INITIAL STUDY and MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FOR

East Valley Water District Well No. 152

Prepared for:

East Valley Water District
31111 Greenspot Road
Highland, CA 92346
(909) 806-4088

Prepared by:

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November 2026

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Acronyms

AB	Assembly Bill
AIA	Airport Influence Area
AF	Acre-Feet
AFY	Acre feet per year
AG/EQ	Agriculture/Equestrian
ALUCP	Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan
APE	Area of Potential Effects
APN	Assessor parcel number
AQ	Air Quality
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
Basin	South Coast Air Basin
BGS	Below ground surface
BMP	Best Management Practices
BOR	United States Bureau of Reclamation
BRTR	Biological Resources Technical Report
CALGreen	California Green Building Standards Code
CAL-OSHA	California Division of Occupational Safety and Health
CARB	California Air Resources Board
C&D	Construction and demolition
CBB	Crotch's Bumble Bee
CBC	California Building Code
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish & Wildlife
CEPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGP	Construction General Permit
CH_4	Methane
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CMU	Concrete masonry unit
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Data Base
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	Carbon monoxide
CO_2	Carbon dioxide
CO_2E	Carbon dioxide equivalent
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CSWRCB DDW	California State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water
dBA	A-weighted decibels
EI	expansion index
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EVWD	East Valley Water District
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GP	General Plan
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan

gpm	Gallons per minute
GWh	Gigawatt-hour
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HFHSZ	High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
Hp	Horsepower
HSC	State Health and Safety Code
IRUMP	Integrated Regional Urban Water Management Plan
IS	Initial Study
ISA	International Society of Arboriculture
kW	Kilowatt
lbs/day	pounds per day
Leq	Equivalent continuous sound level
Lmax	Maximum sound level
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
LST	Localized significance threshold
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MC	Municipal Code
MCL	Maximum contaminant limit
MM	Mitigation measure
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MRZ	Mineral Resource Zone
$MTCO_2E$/year	Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents per year
MWh	Megawatt-hour
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
N_2O	Nitrous oxide
NO_2	Nitrogen dioxide
NO_X	Oxides of nitrogen
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
PM-10	Particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter
OS	Open Space
P-C	Production-Consumption
PCC	Portland Cement-Concrete
PM-2.5	Particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter
PPV	Peak Particle Velocity
PRC	Public Resources Code
QSD	Qualified SWPPP Developer
QSP	Qualified SWPPP Practitioner
ROW	Rights-of-way
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SBB	San Bernardino Basin
SBCDPH	San Bernardino County Department of Public Health
SBIA	San Bernardino International Airport
SBVWCD	San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District
SBCM	San Bernardino County Museum
SBKR	San Bernardino kangaroo rat

SCADA	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SCE	Southern California Edison
SF	Square feet
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SLF	Sacred Lands File
SO_2	Sulfur dioxide
SR	State Route
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SVP	Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
SWP	State Water Project
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Vdb	Vibration decibels
VMT	Vehicles miles traveled
VOC	Volatile organic compounds
Wash Plan	Upper Santa Ana River Wash Habitat Conservation Plan
WEAP	Worker Environmental Awareness Program
WQMP	Water Quality Management Plan
YSMN	Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation

I. INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.), the *CEQA Guidelines* (California Code of Regulations Sections 15000 et seq. East Valley Water District (EVWD or the District) is the lead for CEQA purposes.

Section 15063(c) of the State *CEQA Guidelines* lists the following purposes of an Initial Study:

1. *Provide the Lead Agency with information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare an EIR or a negative declaration;*
2. *Enable an applicant or Lead Agency to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts before an EIR is prepared, thereby enabling the project to qualify for a negative declaration;*
3. *Assist in the preparation of an EIR, if one is required;*
4. *Facilitate environmental assessment early in the design of a project;*
5. *Provide documentation of the factual basis for the finding in a negative declaration that a project will not have a significant effect on the environment;*
6. *Eliminate unnecessary EIRs; and*
7. *Determine whether a previously prepared EIR could be used with the project.*

According to Section 15070 (Decision to prepare a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration) of Article 6 (Negative Declaration Process) of the *CEQA Guidelines*:

> *A public agency shall prepare or have prepared a proposed negative or mitigated negative declaration for a project subject to CEQA when:*
>
> *a) The initial study shows that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment, or*
>
> *b) The initial study identified potentially significant effects, but:*
>
> *1) Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by, or agreed to by the applicant before a proposed mitigated negative declaration and initial study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, and*
>
> *2) There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.*

The purpose of this Initial Study is to assess the impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the East Valley Water District Well No. 152 Project.

This IS/MND is organized as follows:

1. Introduction, which provides the context for review along with applicable citation pursuant to CEQA and the State *CEQA Guidelines*, discusses the purpose and need for the project

2. Environmental Checklist Form, which as suggested in Section 15063(d)(3) of the State *CEQA Guidelines* provides project information, including Project description, an environmental impact assessment consisting of EVWD's environmental checklist and accompanying analysis for responding to the

checklist questions. The Form is used to evaluate whether or not there are any significant environmental effects associated with implementation of the proposed Project.

3. CEQA-Plus Federal Cross-Cutters Analysis (CEQA-Plus), addresses the requirements of CEQA-Plus and provides project analysis for environmental review and federal coordination.

4. References, which includes a list of reference sources, the location of reference material used in the preparation of this IS/MND, and identifies those responsible for preparation of the IS/MND and other parties contacted during the preparation of the IS/MND.

Environmental Process

The environmental process being undertaken for the proposed Project began with the project's proposal and environmental research. Pursuant to Section 15073 of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, the Draft IS/MND will be circulated for a 30-day period to the State Clearinghouse, responsible agencies, and interested parties for review and comment. Comments received from the public review period for this project and EVWD's responses to each comment will be included in the Response to Comments document.

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II. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

1. **Project title:** East Valley Water District Well No. 152 Project

2. **Lead Agency name and address:**
East Valley Water District
31111 Greenspot Road
Highland, CA 92346
(909) 806-4088

3. **Contact person email address and phone number**:
Jason Marseilles, Engineering Manager
jmarseilles@eastvalleywater.gov (909) 806-4088

4. **Project location**:
The East Valley Water District (EVWD or District) service area is located in southern California within southwestern San Bernardino County. The proposed Well No. 152 site is located within the existing EVWD Headquarters facility at 31111 Greenspot Road in Highland California, as reflected on **Figure 1 – Regional Map** and **Figure 2 – Aerial Photograph**. The EVWD Headquarters site consists of approximately 23.5 acres on assessor parcel numbers (APNs) 029-705-124 and 029-705-123, and is located within Township 1 South, Range 2 West, Section 7, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian, identified on the Redlands USGS Quad Map, as shown on **Figure 3 – USGS Topographical Map**.

5. **Project sponsor's name and address:**
East Valley Water District
31111 Greenspot Road
Highland, CA 92346
(909) 806-4088

6. **General Plan Land Use Designation:**
Open Space (OS**)** and Agriculture/Equestrian (AG/EQ)

7. **Zoning:**
Open Space (OS)

8. **Project Description:**
Introduction

The District is a County District formed in 1954 through an election by local residents who wanted water service by a public agency. Originally called the East San Bernardino County Water District, the name was changed to East Valley Water District in 1982. The District's water service area encompasses approximately 30.1 square miles along the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains and serves, the City of Highland, and portions of the City and County of San Bernardino, and the San Manual Band of Mission Indians. as shown on **Figure 4 – District Service Area**. (IRUMP, p. 6-1.) EVWD currently provides water and wastewater services to a total population of approximately 108,000 residents within its service area.

EVWD secures its water supply from a network of groundwater production wells and surface water derived from the Santa Ana River and State Water Project. With groundwater production rights of 14,217 acre feet per year (AFY), as a non-plaintiff party to the 1969 Western Judgement, EVWD has the flexibility to increase groundwater pumping to meet water supply demands. Between 2013 and 2022, EVWD utilized 15-16 wells for its groundwater production with the annual production ranging from 12,702 to 18,289 AFY during this period.

Purpose and Need

Well No. 152 would replace production lost due to decommissioning existing wells and satisfy Priority 1 mitigation action from EVWD's Drought Contingency Plan. (PDR, p. 1.) Available groundwater quality data from the surrounding wells suggest that the proposed well site would supply excellent water quality at the needed capacity. It is expected that water quality would be similar to that of the surrounding wells, as the proposed well site is expected to produce from the same aquifers. (PDR, p. 6.)

Project Description

EVWD proposes the drilling, construction, operation, and maintenance of a new potable groundwater supply well, to be designated Well No. 152, on an approximately 1.13-acre portion of APN 029-705-124 and 029-705-123 and Greenspot Road, at EVWD's headquarters at 31111 Greenspot Road, Highland, CA (hereinafter the Project). (Refer to **Figure 5 – Proposed Site Layout**.)

The proposed well site would include the following features: new wellhead, a new chemical building, new connections to existing storm drain and potable water pipelines, a new booster station, a new emergency generator, and an above-ground storage tank. During construction activities, the following equipment and structures would be used on the Project site: an air compressor, a drill rig, a pipe trailer, two mud tanks, a dog house, two holding tanks, and two above ground conveyance lines.

The Project is proposed on the southside of the EVWD Headquarters site. Due to the built-out nature of the Project site, demolition, relocation and reconstruction of a portion of the southside parking stalls and storage areas would be required. In order to incorporate the Project, parking stalls currently occupied with storage containers would be permanently removed. The storage containers would be removed and relocated onsite to allow for the well building, an existing catch basin would be relocated to the eastern side of the existing concrete driveway, and new underground 18-inch and 24-inch diameter storm drain pipelines would be constructed to connect to the existing 18-inch and 24-inch diameter storm drain system, relocating the storm drain conveyance route between the parking lot and the Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) Basin and drainage channel to the south, respectively. A 58,000-gallon tank and a booster station equipped with two electric pumps (one primary and one standby) that are 125-horsepower (hp) each are proposed near the proposed well. Retaining walls will be required on the eastern and southern side of the booster station to retain soils and protect the existing 6-foot wrought iron fence in place.

The well would be installed with a maximum 42-inch diameter casing and drilled to a depth of approximately 800 feet below ground surface (bgs). Well No. 152 would be equipped with a 200 horsepower (hp) electric motor and designed to produce 2,000 gallons per minute (gpm). The Project would include an enclosed standby backup diesel generator on pad mount; the approximate generator sizing is anticipated to be 350 kilowatts (kW). The wellhead would be constructed inside an approximately 900 square feet (SF) split-face concrete masonry unit well building (as shown on Figure 5). The maximum height of the well building would be 18 feet. The well water would be pumped to the above ground storage tank located southwest. The above ground storage tank height would be 18 feet and have a diameter of 25 feet. The above ground storage tank allows entrained air from the well water to degas before being transferred to the booster station. The booster station footprint would be approximately 400 SF and would be enclosed within a building. The maximum height of the booster station pumps would be six (6) feet. The booster station would pump water from the storage tank through a new 12-inch diameter water pipeline in the parking lot where it would connect to the existing potable water pipeline within Greenspot Road. Pump-to-waste water discharged from the well would be conveyed to the 24-inch diameter storm drain on-site that outlets to the drainage channel south of the Project site.

The well building would include an electrical room to house the electronics to operate the well. A separate chemical building would be approximately 200 SF and 12 feet tall; it would house both a chlorine tank and orthophosphate tank in separate rooms. Chemicals used in the water production process would be chlorine (sodium hypochlorite 12.5%) for disinfection and orthophosphate as a corrosion inhibitor for existing copper lines within the District's distribution system. The chemicals would be introduced into the pumped groundwater prior to the water entering EVWD's potable water system. The chlorine tank would be double-walled to provide secondary containment.

Operation of Well No. 152 would entail regular maintenance of the equipment and would be integrated into EVWD's existing Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. The SCADA antennae would be a maximum of 25 feet tall.

The Project proposes to pave the area surrounding the chemical building, well building, water storage tank, and booster station as shown on **Figure 5**.

Construction

During Project construction, approximately 36 existing parking stalls would be temporarily unavailable. Construction activities would require potable water; thus, the use of an onsite fire hydrant would be utilized during operations. (PDR, p. 10.)

As shown on **Figure 6 – Well Construction Layout**, construction of the proposed Project would consist of site preparation, installation of temporary onsite facilities, such as a two 21,000-gallon holding tanks measuring approximately 40-feet by 8-feet, two mud tanks measuring approximately 45-feet by 8-feet, a dog house (office) measuring approximately 30-feet by 10-feet, pipe trailer measuring approximately 40-feet by 8-feet, drilling rig measuring approximately 45-feet by 10-feet, air compressor measuring approximately 20-feet by 8-feet, and two discharge conveyance lines, as shown on **Figure 6**. The drill rig would be a maximum of 65 feet tall. Other than the well drilling, site preparation is expected to result in ground disturbance ranging from five (5) feet bgs for most improvements to 15 feet bgs for the booster station equipment. During construction, well discharge would be transferred to the mud tanks, where debris settles, into the holding tanks prior to clean water being discharged in the adjacent open drainage channel through a temporary above ground conveyance line. All drill cuttings and fluids used to drill (i.e., drilling mud) would be stockpiled for drying prior to being moved to an onsite location.

The estimated construction period for the proposed Project's initial well drilling and testing is approximately three months. The subsequent well-site construction (equipping) would take approximately 15 months. During the initial drilling and testing stage, several phases of the work would require 24-hour continuous operations on the part of the drilling contractor.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:

The proposed Project site is located within the southern portion of EVWD's Headquarters site. North of the proposed Project site are EVWD's district offices and operations, and residential and agricultural uses, to the west is EVWD's demonstration garden, and to the east is EVWD's employee and operations parking facilities. Land use and zoning surrounding the EVWD Headquarters' site are shown in the table below.

Table A – Existing Land Use, General Plan Land Use and Zoning Surrounding EVWD's Headquarters

Location	Existing Land Use	General Plan Land Use	Zoning
Project Site	EVWD Headquarters	Open Space (OS) and Agriculture/Equestrian (AG/EQ)	Open Space (OS)
North	Residential and Agricultural Operation	Agriculture/Equestrian	PUD-13-001 – Mediterra Development
South	San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District Borrow Pit and Existing SAR Spreading Grounds	Open Space (OS)	Open Space (OS)
East	San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District facilities	Open Space (OS), Agriculture/Equestrian	Open Space (OS), Agricultural/Equestrian Residential
West	Agricultural Operation, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District Spreading Grounds	Open Space (OS), Agriculture/Equestrian	Open Space (OS), Agricultural/Equestrian Residential, Public/Quasi Public

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement):

- Federal Agencies
  - Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) – WaterSMART Grant
- State Agencies
  - California State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water (CSWRCB DDW) – Well Construction Permit
  - Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Santa Ana Region – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)
  - California Department of Water Resources – review of well completion report
- Local Agencies
  - San Bernardino County Department of Public Health (SBCDPH) – Well Construction Permit
  - City of Highland – encroachment permit for work in Greenspot Road
- Regional Agencies
  - South Coast Air Quality Management District – permit for backup generator

11. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?[1]

Refer to the discussions in Section 5, Cultural Resources and Section 18, Tribal Cultural Resources for additional information.

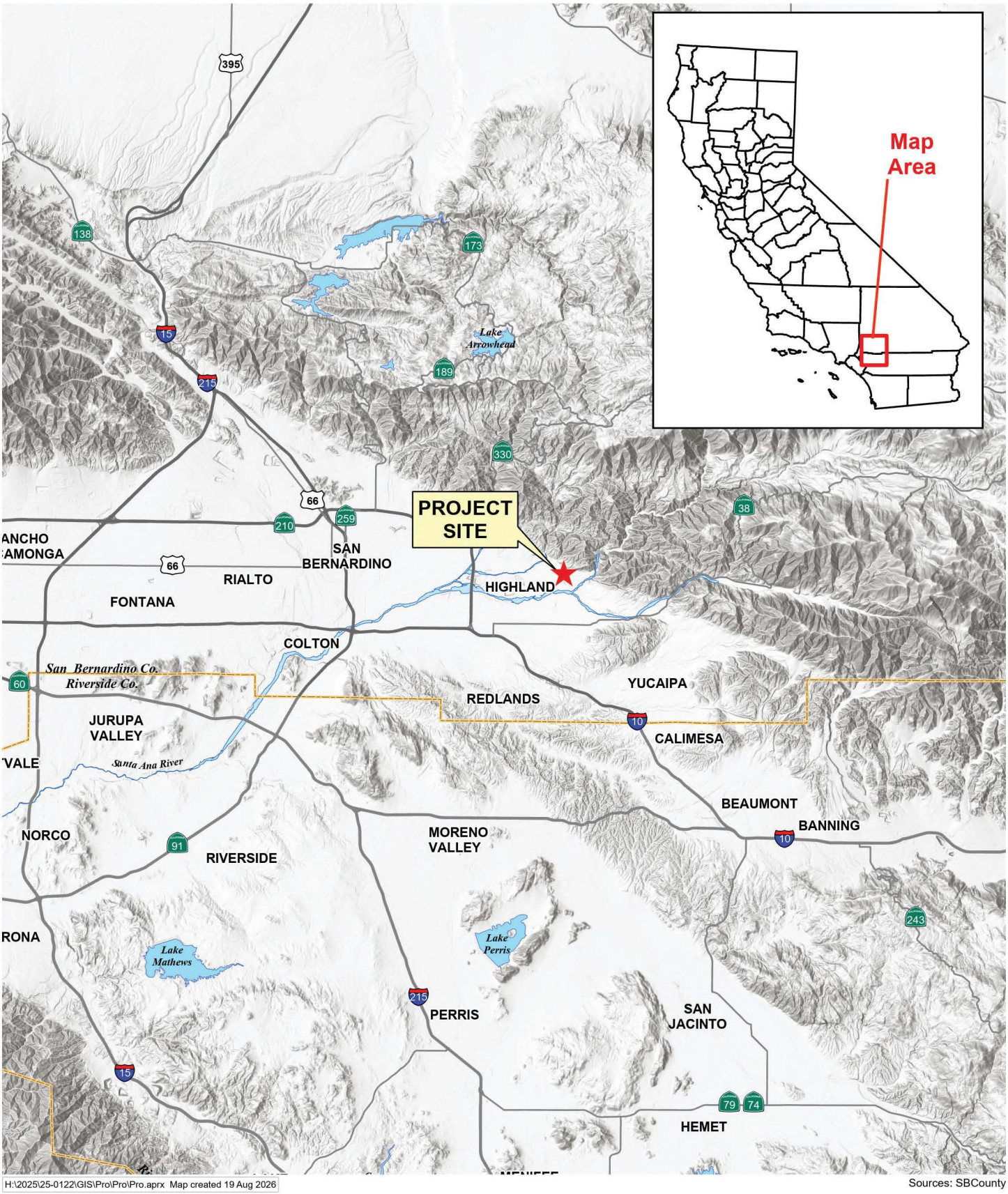
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[1] Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

