4.5 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

4.5.1 Land Use

This section analyzes the potential land use conflicts between the proposals presented in each alternative and the existing and planned land uses in the immediate vicinity of the two project sites for the Otay River Estuary Restoration Project (ORERP, or proposed action). The analysis also addresses consistency with coastal management policies, including the California Coastal Act.

**Significance Threshold:** Impacts to land use would be considered significant if substantial changes in use or intensity of use could occur on the project site that would affect adjacent or nearby properties. A significant impact to land use would also occur if an action or the activities proposed in association with the action would be inconsistent with applicable land use regulations (e.g., Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended; California Coastal Act).

4.5.1.1 Alternative A

Under Alternative A, the no action alternative, there would be no change to the existing land use conditions at either portion of the project site. Habitat and wildlife management would remain unchanged, as would operations at the salt works. Therefore, this alternative would not result in any potential land use conflicts to existing, permitted, or planned uses on or near the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and other adjacent areas.

**Mitigation Measures**

No significant impacts are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

4.5.1.2 Alternative B

As indicated in Table 4.5-1, tidal restoration of the Otay River Floodplain Site and the Pond 15 Site, as proposed under Alternative B, is consistent with goals and recommendations included within the *San Diego Bay NWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan* (USFWS 2006). In addition, the proposed restoration under this alternative is also consistent with the resource goals and objectives of the Multiple Species Conservation Program, which designates the project site as riparian/wetlands. Specifically, the overarching goal of the Multiple Species Conservation Program is to maintain and enhance biological diversity in the region and conserve viable populations of endangered, threatened, and key sensitive species and their habitats, thereby preventing local extirpation and ultimate extinction, and minimizing the need for future listings, while enabling economic growth in the region (City of San Diego 1997). Under this alternative, each component of this overarching goal would be achieved, as outlined in further detail in Section 4.3, Biological Resources, of this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
### Table 4.5-1
Consistency with San Diego Bay NWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>South San Diego Bay Unit Goals</th>
<th>Goal/Recommendation</th>
<th>Alternative B</th>
<th>Alternative C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal 1</td>
<td>Protect, manage, enhance, and restore open water, coastal wetlands, and native upland habitat to benefit the native fish, wildlife, and plant species supported within the South San Diego Bay Unit.</td>
<td>This alternative restores a portion of the South San Diego Bay Unit to coastal wetlands, which is consistent with this goal.</td>
<td>This alternative restores a portion of the South San Diego Bay Unit to coastal wetlands, which is consistent with this goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 2</td>
<td>Support recovery and protection efforts for the Federally and State listed threatened and endangered species and species of concern that occur within the South San Diego Bay Unit.</td>
<td>This alternative restores a portion of the South San Diego Bay Unit to coastal wetlands that could provide habitat for several threatened and endangered species and species of concern, which is consistent with this goal.</td>
<td>This alternative restores a portion of the South San Diego Bay Unit to coastal wetlands that could provide habitat for several threatened and endangered species and species of concern, which is consistent with this goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 3</td>
<td>Provide high-quality foraging, resting, and breeding habitat for colonial nesting seabirds, migratory shorebirds, and waterfowl and saltmarsh-dependent species.</td>
<td>Although this alternative would replace habitat that currently provides foraging opportunities for some species, the restored habitat would provide high-quality wetland habitat to support a greater diversity of species, as well as providing nesting opportunities for seabirds and some shorebirds. Open water habitat would continue to be present in adjacent ponds. Therefore, Alternative B would be consistent with this goal.</td>
<td>Although this alternative would replace habitat that currently provides foraging opportunities for some species, the restored habitat would provide high-quality wetland habitat to support a greater diversity of species, as well as providing nesting opportunities for seabirds and some shorebirds. Open water habitat would continue to be present in adjacent ponds. Therefore, Alternative C would be consistent with this goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 4</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for compatible wildlife-dependent recreation and interpretation that foster public appreciation of the unique natural and cultural heritage of South San Diego Bay.</td>
<td>Restoration under this alternative would not hinder the ability of the San Diego Bay NWR to achieve this goal. The restored habitats under this alternative would provide the San Diego Bay NWR with additional opportunities for interpreting wetland species. This alternative would be consistent with this goal.</td>
<td>Restoration under this alternative would not hinder the San Diego Bay NWR’s ability to achieve this goal. The restored habitats under this alternative would provide the San Diego Bay NWR with additional opportunities for interpreting wetland species. This alternative would be consistent with this goal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NWR = National Wildlife Refuge.

Section 307(c)(1) of the Coastal Zone Management Act, as amended, requires that Federal agency activities that impact any land or water use or natural resource of the coastal zone be consistent with the affected State’s coastal management program, in this case the California Coastal Management Program, to the “maximum extent practicable.” Section 930.32 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s regulations implementing the Coastal
Zone Management Act (15 CFR, Part 930) defines “consistent to the maximum extent practicable” as follows:

The term “consistent to the maximum extent practicable” means fully consistent with the enforceable policies of management programs unless full consistency is prohibited by existing law applicable to the Federal agency (15 CFR 930.32(a)(1)).

Based on a detailed analysis of the consistency of the actions and proposed outcomes of implementing Alternative B with the principal component of the California Coastal Management Program, namely the planning and management policies presented in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act, as presented in Appendix N of this EIS, the implementation of Alternative B would be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the policies of the California Coastal Act.

