

3.15 Population and Housing

3.15.1 Introduction

This section describes population and housing in the study area and the potential impacts of implementing restoration projects that would be permitted under the Order. (See Section 2.6, *Categories of Restoration Projects in the Order*.) These restoration projects could directly and indirectly induce substantial unplanned population growth or the increase demand for housing, or necessitate the construction of replacement housing because of the displacement of people or houses.

The environmental setting and evaluation of impacts on population and housing are based on a review of existing published documents, including city and county general plans; information regarding example projects similar to those permitted under the Order; and other information sources listed in Chapter 8, *References*.

No comments specifically addressing population and housing were received in response to the notice of preparation (NOP). See Appendix B for the NOP comment letters.

3.15.2 Environmental Setting

Population and Population Growth

Since California's admittance to the Union in 1850, the state's population has steadily increased. According to the California Department of Finance (DOF), between July 1, 2018, and July 1, 2019, the population increased by 141,300 people to a total of approximately 39.96 million (DOF 2019a). The population increase represents a growth rate of 0.35 percent for the 2018–2019 year, a decrease from the prior year's (2017–2018) growth rate of 0.57 percent, making the last two growth rates the lowest recorded since 1900. If the current growth rate persists, California's population will reach 42.26 million by 2030 (DOF 2020). Annual growth rates for the state are estimated to be less than 0.8 percent; California will have an annual average increase in population exceeding 300,000 between 2020 and 2030 (PPIC 2020). Table 3.15-1 lists the 10 largest counties and their population percent of the state.

Housing

Housing distribution and household conditions are expected to evolve and change as the population increases throughout the state. In 2018, the net unit growth for completed housing units was 77,000 units, a 0.6 percent increase from 2017. This brought California's total housing to 14,235,000 units (DOF 2019b). Ranked by net housing gains, the most housing units added in 2018 were in Los Angeles (16,525), San Diego (4,505), Irvine (3,384), Santa Clarita (2,486), and Sacramento (2,353). Of the state's 14,253,000 housing units, approximately 9,186,000 are single-family units, 4,490,000 are multi-family units, and 560,000 are mobile homes. The top five cities to produce population growth related to housing production were Lathrop (5.2 percent) in San Joaquin County, San Juan Bautista (4.8 percent) in San Benito County, Dublin (4.4 percent) in Alameda County, Irwindale (4.1 percent) in Los Angeles County, and Beaumont (4.0 percent) in Riverside County.

Table 3.15-1
The 10 Largest Counties in California, 2019

County	Population Estimate	Percent of State
Los Angeles	10,260,237	25.68%
San Diego	3,357,442	8.40%
Orange	3,220,987	8.06%
Riverside	2,443,454	6.11%
San Bernardino	2,197,650	5.50%
Santa Clara	1,961,117	4.91%
Alameda	1,674,115	4.19%
Sacramento	1,553,253	3.89%
Contra Costa	1,153,077	2.89%
Fresno	1,021,960	2.56%

Source: DOF 2019b

3.15.3 Regulatory Setting

This section discusses federal, state, and regional and local plans, policies, regulations, and laws, and ordinances pertaining to population and housing.

Future permitted restoration projects that would be implemented under the Order may be subject to the laws and regulations listed below, as well as other local or individual restoration projects requirements, depending on the project location.

Federal

The Fair Housing Act (FHA) (42 USC § 3601 et seq.) affects municipal land use throughout the state of California. The FHA prohibits discrimination by direct providers of housing, such as landlords and real estate companies as well as other entities, such as municipalities, banks or other lending institutions and homeowner’s insurance companies whose discriminatory practices make housing unavailable to persons because of:

- ◆ Race or color
- ◆ religion
- ◆ sex
- ◆ national origin
- ◆ familial status, or
- ◆ disability.