EVWD WELL 152

FIGURE 1

REGIONAL MAP



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Sources: SBCounty

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FIGURE 2

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



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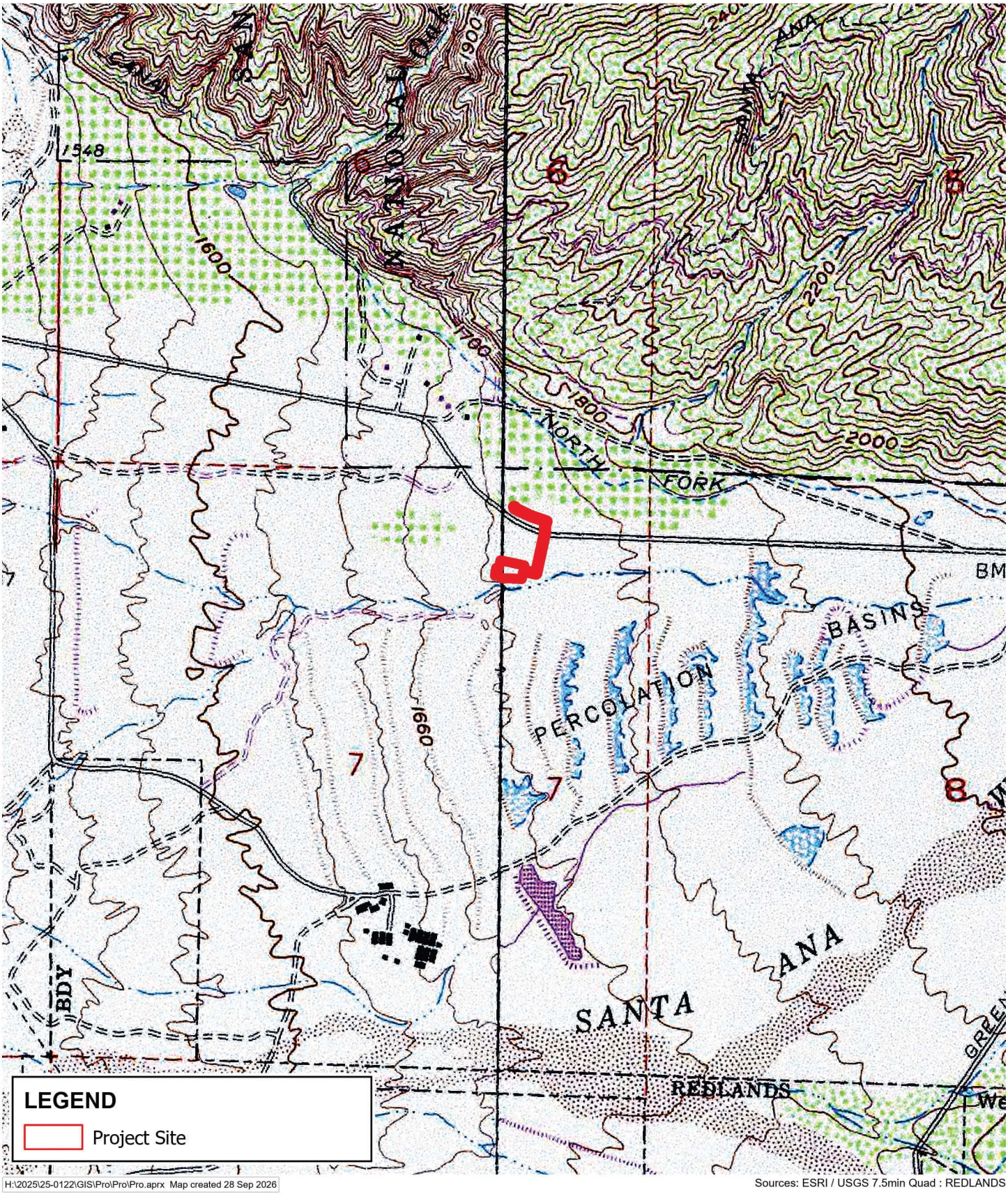
Sources: SBCounty; Nearmap 2026;

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FIGURE 3

USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP



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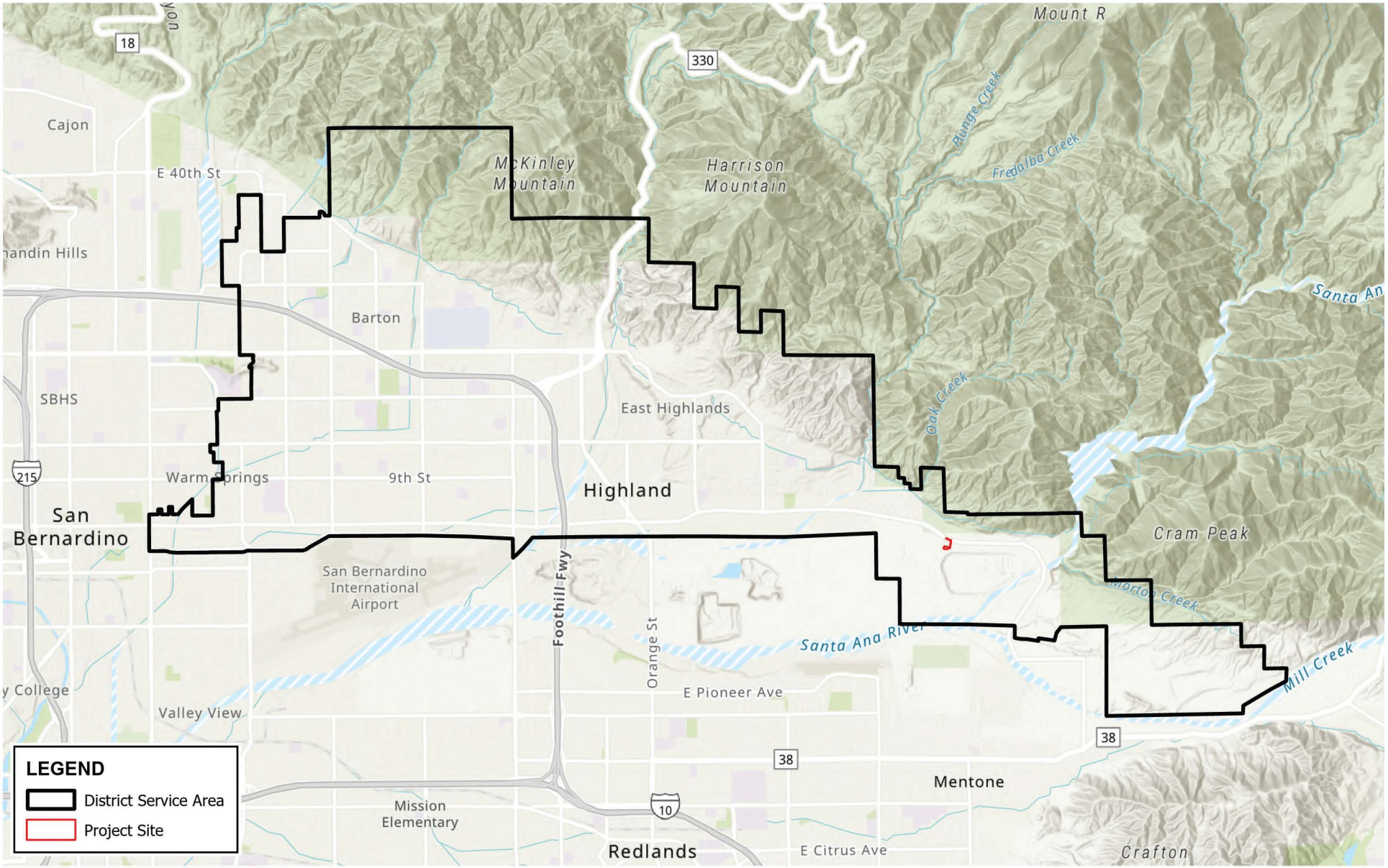
Sources: ESRI / USGS 7.5min Quad : REDLANDS

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FIGURE 4

DISTRICT SERVICE AREA



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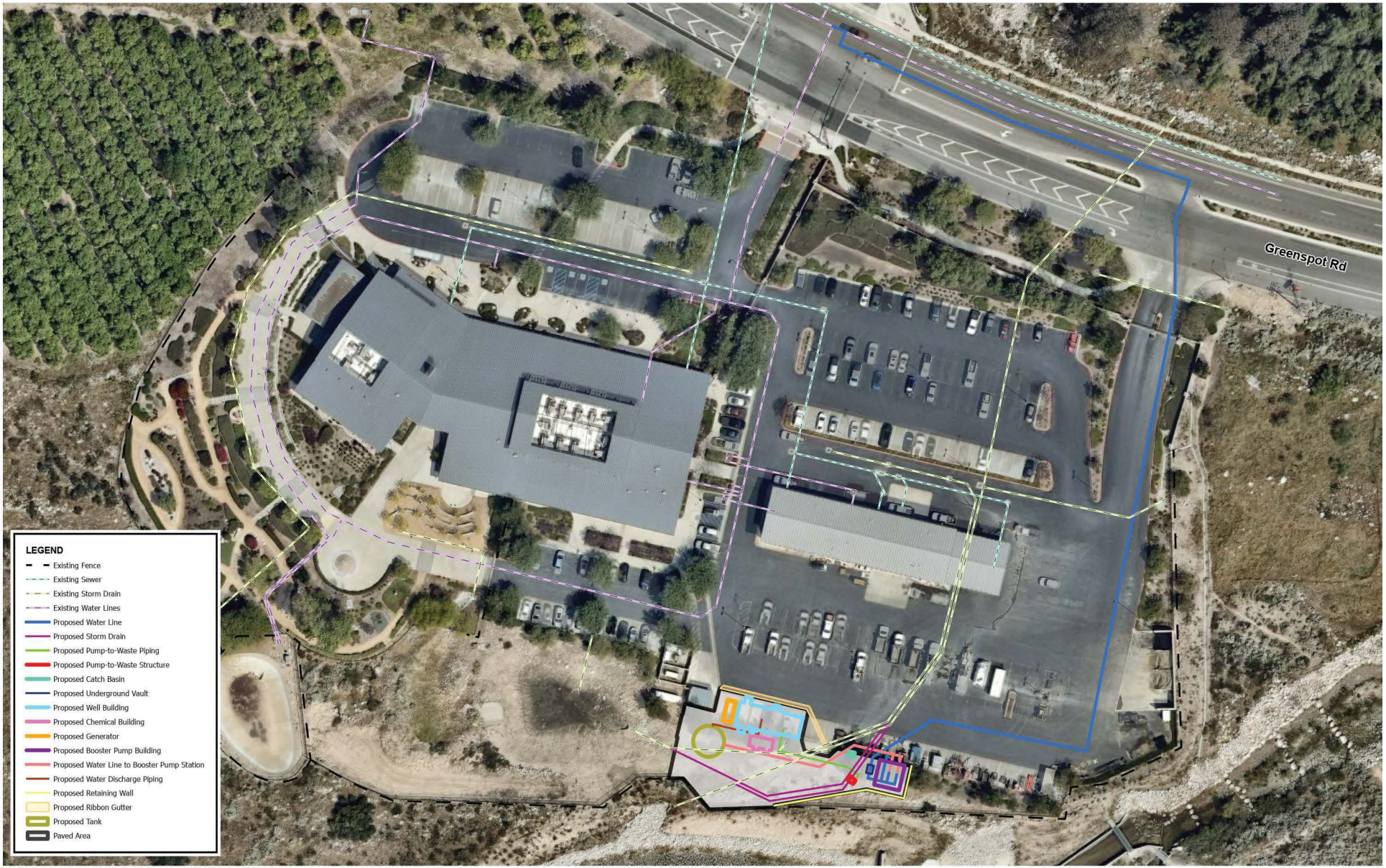
Sources: SBCounty; EVWD

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0 1 2 Miles

FIGURE 5

PROJECT COMPONENTS



H:\2025\25-0122\GIS\Pro\Pro\Pro.aprx Map created 18 Sep 2026

Sources: SBCounty; Nearmap 2026; WEBB 9-9-26

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FIGURE 6

WELL DRILLING LAYOUT



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Sources: PDR

ALBERT A. WEBB ASSOCIATES

III. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages:

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Energy
☐ Geology/Soils	☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials
☐ Hydrology/Water Quality	☐ Land Use/Planning	☐ Mineral Resources
☐ Noise	☐ Population/Housing	☐ Public Services
☐ Recreation	☐ Transportation	☐ Tribal Cultural Resources
☐ Utilities/Service Systems	☐ Wildfire	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

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IV. DETERMINATION (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE LEAD AGENCY)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures described on an attached sheet have been added to the project. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project.

Signature Jason Marseilles Digitally signed by Jason Marseilles Date: 2026.11.04 10:46:16 -08'00' Date 11/4/26

Jason Marseilles, Engineering Manager
Printed Name

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EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved *(e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone)*. A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards *(e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis)*.

2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).

5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). Earlier analyses are discussed below:

    a. **Earlier Analysis Used.** Identify and state where they are available for review.

    b. **Impacts Adequately Addressed.** Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.

    c. **Mitigation Measures.** For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measure which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts *(e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances)*. Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated. A source list should be attached and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8) The explanation of each issue should identify:

    a. the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and

    b. the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
1. AESTHETICS. Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from public accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(Sources: Caltrans; DOF; GE; GP; Project Description)

1.a Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less than significant impact. The City of Highland uses elements such as paths, landmarks, nodes, districts, and edges to compose the community design. (GP.) The San Bernardino Mountains, which has peaks over 4,000 feet above msl, are the major natural landscape feature in the Highland area and provide a dramatic backdrop for views of the city. Highland's major landmarks are found in its dramatic geography at the base of the San Bernardino Mountains. Panoramic views of the mountains provide a scenic background for the entire city. (GP.)

The Project would be installed at the EVWD Headquarters facility, which is developed with District offices, maintenance shops, equipment storage areas, parking areas, and associated utility infrastructure. As a result of the previously disturbed and developed condition of the Project site, the site does not contain features that constitute a scenic vista.

The presence of construction equipment and materials would be limited to the District's Headquarters site and would primarily be visible from within the facility, including office areas, parking areas, and internal access roads. Due to the developed nature of the site and absence of public scenic vantage points, temporary construction activities would not adversely affect any scenic views or vistas. Construction-related equipment would be temporary and removed upon completion of the Project. Once constructed, the proposed Project would be consistent with existing structures at the District's Headquarters. As such, the Project would not substantially alter existing visual character or long-term views within the Project area. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

1.b Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

No impact. The Project site is not located along a State Scenic Highway. The closest eligible state scenic highways are segments of State Route (SR) 330 located approximately 4.36 miles northwest and SR-38 located 2.37 miles south of the Project site. (Caltrans, GE.) Therefore, no impacts would occur with regard to substantially damaging scenic resources.

1.c In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from public accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

No impact. CEQA Section 21071(a) defines an incorporated city as being an urbanized area if it meets either of the following criteria**:**

(1) Has a population of at least 100,000 persons.

(2) Has a population of less than 100,000 persons if the population of that city and not more than two contiguous incorporated cities combined equals at least 100,000 persons.

The City is categorized as an urbanized area because while the City's population is less than 100,000 persons the combined population of both the City of Highland and the City of San Bernardino (a contiguous city) is greater than 100,000 persons. The January 1, 2025, California Department of Finance population estimate for Highland is 57,088 persons and the population estimate for San Bernardino is 222,727 persons, totaling to a population of approximately 279,815 persons. (DOF.) Since the City of Highland is considered an urbanized area for purposes of this threshold, the discussion below is regarding the potential for the Project to conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Construction activities would require the use of construction equipment and temporary storage of materials at the Project site. Excavated areas, stockpiled soils, and construction equipment may introduce temporary visual changes to the site. However, these effects would be limited because construction activities would occur within the developed EVWD Headquarters facility and would primarily be visible only from within this facility (e.g., office areas, parking areas, and internal access areas), rather than from public vantage points. Additionally, these conditions would be temporary and limited to the duration of construction and would not substantially affect the existing visual character of the surrounding area.

Upon completion, the proposed well and related facilities would occupy a relatively small footprint and would be consistent with existing structures at the EVWD Headquarters site. As the Project would be located within an existing developed facility containing similar or larger structures, and not readily visible from public views, it would not substantially alter the visual character of the Project site or surrounding area. Therefore, there would be no impact. Moreover, as discussed in threshold 1.a, implementation of the proposed Project would not have an adverse effect on a scenic vista. For these reasons, implementation of the Project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality, and there would be no impacts.

1.d Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less than significant impact. The Project site is located within the developed EVWD Headquarters facility site, which is currently served by existing lighting sources, including parking lot lighting, building-mounted lighting, and safety/security lighting associated with ongoing operations. Project implementation would introduce limited

temporary lighting during construction, which may be used for safety and security purposes during nighttime or early morning activities. Any temporary lighting would be directed downward and shielded to minimize spillover and glare beyond the immediate work area.

Permanent lighting associated with the Project would be minimal and would consist primarily of safety and security lighting around the well and related facilities, as required for operational access and maintenance. This lighting would be consistent with existing lighting at the EVWD Headquarters site and would be designed to comply with applicable standards, including shielding and directional controls to minimize offsite light spill. Given that the Project would be located within an already developed and illuminated facility, and that new lighting would be limited in intensity and extent, the Project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare affecting surrounding areas. Therefore, impacts related to light and glare would be less than significant.

Aesthetics Mitigation Measures

Aesthetic impacts are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
2. AGRICULTURAL and FORESTRY RESOURCES. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined n Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversionof forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Source: CWP SB EIR; DOC FM; Project Description; PDR; Zoning Map)

2.a Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No impact. According to the California Department of Conservation, the Project site is designated as Grazing Land that is adjacent to Urban and Built-up Land (DOC FM). Since the Project site is not located within areas designated as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, implementation of the proposed Project will not convert Farmland to a non-agricultural use; thus, there will be no impacts in this regard.

2.b Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

No impact. The Project site is located within the parking lot and on the backside of the existing EVWD Headquarters which is zoned as open space (OS) and agriculture/equestrian (AG/EQ), a residential designation which is intended for rural and equestrian-oriented residential development. Further, there is agriculturally zoned property within City of Highland. There is also agricultural/equestrian zones adjacent to the site to the

west and east. (Zoning Map.) However, the Project site is developed with non-agricultural uses. The Project site and surrounding area is not subject to a Williamson Act contract. For these reasons, there will be no impact regarding conflicts with existing zoning for an agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.

2.c Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

Forest land, as defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) section 12220(g) is land that can support 10 percent of native tree cover of any species under natural conditions and that allows for the management of one or more forest resources. Timberland, as defined in PRC section 4526, means land other than land owned by the federal government and land designated as experimental forest land, which is capable of growing a crop of trees for any commercial species, including Christmas trees. Timberland production zone, as defined by Government Code section 51104(g), means an area which has been zoned pursuant to Section 51112 or 51113 and is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber, or for growing and harvesting timber and compatible uses.

No impact. The Project site is located at the existing EVWD Headquarters which is zoned as open space (OS) and a portion within the existing parking lot is zoned agriculture/equestrian (AG/EQ). As such, the Project does not conflict with existing zoning. Within San Bernardino County, forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production are located at a much higher elevation, typically 5,000 feet. The County of San Bernardino has approximately 37,473 acres of forest and woodland vegetation under the County jurisdiction. Approximately 64 percent of that total (24,028 acres) is in the Mountain Region, and 36 percent (13,444 acres) is in the desert regions. None is in the Valley Region. (CWP SB EIR, p. 5.2-5.) The Project site is located within the Valley Region of the San Bernardino County. Furthermore, the Project site is located along the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains at an elevation between 1,830 feet and 2,000 feet. (PDR, p. 2-3.) Furthermore, the Project site is not zoned for forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production. Because Project implementation will not conflict with existing zoning or cause rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production there would be no impact in this regard.

2.d Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No impact. As discussed in the response to threshold 2.c, there is no forest land within the Valley Region of San Bernardino County. Since the Project site is located within the Valley Region, Project implementation would not result in the loss or conversion of forest land; thus, there will be no impact in this regard.

2.e Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No impact. As discussed in the response to threshold 2.a, the Project site is developed and not located in an area designated as Farmland nor is it zoned for agricultural purposes. As stated in the response to threshold 2.d, the Project site is not forest land. No other changes in the existing environment from that which have been described in the Project Description are proposed. Thus, Project implementation will not result in the conversion of Farmland to a non-agricultural use or forest land to non-forest use. There will be no impact in this regard.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources Mitigation Measures

There are no impacts to agricultural and forestry resources; therefore, no mitigation is required.

		Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
3.	**AIR QUALITY**. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a.	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b.	Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c.	Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d.	Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(Sources: CARB 2005, CARB 2023; SCAQMD 1993; SCAQMD 2003; SCAQMD 2022; WEBB-A; Project Description)

3.a Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

The Project is located in the South Coast Air Basin (Basin). The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) prepares the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) for the Basin. The SCAQMD sets forth a comprehensive program that would lead the Basin into compliance with all federal and state air quality standards. The AQMP's control measures and related emission reduction estimates are based upon emissions projections for a future development scenario derived from land use, population, and employment characteristics defined in consultation with local governments. Accordingly, if a project demonstrates compliance with local land use plans and/or population projections, then the AQMP would have taken into account such uses when it was developed. The SCAQMD is required to update its plans on a regular basis; the 2022 AQMP is the most recent plan (SCAQMD 2022).

No Impact. The Project consists of drilling, construction, operation, and maintenance of a new potable groundwater supply well. The proposed well and supporting facilities do not propose any new housing or businesses and would not cause a substantial increase in population because this Project is intended to replace production lost due to decommissioning existing wells and satisfy Priority 1 mitigation action from EVWD's Drought Contingency Plan. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the AQMP, and no impacts would occur.

