangered
ST State listed Threatened
SR State Rare
SSC Species of Special Concern
FP Protected Species (Fully)

California Rare Plant Ranking System:
1B.1 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California
1B.2 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; fairly threatened in California
1B.3 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; not very threatened in California
2A: Plants Presumed extirpated in California but comment elsewhere
2B.1 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere; seriously threatened in California
2B.2 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere; fairly threatened in California
2B.3 Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere; not very threatened in California
4.1 Plants with limited distribution or infrequent throughout a broader area in California; seriously threatened in California
4.2 Plants with limited distribution or infrequent throughout a broader area in California; moderately threatened in California
4.3 Plants with limited distribution or infrequent throughout a broader area in California; not very threatened in California

Sources:

A California Native Plant Society, Inventory of Rare Plants, Calipatria SW, Durmid, Frink, Frink NW, Kane Spring, Kane Spring NE, Kane Spring NW, Mecca, Mortmar, Niland, Oasis, Obsidian Butte, Orocopia Canyon, Salton, Seventeen Palms, Truckhaven, Wister, 7.5-Minute USGS quadrangles study area, accessed 10 April 2026. (CNPS 2026)

B California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Natural Diversity Data Base, 10-Year Plan Boundary plus 0.5-mile landward study area, 10 April 2026 (CDFW 2026)

C United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC), https://www.fws.gov/ipac/index.html, 10-Year Plan Boundary plus 0.5-mile landward study area, 10 April 2026. (USFWS 2026)

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