Additionally, a 0.79-acre portion of the Pond 15 Site area would be located within the Port of San Diego (Port) jurisdiction, as shown on Figure 2-1b. This 0.79-acre area is designated as Wetlands in the Port Master Plan (Port 2015). In regards to Wetland land uses, the Port Master Plan states, “development shall be limited to restoration, nature study or similar resource-dependent activities. Dredging and spoils disposal shall be planned and carried out to avoid significant disruption to marine and wildlife habitats and water circulation. Any diking, filling or dredging occurring in these areas shall maintain or enhance function capacity of the wetlands” (Port 2015). The Pond 15 Site inlet/outlet improvements would be conducted in support of the project’s overall wetland creation objectives and to enhance the wetlands functional use by terrestrial and aquatic species. Mitigation measures MM-BIO-2, MM-BIO-5, MM-BIO-7, MM-BIO-9 and MM-BIO-11 would be implemented to mitigate potential impacts to sensitive species and habitat that may occur within the Pond 15 levee breach inlet/outlet area to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, implementation of Alternative B would not result in a change in designation to this land use or conflict with the goals and policies of the Port Master Plan related to Wetlands.

With coordination throughout the planning and implementation of this alternative with the adjacent jurisdictions, including the cities of San Diego, Imperial Beach, and Chula Vista and the Port of San Diego, no significant adverse land use impacts to these agencies’ land use goals are anticipated. Further, no aspect of Alternative B would interfere with nearby aircraft or military operations. The proposed change to the project site would also not result in any conflicts with existing or future allowable land uses on adjacent properties, which include open space, industrial use, and residential use. Therefore, no significant impacts related to land use are anticipated.

Moreover, under Alternative B, the current habitat and wildlife management activities occurring on the Otay River Floodplain Site would change from upland habitat management to wetland management, and the Pond 15 Site would be converted from solar salt pond to tidally influenced wetland habitat. The change in habitat type associated with the proposed action would have no
substantive impact on surrounding land uses, with the exception of flooding off site, which would result in a beneficial impact from the raising of the levee between Pond 22 and Pond 23. Raising the levee would reduce downstream flooding during a 100-year storm event (see Section 2.3.2, Features Common to Both Action Alternatives). However, construction activities related to the excavation and transport of material from the Otay River Floodplain Site to the Pond 15 Site would temporarily affect the views of the site from surrounding land uses and could produce noise audible from nearby residential and recreational uses. Although these temporary impacts could be considered a nuisance by some residents, the site is far enough from nearby residences that no significant temporary compatibility issues are anticipated, as analyzed in Section 4.2.7, Noise.

Access to the Bayshore Bikeway and the bike path along Saturn Boulevard would be temporarily affected during the construction period. To minimize any disruption to commuter and recreational bicyclists and pedestrians using these bike paths, Mitigation Measure (MM) REC-1 is provided, which would require a flagger to be present during construction to ensure safe access to these paths from Main Street and safe access to the Bay Boulevard portion of the Bayshore Bikeway at the construction access point to the Pond 15 Site. MM-REC-2 is also provided, which would require that the Saturn Boulevard bike path be temporarily realigned to ensure continued access between Main Street and Palm Avenue. With the incorporation of these measures into the scope of the project, no significant impacts to bicycle and pedestrian uses in the area would occur. Additionally, no disruption of use along the Otay Valley Regional Park trail, located to the east of the construction area, is anticipated.

Restoration of the Pond 15 Site and the removal of Pond 15 from the existing solar salt pond operation would reduce, to some extent, the annual production of salt from the solar salt operation. To minimize the impact of removing Pond 15 from the salt operation, the levees around the adjacent ponds would be reconfigured to eliminate any connection to Pond 15 and would be strengthened to avoid disruption of the overall system. Installation of levees and other reinforcement mechanisms would ensure that Pond 15 would function independently of the overall salt pond system operations; therefore, any potential impact the salt ponds may have on the newly restored habitat within Pond 15 would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

4.5.1.3 Alternative C

The potential impacts to land use from the implementation of Alternative C would be the same as those described for Alternative B. Alternative C would also be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the principal components of the California Coastal Management Program, namely the planning and management policies presented in Chapter 3 of the
Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

4.5.2 Traffic, Circulation, and Parking

This section presents the estimated level of traffic that could be generated by the construction/restoration activities associated with the various alternatives. Also included in this section is an analysis of the potential impacts of project-related traffic on local and regional traffic circulation and an analysis of the impacts that an increased demand for parking could have on the surrounding area.

Significance Threshold: Impacts related to traffic would be considered significant if project-related traffic would exceed accepted increases in roadway volume-to-capacity ratios as established by the affected jurisdictions; if road capacities would be exceeded; if sight distance provided at ingress/egress points would be inadequate; or if the proposed action would substantially alter the demand for on- and/or off-street parking spaces.

4.5.2.1 Alternative A

Under this alternative, the Otay River Floodplain Site would remain undeveloped and inaccessible to the public, and would generate a minimal number of vehicle trips associated with maintenance activities for the San Diego Bay NWR. Vehicle trips associated with South Bay Salt Works operations would remain consistent with the existing condition. This alternative would not result in any additional trip generation; therefore, no significant adverse impacts related to traffic (including impacts to existing road capacity) or parking are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

4.5.2.2 Alternative B

Under Alternative B, approximately 320,000 cubic yards of material would be excavated from the Otay River Floodplain Site, of which approximately 260,000 cubic yards would be transported to the Pond 15 Site, while the remaining material would be used to construct the
project features and place an exposure reduction cover, as described in Chapter 2, over an area of high DDT levels on the Otay River Floodplain Site east of Nestor Creek. Construction methods have not yet been finalized for transportation of the excavated material from the Otay River Floodplain Site to the Pond 15 Site. The three options proposed include the use of a conveyor belt, or transporting the material in 12-cubic-yard haul trucks, or routing it through a slurry pipeline, as outlined in detail in Section 2.3.2. To be conservative, this analysis assumes that the material would be transported between sites on haul trucks using area roadways because this would have the most substantial impact on transportation and circulation.