3.b Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

The portion of the Basin within which the proposed Project facilities are located is designated as a non-attainment area for ozone, particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM-10), and particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM-2.5) under the State standards and for ozone and PM-2.5 under Federal standards. (CARB 2023.) The SCAQMD considers the thresholds for project-specific impacts and cumulative impacts to be the same. (SCAQMD 2003.) Therefore, projects that exceed project-specific significance thresholds are considered by SCAQMD to be cumulatively considerable. Based on SCAQMD's regulatory jurisdiction over regional air quality, it is reasonable to rely on its thresholds to determine whether there is a cumulative air quality impact.

The air quality impacts can be described in short- and long-term perspectives. Short-term impacts are anticipated to occur during site preparation and Project construction and consist of fugitive dust and other

particulate matter, as well as exhaust emissions generated by construction-related vehicles. Long-term air quality impacts would occur once the Project is in operation.

All active operations (any activity capable of generating fugitive dust, including, but not limited to, earth-moving activities, construction/demolition activities, disturbed surface area, or heavy- and light-duty vehicular movement) within the Basin would be required to comply with existing SCAQMD rules for the reduction of fugitive dust emissions, which is established in SCAQMD Rule 403. Compliance with this rule would be achieved through application of standard best management practices in construction and operation activities, such as the application of water or chemical stabilizers to disturbed soils, reducing haul road dust by application of water, covering haul vehicles, restricting vehicle speeds on unpaved roads to 15 mph, sweeping loose dirt from paved site access roadways, cessation of construction activity when winds exceed 25 mph and establishing a permanent, stabilizing ground cover on finished sites. In addition, projects that disturb 50 or more acres of soil, or move 5,000 cubic yards of materials per day are required to submit a Fugitive Dust Control Plan or a Large Operation Notification Form to SCAQMD.

Less than significant impact. Air quality impacts from the Project were evaluated in the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas (AQ/GHG) Analysis (WEBB-A) and provided in **Appendix A**.

Construction of the Project would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 403 for fugitive dust. Based on the area of disturbance, a Fugitive Dust Control Plan or a Large Operation Notification Form would not be required.

Short-term emissions from Project construction were evaluated using the CalEEMod program. Operational emissions related to the new well and booster station facilities would be primarily from the electric well and booster station pumps. Routine visits by vehicles driven by maintenance personnel are considered negligible because this Project site is within EVWD's Headquarters property. As such, the proposed Project's facilities are not anticipated to increase the frequency of ongoing maintenance routines; therefore, only short-term impacts were evaluated.

The estimated construction period for the proposed Project is approximately 18 months (see WEBB-A for further details). The summary of the analysis of short-term construction emissions are presented in **Table B – Unmitigated Maximum Daily Construction Emissions**.

Table B – Unmitigated Maximum Daily Construction Emissions

Activity	Peak Daily Emissions (lb/day)					
	VOC	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM-10	PM-2.5
SCAQMD Daily Construction Thresholds	**75**	**100**	**550**	**150**	**150**	**55**
2026	0.46	4.83	8.96	0.01	0.20	0.13
2027	1.99	17.17	20.10	0.04	3.06	1.63
2028	18.03	20.98	27.19	0.05	3.33	1.77
Maximum	**18.03**	**20.98**	**27.19**	**0.05**	**3.33**	**1.77**
Exceeds Threshold?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Source: WEBB-A, Table 2

Note: Numbers are the maximum of summer or winter emissions in a given year and may not match due to rounding within the model.

As shown in **Table B** above, the estimated emissions from construction of the Project are less than the SCAQMD daily construction thresholds for all the criteria pollutants in 2026, 2027 and 2028. In addition, the short-term estimated emissions do not exceed SCAQMD's localized significance thresholds (LST) for the Project's construction. (WEBB-A, Table 3.) Therefore, construction-related air quality impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

The long-term emissions from operation of the new well, booster station and appurtenant facilities would be primarily from the electric pumps and from the routine visits by vehicles driven by maintenance personnel and are considered negligible because the electricity consumption does not result in direct on-site emissions and this Project site is within EVWD's Headquarters property. As such, the proposed Project's facilities are not anticipated to increase the frequency of ongoing maintenance routines.

Regarding localized long-term emissions, according to the LST methodology, LSTs only apply to the operational phase if a project includes stationary sources or on-site mobile equipment generating on-site emissions. The proposed Project facilities do not include such uses because the new well and booster station pumps are electric powered. The well will have a standby backup diesel -powered emergency generator. Because the emergency generator will only operate under emergency conditions and routine testing, emissions would be negligible. The EVWD will be required to obtain an SCAQMD permit to install and operate the emergency generator. The SCAQMD permitting process would ensure that the Project meets regulatory requirements through the application review process and by placing specific operating conditions on the permit such as operating hour limits. Therefore, no long-term LST analysis is needed and localized operational emissions would be less than significant.

Based on the preceding analysis, the Project's short-term construction and long-term operational emissions do not exceed the SCAQMD established thresholds of significance on a regional or localized level for any criteria pollutant. Therefore, the Project will not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria pollutant emissions for which the Project region is non-attainment and thus impacts are considered less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

3.c Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

A sensitive receptor is a person in the population who is particularly susceptible to health effects due to exposure to an air contaminant including children, the elderly, and persons with pre-existing respiratory and/or cardiovascular illness. SCAQMD defines a "sensitive receptor" as a land use or facility such as residences, schools, child care centers, athletic facilities, playgrounds, retirement homes, and convalescent homes where these persons are typically located. (SCAQMD 1993.) Staff at SCAQMD developed LST methodology that can be used by public agencies to determine whether or not a project may generate significant adverse localized air quality impacts (both short- and long-term).

Less than significant impact. There are residential properties located adjacent to the proposed water pipeline alignment within Greenspot Road northwest of EVWD Headquarters. Impacts to these receptors were evaluated and the localized analysis in **Appendix A** demonstrates short-term emissions generated in the Project area during construction were below the applicable thresholds established by SCAQMD. (WEBB-A). As such, the construction emissions were found to be less than significant, as indicated in response to threshold 3b, above. Operational emissions were also found to be less than significant, as indicated above. Therefore, the proposed Project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and impacts are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

3.d Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Less than Significant impact. The Project presents the potential for generation of other emissions such as odors in the form of diesel exhaust during construction in the immediate vicinity of the Project site. Odors generated during construction will be short-term and will not result in a long-term odorous impact to the surrounding area. After completion of the proposed improvements, only infrequent maintenance will be required.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has developed an Air Quality and Land Use Handbook to outline common sources of odor complaints, including: sewage treatment plants, landfills, recycling facilities, and petroleum refineries. (CARB 2005.) The Project proposes water facilities which are not included on CARB's list of uses that are known to be prone to generate odors. No other emissions are anticipated to result from the Project that could adversely affect substantial numbers of people. As such, impacts are less than significant.

Air Quality Mitigation Measures

Air quality impacts are less than significant; therefore. no mitigation is required.

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		Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
4.	**BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.** Would the project:				
a.	Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b.	Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c.	Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d.	Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e.	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☒	☐	☐
f.	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐

(Sources: SWCA-A)

The analysis in this section is based on the findings of the *Biological Resources Technical Report for the Well 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, Highland, San Bernardino County, California* (BRTR) prepared by SWCA Environmental Consultants in October 2026 (SWCA-A). The BRTR is included as **Appendix B** of this Initial Study. The BRTR was prepared to review and assess the biological resources that have been reported from the vicinity of, or have the potential to occur, on and adjacent to the Well 152 Project site plus a 50-foot buffer (the biological study area). The BRTR identifies the conservation status of special status species, suitable habitat for these species, and the potential for each to occur on or near the Project area. The BRTR consisted of a review of pertinent literature and a field reconnaissance survey to perform a general inventory of flora and fauna and determine habitat suitability for special status flora and fauna. Field methods included systematic pedestrian coverage of accessible portions of the biological study area. All flora and fauna detected (e.g., through direct observation, vocalizations, presence of scat, tracks, and/or bones) within the Project area during the course of the survey were recorded in field notes and are included in Appendices B and C of the BRTR. SWCA biologists conducted the habitat assessment site surveys within the biological study area on October 28, 2025. (SWCA-A, p. 13.) A literature review was conducted by SWCA to identify biological resources known from the immediate vicinity of the study area. This included review of literature and searches of CDFW's California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB), the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California, eBird, United States Fish and Wildlife Services' (USFWS') online mapper, iNaturalist, and pertinent documents from the SWCA library and project files. (SWCA-A, p. 13.)

4.a Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than significant with mitigation. Construction of the Project could result in direct and indirect impacts to sensitive biological resources occurring within the Project area. Potential impacts may include disturbance or removal of habitat, displacement of wildlife species, removal of plant species and disturbance of normal nesting and breeding activities of wildlife.

Vegetation Communities and Land Cover – The pedestrian survey identified one vegetation community and two land cover types within the biological study area. The two land cover types were developed and disturbed habitat. The only native vegetation communities present were outside the Project site within the study area along Greenspot Road was brittlebush scrub (*Encelia farinosa* Shrubland Alliance). Brittlebush scrub made up 0.03 acres of the study area, outside the Project site. Appendix B of the BRTR provides a full list of plants observed during the survey. The central portion of the study area has been disturbed, providing little to no value for wildlife and biodiversity conservation. Disturbed areas of the study area unpaved and non-landscaped areas within the EVWD administrative headquarters and most undeveloped areas within the 50-foot buffer surrounding the Project site. EVWD conducts weed abatement in the unpaved area, and overall plant cover is low in the disturbed areas within the facility at the time of the field survey. Vegetation consists of few individual native shrubs. The northern portion of the biological study area is urban/developed and has undergone extensive human modification. The disturbed habitat made up 0.20 acres of the Project site and 1.05 acres of the study area. Developed areas within the biological study area consists of paved surfaces (parking lots and walkways) and landscaped areas of the EVWD administrative headquarters. Developed area made up 0.93 acres of the Project site and 3.12 acres of the study area. Landscaping along the borders of paved surfaces consist primarily of ornamental vegetation, including trees. No sensitive natural communities or riparian habitats were identified in the biological study area. (SWCA-A, pp. 16-19, 38.)

Special-Status Plant Species - No special-status plant species are expected to occur within the Project site due to the prevalence of developed and highly disturbed land covers. (SWCA-A, p. 37.) Therefore, the Project is not anticipated to result in direct or indirect impacts to special-status plant species, and no species-specific mitigation is required.

Special-Status Insect Species – The BRTR identified one special-status insect species, Crotch's Bumble Bee (*Bombus crotchii*), with potential to occur within the Project site. The Crotch's Bumble Bee (CBB) has a moderate potential to occur within the Project site because habitat surrounding the Project site is suitable and landscaped or ruderal plant species that may present foraging opportunities. (SWCA-A, p. 31.) To reduce potential impacts to CBB to less than significant, the Project shall implement mitigation measure **MM BIO-1,** which requires a preconstruction survey. (SWCA-A, p. 37.)

Special-Status Fish Species – No special-status fish species are expected to occur within the Project site because no perennial streams or aquatic connectivity exist. Although this species was historically recorded in the stream adjacent to the Project site, it was presumed extirpated by 1957. Further, the Project is unlikely to affect this stream, which is located approximately 20 feet south of the Project site. Therefore, the Project is not anticipated to result in direct or indirect impacts to special-status fish species, and no species-specific mitigation is required. (SWCA-A, p. 31.)

Special-Status Reptile and Amphibian Species – The BRTR identified three special-status reptile species and one special-status amphibian species with the potential to occur within the Project site. California glossy snake

(*Arizona elegans occidentalis*) and coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*) have a low potential to occur due to the presence of marginally suitable habitat and existing disturbances. Southern California legless lizard (*Anniella stebbinsi*) has a moderate potential to occur due to the presence of loose, moist soils and leaf litter within landscaped areas. Western spadefoot (*Spea hammondii*) has a low potential to occur within the Project site due to the absence of suitable breeding habitat. However, a human-made retention basin located within 50 feet of the Project site may provide suitable breeding habitat following winter rainfall events. Construction activities could result in direct or indirect impacts to these species. To reduce potential impacts, mitigation measure **MM BIO-2**, which requires preconstruction surveys and avoidance or relocation of special-status reptiles, and mitigation measure **MM BIO-3**, which requires seasonal avoidance or preconstruction surveys for western spadefoot, shall be implemented. With incorporation of these mitigation measures, potential impacts to special-status reptile and amphibian species would be reduced to less than significant. (SWCA-A, pp. 36–37.)

Special-Status Bird Species –The BRTR evaluated the potential to occur for six (6) sensitive species: Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), cactus wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*), coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), and Southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimu*s). The Cactus wren and coastal California gnatcatcher are covered under the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Habitat Conservation Plan (Wash Plan). The coastal California gnatcatcher is not expected to occur within the Project site due to the lack of suitable coastal scrub habitat within the study area; However, scrub habitat within 500 feet of the Project site may be more suitable. Therefore, Project construction activities conducted during the breeding season could result in indirect impacts to nesting coastal California gnatcatchers occurring in adjacent habitat. To avoid potential impacts to coastal California gnatcatcher, the Project shall implement mitigation measure **MM BIO-4**, which requires pre-activity nesting bird surveys if construction occurs during breeding season. The other five special-status bird species are not expected to occur on-site due to the lack of suitable habitat present within the Project site or surrounding area. (SWCA-A, pp. 28-29, 35.)

Virtually all native bird species are protected by the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and by the state Fish and Game code. Direct and indirect impacts to nesting birds can be minimized or eliminated by conducting work outside of the local breeding season. Within the study area, breeding activity is expected to occur between February 1 and August 31 (January 1 through June 30 for raptors). With the implementation of **MM-BIO-5,** which requires preconstruction nesting bird surveys and avoidance if nests are found**,** the potential impact to special-status nesting bird species would be less than significant.

Special-Status Mammal Species – The BRTR evaluated the potential to occur for two 2 special-status mammals: San Bernardino kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*) and San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*). The San Bernardino kangaroo rat (SBKR) is a covered species under the Wash Plan and has a low potential to occur on the Project site due to the prevalence of disturbed and developed land cover types. However, the Project site is within USFWS-mapped critical habitat for SBKR, and the species has been historically recorded in the immediate vicinity of the Project site. As a result, the Project could result in direct or indirect impacts to SBKR. To avoid potential impacts to SBKR, the Project shall implement mitigation measure **MM BIO-6**. This mitigation measure requires construction monitoring by a qualified biologist and implementation of avoidance buffers, if necessary. The San Diego desert woodrat is not expected to occur within the Project site because the site lacks suitable habitat including native scrub and rock features. (SWCA-A, pp. 29, 36.)

For the reasons set forth in the above paragraphs, impacts regarding the Project resulting in a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California

Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation.

4.b Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less than significant. Refer to the response to threshold 4.a, above. According to the BRTR, no sensitive natural communities or riparian habitat were identified in the study area; however, riparian habitat may exist downstream of the Project site. Several potentially jurisdictional aquatic resources were identified and mapped within the study area outside of the Project site. None of the potentially jurisdictional features overlap the Project site. These features include the human-made drainage channel to the south of the EVWD headquarters and a human-made retention basin within EVWD Headquarters. The human-made drainage is approximately 20 feet south of the Project site; no direct impacts are anticipated to the human-made drainage. (SWCA-A, pp. 33, 38.) Potential indirect impacts to this potential habitat would be reduced to less than significant levels through compliance with current regulations requiring construction best management practices, such as the implementation of a State-required Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that incorporates effective erosion and sediment control measures.

4.c Would the Project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Less than significant. Refer to the response to threshold 4.b, above. Construction of the Well 152 Project would have a less than significant impacts on federally protected wetlands.

4.d Would the Project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

No impact. Construction of the Well 152 Project would not interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites. The Project site does not support the movement of wildlife at a regional level, nor is it recognized as a vital corridor for dispersal, seasonal migration, or use as a wildlife nursery site. (SWCA-A, p. 39.) For these reasons, no impacts would result to wildlife corridors or nursery sites as a result of the Project.

4.e Would the Project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Less than significant with mitigation. The proposed Project may conflict with local policies or tree preservation ordinances. The Project site contains landscaped trees in developed areas which may meet the definition of a “Heritage Tree” according to the City of Highland Tree Protection Ordinance, including woody plants at least 15 feet in height and having a single trunk circumference of 24 inches or more, as measured 4.5 feet above ground level. (SWCA-A, pp. 39.) With implementation of **MM BIO-7,** which requires the evaluation of trees proposed for removal, avoidance of protected trees when feasible, and obtaining a Tree Removal Permit when applicable, the potential impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.

4.f Would the Project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The proposed Project site is located within the 4,892 acre Wash Plan planning area. The Wash Plan is a comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional Habitat Conservation Plan created to balance the effects of water supply management activities with conservation needs and is designed to facilitate efficient permitting and implementation of "Covered Activities" (such as wells and water infrastructure, aggregate mining, flood-control infrastructure, transportation and recreation/trails, maintenance of existing facilities, and habitat restoration) while achieving conservation of special-status species and natural communities within the plan area. San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District (SBVWCD) along with other participating entities with the need for permit coverage for endangered and threatened species for their water supply/infrastructure projects worked to develop this plan. The Wash Plan covers five species and the vegetation and land cover types that support these species.

EVWD is a Participating Entity under the Wash Plan and may implement qualifying Covered Activities under the Wash Plan. As a water infrastructure project, the Project is an activity covered under the Wash Plan. The following Wash Plan covered species were determined to have potential to occur in the Project site: coastal California gnatcatcher and San Bernadino kangaroo rat (SBKR). Cactus wren, Santa Ana River woollystar, and slender-horned spineflower were determined to have no potential to occur within the project site due to the lack of suitable habitat. (SWCA-A, pp. 19, 40.) The mitigation measures recommended for the protection of these covered species (**MM BIO-4** and **MM BIO-6**) were developed with consideration of applicable Wash Plan requirements. Although coastal California gnatcatcher is a Wash Plan covered species recorded in the vicinity of the project site, it is not expected to occur within the Project footprint due to the absence of suitable habitat. Therefore, **MM BIO-4** for coastal California gnatcatcher is intended to address the potential for indirect impacts to adjacent habitat and are not based on the Wash Plan's species-specific avoidance requirements for impacts within occupied gnatcatcher habitat. The mitigation measure recommended for the protection of SBKR (**MM BIO-6**) is consistent with the measures required by the Wash Plan. Based on the literature review and field survey conducted for this Project, SBKR has a low potential to occur within the Project site and implementation of the recommended avoidance and minimization measures is expected to reduce the potential for impacts to the species. For the reasons outlined above, Project implementation is not expected to conflict with the conservation objectives of the Wash Plan and the impacts would be less than significant with mitigation.

Biological Resources Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce impacts to biological resources to less than significant.

> **MM BIO-1: Preconstruction Survey for Crotch's Bumble Bee.** A qualified biologist familiar with identification and life history of Crotch's bumble bee shall conduct a preconstruction survey no more than 14 days prior to the start of construction to look for Crotch's bumble bee nests within the Project site and a 50-foot buffer. Potential nests shall be flagged and a minimum 50-foot avoidance buffer shall be established. If construction activities are delayed for more than 30 days following completion of the survey, an additional survey shall be conducted prior to the initiation or resumption of ground-disturbing activities. If an active nest is identified during construction, the avoidance buffer shall remain in place until a qualified biologist determines that the nest is no longer active.

MM BIO-2: Preconstruction Survey for California Glossy Snakes, Coast Horned Lizards, and Southern California Legless Lizards. A qualified biologist familiar with the identification and natural history of California glossy snake, coast horned lizard, and southern California legless lizard shall conduct a preconstruction survey no more than 2 days prior to the start of ground disturbance or vegetation clearing activities. If any California glossy snakes, coast horned lizards, or southern California legless lizards are observed within the Project impact area, the qualified biologist shall allow the individual to move out of harm's way on its own, if feasible, or relocate the individual to suitable habitat outside the Project footprint.

