

CHAPTER VII

MANDATORY CEQA SECTIONS

A. INTRODUCTION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the *CEQA Guidelines* require that Environmental Impact Reports on certain types of projects include separate discussions on the following topics:

- The relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity (*CEQA Guidelines* §15126 (e))
- Any significant irreversible environmental changes which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented (*CEQA Guidelines* §15126 (f))
- Growth-inducing impact of the proposed action (*CEQA Guidelines* §15126 (g))

Each of these topics is discussed in turn in the following sections.

B. SHORT-TERM USES VERSUS LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Concerning this topic, the *CEQA Guidelines* provides the following direction:

Describe the cumulative and long-term effects of the proposed project which adversely affect the state of the environment. Special attention should be given to impacts which narrow the range of beneficial uses of the environment or pose long-term risks to health or safety. In addition, the reasons why the proposed project is believed by the sponsor to be justified now, rather than reserving an option for further alternatives, should be explained. (CEQA Guidelines §15126 (e)).

Rather than being a single proposed action, the program described and analyzed in this EIR is a set of water supply options, water distribution alternatives, alternative procedures for administration of the District's Allocation Program, and alternative approaches to the allocation and/or conservation of new water supplies. The impacts of these various options and alternatives vary dramatically. Supply Options I, IV, and V, at Assumed Baseline Production/Consumption Level A (current production/consumption) and Supply Option V at Assumed Baseline Production/Consumption Level B (current production/consumption with nine percent conservation) would allow no additional water to be produced by the Cal-Am system from the Monterey Peninsula Water Resource System. Supply Options II and III at Assumed Baseline Production/Consumption Level A and Supply Options I through IV at Assumed Baseline Production/Consumption Level B would allow for additional Cal-Am production. This water would in turn be used to support new development on the Monterey Peninsula.

Depending on the supply option selected, the Allocation Program would have significant or potentially significant adverse effects on the environment. As discussed in Chapter IV, Supply Options II and III would have potentially significant impacts on the Seaside Coastal Subbasin, Lagoon hydrology, non-Cal-am groundwater users, and water quality in the Carmel River. Even with implementation of identified mitigation measures, the impacts on Lagoon hydrology, non-Cal-Am groundwater users, and water quality are considered potentially significant.

All five supply options would have significant impacts on riparian vegetation in Carmel Valley Subbasin AQ2, AQ3, and AQ4 and potentially significant impacts on Lagoon vegetation. Even with implementation of identified mitigation measures, the impacts on riparian vegetation and Lagoon vegetation are considered potentially significant.

All five supply options would have significant impacts on riparian vegetation-dependent wildlife, including special-status wildlife, and potentially significant impacts on Lagoon vegetation-dependent wildlife. Even with implementation of identified mitigation measures, the impacts on wildlife are considered potentially significant.

All five supply options would have significant impacts on the steelhead population in the Carmel River. While impacts on steelhead can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level for Supply Options IV and V, the impacts of Supply Options I, II, and III would be considered potentially significant even with implementation of identified mitigation measures.

All five supply options would have significant impacts on aesthetics, due to continued loss of riparian vegetation. Even with implementation of the identified mitigation measures, the impacts on aesthetics are considered potentially significant.

Increased Cal-Am production would also lead to increased development in the Monterey Peninsula area. This new development would be a permanent commitment of land to urban uses and would eliminate some existing natural vegetation.

C. SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Concerning this topic, the *CEQA Guidelines* provides the following direction:

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irrecoverable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified. (CEQA Guidelines §15126 (f))

As noted above and as discussed in Chapter IV, Cal-Am production under Supply Options I, II, and III could have a long-term adverse impact on the steelhead population in the Carmel River. This impact on the steelhead population would be considered irreversible.

Also as noted above, increased Cal-Am production would lead to increased, permanent development on the Monterey Peninsula. None of the secondary impacts associated with this development, such as traffic, should, however, be considered irreversible.

D. GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Concerning this topic, the *CEQA Guidelines* provides the following direction:

Discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population

growth (a major expansion of a waste water treatment plant might, for example, allow for more construction in service areas). Increases in the population may further tax existing community service facilities so consideration must be given to this impact. Also discuss the characteristic of some projects which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment. (CEQA Guidelines §15126 (g))

Increased Cal-Am production under Supply Options II and III under Assumed Baseline Production/Consumption Level A and Supply Options I through IV at Assumed Baseline Production/Consumption Level B and the distribution of this water to the eight affected jurisdictions under all six distribution formulas, would lead to increased development on the Monterey Peninsula. This new development will include economic, residential, and population growth.

Supply Options I, IV, and V under Assumed Baseline Production/Consumption Level A and Supply Option V under Assumed Baseline Production/Consumption Level B would not in themselves provide additional water for new development. To the extent that water savings in existing development can be achieved and these savings are rededicated to new development, however, all of the supply options could also lead to increased development on the Monterey Peninsula.

Under those combinations of supply option and production/consumption level that would result in new development potential, if water savings in existing development can be achieved and this water were rededicated to new development, development on the Monterey Peninsula would increase beyond that otherwise projected.

Ultimately, new development is also subject to regulation by the individual jurisdictions consistent with their adopted general plans and land use policies.