Table 4.5-2 lists the trips associated with construction under Alternative B. Transporting 260,000 cubic yards of material from the Otay River Floodplain Site to the Pond 15 Site would require approximately 56,000 total one-way truck trips (or 28,167 round-trips) based on the 12-cubic-yard capacity of the haul trucks proposed for construction and a bulking factor of 1.3 (Appendix E). Assuming 209 working days, as proposed under a 6-day work week and avoidance of the core nesting season, approximately 270 one-way haul truck trips per day would be required to haul the 260,000 cubic yards of material from the Otay River Floodplain Site to the Pond 15 Site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Finish Date</th>
<th>Duration (months)</th>
<th>Work Daysa</th>
<th>Hauling Truck Trips Per Day</th>
<th>Construction Worker Trips</th>
<th>Vendor Trips and Material Deliveries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobilization</td>
<td>8/1/2017</td>
<td>9/30/2017</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dewatering Pond 15</td>
<td>10/1/2017</td>
<td>11/1/2017</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthwork</td>
<td>10/1/2017</td>
<td>1/31/2018</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demobilization</td>
<td>2/1/2018</td>
<td>2/28/2018</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core nesting season</td>
<td>3/1/2018</td>
<td>7/31/2018</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remobilization</td>
<td>8/1/2018</td>
<td>8/31/2018</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthwork</td>
<td>9/1/2018</td>
<td>12/31/2018</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demobilization</td>
<td>1/1/2019</td>
<td>2/28/2019</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Core nesting season</td>
<td>3/1/2019</td>
<td>7/31/2019</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remobilization</td>
<td>8/1/2019</td>
<td>8/31/2019</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pond15 Site grading</td>
<td>9/1/2019</td>
<td>12/31/2019</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: N/A = not applicable.

a Based on 6 work days a week.

In total, it is estimated that approximately 270 truck trips per day would take place between the Pond 15 Site and the Otay River Floodplain Site from about 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday during the proposed action. The haul route is presented on Figure 2-2, Truck Haul Route. The roadways to be used for material transport include a local street and a two-lane light collector. On any given day when the trucks would be operating, hauling trucks would be present on these
streets on a regular basis throughout the day, with one truck leaving the Otay River Floodplain Site every 5 minutes, resulting in about 24 trucks along the route in a 1-hour period. In addition to the truck trips that would be generated under this transport option, up to 50 additional daily construction worker (truck driver) trips could be generated, and an additional 20 vendor trips or material deliveries would be generated throughout the construction period. Although the addition of trucks on the road during hauling activities would result in additional congestion on the haul truck route roadways, based on the low volume of traffic on the roads designated as the haul route (see Table 3.5-1), the presence of 25 trucks per hour (approximately one truck every 2–3 minutes) would not be expected to cause substantial congestion that would interfere with the use of the roads by existing traffic or interfere with access to the properties along the route.

Generally, the material deliveries, vendor trips, and construction worker trips would not overlap with the haul truck trips because construction workers would generally arrive early in the morning, before other trips associated with project construction. Additionally, material deliveries would be intermittent and would vary depending on project needs. Moreover, no truck trips would be generated during the 4-month core nesting season because construction would temporarily cease in order to avoid biological impacts, as discussed further in Section 4.3 of this EIS.

To minimize traffic congestion, all large construction equipment being delivered or removed from the site via ground transport would access the site only via Main Street and only during off-peak traffic hours.

Construction access to the Pond 15 Site would be through a San Diego Bay NWR easement located off Bay Boulevard just north of the intersection of Bay Boulevard and Palomar Street. To provide access to the site for construction equipment during construction, temporary dirt roads would be established and maintained for public safety. Access to both portions of the project site would be controlled through the use of gates, fencing, and site security services. Traffic flow in and out of the construction sites would be controlled by a flagger to avoid traffic congestion as haul trucks move in and out of the site and to ensure public safety along the Bayshore Bikeway and on the Otay Valley Regional Park trail and temporary alignment of the Saturn Boulevard bike path.

As shown on Figure 2-2, loaded haul trucks from the Otay River Floodplain Site would exit the site onto West Frontage Road, turn left onto Anita Street, turn right onto Bay Boulevard, cross Palomar Street, and then turn left off Bay Boulevard onto a San Diego Bay NWR easement. To dispose of the material transported from the Otay River Floodplain Site to Pond 15 Site, trucks would travel along the levee surrounding the Pond 15 Site via a loop to be created to facilitate efficient truck movement within the site. The total round-trip loop between the Otay River Floodplain Site and Pond 15 Site is approximately 7 miles and would take approximately 36 minutes. It is anticipated that the haul truck trips between the two sites would occur during both earthwork phases, and would not occur during the demobilization proposed during the core nesting season.
The roadways where the material would be transported include West Frontage Road, Anita Street, and Bay Boulevard (a two-lane light collector, a local street, and a two-lane light collector respectively). Although capacities on the affected streets are low (refer to Table 3.5-1), all but Main Street are operating well above level of service (LOS) D. The segment of Main Street between West Frontage Road and Interstate 5 (I-5) currently operates below LOS D, with a capacity of 9,000 average daily trips and an estimated volume of 23,500 average daily trips. The majority of this traffic is likely coming from the southbound I-5 exit to travel east on Main Street. The proposed truck traffic would not interfere with that traffic pattern, because it would travel on Main Street only to West Frontage Road, located to the west of the I-5 off-ramp. This, along with traffic control at the exit from the construction site onto Main Street, would avoid any significant adverse traffic impacts on this road segment. With the implementation of MM-TRA-1, the truck and other construction trips associated with implementation of Alternative B would not be expected to cause congestion that would interfere with the use of the roads by existing traffic or interfere with access to the properties along the route.