MM BIO-3: Preconstruction Survey for Western Spadefoot Toad. Limit construction activities within 50 feet of the retention basins to outside of the breeding season (approximately January-May depending on rainfall) to the extent feasible to avoid impacting western spadefoot breeding in the manmade retention basins and drainage. If construction activities within 50 feet of the retention basins occur during the western spadefoot breeding season, a qualified biologist familiar with the identification and life history of western spadefoot shall conduct a preconstruction survey no more than 14 days prior to the start of construction to identify potentially suitable western spadefoot breeding habitat and determine whether western spadefoot are present. The survey area shall include the Project site and a 50-foot buffer. If suitable western spadefoot breeding habitat is identified, best management practices shall be implemented during construction activities to avoid runoff into the breeding habitat. If western spadefoot individuals are found, a minimum 50-foot avoidance buffer shall be established around occupied breeding habitat and maintained until a qualified biologist determines that western spadefoot are no longer present. The avoidance buffer shall be removed when western spadefoot are confirmed to be absent from the breeding habitat by the qualified biologist. If construction activities are delayed for more than 14 days during the breeding season, or if substantial rainfall occurs after the survey and prior to the start or resumption of work, a qualified biologist shall determine whether additional surveys are necessary based on current site conditions and the potential for western spadefoot breeding habitat to have developed.

MM BIO-4: Preconstruction Survey for Coastal California gnatcatcher. To reduce impacts to coastal California gnatcatcher, construction activities during the coastal California gnatcatcher breeding season (February 15 to August 30) shall be avoided, if feasible. If vegetation clearing or initial ground disturbance occurs during the breeding season, a qualified biologist familiar with the identification and natural history of coastal California gnatcatcher shall conduct a pre-activity nesting bird survey no more than 3 days prior to the start of work. The survey shall include the impact area and all accessible habitat within a 500-foot buffer of the project site to determine whether active coastal California gnatcatcher nests or other protected native bird nests are present. If there is a lapse in construction activities of 5 or more days, the area to be disturbed and surrounding 500-foot buffer shall be resurveyed no more than 3 days before vegetation clearing or initial ground disturbance resumes. If an active coastal California gnatcatcher nest is identified, a 300-foot avoidance buffer shall be established and maintained until the qualified biologist determines that nesting has been completed. Appropriate species-specific avoidance buffers shall be established for other protected native bird species, as determined by the qualified biologist.

MM BIO-5: Preconstruction Survey for Nesting Birds. Prior to vegetation removal, the following nesting bird requirements shall be implemented:

a. If possible, site disturbance and landscaping activity shall not occur during the nesting bird breeding season (February 1 through August 31; January 1 through June 30 for raptors).

b. If activities associated with vegetation removal, construction, or grading must be conducted during the bird nesting/breeding season (February 1 through August 31; January 1 through June 30 for raptors), a qualified biologist shall conduct surveys for active nests. Preconstruction nesting bird surveys shall be conducted no more than 3 days prior to the start of clearance/construction work. If ground-disturbing activities are delayed or suspended for 5 or more consecutive days, additional preconstruction surveys shall be conducted such that no more than 3 days have elapsed between the survey and start of ground-disturbing activities.

c. If active nests are discovered during the nest survey, those nests shall be avoided until the young have fledged. The qualified biologist shall establish appropriate avoidance buffers based on the factors such as the nest location, surrounding vegetation, topography, construction activities, and anticipated noise levels. Buffers may be modified by the qualified biologist if the nest remains active and breeding behavior indicates that construction activities are not adversely affecting nesting success. The avoidance buffer shall remain in place until the qualified biologist determines that the young have fledged and are no longer reliant on the nest site. Any temporary exclusionary fencing or flagging installed to delineate the buffer shall be maintained for the duration of the nesting period and removed only at the direction of the qualified biologist.

MM BIO-6: San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat Monitoring. A qualified biologist or biological monitor with San Bernardino kangaroo rat [SBKR] expertise shall be present when construction or ground-disturbing activities that could result in take of SBKR occurs in, or within 100 meters of San Bernardino kangaroo rat habitat. The biological monitor shall ensure that construction activities remain within the approved project footprint and that avoidance buffers established during preconstruction surveys are maintained. Construction or ground-disturbing activities for this Project that could result in take of San Bernardino kangaroo rat include, but are not limited to, site grading, drilling, excavation, trenching, stockpiling of soils or drill cuttings, and repeated vehicle or heavy-equipment travel in unpaved areas. The biological monitor shall ensure that construction activities remain within the approved Project footprint and that avoidance buffers established during preconstruction surveys are maintained. The qualified biologist or biological monitor shall have the authority to stop work if a San Bernardino kangaroo rat is found. If a San Bernardino kangaroo rat is observed within the Project area during construction, work in the immediate vicinity of the observation shall stop and the biological monitor shall allow the individual to leave the area on its own. If necessary, the monitor shall establish an appropriate avoidance buffer and notify the Project proponent and the SBVWCD (Wash Plan administrator). Construction activities may resume once the individual has moved out of the work area and the monitor determines that work can proceed without risk of take.

MM BIO-7: Heritage Tree Removal. The Project shall avoid the removal of protected trees whenever feasible. Prior to the removal of any trees within the Project site, an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist shall evaluate trees proposed for removal and determine whether any qualify as Heritage Trees under the City of Highland Tree Protection Ordinance. If any Heritage Trees would be removed, the Project applicant shall comply with all applicable requirements of the City of Highland Tree Protection Ordinance, including obtaining any required Tree Removal Permit and implementing any permit conditions, such as tree replacement requirements, prior to tree removal.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
5. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

(Sources: SWCA-B)

The analysis in this section is based on the findings of the Historic Property Identification Report for the East Valley Water District Well No. 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, City of Highland, prepared by SWCA Environmental Consultants in October 2026 (SWCA-B). This report is included as **Appendix C.1** of this Initial Study.

5.a Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?

Determination of National Register of Historic Property (NRHP) eligibility for cultural resources is made according to the following criteria of evaluation (36 CFR 60.4):

> The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of state and local importance that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and:
>
> A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
>
> B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
>
> C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack distinction; or
>
> D. that has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history.

A property must meet one or more of these specific criteria to qualify as a good representative of a significant historical theme or pattern. It must be associated with important historical events or persons (Criteria A and B); convey important technical, aesthetic, or environmental values (Criterion C); or have potential to provide important scientific or scholarly information (Criterion D). Unless a site is of exceptional importance, it is not eligible for listing in the NRHP until it is 50 years of age. (SWCA-B p. 6.)

For purposes of CEQA, a historical resource is any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript listed in, or eligible for listing in the CRHR (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21084.1). A resource is eligible for listing in the CRHR if it meets any of the following criteria:

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage.
2. Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.

3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The California Code of Regulations (CCR) further provides that cultural resources of local significance are CRHR-eligible. (Title 14 CCR, Section 4852). (SWCA-B pp. 7-8.)

The City of Highland General Plan includes goals, policies, and actions pertaining to historic buildings and districts. As stated in the Municipal Code, "an improvement, natural feature, or site may be nominated as a cultural resource by the historic and cultural preservation board…if it meets the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or the following", below are the criteria established by the City (SWCA-B pp: 10-11.)

A. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, engineering, architectural, or natural history.
B. It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state, or national history.
C. It embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction, or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship.
D. It is representative of the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect.
E. It contributes to the significance of an historic area, being a geographically definable area possessing a concentration of historic or scenic properties or thematically related grouping of properties which contribute to each other and are unified aesthetically by plan or physical development.
F. It has a unique location or singular physical characteristics or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city.
G. It embodies elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation.
H. It is similar to other distinctive properties, sites, areas, or objects based on a historic, cultural, or architectural motif.
I. It reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particular transportation modes, or distinctive examples of park or community planning.
J. It is one of the few remaining examples in the city, region, state, or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen.

Less than significant impact. Construction of the Well No. 152 Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. The Project site refers to the geographic area within which the Well No. 152 Drilling and Equipping Project has the potential to impact historic properties directly or indirectly pursuant to 36 CFR 800.16(d). The Project site includes the approximately 1.13-acre Area of Potential Effects (APE) located within the EVWD Headquarters property at 31111 Greenspot Road (SWCA-B, p. 1). Construction of Well No. 152 and associated facilities would not impact historical resources because no historic properties were identified within the Project APE.

Cultural literature and records searches were conducted by SWCA through the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at California State University, Fullerton (SWCA-B, pp. 22–24). Background research also included review of the NRHP, California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), California Points of Historical Interest, California Historical Landmarks, the Archaeological Resources Directory, and the California

Historic Resources Inventory. Additional sources consulted included literature, historic maps, aerial photographs, Native American outreach, archaeological sensitivity analysis, and intensive archaeological and built-environment surveys (SWCA-B, pp. 20–27).

The California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) records search identified 15 previous cultural resource investigations within 1.0 mile of the Project APE, one of which intersects the Project APE. The records search also identified eight previously recorded cultural resources within 1.0 mile of the Project APE; however, none intersect the Project APE (SWCA-B, pp. 22–24). A Sacred Lands File (SLF) search was conducted with the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), and Native American outreach was completed as part of the investigation (SWCA-B, pp. 22, 25). In addition to the records search and literature review, SWCA conducted an intensive-level archaeological and built-environment survey of the Project APE on November 19, 2025. The archaeological sensitivity assessment determined that the Project APE has a relatively low potential for containing buried archaeological deposits due to previous ground disturbance. No cultural resources were identified during the pedestrian survey. (SWCA-B, pp. 25-28.) No historic properties were identified within the Project APE. Based on the records search, archival research, Native American outreach, and field surveys, SWCA concluded that implementation of the Project would result in No Historic Properties Affected under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (SWCA-B, p. 29). Therefore, the Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, and impacts would be less than significant.

5.b Would the Project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Construction of the Well 152 Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource. As discussed under threshold 5.a, based on the results of the CHRIS records search, archival and background research, outreach to local Native American groups and interested parties, a site sensitivity assessment, and a pedestrian survey, the archaeological sensitivity for significant prehistoric archaeological resources was determined to be low due to previous grading, utility installation, imported fill, and other disturbances associated with development of the existing EVWD Headquarters (SWCA-B, p. 25-28). To reduce potential impacts associated with an inadvertent discovery of archaeological resources and as requested by the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (YSMN), the Project shall implement mitigation measure **MM CR-1** and **MM CR-2**, set forth the procedures to be followed in the event an archaeological resource is discovered. With incorporation of mitigation measures **MM CR-1** and **MM CR-2**, potential impacts to archaeological resources would be reduced to less than significant.

5.c Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Human remains are not expected to be disturbed as a result of the implementation of the proposed Project. In the unlikely event that unknown human remains or funerary objects are uncovered during construction, no further disturbance to the site shall occur, pursuant to law, the San Bernardino County coroner would be notified and standard procedures for the respectful handling of human remains would be adhered to in compliance with California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15064.5(e); Public Resources Code (PRC) Division 5, Chapter 1.75, Section 5097.98; and State Health and Safety Code (HSC) Division 7, Part 1, Chapter 2, Section 7050.5. Compliance with these regulations, which are incorporated in **MM CR-3** as requested by YSMN, would reduce potential impacts to the disturbance of human remains to less than significant.

Cultural Resources Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce impacts to cultural resources to less than significant.

MM CR-1: Inadvertent Discovery. In the event that cultural resources are discovered during Project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the other portions of the Project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed within **MM TCR-1**, regarding any pre-contact finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.

MM CR-2: If significant pre-contact cultural resources, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to YSMN for review and comment, as detailed within **MM TCR-1**. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the Project and implement the Plan accordingly.

MM CR-3: If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the Project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the Project.

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		Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
6.	**ENERGY.** Would the project:				
a.	Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b.	Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: Project Description; CEC, WEBB-A; WEBB-B)

6.a Would the Project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?

Less than Significant Impact. As an infrastructure project, the majority of impacts would be short-term. As described in the AQ/GHG Analysis (WEBB-A), the Project's short-term construction would last approximately 18 months. Project construction would require the use of construction equipment for drilling, well and booster station construction and paving, as well as construction workers and vendors traveling to and from the Project site. Construction equipment requires diesel as the fuel source and construction worker and vendor trips use both gasoline and diesel fuel. Project-related fuel consumption was estimated and is included in **Appendix D – Energy Tables**. (WEBB-B.) Construction of the Project is estimated to use approximately 58,333 gallons of diesel fuel and 3,642 gallons of gasoline. (WEBB-B.)

Fuel consumption from on-site heavy-duty construction equipment and construction would be temporary in nature and uses a limited number of equipment, which would represent a negligible demand on energy resources. Furthermore, there are no unusual Project site characteristics that would necessitate the use of construction equipment that would be less energy-efficient than at comparable construction sites in other parts of the State.

Energy used during operation of the well and booster station would primarily result from electricity usage from one well pump and one booster pump (the second pump is standby). The estimated electricity consumption for the well and booster pump is 650 megawatt-hours (MWh) per year. Additionally, there will be limited lighting on the Project site that would result in nominal electricity usage. The Project's operational energy usage represents a negligible demand on Southern California Edison's (SCE's) energy resources, which consumed 282,783 gigawatt hours (GWh) in 2024 (CEC) and therefore would not operate in a manner that is wasteful or inefficient.

For these reasons, the Project would not result in a potentially significant impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy during Project construction or operation. Impacts are less than significant. No mitigation is required.

6.b Would the Project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

No Impact. The Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of any state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency because there are no applicable plans for water infrastructure. Thus, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. No impact would occur.

Energy Mitigation Measures

There are no impacts to energy; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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		Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
7	**GEOLOGY AND SOILS.** Would the project :				
a.	Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i.	Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii.	Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii.	Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv.	Landslides?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b.	Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c.	Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d.	Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e.	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f.	Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

(Sources: GIR; GP PHSEJ; SWCA-C)

The discussion to responses 7a through 7e is based, in part, on findings and recommendations from the *Geotechnical Investigation Report, Well 152 Equipment Building (W2255) 31111 Greenspot Road City of Highland, San Bernardino County, California, May 7, 2026 (cited as GIR*), prepared by Converse Consultants. The study is included as **Appendix E** of this Initial Study. The discussion to response to threshold 7f is based on the *Paleontological Resources Assessment for the Well No. 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, Highland, San Bernardino County, California October 2026 (cited as SWCA-C)*, prepared by SWCA Environmental Consultants, which is included as **Appendix C.2** of this Initial Study.

7.a.(i) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

Surface rupture refers to the actual "tearing apart" of the ground surface along a fault trace resulting from an earthquake. The effects of surface rupture may be mitigated by placing structures a specific distance from the known fault trace. The Alquist-Priolo Act requires the State Geologist to establish regulatory zones (known as Earthquake Fault Zones) and to issue appropriate maps. Local agencies must then regulate most development projects within the zones.

No Impact. According to the *Highland General Plan Public Health, Safety, and Environmental Justice Element Figure 13 - Alquist- Priolo Earthquake Fault Zones*, the Project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone (GP PHSEJ, p. 36.) As reported in the Geotechnical Investigation Report by Converse Consultants, the potential for surface rupture resulting from the movement of a presently unrecognized fault beneath the site is considered very low (GIR, p. 8). No impacts would occur.

7.a.(ii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking

Less than significant. As discussed above in the response to threshold 7.a.(i), the Project site is not located within a currently designated State of California Earthquake or San Bernardino County Fault Zone. (GIR, p. 8.) Although the Project site will be subject to seismic activity, the Project does not include habitable structures or office space that would be occupied for lengthy periods of time. Thus, the likelihood that a human would be present on the Project site during a moderate or major earthquake is small. Additionally, there is no aspect of the Project's construction or operation that would exacerbate the potential for or magnitude of seismic ground shaking. For these reasons, the potential for the Project to result in substantial direct or indirect impacts involving the exposure of people or structures to the risk of loss, injury, or death involving earthquake rupture would be less than significant.

7.a.(iii) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Less than significant. Liquefaction commonly occurs in loose, saturated, sandy sediments that are subjected to ground vibrations greater than 0.2g (g-force). When liquefaction occurs, the sediments involved have a substantial loss of shear strength and behave like a liquid or semi-viscous substance, which can result in structural distress or failure due to ground settlement, a loss of load-bearing capacity in foundation soils, and the buoyant rise of buried structures.

The analysis in the Geotechnical Investigation Report determined that the Project site has a low potential for liquefaction due to the very dense soil conditions encountered as well as current ground water being deeper than approximately 120 feet. (GIR, p. 9.) Furthermore, the Project does not propose habitable structures that would involve exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving liquefaction are proposed. Additionally, the Project will be designed with recommendations outlined in the Geotechnical Investigation Report, which include but are not limited to, site preparation, grading, foundation footing, and drainage control. Nonetheless, because the Project will comply with the standards outlined in the CBC, CAL-OSHA, as well as the recommendations in the Geotechnical Investigation Report, direct and indirect hazards associated with liquefaction would be less than significant.

7.a.(iv) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?

Less than significant. Strong ground motions can result in landslides, rock slides, and rock falls, particularly where saturated ground conditions exist. During an earthquake, groundwater conditions also have an influence in the development of seismically-induced slope failures, as well as landslides and mudflows. Lateral spreading is a type of landslide that can occur on gentle to steep slopes where seismic-induced liquefaction occurs in saturated soils.

The Geotechnical Investigation Report concluded the risk of landslides at the Project site is low because the site is not adjacent to any steep slopes. (GIR, p. 9.)

Additionally, not only is the landslide potential of the Project site low, the Project does not propose habitable structures that would involve exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. The Project will be designed and constructed with recommendations outlined in the Geotechnical Investigation Report, which include but are not limited to, site preparation, grading, foundation footing, trench backfill, pipeline preparation and bedding, pavement, and drainage control. Moreover, the Project will comply with the standards outlined in the California Building Code (CBC), California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (CAL-OSHA), and hazards associated with landslides would be less than significant. Therefore, direct or indirect impacts associated with causing potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides would be less than significant.

7.b Would the Project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Less than significant. Construction of the Project would result vegetation removal, grading, and excavation which may lead to localized erosion as wind and water carry loose soils offsite. Compliance with current regulations for fugitive dust control under SCAQMD Rule 403 and implementation of a State-required Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) that incorporates effective erosion and sediment control measures would reduce impacts regarding substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil to less than significant.

7.c Would the Project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

Less than significant. As discussed in responses to threshold 7.a.iii and threshold 7.a.iv, the Project site is located in an area that has low liquefaction potential and is at low risk for landslides. Due to the lack of liquefaction potential, the risk for lateral spreading at the Project site is considered low. (GIR, p. 9.) Although the Project site topography will be minorly altered during Project construction, the Project site will be designed with recommendations outlined in the Geotechnical Investigation Report ,which include but are not limited to, site preparation, grading, foundation footing, and drainage control. Moreover, the Project will comply with the standards outlined in the CBC, CAL-OSHA, and hazards associated with construction on unstable soils would be less than significant.

7.d Would the Project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Less than significant. This question makes specific reference to a definition from the Uniform Building Code (1994), which has been replaced by the California Building Code (2016) and the definition of expansive soil provided in section 1803.5.3. Expansive soils are those that contain a significant amount of clay particles that have a high shrink (dry) and swell (wet) potential. The upward pressures induced by the swelling of expansive soils under moist conditions can damage structures. The Project does not propose habitable structures that would directly or indirectly create a substantial risk to life.

Based on the soil sampling from in the Geotechnical Investigation Report, the Project site soil was classified as silty sand with some gravels, cobbles, and boulders. (GIR, p. 5.) The report also indicated that the Project site had an expansion index (EI) of zero, which is categorized as very low potential for soil expansion. Therefore, impacts associated with creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property due to the presence of expansive soils would less than significant.

7.e Would the Project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

No impact. The proposed Project does not include the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Thus, there would be no impact in terms of having soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems.

7.f Would the Project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Paleontological resources include fossils of plant and animal remains from prehistoric eras.

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. As part of the Paleontological Resources Assessment prepared for the Project, SWCA conducted an analysis of available existing data pertinent to paleontological resources. This analysis included a review of geologic maps, subsurface geotechnical data, scientific literature, and museum records search from the San Bernardino County Museum (SBCM). The SBCM does not possess records of paleontological resources from within the Project site. The SBCM has one record of a fossil locality approximately 4.6 miles from the Project site (SWCA-C, p. 12).