State

California Government Code Section 65302 requires that each city and county adopt a land use and housing element as part of its general plan. Section 65302(a) outlines requirements for a land use element and states that it must include the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the uses of the land for housing, business, industry, open space, include agriculture, natural resources, recreation, and enjoyment of scenic beauty, education, public buildings and grounds, solid and liquid

waste disposal facilities, greenways, as defined in Section 816.52 of the Civil Code, and other categories of public and private uses of land. Section 65302(b) outlines requirements for the housing element, which include the following:

- ◆ An assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to meeting those needs.
- ◆ A statement of the community's goals, quantified objectives, and policies relative to the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing.
- ◆ A program with a schedule of actions during the planning period that the local government will undertake to implement the housing element's policies and achieve the element's goals and objectives.

California Department of Housing and Community Development

The State Tenement House Act of 1909 was California's first housing regulation. The law applied only to the apartment houses and hotels in cities. Later laws such as the State Dwelling Act and the State Housing Law (formerly known as the State Housing Act) were applied to a wider range of housing types and eventually led to the formation of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) in 1965. HCD develops and enforces statewide minimum construction regulations for all types of housing and is responsible for promoting and maintaining adequate housing and decent living environments for all of California's citizens (HCD 2019).

Regional and Local

The study area encompasses all counties and cities throughout California. Each county and city has local regulations and a general plan containing goals and policies for housing and population that promote investments and land use decisions to address future growth and existing needs.

3.15.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Methods of Analysis

Population and housing impacts from the types of restoration projects permitted under the Order are evaluated in terms of how typical construction and operation of project components could impact growth and housing displacement. Trends for construction workforces and housing are discussed. However, the precise locations and detailed characteristics of potential future individual restoration projects are yet to be determined. Therefore, this population and housing analysis focuses on reasonably foreseeable changes from implementation of the types of projects and actions that might be taken in the future consistent with the level of detail appropriate for a program-level analysis.

Permanent impacts are considered those that would continue through the life of a proposed restoration project as a result of the environmental conditions created by the project (e.g., ongoing maintenance that could require the relocation of an operations crew). Temporary impacts are considered those that would be temporary in nature (e.g., construction-related activities). Indirect population growth is also discussed in Chapter 5, *Other CEQA Considerations*.

The approach to assessing population and housing impacts was to identify and review existing environmental studies, data, model results, and other information for projects that are consistent with those identified in Section 2.6, *Categories of Restoration Projects in the Order*, and Section 2.7, *Typical Construction, Operation, and Maintenance Activities and Methods*.

Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, an impact related to population and housing resources is considered significant if the types of projects that would be permitted under the Order would do either of the following:

- ◆ Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)
- ◆ Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Table 3.15-2 summarizes the impact conclusions presented in this section for easy reference.

As part of the State Water Board or Regional Board’s issuance of a NOA for a restoration project under the Order, compliance with the general protection measures and mitigation measures listed below would be required when applicable to a given project. Not all general protection measures and mitigation measures would apply to all restoration projects. The applicability of the general protection measures and mitigation measures would depend on the individual restoration activities, project location, and the potentially significant impacts of the individual restoration project. Implementation of the mitigation measures would be the responsibility of the project proponent(s) under the jurisdiction of the State Water Board, appropriate Regional Board, or other authorizing regulatory agency.

**Table 3.15-2
 Summary of Impact Conclusions—Population and Housing**

Impact Statement	Construction Activities	Constructed Facilities and Operations and Maintenance
3.15-1: Implementing restoration projects permitted under the Order could require relocation by construction and operation crews, resulting in population growth and demand for housing.	LTS	LTS
3.15-2: Implementing restoration projects permitted under the Order may displace substantial numbers of people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.	LTS	LTS

Source: Data compiled by Environmental Science Associates in 2019 and 2020

Note: LTS = less than significant

Impact 3.15-1: Implementing restoration projects permitted under the Order could require relocation by construction and operation crews, resulting in population growth and demand for housing.