For construction workers and material deliveries, the roadways that would mainly be used to access the project sites are West Frontage Road, Anita Street, Bay Boulevard, Main Street, and I-5. These trips would not be expected to cause congestion that would interfere with the use of the roads by existing traffic or interfere with access to the properties along the route, because trips would be dispersed throughout the day. Construction staging areas would be located on the eastern side of the Otay River Floodplain Site (as shown on Figure 2-1a), which would keep construction equipment and worker vehicles out of the public roadway when not in use.

Construction worker vehicles would be parked in the staging area on the Otay River Floodplain Site, east of Nestor Creek, as shown on Figure 2-1a. Therefore, there would be no increase in demand off site for on- or off-street parking spaces. To avoid impacts to other users in the area, construction workers would not be permitted to park in trail staging areas or in areas that could pose a safety threat to users of the Bayshore Bikeway. In addition, parking in nearby parking lots would be permitted only if prior authorization has been provided by the property owner.

During and after construction, both sites would be closed to the public. Therefore, there would be no additional trips generated and no increased parking demand due to public use. Once initial restoration activities are completed, trips to the project site would occur in conjunction with site monitoring and maintenance. The number of trips associated with these activities would be small, but slightly higher than the minimal number of trips made to the site for maintenance and monitoring under existing conditions. Vehicles associated with maintenance and monitoring would park either near the staging area on the Otay River Floodplain Site or on the levees of the Pond 15 Site. Overall, once construction of the restored wetlands is complete, there would be no measurable increase in traffic or parking on area roadways resulting from this alternative.
Trips generated by the implementation of Alternative B are not expected to alter the LOS on any area roadway segment or intersection. In addition, all affected roadways and intersections operate at a LOS C or above under existing conditions, as outlined in Tables 3.5-1 and 3.5-2. Construction phase trips are not expected to result in any substantial traffic congestion on these roadways and intersections with the implementation of MM-TRA-1 and MM-TRA-2. The proposed action does not include an increased long-term transportation component. Therefore, the project would not exceed the volume-to-capacity ratios in the established applicable jurisdictions, or substantially alter the demand for on- or off-street parking spaces.

Although the average daily trips occurring on the surrounding roadways is below the current design capacity, if material deliveries, construction worker trips, and haul truck trips all occur during the peak hour, there is a potential for increased traffic congestion on area roadways. To offset these potential impacts, MM-TRA-1 and MM-TRA-2 are provided. All potentially significant impacts associated with implementation of Alternative B would be reduced to less than significant through the implementation of MM-TRA-1 and MM-TRA-2. No significant adverse impacts related to traffic and parking are therefore anticipated.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures have been incorporated to avoid or minimize potentially significant traffic impacts associated with construction activities occurring on roadways.

**MM-TRA-1** Prior to the commencement of any sediment transport, a construction area traffic control plan or detour plan shall be prepared for each location where construction activities would encroach into the right-of-way of a public roadway. The plans would include, but not be limited to, such features as warning signs, lights, flashing arrow boards, barricades, cones, lane closures, flaggers, pedestrian detours, parking restrictions, and restricted hours during which lane closures would not be allowed (e.g., 7 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 6 p.m.) or as determined by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

**MM-TRA-2** The contractor shall schedule all deliveries of construction materials and equipment to the project site to avoid peak-hour traffic congestion (e.g., 7 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 6 p.m.) or as determined by the Service.

**4.5.2.3 Alternative C**

Approximately 370,000 cubic yards of material would be excavated from the Otay River Floodplain Site under Alternative C, of which approximately 310,000 would be transported to the Pond 15 Site, while the remaining material would be used to construct the project features and place an exposure reduction cover over an area of high DDT levels or stockpiled on the Otay
River Floodplain Site east of Nestor Creek. As described under Alternative B, construction methods have not yet been finalized for transportation of the excavated material from the Otay River Floodplain Site to the Pond 15 Site, and three–two options for sediment transport are proposed. To be conservative, this analysis assumes that the material would be transported between sites on haul trucks using area roadways, as this would have the most substantial impact on transportation and circulation. The truck haul route proposed for Alternative C would be the same as proposed for Alternative B, as outlined on Figure 2-2.

Table 4.5-3 lists the trips associated with construction under Alternative C. Transporting 310,000 cubic yards of material from the Otay River Floodplain Site to the Pond 15 Site would require 67,100 total truck trips (or 33,550 round-trips) based on the 12-cubic-yard capacity of the haul trucks proposed for construction and a bulking factor of 1.3 (Appendix E). Assuming 209 working days, as proposed under a 6-day work week schedule and avoidance of the core nesting season, approximately 321 haul truck trips per day (approximately 29 trips per hour, or approximately 1 trip every 2 minutes) would be required to haul the 310,000 cubic yards of material between the Otay River Floodplain Site and the Pond 15 Site. Similarly to Alternative B, no truck trips would be generated during the 4-month core nesting season.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Finish Date</th>
<th>Duration (months)</th>
<th>Work Daysa</th>
<th>Hauling Truck Trips Per Day</th>
<th>Construction Worker Trips</th>
<th>Vendor Trips and Material Deliveries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobilization</td>
<td>8/1/2017</td>
<td>9/30/2017</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dewatering Pond 15</td>
<td>10/1/2017</td>
<td>11/1/2017</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Earthwork</td>
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<td>1/31/2018</td>
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<td>105</td>
<td>321</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>24</td>
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<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core nesting season</td>
<td>3/1/2018</td>
<td>7/31/2018</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>8/1/2018</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demobilization</td>
<td>1/1/2019</td>
<td>2/28/2019</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Core nesting season</td>
<td>3/1/2019</td>
<td>7/31/2019</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remobilization</td>
<td>8/1/2019</td>
<td>8/31/2019</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>87</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:  
N/A = not applicable.

a Based on 6 work days a week

Trips generated by the implementation of Alternative C are not expected to alter the LOS on any area roadway segment or intersection. In addition, all affected roadways and intersections operate at a LOS C or above under existing conditions, as outlined in Tables 3.5-1 and 3.5-2. Construction phase trips are not expected to result in any substantial traffic congestion to these roadways and
intersections with the implementation of MM-TRA-1 and MM-TRA-2. The proposed action does not include an increased long-term transportation component. Therefore, the project would not exceed the volume-to-capacity ratios in the established applicable jurisdictions, or substantially alter the demand for on- or off-street parking spaces.