The Project site is mapped as containing late Holocene very young alluvial fan deposits and middle Holocene young axial channel deposits, Unit 3. Both the very young alluvial fan deposits and young axial channel deposits, Unit 3 have low paleontological potential (PFYC 2). The site likely also contains artificial fill, which has no paleontological potential. The SBCM indicates that Pleistocene-age sediments may occur beneath the young axial channel deposits at the Project site. Similar Pleistocene deposits in Southern California have yielded scientifically significant paleontological resources. Most site preparation activities are expected to result in ground disturbance up to 5 feet below ground surface (bgs), with excavation for the booster station equipment extending up to 15 feet bgs. The proposed well would be drilled to a depth of approximately 800 feet bgs with a maximum 42-inch-diameter casing. Although well drilling would extend into Pleistocene-age deposits, the drilling process would prevent observation of resources at depth, produce highly disturbed spoils, and affect a relatively small volume of sediment. Therefore, well drilling is not anticipated to result in a potentially significant impact. However, excavation for the booster station equipment could encounter Pleistocene-age sediments and any scientifically significant paleontological resources they may contain. (SWCA-C, p. 12.) To reduce potential direct or indirect impacts to a unique paleontological resources to less than significant, mitigation measure **MM GEO-1**, which requires worker environmental awareness training, monitoring, reporting, and treatment of any fossil discoveries, shall be implemented (SWCA-B, pp. 12–13).

Geology and Soils Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce impacts to geology and soils to less than significant.

MM GEO-1: Paleontological Resources. To reduce impacts to paleontological resources, prior to any Project-related construction or excavation, East Valley Water District (EVWD), or its designee shall retain a Qualified Paleontologist who meets the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) qualifications for Principal Investigator or Project Paleontologist to carry out the following:

a. **Conduct Worker Environmental Awareness Training**. The Qualified Paleontologist shall develop worker environmental awareness program (WEAP) training to educate the construction crew on the legal requirements for preserving fossil resources, as well as the procedures to follow in the event of a

fossil discovery. This training program shall be presented by the Qualified Paleontologist (or their representative) to the crew prior to any ground-disturbing activities.

b. **Monitor for Paleontological Resources**. A single paleontological monitoring spot-check shall occur once excavation for the booster station reaches a greater depth than 5 feet to evaluate the absence or presence of Pleistocene sediments. If Pleistocene age sediments are encountered, monitoring should transition to full-time during ground disturbing activities for the booster station below a depth of 5 feet. Monitoring shall not be required when ground-disturbing activities would occur only within previously disturbed sediments and/or artificial fill, regardless of depth. Monitoring shall be conducted by a qualified paleontological monitor who meets the standards of the SVP and who shall be supervised by the Qualified Paleontologist. The Qualified Paleontologist may periodically inspect construction activities and increase, decrease, or cease monitoring in response to subsurface conditions, as appropriate.

c. **Prepare a Paleontological Resources Monitoring Report.** At the conclusion of ground-disturbing activities, the Qualified Paleontologist shall prepare a final monitoring report that documents the methods and results of the monitoring efforts, treatment of paleontological resources, results of specimen processing, analysis, and research, and final curation arrangements, as applicable. The report shall be completed after the completion of paleontological monitoring for the Project. If paleontological resources are curated, the final monitoring report and any associated data pertinent to the curated specimen(s) should be submitted to the designated repository. A copy of the final monitoring report shall be filed with EVWD.

d. **Treat Fossil Discoveries.** In the event of a fossil discovery, whether by the qualified paleontological monitor or a member of the construction crew, the qualified paleontological monitor shall have the authority to temporarily divert construction activity, and all work shall cease within a 50-foot radius of the discovery. The Qualified Paleontologist will evaluate the scientific significance of the find and, if appropriate, collect the fossil specimen(s) and all associated data. Paleontological monitors shall record pertinent geological information and collect sediment from the fossil localities. Recovered fossils shall be prepared to the point of curation, identified by qualified experts, listed in a database to facilitate analysis, and deposited in a designated paleontological curation facility. The Qualified Paleontologist shall obtain a curatorial arrangement with an accredited repository and scientifically significant fossils may be donated to this institution.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:				
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: Project Description; WEBB-A)

8.a Would the Project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Greenhouse gases (GHG) are not presented in pounds per day (lbs/day) like criteria pollutants; they are typically evaluated on an annual basis using the metric system. Several agencies, at various levels, have proposed draft GHG significance thresholds for use in CEQA documents. SCAQMD has worked on GHG thresholds for development projects. In December 2008, the SCAQMD adopted a threshold of 10,000 metric tonnes per year of carbon dioxide equivalents ($MTCO_2E$/yr) for stationary source projects where SCAQMD is the lead agency. The most recent draft proposal was in September 2010 and included screening significance thresholds for residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects at 3,500, 1,400, and 3,000 $MTCO_2E$/yr, respectively. Alternatively, a lead agency has the option to use 3,000 $MTCO_2E$/yr as a threshold for all non-industrial projects. Although both options are recommended by SCAQMD, a lead agency is advised to use only one option and to use it consistently. The SCAQMD significance thresholds also recommends amortizing construction emission over an expected project life of 30 years. The analysis herein uses the threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2E$/yr.

Less than significant impact. The AQ/GHG Analysis prepared for the Project (WEBB-A) estimated GHG emissions from fuel usage by construction equipment and construction-related activities, such as construction worker trips. Model results indicate that an estimated 651.92 $MTCO_2E$ would occur from Project construction equipment over the course of the estimated construction period, as shown in **Table C – Project Construction Equipment GHG Emissions**.

Table C – Project Construction Equipment GHG Emissions

Year	Metric Tons per year (MT/yr)				
	Total CO_2	Total CH_4	Total N_2O	Total R	Total CO_2E
2026	29.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	29.22
2027	458.92	0.02	0.01	0.04	461.27
2028	160.59	0.01	0.00	0.01	161.43
Total	**648.57**	**0.03**	**0.01**	**0.05**	**651.92**
				Amortized[1]	**21.73**

Source: WEBB-A, Table 4

Note: [1]Construction emissions were amortized over a 30-year period, as recommended by SCAQMD.

As discussed under the response to threshold 3.b, Air Quality, long-term emissions from the proposed Project would primarily be from the electric well and booster station pumps. Operations would include one well pump and one booster pump (with a second booster pump on standby). Routine visits by vehicles driven by

maintenance personnel are considered negligible because this Project site is within EVWD's Headquarters property. GHG emissions from the operation of the electric pumps were evaluated in the AQ/GHG Analysis and calculated using the annual electricity consumption from the well and booster station pumps and carbon intensity data from the electric provider (Southern California Edison (SCE)). The electricity consumption for the two electric pumps is estimated at 650 MWh per year. The estimated GHG emissions from operation of two electric pumps will be approximately 102.67 $MTCO_2E$ per year. There will be limited lighting on the Project site. However, the GHG emissions from electricity usage from on-site lighting will be negligible.

The Project's GHG emissions do not exceed the SCAQMD recommended screening level of 3,000 $MTCO_2E$/yr. Due to the estimated amount of emissions from Project construction and operational emissions from electric pumps as well as nominal emissions from routine maintenance and site lighting, the proposed Project would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment and impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

8.b Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

There are no applicable plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions (i.e., Climate Action Plan) for an infrastructure project such as this Project.

No Impact. Construction and operation of the proposed Project would not generate GHG emissions such that a significant impact on the environment would result. Refer to the response to threshold 8.a, above. The Project also will not result in any changes to the existing land use patterns within the Project area. Further, these facilities would not obstruct implementation of any future plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. Therefore, no impact would occur.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(Sources: CCR; CGC; CFR; Cortese List; CWP SB; GE; GP DEIR; GP PHSEJ; *HSC 6.95; MC; PDR; Project Description)*

9.a Would the Project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less than significant impact. Construction activities may include the transport and temporary storage of hazardous materials, such as fuels, lubricants, drilling fluids, and cement products associated with well drilling operations. The transportation and use of these materials could result in accidental spills, leaks, or releases; however, the Project would not require the use or storage of large quantities of hazardous materials during construction.

Hazardous materials transport, storage, and response to accidental releases are regulated by federal and state agencies. At the federal level, these activities are governed by the U.S. Department of Transportation under Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). State regulations are codified in Titles 8, 13, 22, and 26 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), as well as Chapter 6.95 of the California Health and Safety Code, which addresses hazardous materials release response plans and inventories. Compliance with these regulations would reduce the likelihood and severity of accidental releases.

The Project does not include the long-term storage of hazardous materials beyond those typical for operation of a potable water facility. During construction, drill cuttings and fluids would be temporarily stored onsite and removed for proper offsite disposal by the contractor, and wastewater generated during development and

testing would be managed in accordance with applicable discharge requirements (PDR, pp. 10–11). Operation of the completed well would involve minimal quantities of chemicals (e.g., chlorine and orthophosphate) used for water treatment, which would be stored and handled in accordance with applicable regulations and industry standards. Through compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations governing the transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment. Impacts would be less than significant.

9.b Would the Project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Less than significant impact. Given the relatively small size of the Project site (approximately 1.13 acres) and the limited quantities of hazardous materials required for construction and operation, hazardous materials would not be present in substantial quantities. Construction activities would involve the temporary use of materials typical of well drilling, including fuels, lubricants, drilling fluids, and cement products. These materials would be handled, stored, and disposed of in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Drill cuttings and fluids would be temporarily stored onsite and removed for proper offsite disposal by the contractor, and wastewater generated during development and testing would be managed in compliance with applicable discharge requirements. (PDR, pp. 10–11.) During operation, the Project would involve the use of limited quantities of chemicals, including chlorine (sodium hypochlorite) for disinfection and orthophosphate for corrosion control, which would be stored and handled in accordance with regulatory requirements, including secondary containment and spill response protocols. The proposed standby generator and associated fuel storage would also be subject to applicable safety and containment requirements.

The closest clean-up site is located approximately 3.1 miles southwest of the Project site at the southeast corner of Greenspot Road and Orange Street. This site is currently-active and is listed as a voluntary clean up (OEHHA). The Project site is located at the EVWD Headquarters facility and would be accessible only to authorized personnel trained in proper handling and emergency response procedures. In the event of an accidental release, implementation of standard spill prevention and response measures would minimize potential impacts. Through compliance with applicable federal and state laws governing the transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, the Project would not result in a significant hazard to the public or environment. Impacts would be less than significant.

9.c Would the Project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

Less than significant impact. Implementation of the Project would not result in the emissions or handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school given that there are no schools within a one-quarter mile of the Project site. The closest schools to the Project site are approximately 1.9 miles southeast (Cram Elementary School) located at 29700 Water Street and 2.8 miles southeast (Arroyo Verde Elementary School) located at 28355 Base Lane Street. (GE)

Nonetheless, the construction of the Project site would comply with state and federal regulations governing the use and transport of hazardous materials. Therefore, the proposed Project would not expose nearby schools to hazardous materials, substances, or waste and impacts would be less than significant.

9.d Would the Project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

No impact. According to the California Environmental Protection Agency's (CEPA) Cortese list, compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, no hazards material sites are located at or adjacent to the Project site. Thus, no impacts are anticipated in this regard.

9.e For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

No impact. The closest airports[2] to the City of Highland are the Redlands Municipal Airport and San Bernardino International Airport (SBIA). There are no private airstrips or heliports located within the City of Highland. (GP DEIR, p. 5.7-14.) The Redlands Municipal Airport is located approximately 1.6 miles southwest of the Project site at 1755 Sessums Drive. SBIA is located approximately 5.1 miles west of the Project site at 105 N Leland Norton Way. According to the City of Highland General Plan DEIR *Figure 5.7-1, San Bernardino International Airport Influence Area (AIA)/Redlands Municipal Airport Compatibility Map* the Project site is not located with the Redlands Municipal Airport's or the SBIA's influence area or area of special compatibility concern. (GP DEIR, p. 5.7-15.)

Furthermore, the Project site does not propose habitable structures on-site and will not be routinely staffed by EVWD employees. Upon completion of construction, EVWD staff will only perform routine checks and maintenance on an as needed basis. Therefore, due to the Project site's distance to the existing airports and the Project site not housing employees on a routine basis, the Project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area. Thus, no impacts are anticipated in this regard.

9.f Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Less than significant impact. The City of Highland has adopted the City of Highland Emergency Operations Plan and has a five-year plan that outlines fire hazards and risks, and present and future fire protection needs. Additionally, the City of Highland participates in the Statewide Master Mutual Aid Agreement with the City of San Bernardino and the San Bernardino County Sheriff Department; and automatic aid agreements with the Cities of Redlands and Yucaipa, the CDF, and the U.S. Forest Service. (GP DEIR. p. 5.7-17.)

The San Bernardino County Fire Department Hazards Materials Division provides emergency response services to cities within the San Bernardino County. (GP DEIR, p. 5.7-24.) The San Bernardino County-Wide Plan identified potential evacuation routes in and around the City of Highland. These evacuation routes include major interstates (I-10, I-15, I-215), California State Routes (SR-18, SR-30, SR-31, SR-60, SR-62, SR-66, SR-71, SR-83, SR-138, SR-210, SR-247, SR-330) as shown in the County-Wide Plan *Policy Map PP-2 Evacuation Routes*. (CWP SB) Additionally the City of Highland's Public Health, Safety and Environmental Justice Element of the General Plan identifies major east/west roads within the City as possible evacuation roads, (Greenspot Road, Base line Street East Highland Avenue, and Pacific Street). (GP PHSEJ, p. 46.) The Project site is located at the EVWD Headquarters along Greenspot Road, which serves as a primary roadway in the area and may function as an evacuation route. Construction activities may require temporary lane closures along Greenspot Road to

[2] The City of Highland General Plan 2016 DEIR lists the Rialto Municipal Airport as a nearby airport. However, the Rialto Municipal Airport has since been permanently closed and the area has since been redeveloped.

accommodate delivery of equipment, materials, and installation of pipeline connections. If lane closures are necessary, they would be temporary and implemented in accordance with an approved traffic control plan. The traffic control plan would maintain access for emergency vehicles and ensure that adequate circulation is preserved, including provisions for emergency evacuation. Therefore, the Project would not impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

9.g Would the Project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

Less than significant impact. The City of Highland is susceptible to wildland fires due to the steep terrain and highly flammable chaparral vegetation of the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains and high winds that correspond with seasonal dry periods. The characteristics of the mountains and winds in the area indicate that large uncontrollable fires on a recurring basis are inevitable. (GP DEIR, p. 5.7-24.)

The Project site is located within a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (HFHSZ) per *Figure 4-16 Wildfire Hazard Severity Zone,* of the City of Highland's Public Health, Safety and Environmental Justice Element of the General Plan. (GP PHSEJ, p. 44.) There are preventative measures that can be used to offset the wildfire risk of loss of life or property. The use of fire-resistant building materials and brush clearance on the Project site and around the proposed structures can reduce potential of wildfire risk onsite. (GP DEIR, p. 5.7-24.)

Construction of the proposed Project would involve the use of heavy equipment and vehicles that may generate sparks or heat, which could pose a potential fire risk, particularly during dry or windy conditions. However, construction activities would occur within the developed District Headquarters site, which is characterized by maintained landscaping, paved surfaces, and existing infrastructure, and does not contain substantial wildland fuels. Standard construction best management practices, including proper equipment maintenance, fire prevention measures, and compliance with applicable fire codes, would be implemented to minimize fire risk. While a formal fuel modification or fire management plan is not anticipated to be required given the developed nature of the site, construction activities would be subject to applicable local fire agency requirements.

As discussed in the Project Description, the Project does not propose habitable structures and will not require EVWD staff to be present on a regular basis. Therefore, the Project would have a less than significant impact on exposure of people or structures to significant risk from wildfire.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials Mitigation Measures

Hazards and Hazardous Materials impacts are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:	☐	☐	☒	☐
i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv. impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(Sources: Basin Plan; EVWD; PDR; Project Description; SWRCB 2014; SWRCB 2020; SWRCB 2022)

10.a Would the Project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

Water quality standards are the combination of water quality objectives (i.e., numeric and narrative thresholds) that are established to protect the beneficial uses of downstream receiving waters.

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The Project consists of the installation and operation of a new potable groundwater production well (Well No. 152) at the District Headquarters, including supporting facilities such as a wellhead, chemical building, booster station, and above-ground storage tank. Construction and operation of the proposed Project would involve activities that have the potential to affect surface or groundwater quality. During construction, groundwater generated from drilling, development, and aquifer testing would be brought to the surface and temporarily managed onsite. Groundwater would be conveyed to mud tanks and holding tanks to allow suspended solids to settle prior to discharge to an adjacent drainage channel via temporary conveyance lines. (PDR, pp. 10–11.) These discharges, as well as construction-related stormwater runoff, could affect downstream water quality if not properly controlled.

Construction-phase stormwater quality is regulated under the Statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit (NPDES No. CAS000002), which requires preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) by a Qualified SWPPP Developer (QSD) and implementation by a Qualified SWPPP Practitioner (QSP) for the duration of construction. (SWRCB 2022.)

The Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has jurisdiction over groundwater quality and surface water discharges associated with the Project. Discharges related to well development, testing, and operation would be subject to applicable NPDES permits, including Order No. R8-2020-0006 (NPDES No. CAG998001) and Order WQ 2014-0194-DWQ (NPDES No. CAG140001), which establish performance standards to ensure compliance with water quality objectives. Prior to discharge, groundwater would be sampled and managed as necessary to comply with applicable water quality standards, including treatment or other measures if required. (SWRCB 2014; SWRCB 2020.) Mitigation measure **MM HYD-1** shall be implemented and requires groundwater testing prior to discharge to ensure that no significantly degraded groundwater (above MCLs) will be discharged during well testing.

Water quality standards for surface and groundwater in the Project area are established by the RWQCB Basin Plan for the Santa Ana Region. The Project is located within the Upper Santa Ana Valley – San Bernardino Subbasin and is tributary to downstream waters that ultimately flow to the Santa Ana River. Compliance with applicable Basin Plan objectives and NPDES permit requirements would ensure that the Project does not substantially degrade water quality or impair designated beneficial uses.

Although minor soil disturbance would occur during drilling and site modifications, the Project site is previously disturbed and developed with existing buildings, paved surfaces, and graded areas, including some sloped portions of the site. Construction activities on sloped areas have the potential to result in erosion, siltation, and polluted runoff. However, implementation of erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs), as required under the Construction General Permit and SWPPP) would minimize these effects. With adherence to these measures, the potential for substantial erosion and associated water quality impacts would be low. Through compliance with existing water quality regulations, including NPDES permitting and SWPPP implementation, Project impacts to surface and groundwater quality would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

10.b Would the Project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Less Than Significant with mitigation incorporated. The Project is located within the San Bernardino Subbasin of the Upper Santa Ana Valley (Basin No. 8-002.06). Water rights to the San Bernardino Basin (SBB) were adjudicated by the Superior Court of the State of California for the County of San Bernardino on April 17, 1969 (Judgment).[3] EVWD is a Party to the Judgment and therefore has rights to the San Bernardino Groundwater Basin. The principal function of the Judgment is to control the use of the water source in order to ensure the source is utilized in an optimum manner. The provisions of the Judgment and the monitoring of the basin are carried out by the court-appointed Western-San Bernardino Watermaster (Watermaster). According to EVWD's 2025 Urban Water Management Plan, EVWD's water supply sources include groundwater from the SBB and is projected to remain within existing water rights through 2045 (EVWD, p. 6-22). Because the SBB is adjudicated, a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) or similar mechanism is not required and management of the basin is done by the Watermaster.

The proposed well is not anticipated to substantially interfere with nearby wells within the same aquifer system. Based on available data from surrounding wells, the aquifer is capable of supporting the proposed production

[3] The 1969 Judgment and 1992 amendment to the Judgment can be found online at https://www.sbvmwd.com/transparency/reports/.

rate, and estimated water level interference is expected to be minimal. However, because site-specific pumping data will not be available until after well construction and testing, mitigation measure **MM HYD-2** shall be implemented to ensure that nearby wells are not adversely affected.

Therefore, through implementation of the above mitigation measure, the potential to substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the Project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin would be reduced to less than significant.

10.c.i. Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on-or-off-site?

10.c.ii. Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or-off-site?

10.c.iii. Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

10.c.iv. Would the Project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would create or contribute runoff water which would impede or redirect flood flows?

Less than significant impact. The Project would involve the installation of a new groundwater production well (Well No. 152), along with supporting facilities such as a wellhead, chemical building, booster station, above-ground storage tank, and connecting piping within the EVWD Headquarters site, which is an existing developed facility with on-site drainage improvements. Given the limited footprint of the Project, the proposed Project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or surrounding area, including through alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding.

