

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

As mentioned in Chapter 3, Project Description, of this Draft EIR, the proposed Project consists of an update to the Sphere of Influence of Nevada City. The proposed Project occurs over an area of SOI includes approximately 2,702 acres of unincorporated county land. The environmental analysis of the Project in this Draft EIR is made up of 12 subchapters. This chapter describes the environmental topics discussed in the Draft EIR and the assumptions and methodology of the cumulative impact analysis. The remaining 16 sub-chapters evaluate the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts of the proposed Project. The potential environmental effects of the proposed Project are analyzed for the following issue areas.

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Public Services
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

For the reasons identified under Section 5.5 of Chapter 5, CEQA-Mandated Sections, of this Draft EIR, no environmental impacts associated with agricultural and forestry resources, energy, hazards and hazardous materials, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, and recreation are expected to occur as a result of the proposed Project. These resource topics will not be addressed further in this Draft EIR.

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

This chapter consists of 12 sub-chapters that evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed Project. Each issue area uses generally the same organization and consists of the following subsections:

- The Environmental Setting section provides a Regulatory Framework section that describes which local, State, and/or federal regulations are applicable to the proposed Project, as well as an Existing Conditions section that describes current conditions with regard to the environmental issue area reviewed.
- The Thresholds of Significance section describes how an impact is judged to be significant in this Draft EIR. These standards are derived from CEQA Appendix G Guidelines unless stated otherwise.
- The Impact Discussion assesses potential impacts (direct and indirect) and explains why impacts were found to be significant or less than significant.
- The Cumulative Impact Discussion section analyzes impacts that the proposed Project may have when considered in addition to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects. (See further discussion below).

ASSUMPTIONS AND METHODOLOGY REGARDING CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

A cumulative impact consists of an impact created as a result of the combination of the Project evaluated in the EIR, together with other reasonably foreseeable projects causing related impacts. Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines require an EIR to discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the Project's incremental effect is "cumulatively considerable." In the case of a General Plan, cumulative effects occur when future development under the General Plan is combined with development in the surrounding areas or in some instances in the entire region.

Where the incremental effect of a project is not "cumulatively considerable," a Lead Agency need not consider that effect significant but must briefly describe its basis for concluding that the incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable. Where the cumulative impact caused by the Project's incremental effect and the effects of the other projects is not significant, the EIR must briefly indicate why the cumulative impact is not significant.

The cumulative discussions in Chapters 4.1 through 4.12 of this Draft EIR explain the geographic scope of the area affected by each cumulative effect (e.g., immediate project vicinity, county, watershed, or air basin). The geographic area considered for each cumulative impact depends upon the impact that is being analyzed. For example, in assessing macro-scale air quality impacts, development within the air basin may contribute to regional emissions of criteria pollutants while aesthetic impacts, typically involve development within the localized area of change that would contribute to a cumulative visual effect since the area of change is only visible within the vicinity of that area.

CEQA requires cumulative impact analysis in EIRs to consider either a list of planned and pending projects that may contribute to cumulative effects or a forecast of future development potential. Currently planned and pending projects within are listed in *Table 4.0-1: Cumulative Projects List*. Based on the current growth and development trends within the City and surrounding County the list captures reasonably foreseeable development that would be likely to use similar resources such as freeway and roadway capacity, similar biological resources, similar surface water drainage patterns, and similar public services and utilities. The list of projects in Table 4.0-1 was used for generally used for all cumulative impact discussions in this Draft EIR.

Table 4.0-1: Cumulative Projects List

Project		Location	Proposed Use	Project Status	Distance from the Project Site
1	Proposed Project –	170 Ridge Road	Affordable Housing project for 56-apparment units with 11 one-bedroom units, 30 two-bedroom units, and 15 three-bedroom units.	Proposed	0.25 miles
2	Providence Quartz Mill Site	Assessor Parcel Number (05-100-87)	This Project relates to potential clean-up and remediation efforts and alternatives for the previous mining site.	Proposed	Within
3	Sugarloaf Trail	Assessor Parcel Number (036-020-026)	A proposed multi-use trail within a 30.59-acre open space parcel.	Proposed	0.25 miles
4	The Grove	Off Providence Mine Road	Two phased development with 15 large lot single family homes and 32 clustered townhomes and 12 clustered single-family lots.	Proposed	100 feet
5	Dunne Parcel Map	198 - Gold Flat Road	Subdivision of a 3.01-acre parcel into three residential lots.	Proposed	500 feet

This page intentionally left blank.