Although the average daily trips occurring on the surrounding roadways is below the current design capacity, if material deliveries, construction worker trips, and haul truck trips all occur during the peak hour, there is a potential to cause traffic congestion on area roadways. To offset these potential impacts, MM-TRA-1 and MM-TRA-2 are provided. All potentially significant impacts associated with implementation of Alternative C would be reduced to less than significant through the implementation of MM-TRA-1 and MM-TRA-2. No significant adverse impacts related to traffic and parking are therefore anticipated.

Mitigation Measures

MM-TRA-1 and MM-TRA-2 have been incorporated to avoid or minimize potentially significant traffic impacts associated with construction activities occurring on roadways. See Section 4.5.2.2, Alternative B, for the text of these mitigation measures.

4.5.3 Public Utilities/Easements

This section analyzes the potential impacts of the various management alternatives on existing public utilities and easements in the immediate vicinity of the San Diego Bay NWR. The information provided in this section is based on the Otay River Estuary Restoration Project Existing Utility Investigation Final Report conducted by Everest International Consultants in August 2015, provided as Appendix L of this EIS.

Significance Threshold: Direct or indirect impacts to public utilities and easements would be considered significant if project implementation has the potential to damage existing utilities, interrupt utility service, or modify access to existing utilities.

4.5.3.1 Alternative A

This alternative would involve continuing current wildlife and habitat management practices at the Otay River Floodplain Site and retaining Pond 15 within the current configuration of the existing South Bay Salt Works. Since no changes to current operations would occur, this alternative would not result in a direct or indirect damage to utilities, utility service, or other public utility easements.

Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.
4.5.3.2 Alternative B

Although no public utilities or easements are present within the construction footprints of the Otay River Floodplain Site or Pond 15 Site, there are a number of utilities and easements within the Otay River floodplain to the east of the construction site, as shown in Figures 3.5-2 through 3.5-6, and as described in Appendix L. Construction access to the Otay River Floodplain Site would require the creation of a temporary construction access road that would likely travel along a portion of the existing bike path east of the site boundary. Depending on the haul method chosen for transporting material from the Otay River Floodplain Site to the Pond 15 Site, this access route may function as the primary material transport route in addition to providing access to the site for project mobilization and demobilization and for construction worker access. To ensure that construction activities associated with the implementation of Alternative B do not interfere with or damage existing utilities in this area, MM-UTL-1 has been incorporated into the scope of the project. This measure requires coordination with individual utility agencies prior to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service or USFWS) approval of the 100% construction drawings to ensure that no actions associated with this proposal would damage or adversely affect utilities, utility service, or utility easements.

Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measure has been incorporated to avoid the potential for impacts to public utilities, utility service, or utility easements associated with construction activities:

**MM-UTL-1** Prior to the completion of final project construction plans, individual utility agencies with utilities located within or adjacent to areas of construction activity shall be contacted to determine the extent and type of temporary protective measures that must be implemented to prevent construction damage to surface and subsurface utilities.

4.5.3.3 Alternative C

The potential impacts to utilities, utility service, or utility easements under Alternative C would be the same as those described under Alternative B, and MM-UTL-1 would also be implemented under Alternative C to avoid or minimize damage or significant adverse impacts to utilities, utility service, or utility easements.

Mitigation Measures

MM-UTL-1 has been incorporated into the scope of the proposed action to avoid the potential for impacts to public utilities and easements associated with construction activities for Alternative C.
4.5.4 Public Access and Recreational Opportunities

*Significance Threshold:* Impacts to public access, education, and recreational opportunities would be considered significant if substantial modification to existing public recreation and educational activities or opportunities would occur as a result of the proposed action or if existing public access would be substantially altered.

**4.5.4.1 Alternative A**

No public access is currently permitted on either the Otay River Floodplain Site or the Pond 15 Site. Under Alternative A, public access would continue to be restricted on both project sites, and access to the San Diego Bay NWR would remain limited to access as approved by the Service, such as occasional guided nature tours at the South Bay Salt Works outside of the seabird nesting season. Visual access to the site during recreational activities available on the Bayshore Bikeway would remain unobstructed. Public access to the San Diego Bay for boating and fishing activities in the open waters would still be available, and no existing public access routes through the San Diego Bay NWR would be altered or removed. Under the no action alternative, there would be no significant adverse impacts to public access, educational activities, or recreational opportunities.

**Mitigation Measures**

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

**4.5.4.2 Alternative B**

Under Alternative B, the two project sites would continue to be closed to public access during construction and after restoration is completed. Access as approved by the Service, such as occasional guided nature tours at the South Bay Salt Works outside of the seabird nesting season, could continue but would not include the area around the Pond 15 Site while construction activities are underway. After construction, the pre-project tour route may be altered to eliminate access in the vicinity of Pond 15; however, access around other ponds in the system would continue to be available.