Regarding, substantially increasing the amount of surface runoff due to the addition of impervious surfaces, the Project will introduce new impervious surfaces to the District Headquarters site, which drains into existing drainage facilities. Once the well and appurtenances are constructed, the overall drainage pattern of the Headquarters site would not change. That is runoff would continue to drain into the same existing facilities as the pre-Project condition. Thus, it is not anticipated that substantial erosion or siltation would occur on site, given that drainage will be managed as it is at present. Project construction would require minimal grading, demolition of existing concrete, and excavation to install connecting piping, and as such would have a less than significant potential to interfere with the discharge of stormwater over the long-term as the site will remain essentially the same, with only the small Project site being temporarily or permanently disturbed as a result of the Project. Furthermore, because the development of the well would alter the Headquarters site only minimally, the Project would not substantially increase the amount of surface runoff, such that flooding on- or off-site would occur.

Regarding the potential for substantial erosion, siltation, and polluted runoff, refer to the response to threshold 10.a. Regarding the potential for flooding, refer to the response to threshold 10.d.

10.d In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the Project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Less than significant impact. A tsunami is a tidal wave that occurs in coastal areas. The Project location is too far inland to be subject to tsunamis.

Seiche is a back and forth vibration of an enclosed body of water, either natural or manmade, caused by wind or seismic activities. The Project site is approximately 525 feet northwest of the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District Borrow Pit and Santa Ana River Spreading Grounds. This is the diversion and recharge facility downstream of the Seven Oaks Dam. Santa Ana River water from the Seven Oaks Dam enters this facility and infiltrates into the groundwater basin. Depending upon the quantity of water in this facility at the time of an earthquake, the Project site could be exposed to a seiche. However, as discussed in the threshold 9.b, the Project would incorporate containment for hazardous materials present on the Project site, impacts regarding the release of pollutants due to Project inundation resulting from seiche would be less than significant.

The Project site is not located within a 100-year flood hazard zone, as shown on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map No. 06071C8707J (effective 09/02/16), however the Project site is located within Zone X, which is 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile. (FEMA) Inundation of the Project site would pose limited risk of pollutant release because the Project has minimal chemicals stored on-site, as outlined in threshold 9.a., and any chemicals present are properly stored and secured indoors. Thus, the Project would be designed to prevent or contain any pollutants released in the event of inundation. Therefore, through compliance with existing regulations and Project design to adequately secure and store chemicals, impacts from release of pollutants during inundation would be less than significant.

10.e Would the Project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Less than significant impact. The Project site is located within the Upper Santa Ana Valley Groundwater Basin, San Bernardino Subbasin (Basin No. 8-002.06), within the Upper Santa Ana River Watershed. The San Bernardino Subbasin is an adjudicated basin governed by the 1969 Western Judgment, which regulates groundwater extraction and establishes a framework for sustainable basin management. As an adjudicated basin, management of groundwater resources is conducted by the court-appointed Western-San Bernardino Watermaster, and preparation of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) is not required. SGMA requires high- and medium-priority groundwater basins to achieve sustainability through implementation of GSPs; however, adjudicated basins such as the San Bernardino Subbasin are exempt from these requirements because groundwater use is already regulated under a judicial framework. The Western Judgment establishes the basin's safe yield and allocates groundwater extraction rights among parties, while also requiring replenishment to maintain basin sustainability.

As of 2025, the District has a total of 12 active potable wells with a total maximum potential pumping capacity of 16,805 gpm. The proposed Project (Well No. 152) is intended to replace lost production from decommissioned wells and meet near-term water supply needs. Operation of the proposed well would occur within EVWD's existing groundwater rights and in compliance with the Western Judgment. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management framework. Additionally, compliance with applicable water quality regulations and

implementation of standard best management practices during construction and operation would ensure that the Project does not adversely affect water quality objectives established by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Impacts would be less than significant.

Hydrology and Water Quality Mitigation Measures

MM HYD-1: Groundwater Testing. The District shall test the groundwater produced from the well prior to discharge. Prior to or during discharge any contaminants shall be blended below the pertinent MCL or treated prior to discharge, including sediment or other material.

MM HYD-2: Aquifer Pumping Tests and Monitoring. The District shall conduct aquifer pumping tests of the completed well to evaluate drawdown and potential interference with nearby wells. If monitoring indicates that nearby wells are adversely impacted by groundwater extraction from the proposed well, the District shall implement appropriate measures to offset impacts, which may include providing an alternative water supply, adjusting pumping rates, or modifying hours of operation.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
11. LAND USE PLANNING. Would the project				
a. Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: Project Description)

11.a Would the Project physically divide an established community?

No impact. The physical division of an established community typically refers to the construction of a physical feature (such as a wall, interstate highway, or railroad tracks) or the removal of a means of access (such as a local road or bridge) that would impair mobility. Implementation of the Project would not physically divide an established community, because the Project site is located at the existing EVWD Headquarters site. For these reasons the Project would not physically divide an established community. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated in this regard.

11.b Would the Project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

No impact. The agency with jurisdiction over the Project is EVWD. EVWD does not have land use jurisdiction. Thus, implementation of the proposed Project would not conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The Project will comply with current and pending drinking water quality regulations, and develop a domestic water supply and conveyance project that would benefit EVWD. As such the Project is consistent with EVWD's water planning efforts. For these reasons, there would be no impact in this regard.

Land Use Planning Mitigation Measures

There are no impacts to land use planning; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
12. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(Sources: GP DEIR)

12.a Would the Project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

12.b Would the Project result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

Less than significant impact. Mineral resources are naturally occurring chemicals, elements, or compounds formed by inorganic processes or organic substances. These resources include bituminous rock, gold, sand, gravel, clay, crushed stone, limestone, diatomite, salt, borate, potash, geothermal, petroleum, and natural gas resources. Construction aggregate, another mineral resource, refers to sand and gravel (natural aggregates) and crushed stone (rock) that are used as Portland cement-concrete (PCC) aggregate, asphaltic-concrete aggregate, road base, railroad ballast, riprap, fill, and the production of other construction materials.

The City of Highland is located in the San Bernardino Production- Consumption (P-C) Region of the Greater Los Angeles Sand and Gravel Resource Area. San Bernardino County has nine major areas where significant mineral deposits are present. According to Figure 5.10-1, Mineral Resource Areas of the General Plan DEIR, there are three Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ) classifications present within the City of Highland. The Project site is located within MRZ-3 which is a zone where the significance of mineral deposits cannot be determined from the available data. Additionally, the Project site is located at EVWD's Headquarters facility, which is not within an area that have existing mineral extraction uses or aggregate pits. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not result in the loss of availability of a regionally or locally-important mineral resource site and there would be no impacts in this regard.

Mineral Resources Mitigation Measures

Impacts to mineral resources are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
13. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a. Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: Caltrans 2020; FHWA; FTA; GP DEIR; MC)

Background

Noise is generally described as unwanted sound. The Project, located at EVWD's Headquarters, includes the drilling, construction, operation, and maintenance of a new potable groundwater supply well with pipelines constructed in the street rights-of-way (ROW) of Greenspot Road.

Receiver Locations

To assess the potential for construction noise impacts, four receiver locations were identified as representative locations for analysis. Sensitive uses or receivers are generally defined as locations where people reside or where the presence of unwanted sound could otherwise adversely affect the use of the land.

To describe the potential off-site Project noise levels, receiver locations in the vicinity of the Project site were identified, as shown on **Figure 7 – Noise Source and Receiver Locations**. Four noise receivers were identified near the Project site, including one sensitive receiver at the nearest residential property to the north and three commercial receivers located on the District Headquarters site at the existing office building and demonstration garden. Other land uses in the Project study area that are located at greater distances than those identified in this analysis will experience lower noise levels than those presented herein due to the additional attenuation from distance and the shielding of intervening structures. Distances are measured in a straight line from the noise source to each receiver location.

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EVWD WELL 152

FIGURE 7

NOISE SOURCE AND RECEIVER LOCATIONS



H:\2025\25-0122\GIS\Pro\Pro\Pro.aprx Map created 06 Oct 2026

Sources: SBCounty; Nearmap 2026

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13.a Would the Project result in the generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Less than significant impact. Temporary increases to ambient noise levels would occur during Project construction. Noise would derive from the use of various types of construction equipment such as bore/drill rig, air compressors, off-highway truck, crane, grader, dozer, welder, tractor/loader/backhoe, pavers, and roller, and from a worker-related increase in traffic in the vicinity of the Project site. Maximum noise levels (L_{max}) in A-weighted decibels (dBA) associated with the construction equipment expected to be used ranges from 73 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet to 85 dBA L_{max} at 50 feet. (FHWA.) Once construction is complete, the well, booster pumps, and emergency generator would be enclosed and would generate minimal operational noise. Underground pipelines do not generate noise above ground.

The Project would be constructed within the City of Highland. To analyze noise impacts originating from a designated fixed location or private property such as the Project, stationary-source (operational) noise levels such as the expected well and related improvements, as well as noise from construction activities are typically evaluated against standards established under the City's Municipal Code. However, Section 8.50.060(k) of the City of Highland Municipal Code exempts the construction, operation, and maintenance of public works projects and essential public services and facilities from the City's noise regulations (MC).

Using the highest reference construction equipment noise level measurement of 85 at 50 feet dBA L_{max} and the distance attenuation formula,[4] Project construction noise level impacts at the closest sensitive receiver location shown on **Figure 7** is approximately 82 dBA L_{max}. This location is on the property line. There is a solid block wall between the residential lots and Greenspot Road, which provides a noise reduction of approximately 5 dBA (FHWA). Attenuation of construction noise would also be provided to interior receivers by the structural elements (i.e., walls, doors, closed windows) of the building in which they reside. Typical building construction provides a minimum 10 dBA (10 dBA L_{min}) interior noise reduction with windows open and 20 dBA L_{min} interior noise reduction with windows closed (FHWA).

During operation, Well No. 152 would be equipped with a 200-horsepower (hp) electric motor enclosed within an approximately 900-square-foot well building. The Project would also include a booster station equipped with two 125-hp electric pumps enclosed within a separate building. As the well motor and booster pumps are electrically driven and enclosed within buildings, they are not substantial noise generators. The Project would also include an approximately 350-kilowatt (kW) standby diesel generator, which would operate during power outages and periodic maintenance and testing. Although operation of the generator would temporarily generate noise, its use would be intermittent rather than continuous. Additionally, the Project would be located within the existing EVWD Headquarters facility, where water utility operations already occur. Therefore, operation of the proposed facilities is not anticipated to substantially increase ambient noise levels in the surrounding area. For the reasons outlined above, the Project would not conflict with applicable noise standards, and potential noise impacts would be less than significant.

[4] Construction noise is treated as a point source. The distance attenuation formula for a point source is: dBA(R2) = dBA(R1) - 20 log10(R2/R1); where dBA(R1) = reference noise level for the construction equipment; R1 = distance for the reference noise level; R2 = distance from the construction equipment to the receiver; dBA(R2) = calculated construction noise at the receiver.

13.b Would the Project result in the generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Construction projects can generate ground-borne vibration, and in general, demolition of structures preceding construction generates the highest vibrations. However other construction equipment such as vibratory compactors or rollers, pile drivers and pavement breakers can generate perceptible vibration during construction activities. Heavy trucks can also generate ground-borne vibrations that vary depending on vehicle type, weight and pavement conditions.

Typically, ground-borne vibration generated by man-made activities attenuates rapidly with distance from the source of vibration. Man-made vibration issues are therefore, usually confined to short distances (i.e., 500 feet or less) from the source. Sensitive receptors for vibration include structures (especially older masonry structures), people (especially residents, the elderly, and the sick), and vibration sensitive equipment. Ground vibrations from construction activities do not often reach the levels that can damage structures, but they can achieve the audible and feelable ranges in buildings very close to the site (FTA).

Various types of construction equipment have been measured under a wide variety of construction activities with an average of source levels reported in terms of velocity as shown in **Table D – Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment**. Although the table gives one level for each piece of equipment, it should be noted that there is a considerable variation in reported ground vibration levels from construction activities. The data provides a reasonable estimate for a wide range of soil conditions.

Table D – Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment

Equipment	PPV at 25 feet (inches/second)	Lv at 25 feet
Large Bulldozer	0.089	87
Caisson Drill	0.089	87
Loaded Truck	0.076	86
Small Bulldozer	0.003	58
Vibratory Roller	0.21	94

Source: FTA, Table 7-4

Notes: PPV = Peak Particle Velocity; Lv = Root mean square (RMS) velocity in vibration decibels (VdB) re 1 micro-inch/second

Regarding impacts from ground-borne vibration, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has published guidance in their document titled *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*. According to the FTA, although the perceptibility threshold for humans is approximately 65 VdB, human response to vibration is not usually significant unless the vibration exceeds 70 VdB. If the vibration level in a residence reaches 85 VdB, most people would be strongly annoyed by the vibration.

Table E – Typical Human Reaction and Effect on Buildings Due to Groundborne Vibration, displays some of the common human reactions to various levels of groundborne vibration (expressed in PPV) and its effect on buildings.

Table E – Typical Human Reaction and Effect on Buildings Due to Groundborne Vibration

Vibration Level (PPV) (inches/second)	Human Reaction	Effect on Buildings
0.006-0.019	Threshold of perception	Vibrations unlikely to cause damage of any type
0.08	Vibration readily perceptible	Recommended upper level of vibration to which ruins ancient monuments should be subjected
0.10	Level at which continuous vibration begins to annoy people	Virtually no risk of "architectural" (i.e., not structural) damage to normal buildings
0.20	Vibrations annoying to people in buildings	Threshold at which there is a risk to "architectural" damage to normal dwelling – houses with plastered walls and ceilings
0.4-0.6	Vibrations considered unpleasant by people subjected to continuous vibrations and unacceptable to some people walking on bridges	Vibrations at a greater level than normally expected from traffic, but would cause "architectural" damage and possibly minor structural damage

Source: Caltrans 2020, Table 5 and Table 12
Notes: PPV = Peak Particle Velocity

Less than significant. Construction of the proposed Project would require standard construction equipment and methods that could produce ground-borne vibrations as shown in **Table E** above. The proposed Project is located in a developed, urban area and there are no historic buildings. Based on the information in **Tables D** and **E**, above, if it is assumed that the distance from construction to the nearest sensitive receiver is approximately 50 feet, ground-borne vibration generated during construction may be perceptible, but would not reach the threshold of annoyance. Because vibration generated during Project construction would not reach the threshold of annoyance and because there are not any historic buildings in the immediate vicinity, construction-related vibration would not result in substantial annoyance or structural damage.

Because Project construction and operation are not anticipated to generate any significant sources of ground-borne vibration above those that would normally be associated with construction, impacts regarding the exposure and generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels would be less than significant.

13.c For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the Project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

No impact. As discussed in response to threshold 9.e, the closest airports to the City of Highland are the Redlands Municipal Airport and the SBIA, which are approximately 1.6 and 5.1miles away from the Project site, respectively. City of Highland General Plan DEIR *Figure 5.7-1, San Bernardino International Airport Influence Area (AIA)/Redlands Municipal Airport Compatibility Map* confirmed that Project site is not located with the Redlands Municipal Airport's or the SBIA's influence area or area of special compatibility concern. (GP DEIR, p. 5.7-15.) Therefore, no impacts from excessive airport noise are anticipated.

Noise Mitigation Measures

Noise impacts are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
14. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:				
a. 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)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Source: PDR; Project Description)

14.a Would the Project 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)?

Less than significant impacts. The proposed Project does not include new residential or commercial development and therefore would not result in direct or unplanned population growth. The Project consists of construction of a new potable groundwater production well (Well No. 152) to address EVWD's near-term water supply deficit and replace lost production from decommissioned wells, consistent with the District's drought contingency planning efforts (PDR, p. 1-1). Therefore, Project implementation is a preventative measure to provide adequate water service for planned population growth. Furthermore, the Project is not extending water service to an area where it is not currently available. Thus, the Project would not directly or indirectly substantially induce population growth within the EVWD service area. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

14.b. Would the Project displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

No Impact. Construction and operation of the Project facilities would not necessitate the demolition or relocation of existing housing units as the Project site is at the District's Headquarters. Since no housing would be displaced, no people would be displaced as a result of Project implementation and no impacts would occur.

Population and Housing Mitigation Measures

Population and housing impacts are less than significant; therefore. no mitigation is required.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
15. PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project:				
Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a. Fire protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Police protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c. Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Parks?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e. Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Source: Project Description)

Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

15.a Fire Protection?
15.b Police Protection?

No impact. The Project would not result in the need for new or physically altered government facilities or increase the need for fire or police protection services. Construction activities may require temporary lane closures along Greenspot Road to accommodate delivery of equipment, materials, and installation of pipeline connections. If lane closures are necessary, they would be temporary and implemented in accordance with an approved traffic control plan. The traffic control plan would maintain access for emergency vehicles and ensure that adequate circulation is preserved. As mentioned in the Project Description, no habitable structures are proposed, therefore the Project will not directly or indirectly generate new development or unplanned population growth to the City of Highland.

15.c Schools?
15.d Parks?
15.e Other Public Facilities?

No impact. As discussed in response to threshold 14.a, the Project is proposed to address EVWD's near-term water supply deficit and replace lost production from decommissioned wells. Additionally, the Project would not extend water availability to an area where it is not currently available. Thus, the Project in and of itself would not result in population increases that would require additional schools, parks, or other public facilities. The Project does not propose new schools, parks, or other public facilities other than the components, described in the Project Description. As such the proposed Project would not result in or contribute to the need for new or physically altered schools, parks, or other public facilities and there would be no impacts in this regard.

Public Services Mitigation Measures

Impacts to public services are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
16. RECREATION.				
a. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: PDR; Project Description)

16a Would the Project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

No impact. The proposed Project is a new potable water well, to address EVWD's near-term water supply deficit and replace lost production from decommissioned wells, and associated appurtenances and connecting piping. As discussed in threshold 14.a. the Project would not contribute to an increase in population beyond what is planned. Therefore, the proposed Project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. No impact would occur in this regard.

16.b Does the Project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

No impact. The Project does not include new public recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. Therefore, there would be no impact in this regard.

Recreation Mitigation Measures

There are no impacts to parks or recreational facilities; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
17. TRANSPORTATION. Would the project:				
a. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(Sources: Project Description)

17.a Would the Project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?

Less than significant impact. Implementation of the Project would not conflict with any program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system. All construction activities will take place on-site, the Project will connect to existing water distribution facilities in Greenspot Road. Traffic may be temporarily increased along the roadways used to access the Project site as a result of construction personnel, supply trucks, and hauling of heavy-duty equipment. However, this congestion would be short-term and relatively minor considering that the Project would be located at the District's Headquarters site. Construction activities may require temporary lane closures along Greenspot Road to accommodate delivery of equipment, materials, and installation of pipeline connections. If lane closures are necessary, they would be temporary and implemented in accordance with an approved traffic control plan. The traffic control plan would maintain local access. For these reasons, impacts regarding conflicts with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system would be less than significant.

17.b Would the Project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(a) describes specific considerations for evaluating a project's transportation impacts and states "Generally, vehicle miles traveled is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts." As stated in *CEQA Guidelines* section 15064.3(b)(2), "projects that reduce, or have no impact on, vehicle miles traveled should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact."

Less than significant impact. Construction of the Project would temporarily increase traffic in the area as a result of construction-related vehicles. However, since water facilities are not trip generators, there would be no net increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMTs). Therefore, Project implementation would not conflict with or be inconsistent with *CEQA Guidelines* section 15064.3. subdivision (b). Impacts would be less than significant.

17.c Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

No impact. The proposed Project would not change roadway configurations. There would be no impacts in this regard.

17.d Result in inadequate emergency access?

Less than significant impact. The proposed Project would not reconfigure current roadways. If lane closures are necessary during construction, they would be temporary and implemented in accordance with an approved traffic control plan that would maintain emergency access through-out construction. Furthermore, as mentioned in threshold 9.f. the Project site is not located along an emergency or evacuation route. Therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated in this regard.

Transportation Mitigation Measures

Transportation impacts are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resources, defined in Public Resources Code Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that:				
a. Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

(Sources: AB 52 Consultation Process; SWCA-B)

18.a Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k)?