Effects of Project Construction Activities

Construction activities for restoration projects permitted under the Order could include large projects such as removing levees, constructing new setback levees, and widening floodways. During construction, non-locals may move to a project area to support these activities; however, construction employees are generally pulled from the region's existing labor pool and typically do not relocate when assigned to a new construction site. Those who are hired from outside of the existing labor pool generally tend to commute to jobsites, as projects can change several times a year and offer no permanent place of business. Some more specialized construction workers may be needed and potentially would relocate to the construction area; however, relocation by specialized workers is usually temporary and limited to the duration needed to complete a particular phase of construction that requires their skills. Once that construction phase is completed, specialized workers typically move onto the next jobsite requiring their skills. Construction of restoration projects may be as short as a few days or as long as several years, depending on the specific project being constructed. As such, worker relocation could vary depending on the size, type, and length of construction activities. Therefore, restoration projects would not be expected to result in substantial population or demand for housing.

Restoration projects permitted under the Order would have the potential to result in an increase in temporary and long-term population growth. Individual restoration projects locations and the scale of potential future permitted restoration projects and their staffing needs are not known at this time. Factors necessary to identify potential impacts include the number of construction workers employed, the duration of project construction, and the location of projects relative to populated areas. However, none of the restoration projects permitted under the Order would involve constructing new homes, businesses, or other infrastructure that would provide new long-term employment opportunities or result in population growth and demand for housing. Furthermore, while temporary or longer term population increases could occur, the potential presence of existing vacant units in and around the project area would help absorb the population increases, which would be negligible and temporary. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

Effects of Constructed Facilities (Natural or Artificial Infrastructure) and Operations and Maintenance of those Facilities

Operations and maintenance (O&M) supporting constructed infrastructure for restoration projects permitted under the Order may include maintenance and cleaning of fish screens, removal of debris and sediment from stream crossings, and maintenance and operation of fishways. These O&M activities could require additional staff. However, it is anticipated that these activities would be similar to those in the project area located near a waterway. Furthermore, the potential presence of existing vacant units in and around the project area is expected to be sufficient to accommodate any workers who temporarily relocate to the area.

Routine O&M activities for restoration projects permitted under the Order could result in the relocation of an operations crew. However, potential vacant units in the area would provide sufficient housing for the minimal number of operations workers who may relocate to the project area. This impact would be **less than significant**. The Order does not include any general protection measures applicable to this impact.

Impact 3.15-2: Implementing restoration projects permitted under the Order could displace substantial numbers of people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Effects of Project Construction Activities, Constructed Facilities (Natural or Artificial Infrastructure), and Operations and Maintenance of those Facilities

Construction of restoration projects, constructed facilities (natural or artificial infrastructure), and operations and maintenance of those facilities permitted under the Order would not result in the elimination of housing. Some construction activities (such as projects to establish, restore, and enhance stream and riparian habitats and upslope watershed sites (watersheds that are upslope and contribute flow to a common watershed outlet) could involve removing or relocating existing infrastructure such as boat docks, boat haul-out locations, campgrounds and campsites, day-use sites, roads/trails, and off-highway/off-road vehicle routes.

Most, if not all, of the projects that would be constructed and operated under the Order would be located in or near waterways. Restoration projects would not be expected to displace substantial numbers of housing or people, and any displacements that could occur, would not be expected to result in the need to construct new housing. This is due to larger restoration projects (e.g. floodplain widening) being located in rural areas with the potential for small numbers of rural residences to be displaced, in which displaced individuals could be accommodated within existing available housing stock. Individual restoration projects permitted under the Order could displace future housing due to an expansive amount of land needed for a large restoration project, or an increase in housing due to the aesthetic nature of a restoration project; however, restoration projects would need to be consistent with local general plans and would not be expected to result in a substantial number of people or housing which would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Water conservation projects could involve constructing new infrastructure (e.g., fish screens, fishways, pumps and piping, screens and head gates); however, these projects would most likely be in less urbanized or rural environments in areas with minimal housing. Given that the location and scope of an individual restoration project permitted under the Order are yet to be determined, the potential exists for some such projects to result in displacement of some housing and people. Factors necessary to identify specific impacts include the type of project and the location of construction relative to people and housing. Even though these factors are not known, these impacts should be negligible because projects would typically occur in low-density population regions near waterways, limiting the potential for the displacement of people or housing. Furthermore, none of the restoration projects permitted under the Order would include the removal or relocation of housing. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant. The Order does not include any general protection measures applicable to this impact.