The Bayshore Bikeway, the 24-mile bicycle facility that extends around the San Diego Bay, passes along the northern border of the Otay River Floodplain Site in an area located outside the boundaries of the San Diego Bay NWR. General use of the Bayshore Bikeway and surrounding linkages includes recreational and commuter bicyclists, along with walkers, joggers, in-line skaters, and birdwatchers. Under this alternative, access to the Bayshore Bikeway could be disrupted for short periods. If the conveyor belt or slurry method of soil transport is selected, it may be necessary for construction crews to be temporarily present on the bike path while they are extending the required equipment under the path at the eastern bridge site where the path crosses...
the Otay River channel. In this case, a potential impact to the bike path may occur. To mitigate this potential impact, MM-REC-1 has been proposed. This measure requires signage to be provided prior to any construction work to alert bicyclists and other users of scheduled events, and requires a flagger to be present during construction activities to ensure the safety of all users.

Access to Pond 15 under either transport method would require construction vehicles to cross the bike path just north of the intersection of Palomar Street and Bay Boulevard, with a much higher number of crossings occurring under the truck transport method. Protective devices (such as specialized rubber mats) that are not damaging to bicycle tires would be installed over the path to avoid damage from construction vehicles. In addition, trucks would cross the access to the southern portion of the Bayshore Bikeway where it intersects with Main Street. As outlined in MM-REC-1, signs would be installed to alert riders to the presence of protective materials on the path, and flaggers would be present to control trucks and bicycle traffic during active construction periods.

The implementation of Alternative B could also affect the Bayshore Bikeway by altering existing flood elevations and flood flow velocities downstream of I-5. In the existing condition, the Bayshore Bikeway begins to be flooded during the 10-year and 15-year storm event. With the implementation of Alternative B, the bike path would no longer be flooded during the 10-year storm event. Alternative B would not alleviate flooding of the bike path under the 100-year storm event, but it would prevent flooding of the bike path for smaller and more frequent flood events (Appendix H). More information is provided in Section 4.2.5.2, Tidal Flow Impacts, of this EIS.

To avoid potential impacts to users of the City’s bike path that extends from Saturn Boulevard to Main Street in an area to the east of the Otay River Floodplain Site, this bike path would be rerouted during construction to avoid conflicts between bicyclists and construction vehicle ingress and egress from the Otay River Floodplain Site. The temporary bike path reroute, shown on Figure 2-1a, would direct users onto the existing Otay Valley Regional Park trail until the trail crosses the Otay River; then the trail would turn west and reconnect with the existing bike path. This reroute would include a paved pathway and signs for users during construction. MM-REC-2 is provided to offset any impacts associated with this reroute. Although public use may be temporarily affected on the Bayshore Bikeway and surrounding paths during construction, once restoration is complete, all public paths and public access to them would be completely restored to pre-project conditions.

Other recreational activities, such as boating and fishing within the open waters surrounding the project site, would not be affected under this alternative.

Implementation of Alternative B would result in construction-related impacts to surrounding public access facilities, including the Bayshore Bikeway and Saturn Boulevard bike path. Significant adverse impacts would be reduced through the incorporation of MM-REC-1 and MM-REC-2.
Mitigation Measures

The following mitigation measures are provided to avoid or minimize potentially significant impacts associated with conflicts between public access and construction activities occurring on the project site under Alternative B.

**MM-REC-1**

30 days prior to the start of any clearing and grubbing or mobilization(s), whichever occurs first, the contractor shall install warning and notification signs at the following locations: 1) along the Bayshore Bikeway in both directions and 50-feet away in both directions from the construction access point to the Pond 15 Site where vehicles will be crossing the Bayshore Bikeway and 2) at the Main Street/Frontage Road entrance to the Bayshore Bikeway in both directions and 50-feet away in both directions, as well as at the 13th Street entrance onto the east bound segment of the Bayshore Bikeway. The initial signs, to be posted 30 days prior to the start of construction, will alert riders of upcoming construction activity and the potential for future delays due to the presence of construction vehicles. Prior to initiating construction and installing protective materials on the bike path, the initial signs shall be replaced with warning signs informing riders to expect delays due to construction vehicles crossing the bikeway or entering Main Street from the project site, as applicable. Where protective materials will be installed on the bicycle path, the warning signs shall clearing alert riders to slow down due to the uneven surfaces that the protective materials will create. The contractor shall maintain all signs in good order throughout each of two construction periods. At the end of each construction period, the Bayshore Bikeway shall be returned to documented pre-project conditions. Prior to commencement of the second year of construction, the same signage procedures shall be followed as described above.

Similarly, at 50-feet away from the Main Street entrance (north end) and at and 50-feet away from the Saturn Boulevard entrance (south end) to the Saturn Boulevard bike path initial signs shall be installed 30 days prior to construction to alert riders about the upcoming construction and associated temporary reroute of the bike path, including a map indicating where the reroute will be located, and two weeks prior to construction, signs, with a map of the rerouted section, shall be installed to direct users onto and along the rerouted section of trail. In addition, warning signs shall be installed 50-feet away from Main Street along the reroute informing users of presence of construction vehicles entering and exiting Main Street and the potential for delays. The temporary reroute and all directional signs shall be maintained throughout the two-year construction period. Prior to commencement of the second year of construction, the same warning sign
procedures shall be followed as described above. At the end of construction, the Saturn Boulevard bike path shall be returned to documented, pre-project conditions.

During active construction, flaggers shall be present to control trucks and bicycle traffic on the Bayshore Bikeway, with flaggers present at the Main Street/Frontage Road entrance to the Bayshore Bikeway, at the construction access point to the Pond 15 Site, and at the northern extent of the rerouted Saturn Boulevard bike path. The contractor shall maintain the bikeway in good repair at all times, frequently remove any dirt or debris deposited on the bikeway or Main Street by trucks and construction equipment, and provide protective barriers as necessary.