18.b A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. EVWD provided "Notice of Opportunity to Consult" via certified mail on June 25, 2026, pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) to Tribes that have previously requested such a notice from EVWD. Notification was sent to three Tribes: Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (YSMN), Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation (Kizh Nation), and Morongo Band of Mission Indians. As of September 9, 2026, the Yuhaaviatam and Kizh Nation are the only tribes that responded. YSMN responded on July 21, 2026 that the tribe does not have any concerns with the Project's implementation and requested mitigation measures be made a part of the Project. Kizh Nation requested and scheduled a meeting, but subsequently cancelled and did not provide timely input for the District and on September 18, 2026, the District concluded consultation.

As a result of the AB 52 consultation process, in addition to mitigation measures **MM CR-1**, **MM CR-2**, and **MM CR-3** (refer to Section 5, Cultural Resources), **MM TCR-1** and **MM TCR-2** shall be implemented**.** With implementation of these mitigation measures, impacts with regard to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.

Tribal Cultural Resources Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce impacts to tribal cultural resources to less than significant.

MM TCR-1: YSMN Notification. The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Management Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed in **MM CR-1**, of any pre-contact cultural resources discovered during Project implementation, and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), a Cultural Resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with YSMN, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents YSMN for the remainder of the Project, should YSMN elect to place a monitor on-site.

MM TCR-2: Document Dissemination. Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the Project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be supplied to the District for dissemination to YSMN. The District shall, in good faith, consult with YSMN throughout the life of the Project.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new water or expanded wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities or the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulation related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

(Sources: EVWD; PDR; CWP SB EIR)

19.a Would the Project require or result in the construction of new water or expanded wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities or the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less than significant impact. The proposed Project involves the construction and operation of a new potable water well, appurtenances, and associated piping, the environmental impacts of which are being evaluated herein. The Project does not require or propose relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater, storm water drainage, electrical power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities. As indicated in the analysis in this Initial Study, all environmental effects associated with the Project will be either no impact, less than significant or less than significant with mitigation incorporated as identified herein.

For the reasons set forth above, implementation of the Project, which will result in a new water facility, and will not require or result in the relocation or construction of new wastewater, storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities. Therefore, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

19.b Would the Project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?

Less than significant impact. The Project does not, in and of itself, consume water supplies and does not have a water demand like other land uses. Well No. 152 would replace production lost due to decommissioning existing wells. According to EVWD's 2025 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), EVWD's water supply specifically is composed of local groundwater, local surface water and State Water Project (SWP) water and the Project would contribute to EVWD's ability to provide average year, single-dry, and multiple-dry year water demands within its service area. Thus, less than significant impacts are anticipated.

19.c Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

No impact. EVWD provides water and wastewater services for the Project site. However, there is no Project component that would produce wastewater. Therefore, EVWD has adequate wastewater treatment capacity for this Project and their existing commitments and there would be no impacts in this regard.

19.d Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Less than significant impact.

The proposed Project would generate a limited amount of solid waste during construction activities, consisting primarily of drill cuttings, drilling fluids, and minor construction debris such as wood, metal, and packaging materials. Drill cuttings and fluids would be temporarily stored onsite and removed for proper offsite disposal by the contractor (PDR, pp. 10–11). Construction and demolition (C&D) materials would be recycled to the maximum extent feasible in accordance with applicable regulations, including the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen).

In accordance with CALGreen requirements, recyclable materials such as concrete, asphalt, metals, and wood would be diverted from landfills where feasible. Numerous recycling and disposal facilities in San Bernardino County and surrounding areas accept C&D materials, providing adequate opportunities for recycling and proper disposal. Existing regional landfills, including facilities such as the Mid-Valley and San Timoteo Sanitary Landfills, have sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the relatively small volume of waste generated by the Project. Operation of the proposed well would not generate substantial solid waste, as the facility would consist of a groundwater production well with minimal ongoing material use. Any routine maintenance waste would be minor and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations.

The Project would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste handling, recycling, and disposal. Given the small quantity of waste generated and the availability of adequate landfill and recycling capacity, the Project would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, exceed the capacity of local infrastructure, or impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

19.e Would the Project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulation related to solid waste?

No impact. The collection and disposal of solid waste would conform to applicable federal, state, and local plans and regulations, including AB 939 (Integrated Waste Management Act) that require local jurisdictions divert at least 50% of all solid waste. The proposed Project would adhere to all federal, state and local regulations related to solid waste during construction and operation. Therefore, the proposed Project would have no impact in terms of complying with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Utilities and Service Systems Mitigation Measures

Impacts to utilities and service systems are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
20. WILDFIRE. If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b. Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☒	☐

(*Sources: CalFire-A; CalFire-B; GP; PDR; Project Description)*

20.a. Would the Project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

No impact. Implementation of the Project would not substantially impair adopted emergency response or evacuation plans. The Project site is not located in a State Responsibility Area (SRA), the area has been designated by Cal Fire as a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) and as a HFHSZ. Furthermore, as mentioned in threshold 9.f. the Project site is not located along an adopted emergency or evacuation plan. Additionally, all Project construction and operation will be restricted on-site. Therefore, the Project would not impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Thus, no impacts are anticipated in this regard.

20.b Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, would the Project exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Less than significant impact. As discussed in response to threshold 9.g, the City of Highland is susceptible to wildland fires due to steep terrain, highly flammable chaparral vegetation, and seasonal high winds. (GP) The general area surrounding the Project site is designated as a Local Responsibility Area High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (LRA HFSZ) by Cal Fire.

However, the proposed Project is located within the developed EVWD Headquarters site, which has been previously disturbed and consists of buildings, paved surfaces, and maintained landscaping with minimal wildland fuel. The Project would involve installation of a groundwater production well and associated infrastructure and would not introduce habitable structures or result in long-term occupancy, as the site would only require periodic maintenance by EVWD staff. Due to the developed condition of the Project site, limited fuel load, and small, low-profile nature of the Project, implementation would not exacerbate wildfire risk related to slope, prevailing winds, or other factors, nor would it increase landslide risks. Furthermore, as a water supply project, the proposed well would support fire protection efforts by contributing to the District's water system. Therefore, the Project would not expose occupants to pollutant concentrations from wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. Impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

20.c Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

Less than significant impact. The Project involves the installation of a new groundwater production well to address EVWD's near-term water supply needs and replace lost production from decommissioned wells. The Project would be located within the existing EVWD Headquarters facility and would connect to existing water distribution infrastructure. The Project does not include development of new roads, fire breaks, major utility corridors, or other infrastructure that would increase wildfire risk.

As discussed under response to threshold 9.b, implementation of the Project would not alter the existing site conditions in a manner that would increase wildfire hazards. The Project site is already developed and maintained, with minimal wildland fuel present. Therefore, implementation of the Project would not change the current level of fire risk in the area. Impacts would be less than significant.

20.d Would the Project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Less that significant impact. The proposed Project does not include habitable structures. Implementation of the Project would involve limited grading and site modifications within the developed EVWD Headquarters facility, including a wellhead, chemical building, booster station, and above-ground storage tank. Although these activities would result in minor changes to on-site drainage features, overall drainage patterns would remain consistent with existing conditions.

Project runoff would continue to be conveyed through the site's existing and modified drainage infrastructure, which discharge to the WQMP basin and adjacent drainage channel. These improvements are designed to maintain proper drainage and prevent localized flooding or erosion.

Because the Project would occur within a previously disturbed and developed site, and drainage would be managed through engineered systems, implementation of the Project would not substantially alter existing drainage patterns or increase runoff in a manner that would result in flooding, slope instability, or erosion. Therefore, the Project would not expose people or structures to significant wildfire risks related to runoff, slope instability, or drainage changes. Impacts would be less than significant.

Wildfire Mitigation Measures

Impacts to wildfire are less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less Than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.				
a. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or an endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

(Source: Above Initial Study)

21.a Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or an endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Potential to Degrade the Quality of Environment: As indicated in the preceding analysis, with implementation of the mitigation measures identified herein, the Project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment.

Potential to Impact Biological Resources: As discussed in Section 4, Biological Resources, implementation of the proposed Project would not:

- substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species;
- cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels; or
- threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community.

The results of the BRTR, included as **Appendix B**, and the analysis in response to thresholds 4.a, 4.c, and 4.d indicate that with implementation of mitigation measures **MM BIO-1** through **MM BIO-7** impacts to biological resources would be less than significant.

Potential to Eliminate Important Examples of the Major Periods of California History or Prehistory: The results of Historic Property Identification Report, included as **Appendix C.1**, and the analysis in Section 5, indicate Well No. 152 Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. The archaeological sensitivity assessment determined that the Project APE has a relatively low potential for containing buried archaeological deposits due to previous ground disturbance. To address the potential for

buried resources to be uncovered, mitigation measures **MM CR-1** and **MM CR-2** would be implemented. Consistent with state law, mitigation measure **MM CR-3** regarding uncovered human remains or funerary items would be implemented. Regarding Tribal Cultural Resources, based on the outcome of AB 52 consultation, mitigation measures **MM TCR-1** and **MM TCR-2** would be implemented for the handling of uncovered precontact items. Therefore, impacts are not anticipated to eliminate an important example of California History or Prehistory and be reduced to less than significant.

21.b Does the Project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?

Less than significant impact. The construction and operation of Well No. 152 will serve to replace production lost due to decommissioning of existing wells and satisfy Priority I mitigation action from EVWD's Drought Contingency Plan. The Project is consistent with local and regional plans, and the Project's air quality emissions do not exceed established thresholds of significance. The Project adheres to all other land use plans and policies with jurisdiction in the Project area, and would not increase VMTs within the Project area. The Project is not considered growth-inducing as defined by *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.2(d) and would not induce, either directly or indirectly, population and/or housing growth beyond what is envisioned by local and regional plans. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

21.c Does the Project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. Effects on human beings were evaluated as part of the aesthetics, air quality, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, noise, population and housing, and transportation thresholds sections of this initial study and found to be less than significant for each of the above sections with implementation of mitigation measures **MM GEO-1, MM HYD-1,** and **MM HYD-2.** Based on the analyses and conclusions in this initial study, the proposed Project will not cause substantial adverse effects directly or indirectly to human beings. Therefore, potential direct and indirect impacts on human beings that result from the proposed Project are considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

VI. CEQA PLUS ANALYSIS

Evaluation for Environmental Review and Federal Coordination

1. Potential Co-Funding Sources

Will the project potentially be co-funded by any other federal agencies?

☐ *No – No other federal agencies will provide funding for the project.*

☒ *Yes – The project will potentially receive funding from other federal agency(s). Please list the agency(ies) and explain the funding status.*

The District has a WaterSMART grant from the Bureau of Reclamation.

2. United Stated Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Other Federal Land

Is any portion of the proposed project site located on United States Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), or any other federally managed land?

☒ *No – The proposed project will not be located on USFS, BLM, or any other federally managed land.*

☐ *Yes – The proposed project will be located on USFS, BLM, or other federally managed land. Please explain or indicate where more information can be found (e.g., biological report/assessment, CEQA document, etc.), and attach a colored map identifying the project location with respect to the USFS, BLM, or other federal land. Attach a copy of the appropriate authorization/permit for the use of federal land (e.g., USFS Special-Use Authorization, BLM Land Use Permit) or indicate the status of the authorization/permit below.*

3. Environmental Alternative Analysis

The Initial Study does not evaluate any alternatives.

Please briefly summarize the direct and indirect environmental impacts associated with each project alternative considered, including a "no project/no action" alternative, and the environmental considerations behind the selected project alternative. Also, include any mitigation measures to reduce potential environmental impacts:

The Project's Initial Study evaluates the proposed Project's impacts on the environment. Impacts that were found to be significant can be reduced to less than significant levels with implementation of mitigation measures; thus, there is no environmentally superior alternative. A no project/no action alternative would result in no environmental impacts; however, it would not achieve the Project's intent to replace production lost due to decommissioning existing wells and satisfy Priority 1 mitigation action from EVWD's Drought Contingency Plan and supply excellent water quality at the needed capacity. In addition to compliance with existing regulations, the Project will implement the following mitigation measures to reduce impacts to less than significant:

> **MM BIO-1: Preconstruction Survey for Crotch's Bumble Bee.** A qualified biologist familiar with identification and life history of Crotch's bumble bee shall conduct a preconstruction survey no more than 14 days prior to the start of construction to look for Crotch's bumble bee nests within the Project site and a 50-foot buffer. Potential nests shall be flagged and a minimum 50-foot avoidance buffer shall be established. If construction activities are delayed for more than 30 days following completion of the survey, an additional survey shall be conducted

prior to the initiation or resumption of ground-disturbing activities. If an active nest is identified during construction, the avoidance buffer shall remain in place until a qualified biologist determines that the nest is no longer active.

MM BIO-2: Preconstruction Survey for California Glossy Snakes, Coast Horned Lizards, and Southern California Legless Lizards. A qualified biologist familiar with the identification and natural history of California glossy snake, coast horned lizard, and southern California legless lizard shall conduct a preconstruction survey no more than 2 days prior to the start of ground disturbance or vegetation clearing activities. If any California glossy snakes, coast horned lizards, or southern California legless lizards are observed within the Project impact area, the qualified biologist shall allow the individual to move out of harm's way on its own, if feasible, or relocate the individual to suitable habitat outside the Project footprint.

MM BIO-3: Preconstruction Survey for Western Spadefoot Toad. Limit construction activities within 50 feet of the retention basins to outside of the breeding season (approximately January-May depending on rainfall) to the extent feasible to avoid impacting western spadefoot breeding in the manmade retention basins and drainage. If construction activities within 50 feet of the retention basins occur during the western spadefoot breeding season, a qualified biologist familiar with the identification and life history of western spadefoot shall conduct a preconstruction survey no more than 14 days prior to the start of construction to identify potentially suitable western spadefoot breeding habitat and determine whether western spadefoot are present. The survey area shall include the Project site and a 50-foot buffer. If suitable western spadefoot breeding habitat is identified, best management practices shall be implemented during construction activities to avoid runoff into the breeding habitat. If western spadefoot individuals are found, a minimum 50-foot avoidance buffer shall be established around occupied breeding habitat and maintained until a qualified biologist determines that western spadefoot are no longer present. The avoidance buffer shall be removed when western spadefoot are confirmed to be absent from the breeding habitat by the qualified biologist. If construction activities are delayed for more than 14 days during the breeding season, or if substantial rainfall occurs after the survey and prior to the start or resumption of work, a qualified biologist shall determine whether additional surveys are necessary based on current site conditions and the potential for western spadefoot breeding habitat to have developed.

MM BIO-4: Preconstruction Survey for Coastal California gnatcatcher. To reduce impacts to coastal California gnatcatcher, construction activities during the coastal California gnatcatcher breeding season (February 15 to August 30) shall be avoided, if feasible. If vegetation clearing or initial ground disturbance occurs during the breeding season, a qualified biologist familiar with the identification and natural history of coastal California gnatcatcher shall conduct a pre-activity nesting bird survey no more than 3 days prior to the start of work. The survey shall include the impact area and all accessible habitat within a 500-foot buffer of the project site to determine whether active coastal California gnatcatcher nests or other protected native bird nests are present. If there is a lapse in construction activities of 5 or more days, the area to be disturbed and surrounding 500-foot buffer shall be resurveyed no more than 3 days before vegetation clearing or initial ground disturbance resumes. If an active coastal California gnatcatcher nest is identified, a 300-foot avoidance buffer shall be established and maintained until the qualified biologist determines that nesting has been completed. Appropriate species-specific avoidance buffers shall be established for other protected native bird species, as determined by the qualified biologist.

MM BIO-5: Preconstruction Survey for Nesting Birds. Prior to vegetation removal, the following nesting bird requirements shall be implemented:

d. If possible, site disturbance and landscaping activity shall not occur during the nesting bird breeding season (February 1 through August 31; January 1 through June 30 for raptors).

e. If activities associated with vegetation removal, construction, or grading must be conducted during the bird nesting/breeding season (February 1 through August 31; January 1 through June 30 for raptors), a qualified biologist shall conduct surveys for active nests. Preconstruction nesting bird surveys shall be conducted no more than 3 days prior to the start of clearance/construction work. If ground-disturbing activities are delayed or suspended for 5 or more consecutive days, additional preconstruction surveys shall be conducted such that no more than 3 days have elapsed between the survey and start of ground-disturbing activities.

f. If active nests are discovered during the nest survey, those nests shall be avoided until the young have fledged. The qualified biologist shall establish appropriate avoidance buffers based on the factors such as the nest location, surrounding vegetation, topography, construction activities, and anticipated noise levels. Buffers may be modified by the qualified biologist if the nest remains active and breeding behavior indicates that construction activities are not adversely affecting nesting success. The avoidance buffer shall remain in place until the qualified biologist determines that the young have fledged and are no longer reliant on the nest site. Any temporary exclusionary fencing or flagging installed to delineate the buffer shall be maintained for the duration of the nesting period and removed only at the direction of the qualified biologist.

MM BIO-6: San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat Monitoring. A qualified biologist or biological monitor with San Bernardino kangaroo rat [SBKR] expertise shall be present when construction or ground-disturbing activities that could result in take of SBKR occurs in, or within 100 meters of San Bernardino kangaroo rat habitat. The biological monitor shall ensure that construction activities remain within the approved project footprint and that avoidance buffers established during preconstruction surveys are maintained. Construction or ground-disturbing activities for this Project that could result in take of San Bernardino kangaroo rat include, but are not limited to, site grading, drilling, excavation, trenching, stockpiling of soils or drill cuttings, and repeated vehicle or heavy-equipment travel in unpaved areas. The biological monitor shall ensure that construction activities remain within the approved Project footprint and that avoidance buffers established during preconstruction surveys are maintained. The qualified biologist or biological monitor shall have the authority to stop work if a San Bernardino kangaroo rat is found. If a San Bernardino kangaroo rat is observed within the Project area during construction, work in the immediate vicinity of the observation shall stop and the biological monitor shall allow the individual to leave the area on its own. If necessary, the monitor shall establish an appropriate avoidance buffer and notify the Project proponent and the SBVWCD (Wash Plan administrator). Construction activities may resume once the individual has moved out of the work area and the monitor determines that work can proceed without risk of take.

MM BIO-7: Heritage Tree Removal. The Project shall avoid the removal of protected trees whenever feasible. Prior to the removal of any trees within the Project site, an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist shall evaluate trees proposed for removal and determine whether any qualify as Heritage Trees under the City of Highland Tree Protection Ordinance. If any Heritage Trees would be removed, the Project applicant shall comply with all applicable requirements of the City of Highland Tree Protection Ordinance, including obtaining any required Tree Removal Permit and implementing any permit conditions, such as tree replacement requirements, prior to tree removal.

MM CR-1: Inadvertent Discovery. In the event that cultural resources are discovered during Project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the other portions of the Project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed within **MM TCR-1**, regarding any pre-contact finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.

MM CR-2: If significant pre-contact cultural resources, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to YSMN for review and comment, as detailed within **MM TCR-1**. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the Project and implement the Plan accordingly.

MM CR-3: If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the Project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the Project.

MM GEO-1: Paleontological Resources. To reduce impacts to paleontological resources, prior to any Project-related construction or excavation, East Valley Water District (EVWD), or its designee shall retain a Qualified Paleontologist who meets the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) qualifications for Principal Investigator or Project Paleontologist to carry out the following:

e. **Conduct Worker Environmental Awareness Training**. The Qualified Paleontologist shall develop worker environmental awareness program (WEAP) training to educate the construction crew on the legal requirements for preserving fossil resources, as well as the procedures to follow in the event of a fossil discovery. This training program shall be presented by the Qualified Paleontologist (or their representative) to the crew prior to any ground-disturbing activities.

f. **Monitor for Paleontological Resources**. A single paleontological monitoring spot-check shall occur once excavation for the booster station reaches a greater depth than 5 feet to evaluate the absence or presence of Pleistocene sediments. If Pleistocene age sediments are encountered, monitoring should transition to full-time during ground disturbing activities for the booster station below a depth of 5 feet. Monitoring shall not be required when ground-disturbing activities would occur only within previously disturbed sediments and/or artificial fill, regardless of depth. Monitoring shall be conducted by a qualified paleontological monitor who meets the standards of the SVP and who shall be supervised by the Qualified Paleontologist.

