

Chapter 6 Cumulative Effects

This section presents potential cumulative environmental impacts of the PWIMP or Proposed Program/Project. The scope of the analysis and key attributes of the analytical approach are presented below to assist readers in understanding the manner in which the impact analyses have been conducted in this Program EIR.

6.1 Determination of Cumulative Effects

The CEQA guidelines (Section 15355) define cumulative impacts as “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” This section of the Guidelines further notes that:

- a) *The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects.*
- b) *The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment, which results in the incremental impacts of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonable foreseeable probably future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.*

A cumulative impact is significant if, when considered collectively with the impacts of the other projects, it exceeds the threshold of significance for a particular individual environmental resource area, as described in Chapter 3 - Environmental Analysis.

6.2 Assessment Methods

For the purposes of this analysis, potentially significant cumulative effects are addressed in terms of short-term cumulative impacts (i.e., those impacts that would be cumulatively considerable during construction) and long-term cumulative impacts (i.e., those impacts that would be cumulatively considerable during operation). As described in Chapter 3 – Environmental Analysis, the construction and operation of the PWIMP would have less-than-significant effects to the environment with the implementation of the identified mitigation measures. Therefore, it is unlikely that the long-term operation of the PWIMP would have a significant adverse cumulative impact on the environment. In fact, the long-term operation is expected to have a cumulative beneficial impact to the City’s water supplies, utilities, and infrastructure. As for temporary cumulative construction impacts, construction would occur over the period of 15-to-20 years, it would be speculative at best to determine which other projects would be constructed at the same time as to one or several PWIMP projects and potentially cause a significant direct or indirect cumulative environmental effect. However, it is acknowledged that construction impacts could have temporary significant and cumulative impacts to air quality, noise, and traffic and transportation. As a result, temporary cumulative construction effects should be done on a project-level basis at the appropriate time through the preparation of the appropriate separate environmental documentation to meet CEQA requirements (i.e. Addendum, Categorical Exemption, Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Project-level Environmental Impact Report), depending on the nature of the specific project(s).

6.2 Conclusion on Cumulative Effects

Temporary construction of the PWIMP and facility(s) in conjunction with other undetermined projects over the next 15-to-20 years has the potential to have direct and/or indirect cumulative environmental

impacts. These could result in potentially significant temporary impacts, perhaps even significant and unavoidable impacts on air quality, noise, and traffic and transportation - depending upon the other projects being constructed nearby at the same time. As a result, temporary cumulative construction effects should be analyzed on a project-level basis at the appropriate time through the preparation of the appropriate separate environmental documentation to meet CEQA requirements (i.e. Addendum, Categorical Exemption, Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Project-level Environmental Impact Report), depending on the nature of the specific project(s). With the implementation of the identified mitigation measures in Chapters 3.3-Air Quality, 3.12-Noise, and 3.13-Traffic and Transportation, any cumulative impacts can be reduced to less-than-significant levels.

The long-term operation of the PWIMP would not likely have a significant adverse direct or indirect cumulative impact on the environment. In fact, the long-term operation of the PWIMP is expected to have a cumulative beneficial impact to the City's water supplies, utilities, and water resources related infrastructure and facilities.