Prior to any construction activity in the Bayshore Bikeway, the contractor shall install signs to alert riders to the presence of protective materials on the path and of potential intermittent closures during construction. During active construction, flaggers shall be present to control trucks and bicycle traffic on the Bayshore Bikeway, with flaggers present at the Main Street/Frontage Road entrance to the Bayshore Bikeway, as well as at the access point to the Pond 15 Site where the access point crosses the Bikeway. The contractor shall maintain the Bikeway in good repair at all times, provide protective barriers as necessary, and be responsible for restoring the Bikeway to pre-project conditions following completion of construction activities.

**MM-REC-2** Prior to the commencement of project construction, a reroute of the Saturn Boulevard bike path shall be designed and **required approvals obtained**. and prior to any other construction associated with the project, the contractor shall complete the approved temporary reroute of the bike path. Design, permitting, and construction shall be conducted in coordination with the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department and the Streets Division, as well as County of San Diego Park and Recreation Department. The project construction documents shall indicate that the contractor is responsible for restoring the existing bike path to documented preconstruction conditions following completion of all construction activities.
4.5.4.3 Alternative C

The potential impacts to public access, education, and recreational opportunities from the implementation of Alternative C would be the same as those described for Alternative B.

Mitigation Measures

MM-REC-1 and MM-REC-2 would also be implemented under Alternative C to avoid or minimize potentially significant impacts associated with construction activities occurring within the Bayshore Bikeway and Saturn Boulevard bike path.

4.5.5 Vectors and Odors

This section discusses the direct and indirect impacts with respect to vector breeding and odor generation of implementing the proposed action.

Significance Threshold: Impacts related to vectors and odor would be considered significant if the proposed action has the potential to substantially alter wetland conditions conducive to mosquito breeding or to substantially alter the potential for odors to be generated from within the project site.

4.5.5.1 Alternative A

Under this alternative, the Pond 15 Site would continue to generate potentially offensive odors due to decomposition of organic materials within shallow warm water. The mosquito composition and potential breeding habitat for the species in the Otay River and Nestor Creek discussed in Section 3.5.5, Vectors and Odors, of this EIS would remain unaltered. Alternative A would not result in substantial alteration of wetland conditions conducive to mosquito breeding or increase the potential for odors to be generated. No significant impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

4.5.5.2 Alternative B

Vectors

The majority of the mosquito populations and potential breeding habitat in the vicinity of the project includes fresh and brackish waters in Nestor Creek and the Otay River. Standing water could provide potential habitat for a variety of mosquito species found in the South Bay, in particular *Ochlerotatus taeniorhynchus* and *O. squamiger*. These species are not known to carry human diseases, but can be a nuisance during certain times of the year. The saltmarsh habitat that
would be restored at the Otay Floodplain Site and Pond 15 Site under Alternative B would be inundated daily by the tides and has been designed to avoid the presence of standing water; therefore, the proposed restoration under Alternative B would not provide additional breeding habitat for mosquitos. Additionally, the wetlands would be graded so that no pooling water would be created above areas that are influenced by the tides.

The mosquito community in the San Diego Bay NWR would continue to be monitored under all alternatives by the San Diego County (County) Department of Environmental Health, and appropriate control actions would be considered by the San Diego Bay NWR if mosquito populations become a significant nuisance to adjacent residences. The County Department of Environmental Health, under a Special Use Permit issued by the Service (permit no. 81681-14003), would implement vector control measures on San Diego Bay NWR lands, including the application of larvicides or adulticides. Prior to such use of vector control measures, the County, as specified in the Special Use Permit, shall initiate coordination with the Service to avoid or minimize any potential adverse effects to San Diego Bay NWR lands. Additionally, as specified in the Special Use Permit, mosquito population control techniques during non-emergency conditions shall stress the use of biocontrol agents prior to the use of chemical larvicides or adulticides and shall dispense mosquito control compounds in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulations for each compound. County staff shall coordinate with San Diego Bay NWR staff on all actions taking place on NWR lands. Moreover, as specified in the Special Use Permit, at the beginning of each year’s migratory bird nesting season (prior to April 15), County field staff shall meet with San Diego Bay NWR biological and management staff to identify field protocols for avoidance and minimization of take to any trust resources, including listed species and their habitats and migratory birds (USFWS 2014).

**Odors**

Odors are a form of air pollution that is most obvious to the general public. Odors can present significant problems for both the source and surrounding community. Although offensive odors seldom cause physical harm, they can be annoying and cause concern.

Section 6318 of the San Diego County Zoning Ordinance requires that all commercial and industrial uses be operated so as not to emit matter causing unpleasant odors that are perceptible by the average person at or beyond any lot line of the lot containing said uses. Section 6318 goes on to further provide specific dilution standards that must be met “at or beyond any lot line of the lot containing the uses” (County of San Diego 1979). SDAPCD Rule 51 (Public Nuisance) also prohibits emission of any material that causes nuisance to a considerable number of persons or endangers the comfort, health, or safety of any person. A proposed project that involves a use that would produce objectionable odors would be deemed to have a significant odor impact if it would affect a considerable number of off-site receptors.
Construction of Proposed Project would result in the emission of diesel fumes and other odors typically associated with construction activities. These compounds would be emitted in varying amounts on the site depending on where construction activities are occurring, number and types of construction activities occurring, and prevailing weather conditions, among other factors. A variety of sensitive receptors surround the general vicinity of the South San Diego Bay Unit of the San Diego Bay NWR, including the San Diego Bay NWR itself. These receptors include a mobile home park located to the south of the Otay River Floodplain within the City of San Diego, residential uses and an elementary school located along the south end of the San Diego Bay within the City of Imperial Beach, residential units scattered among small industrial uses to the east of Pond 15, and residential development located just to the west of the San Diego Bay NWR boundaries in the City of Coronado. However, all odor impacts would be temporary and would cease with completion of the project. Odors from construction activities would be localized in the immediate vicinity of the construction site and would be limited to a finite, temporary period of time. Therefore, impacts related to odors during construction would be less than significant.

