

3.18 Cumulative Impacts

This section of the Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Revised/Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS) reflects changes identified in Section 3.7, Biological and Aquatic Resources.

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3.18.6 Cumulative Impacts Analysis

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3.18.6.6 *Biological and Aquatic Resources*

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Cumulative Condition

Special-Status Species

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The permanent conversion of existing land uses to residential, commercial, agricultural, and transportation uses would result in cumulative impacts on special-status species in the cumulative resource study area (RSA). These cumulative impacts would be mostly likely to occur for species that occur in suitable habitat throughout the cumulative RSA (e.g., California red-legged frog [*Rana draytonii*], monarch butterfly [*Danaus plexippus*]); species confined to specific, well-known sites that are already protected (e.g., callippe silverspot butterfly [*Speyeria callippe callippe*], Bay checkerspot butterfly [*Euphydryas editha bayensis*], and Mission blue butterfly [*Plebejus icariodes missionensis*] at San Bruno Mountain near Brisbane, San Francisco garter snake [*Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia*] at the San Francisco International Airport [SFO] West-of-Bayshore property) would not be subjected to impacts of other projects in different geographic areas. Additionally, construction of these projects could result in land disturbance, increased vehicle traffic, and topography alteration, which could lead to disturbance, injury, or mortality of special-status wildlife individuals. Examples of other current or planned projects that would affect special-status species and their habitat include the Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project (construction is currently underway and is scheduled for completion in 2021), development anticipated by the 2018 Brisbane General Plan Amendment at the Brisbane Baylands site,¹ the 1400 North Shoreline Boulevard development project in the city of Mountain View, the SFO Expansion project in South San Francisco, and the San Jose to Merced Project Section.

Some special-status species (i.e., listed under the federal Endangered Species Act [FESA] or the California Endangered Species Act [CESA]) are protected by law and any cumulative projects would be required to incorporate measures to minimize disturbance of special-status species, such as conducting pre-construction surveys; avoiding occupied habitat or relocating individuals out of work areas during construction; salvaging, relocating, and propagating special-status plant species found during pre-construction surveys; and restoring temporarily affected habitat after construction. Most recently, the monarch butterfly became a candidate for listing under FESA due to significant population declines. Projects may also be required by federal permits, state permits, or both to compensate for direct impacts on listed species habitat by preserving, creating, restoring, or enhancing in-kind habitat. Additionally, the project alternatives include requirements that would avoid or minimize many of the direct and indirect impacts associated with construction of the high-speed rail system. For example, the impact avoidance and minimization features identified in Section 3.7 include measures to designate agency-approved project biologists,

¹ At the November 2018 general election the City of Brisbane approved a General Plan Amendment for the Baylands area that designated locations and densities for residential, commercial, and hotel development. A revised Specific Plan is under preparation to reflect the approved General Plan Amendment. This cumulative impacts analysis considers the proposed changes to zoning and land use designations, consistent with the 2018 Brisbane General Plan Amendment when assessing the potential contribution of the project to cumulative impacts.

develop a comprehensive biological resources management plan, and provide training to all workers regarding identification and avoidance of sensitive biological and aquatic resources (including special-status species and their habitat), and require site housekeeping practices to minimize degradation of habitat.

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Contribution of the Project Alternatives

Special-Status Species

Although the project alternatives would result in temporary and permanent construction impacts on habitat for special-status species, these impacts would be minimal compared to the total amount of remaining habitat for these species within their known range as well as the cumulative RSA. Moreover, these impacts would be confined to an area that is dominated by urban development and exposed to ongoing human disturbance. The project alternatives would not eliminate remaining tidal marsh habitat for Alameda song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia pusillula*) and saltmarsh common yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas sinuosa*) at Brisbane Lagoon or wetland and upland habitat for San Francisco garter snake at the SFO West-of-Bayshore property. Alternative A would remove 0.6 acre of potential estuarine habitat for central California coast steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and green sturgeon (*Acipenser medirostris*) and designated essential fish habitat in Visitacion Creek, but the habitat at this location is severely degraded. Alternative B would remove 8 acres of suitable habitat for three federally listed butterfly species (callippe silverspot butterfly, Bay checkerspot butterfly, and Mission blue butterfly) on Icehouse Hill near San Bruno Mountain, but would not affect any habitat known to be occupied by these species. A total of 139.7 acres and 163.4 acres of suitable habitat for monarch butterfly, which is a candidate for listing under FESA, would be removed under Alternative A and Alternative B, respectively. In addition, mitigation measures identified in Section 3.7.9, Mitigation Measures, would compensate for permanent and temporary impacts by providing for on-site or off-site protection, restoration, or enhancement of listed species habitat. The measures proposed and compliance with FESA and CESA mitigation requirements would fully offset impacts on special-status species habitat and individuals.

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