The Qualified Paleontologist may periodically inspect construction activities and increase, decrease, or cease monitoring in response to subsurface conditions, as appropriate.

g. **Prepare a Paleontological Resources Monitoring Report.** At the conclusion of ground-disturbing activities, the Qualified Paleontologist shall prepare a final monitoring report that documents the methods and results of the monitoring efforts, treatment of paleontological resources, results of specimen processing, analysis, and research, and final curation arrangements, as applicable. The report shall be completed after the completion of paleontological monitoring for the Project. If paleontological resources are curated, the final monitoring report and any associated data pertinent to the curated specimen(s) should be submitted to the designated repository. A copy of the final monitoring report shall be filed with EVWD.

h. **Treat Fossil Discoveries.** In the event of a fossil discovery, whether by the qualified paleontological monitor or a member of the construction crew, the qualified paleontological monitor shall have the authority to temporarily divert construction activity, and all work shall cease within a 50-foot radius of the discovery. The Qualified Paleontologist will evaluate the scientific significance of the find and, if appropriate, collect the fossil specimen(s) and all associated data. Paleontological monitors shall record pertinent geological information and collect sediment from the fossil localities. Recovered fossils shall be prepared to the point of curation, identified by qualified experts, listed in a database to facilitate analysis, and deposited in a designated paleontological curation facility. The Qualified Paleontologist shall obtain a curatorial arrangement with an accredited repository and scientifically significant fossils may be donated to this institution.

MM HYD-1: Groundwater Testing. The District shall test the groundwater produced from the well prior to discharge. Prior to or during discharge any contaminants shall be blended below the pertinent MCL or treated prior to discharge, including sediment or other material.

MM HYD-2: Aquifer Pumping Tests and Monitoring. The District shall conduct aquifer pumping tests of the completed well to evaluate drawdown and potential interference with nearby wells. If monitoring indicates that nearby wells are adversely impacted by groundwater extraction from the proposed well, the District shall implement appropriate measures to offset impacts, which may include providing an alternative water supply, adjusting pumping rates, or modifying hours of operation.

MM TCR-1: YSMN Notification. The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Management Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed in **MM CR-1**, of any pre-contact cultural resources discovered during Project implementation, and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), a Cultural Resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with YSMN, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents YSMN for the remainder of the Project, should YSMN elect to place a monitor on-site.

MM TCR-2: Document Dissemination. Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the Project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be supplied to the District for dissemination to YSMN. The District shall, in good faith, consult with YSMN throughout the life of the Project.

4. Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act (AHPA)

Will the project cause the irreparable loss or damage to a significant archaeological or historic resource or data through alteration of the terrain resulting from dam or reservoir construction (i.e., flooding, building of access roads, or construction of a reservoir)?

☒ *No – The project construction will not cause an irreparable loss or damage of significant archaeological or historic resources or data through alteration of the terrain resulting from dam or reservoir construction. The project does not require compliance with the AHPA. Please explain or indicate where this information can be found.*

Impacts to archaeological and historic resources were evaluated in the Historic Property Identification Report for the East Valley Water District Well No. 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, City of Highland, San Bernardino County, California, prepared by SWCA Environmental Associates dated October 2026, which is included as Appendix C.1 to this Initial Study.

☐ *Yes – The project construction will cause an irreparable loss or damage of a significant archaeological or historic resource or data through alteration of the terrain resulting from dam or reservoir construction. The project requires compliance with the AHPA. Please explain or indicate where this information can be found.*

5. Clean Air Act

Name of Air Basin: South Coast Air Basin

Local Air District: South Coast Air Quality Management District

Is the project located in nonattainment area, or an attainment area under maintenance plan, for any criteria pollutant?

☐ *No – The project is not in a nonattainment area, or an attainment area under maintenance plan, for any criteria pollutant.*

☒ *Yes – The project is in a nonattainment area, or an attainment area under maintenance plan, for any criteria pollutant. If yes:*

a) Identify the criteria pollutant(s) for which the project area is in nonattainment and the nonattainment rate(s) (i.e., marginal, moderate, serious, severe, or extreme), and/or identify the criteria pollutant(s) for which the project area is in attainment under a maintenance plan:

The Project area is located within the South Coast Air Basin and is designated as extreme nonattainment for ozone (O_3) and serious nonattainment for $PM_{2.5}$ federal air quality standards. The Project area is also designated as a serious maintenance area for PM_{10} and carbon monoxide (CO) and under maintenance for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2).

b) Complete the following table by filling in the estimated construction and operation emissions for each criteria pollutant:

Pollutant	Estimated Construction Emissions (Tons/Year)	Estimated Operation Emissions (Tons/Year)	Federal de minimis levels (tons/year)	
Ozone (O_3) Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_X) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)	N/A 2.10 0.25	N/A	Marginal/Moderate NAA's	100
			Serious NAA's	50
			Severe NAA's	25
			Extreme NAA's	10
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	2.44	N/A	All maintenance areas	100
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	N/A	N/A	All NAA's	100
Lead (Pb)	N/A	N/A	All NAA's	25
Particulate Matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$)	0.20	N/A	Moderate NAA's	100
			Serious NAA's	70
Particulate Matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM_{10})	0.37	N/A	Moderate NAA's	100
			Serious NAA's	70
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	0.00	N/A	All NAA's	100

c) *Attach any documents utilized to support the estimated emissions above, or to compile the air quality data (e.g., air quality studies/models, CalEEMod report). If any of the federal de minims levels are exceeded additional information may be required.*

As shown in the above table, maximum construction-related emissions per year are estimated to be below the federal *de minimus* levels for all constituents. Moreover, operational emissions for the Project will be negligible. Therefore, the Project is not subject to General Conformity determination.

An air quality assessment was prepared using the California Emissions Estimator Model® (CalEEMod) program to quantify Project-related emissions from the Project. This assessment is provided in Appendix A of this Initial Study.

6. Coastal Zone Management Act:

Is any portion of the project site located within the coastal zone?

☒ *No – The project is not within the coastal zone.*

☐ *Yes – The project is located within the coastal zone. Attach a copy of the coastal zone permit or coastal exemption or indicate the status of the coastal zone permit below (http://www.coastal.ca.gov/enforcement/cdp_pamphlet.pdf). Describe the project location with respect to coastal areas or indicate where this information can be found (e.g., CEQA document, biological report/assessment, etc.).*

7. Endangered Species Act (ESA)

Does the project involve any direct or indirect impacts from construction or operation activities that may affect federally listed threatened or endangered species, or their critical habitat, that are known, or have a potential, to occur on the project site, in the surrounding area, or in the service area?

☒ *No – The project will not have an impact on any federally listed species or their critical habitat. Please explain or indicate where this information can be found (e.g., biological report/assessment, CEQA document, etc.*

Impacts to biological resources for the Project site were evaluated in the Biological Resources Technical Report for The Well 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, Highland, San Bernardino County, California, which is included as Appendix B to this Initial Study.

There is critical habitat within the biological study area; however, mitigation measures for biological resources listed in the response to item 3, Environmental Alternatives above, shall be implemented to avoid impacts to San Bernardino kangaroo rat and other special-status species.

Please refer to Appendix B this Initial Study for the Biological Resources Technical Report for The Well 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, Highland, San Bernardino County, California, prepared for the Project.

No consultations with any state or federal biological agencies have been conducted.

☐ *Yes – The project will have an impact on one or more federally listed species or their critical habitat. Please provide information on the federally listed species or their critical habitat that could potentially be affected by the project any proposed avoidance and conservation measures. Please list the dates of any biological fields surveys completed for the Project. Identify any federally listed species that could potentially be affected by the project. Identify any proposed avoidance and conservation measures that will be implemented. Indicate below where more information can be found (e.g., biological report/assessment, CEQA document, etc.) If any consultations with state or federal agencies have been conducted for the project, please discuss the consultation efforts. Attach copies of a project-level biological report/assessment and copies of any consultations conducted with relevant agencies.*

8. Farmland Protection Policy Act

Is any portion of the project located on, or will the project impact, prime, unique, or important farmland, or farmland under Williamson Act Contract?

☒ *No – The project is not located on, and will not impact prime, unique, or important farmland or farmland under Williamson Act Contract.*

According to the California Department of Conservation, the location of the Project is designated as Grazing Land that is adjacent to Urban and Built-up Land

Refer to the discussion under threshold 2, Agricultural and Forestry Resources in this Initial Study.

☐ *Yes – The project is located on and/or will impact prime, unique, or important farmland or farmland under Williamson Act Contract. If the project is located on or near prime, unique, or important farmland, or farmland under a Williamson Act Contract, but will avoid impacting the farmland (due to the scope of the project, implementation of avoidance measures, or for other reasons), please explain or indicate where more information can be found (e.g., CEQA document, etc.). Include information on the acreage that would be converted from important farmland to other uses. Indicate if any portion of the project boundaries is under a Williamson Act Contract and specify the amount of acreage affected. Attach documents/assessments evaluating the conversion*

of prime/unique farmland and farmland of statewide/local importance to non-agricultural uses, as well as any consultation(s) conducted with relevant agencies.

9. Flood Plain Management: Executive Orders 11988 and 12148

Is any portion of the project located within a 100-year floodplain as depicted on an official floodplain map or otherwise designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency(FEMA)?

☒ *No – The project is not located within a 100-year floodplain.*

☐ *Yes – The project or a portion of the project is located within a 100-year floodplain. Identify any relevant consultations completed with other agencies. Describe the floodplain and any proposed measures that will be implemented to minimize or avoid redirection of the flood flow by the project or indicate where this information can be found (e.g., floodplains/hydrological assessment, CEQA document, etc.). Attach any reports (floodplains/hydrological assessment) completed for the project and official floodplain map from the FEMA Flood Map Service Center that includes the project area.*

The Project site is not located within a 100-year flood hazard zone, as shown on FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map No. 06071C8707J (effective 09/02/16), however the Project site is located within Zone X, which is 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile.

10. Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act:

Does the project involve any direct or indirect impacts from construction or operational activities or changes in water quality/quantity that may impact Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)?

☒ *No – The project will not impact EFH. Please explain or indicate where this information can be found (e.g., biological report/assessment, EFH impact assessment/evaluation, CEQA document, etc.).*

As discussed in the Biological Resources Technical Report for The Well 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, Highland, San Bernardino County, California prepared for the Project (Appendix B of the Initial Study), no fish species were identified with a potential for occurrence in the literature search.

☐ *Yes – The project may* adversely im*pact EFH and consultation with the NMFS will be required. Describe how EFH could potentially be impacted by this project and any proposed avoidance and conservation measures or indicate where this information can be found (e.g., biological report/assessment, EFH impact assessment/evaluation, CEQA document, etc.). Describe any previous or ongoing consultations/coordination conducted with the NMFS for the project. Please attach an official NMFS species list, obtained through the NMFS Essential Fish Habitat Mapper, and EFH Impact Assessment (if available):*

11. National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

Identify the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 finding of effect contained in the cultural resources report:

☒ No Historic Properties Affected

☐ No Adverse Effect to Historic Properties

☐ Adverse Effect to Historic Properties

Provide a brief explanation for the above identified determination, or indicate where this information can be found (e.g., HPIR cultural report):

Construction of Well No. 152 and associated facilities would not impact historical resources because no historic properties were identified within the Project APE. Based on the Historic Property Identification Report, SWCA concluded that implementation of the Project would result in No Historic Properties Affected under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. (SWCA-B, p. 29.)

If relevant, please justify compliance with the NHPA:

Provide a Historic Property Identification Report directly to the Division of Financial Assistance Cultural Resources Officer. Note: Please do not upload confidential documents through the FAAST system. Submit documents to: CulturaResources@Waterboards.ca.gov. If the project is a type of activity that does not have the potential to cause effects to historic properties, a HPIR is not necessary. Contact the Cultural Review Staff at: CulturalResources@Waterboards.ca.gov to discuss.

12. Protection of Wetlands:
Will any portion of the project be located in or potentially affect a wetland?

☒ *No – The project will not be located in and/or will not potentially affect a wetland. Please explain, or indicate this information can be found (e.g., wetland assessment/delineation report, biological report/assessment, CEQA document, etc.).*

Refer to the Biological Resources Technical Report for The Well 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, Highland, San Bernardino County, California included as Appendix B of this Initial Study.

☐ *Yes – The project will not be located in and/or will not potentially affect a wetland. If the project is located in or near a wetland but will avoid impacting the wetland (due to the scope of the project, implementation of avoidance measures, or for other reasons), please explain, or indicate where more information can be found (e.g., wetland assessment/delineation report, biological report/assessment, CEQA document, etc.). Indicate the status of any permits necessary for project construction (e.g., Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit, etc.) Attach a wetland assessment/delineation report consistent with the United States Army Corps of Engineer (USACE) guidance describing the project's potential impacts to wetlands and/or potential wetland areas, documentation on the avoidance, minimization, and conservation measures that will be implemented to reduce such impacts and copies of the Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification and Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit (if available).*

13. Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 10
Will the project involve the construction of structures or any other regulated activities in, under, or over navigable waters of the United States? (NOTE: Regulated activities include the placement/removal of structures, work involving dredging, disposal of dredged material, filling, excavation, or any other disturbance of soils/sediments or modification of a navigable waterway.)

☒ *No – The project is not located in or near navigable waters of the United States. There will be no construction of structures, modification of existing structures, or any other regulated activity work in, under, or over navigable waters of the United States.*

☐ *Yes – The project will involve the construction of structures and/or one or more of the listed regulated activities in, under, or over navigable waters of the United States, and will require a Section 10 permit. Please provide a copy of the permit obtained from the USACE, or the current status of the permit. Indicate below where more information on the project's construction and regulated activities can be found (e.g., Project Technical Report/Engineering Report, CEQA document, etc.).*

14. Sole Source Aquifer, Safe Drinking Water Act:
Is the project located in an area designated by the USEPA, as a Sole Source Aquifer?

☒ *No – The project is not within the boundaries of a sole source aquifer.*[5]

The Project is located within the San Bernardino Subbasin of the Upper Santa Ana Valley (Basin No. 8-002.06). , which are not Sole Source Aquifers. The nearest Sole Source Aquifer is Campo-Cottonwood Creek Aquifer located due east of San Diego along the U.S./Mexico Border.

☐ *Yes – The project is located in and/or will impact a Sole Source Aquifer. Identify the Sole Source Aquifer. Attach a completed Sole Source Aquifer Project Review Information document (contact the Division of Financial Assistance to request a copy of the Sole Source Aquifer Questionnaire).*

15. Wild and Scenic Rivers Act:
Identify the watershed in which the project is located: Santa Ana River Watershed

Will the project impact any listed wild and scenic rivers?

☒ *No – The project will not impact any of the wild and scenic rivers listed above.*

The nearest river to the Project is the Santa Ana River, which is not designated as wild and scenic.[6]

☐ *Yes - The project will impact any listed wild and scenic river. Identify the wild and scenic river that will be impacted. Explain how the project will impact the wild and scenic river, or indicate where this information can be found (e.g., biological report/assessment, CEQA document, etc.). Attach a map of the impacted wild and scenic river and identify the relative project location.*

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[5] Source: http://www.epa.gov/region9/water/groundwater/ssa.html.
[6] Source: http://www.rivers.gov/california.php.

VII. REFERENCES

The following documents were referred to as information sources during preparation of this document. They are available for public review at the locations abbreviated after each listing and spelled out at the end of this section.

Basin Plan	California Water Boards, Santa Ana – R8, *Santa Ana River Basin Plan*, updated June 2019. (Available at https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/santaana/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/, accessed July 7, 2026.)
CalFire-A	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, *Fire Hazard Severity Zones*, *FHSZ Viewe*r. (Available at https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/5065c998b4b0462f9ec3c6c226c610a9 , accessed April 1, 2026.)
CalFire-B	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, *State Responsibility Area Viewer*, updated April 1, 2024. (Available at https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6a9cb66bb1824cd98756812af41292a0 accessed April 1, 2026.)
Caltrans	Caltrans Department of Transportation, *Scenic Highway Systems List,* (Available at https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways, accessed March 30, 2026.)
Caltrans 2020	Caltrans Department of Transportation, *Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual*, April 2020. (Available at https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/environmental-analysis/documents/env/tcvgm-apr2020-a11y.pdf, accessed October 29, 2026.)
CARB 2005	California Air Resources Board. *Guidance Document for Addressing Air Quality Issues in General Plans and Local Planning,* dated May 6, 2005. (Available at http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/planning/air-quality-guidance/complete-guidance-document.pdf?sfvrsn=4, accessed July 21, 2026.)
CARB 2023	California Air Resources Board, *State and Federal Standard Area Designations,* webpage, 2023. (Available at https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/maps-state-and-federal-area-designations, accessed July 28, 2026.)
CCR	Thomas Reuters Westlaw, *California Code of Regulations*, (Available at https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Browse/Home/California/CaliforniaCodeofRegulations?bhcp=1&transitionType=Default&contextData=%28sc.Default%29, accessed April 1, 2026.)
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CFR	National Archives, *Code of Federal Regulations,* (Available at https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-40, accessed April 1, 2026.)
CGC	California Government Code, *Title 7, Section 65962.5.* (Available at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV&sectionNum=65962.5., accessed April, 1, 2026.)
Cortese List	California Department of Toxic Substances Control, *Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (Cortese).* (Available at https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/search?cmd=search&reporttype=CORTESE&site_type=CSITES,FUDS&status=ACT,BKLG,COM&reporttitle=HAZARDOUS+WASTE+AND+SUBSTANCES+SITE+LIST+%28CORTESE%29, accessed August 9, 2026.)
CWP SB EIR	County of San Bernardino, *Draft Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse Number 2017101033), San Bernardino Countywide Plan for the County of San Bernardino,* June 2019. (Available at https://countywideplan.sbcounty.gov/resources/document-download/ accessed April 7, 2026.)
CWP SB	County of San Bernardino, *Countywide Plan – County Policy Plan*, October 2025. (Available at https://countywideplan.sbcounty.gov/resources/document-download/#docaccess-77d4553c6e2f6b1d4fc4f7e2eac5eaaeb08effd42a22432ae282caa6060dfdd0, accessed April 1, 2026.)
DOC FM	State of California Department of Conservation, *California Important Farmland Finder,* 2022. (Available at https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/, accessed April 7, 2026.)
DOF	State of California, Department of Finance, *E-1 Cities, Counties, and the State population and Housing Estimates with Annual Percent Change – January 1, 2024 and 2025.* (Available at https://dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/estimates-e1/, accessed March 30, 2026.)
EVWD	East Valley Water District, *2025 Urban Water Management Plan*, June 2026. (Available at https://www.eastvalleywater.gov/media/spammwfm/20260624_evwd_uwmp_2025.pdf, accessed July 7, 2026.)
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FTA	Federal Transit Authority, *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual,* September 2018. (Available at https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/docs/research-innovation/118131/transit-noise-and-vibration-impact-assessment-manual-fta-report-no-0123_0.pdf, accessed October 29, 2026.)
GE	Google, Inc. *Google Earth Pro*, Accessed April 1, 2026.
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GP	City of Highland, *City of Highland General Plan*, 2006 (Available at https://www.highlandca.gov/191/General-Plan, accessed March 30, 2026.)
GP DEIR	City of Highland, *General Plan and Development Code Update Environmental Impact Report SCH#2005021046,* September 2005. (Available at the City of Highland Planning Division.)
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SCAQMD 1993	South Coast Air Quality Management District, *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, November 1993. (Available at SCAQMD.)
SCAQMD 2003	South Coast Air Quality Management District, *White Paper on Potential Control Strategies to Address Cumulative Impacts from Air Pollution*, August 2003 (Available at http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/Agendas/Environmental-Justice/cumulative-impacts-working-group/cumulative-impacts-white-paper.pdf, accessed July 28, 2026.)

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SWCA-A SWCA Environmental Associates, *Biological Resources Technical Report for The Well 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, Highland, San Bernardino County, California,* October 2026. (Included as **Appendix B.**)

SWCA-B SWCA Environmental Associates, *Historic Property Identification Report for the East Valley Water District Well No. 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, City of Highland, San Bernardino County, California*, October 2026. (Included as **Appendix C.1.**)

SWCA-C SWCA Environmental Associates, *Paleontological Resources Assessment for The Well No. 152 Drilling and Equipping Project, Highland, San Bernardino County, California,* October 2026. (Included as **Appendix C.2.**)

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