Land uses and industrial operations that are associated with odor complaints include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. The project would not include any of these operational activities typically associated with odors. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to comply with the County odor policies enforced by SDAPCD, including Rule 51 in the event a nuisance complaint occurs, and County Code Sections 63.401 and 63.402, which prohibit nuisance odors and identify enforcement measures to reduce odor impacts to nearby receptors. Thus, the impacts associated with odors would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

4.5.5.3 Alternative C

The potential impacts to vectors and odors from the implementation of Alternative C would be the same as those described for Alternative B.

Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

4.5.6 Economics/Employment

This section discusses the direct and indirect economic impacts on the regional economy of implementing the proposed alternatives.
Significance Threshold: Impacts to the regional economy would be considered significant if the proposed action could substantially alter existing employment levels within the local or regional economy, set a precedent for future development trends in the project vicinity, or seriously interfere with daily operations on adjacent commercial and industrial properties.

4.5.6.1 Alternative A

Implementation of this alternative would have no benefits or significant adverse impacts on the economy or employment within the region. Alternative A would not substantially alter existing employment levels within the local or regional economy, set a precedent for future development trends in the project vicinity, or seriously interfere with daily operations on adjacent commercial and industrial properties.

Mitigation Measures

No significant adverse impacts related to economics or employment are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

4.5.6.2 Alternative B

Under this alternative, the Otay River Floodplain Site, as a portion of the San Diego Bay NWR, would continue to lack direct employment opportunities and would not make a notable contribution to the regional economy, due to lack of entrance fees or public access to this portion of the San Diego Bay NWR.

The South Bay Salt Works, a commercial solar salt operation that encompasses the Pond 15 Site, would continue to operate without the use of Pond 15. The South Bay Salt Works is currently using Pond 15 as an evaporation pond. Construction operations associated with implementation of Alternative B have the potential to affect the operations at this facility. To offset any potential impacts, MM-ECO-1 has been identified to require coordination between the contractor and the adjacent facility.

Once construction is complete, restoration of the Pond 15 Site would remove this evaporation pond from the existing operation. However, as outlined in Section 3.5.6, Economics/Employment, this operation makes minimal input into the local and regional economy. To minimize the impact of removing Pond 15 from the salt operation, the levees around the adjacent ponds would be reconfigured to eliminate any connection to Pond 15 and would be strengthened to avoid disruption of the overall system. Additionally, the programmatic EIS prepared for management of the San Diego Bay NWR that this EIS tiers from includes plans to restore each of the salt evaporation plans in this area to natural, tidally influenced habitat (USFWS 2006).
Alternative B includes restoration that would involve a total expenditure of between $15 and $24 million. Although this is a relatively minor amount of funding when viewed in terms of the regional economy, during construction this would result in direct expenditures that would be used to purchase materials and retain contractors. These expenditures would provide a minor benefit to the regional economy and employment. New opportunities for wildlife observation would have the potential to increase the number of visitors to the area, which could correlate with additional expenditures in retail trade, lodging, and food service. However, none of these impacts would be notable in terms of local or regional economy or employment. Therefore, with the implementation of MM-ECO-1, implementation of Alternative B would not substantially alter existing employment levels within the local or regional economy or seriously interfere with daily operations on adjacent commercial and industrial properties.

**Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measure has been incorporated to avoid or minimize potentially significant impacts associated with construction activities occurring in the vicinity of the South Bay Salt Works.

**MM-ECO-1** To avoid conflicts with ongoing salt works operations, prior to the start of construction, the contractor shall provide the salt works management with an up-to-date construction schedule and timeline of activities related to the restoration project. The salt works management shall also receive monthly updates of construction progress and shall be informed immediately of any changes in the proposed schedule or timeline.

**4.5.6.3 Alternative C**

The potential for direct and indirect economic impacts on the regional economy from the implementation of Alternative C would be the same as described for Alternative B.

**Mitigation Measures**

MM-ECO-1 would also be implemented under Alternative C to avoid or minimize potentially significant impacts associated with construction activities occurring in the vicinity of the South Bay Salt Works.

**4.5.7 Environmental Justice**

This section evaluates the potential for adverse human health or environmental impacts on minority populations or low-income populations living in the vicinity of the project site as a result of implementing the various actions proposed in each alternative.
**Significance Threshold:** Impacts related to environmental justice would be considered significant if the proposed action would result in disproportionate human health impacts or environmental impacts to low-income or minority populations.

### 4.5.7.1 Alternative A

This alternative proposes continuing current management practices on the Otay River Floodplain Site, and solar salt production in the Pond 15 Site would not result in any disproportionate impact on human health or associated environmental impact. No significant impacts are anticipated.

**Mitigation Measures**

No significant adverse impacts related to environmental justice are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

### 4.5.7.2 Alternative B

Restoration of the project site under this alternative would have long-term benefits to biological resources. No significant and unavoidable impacts have been identified within this EIS. Although the median income within the general project vicinity is lower than the County average, and there is a larger racial minority population in this area, no significant adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of implementing Alternative B. Therefore, there would be no disproportionate adverse human health impacts or environmental impacts to any low-income or minority populations in the areas surrounding the project site.

**Mitigation Measures**

No significant adverse impacts related to environmental justice are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

### 4.5.7.3 Alternative C

The potential impacts to environmental justice from the implementation of Alternative C would be the same as those described for Alternative B.

**Mitigation Measures**

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation measures are required.