7. *CEQA Mandated Sections*

This chapter provides an overview of the impacts of the proposed Project based on the analyses presented in Chapters 4 through 6 of this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The topics covered in this chapter include impacts found not to be significant, significant irreversible changes due to the proposed Project, and growth inducement. A more detailed analysis of the effects proposed Project would have on the environment and proposed mitigation measures to minimize significant impacts is provided in Chapters 4.1 through 4.16.

7.1 IMPACTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15128, allows environmental issues for which there is no likelihood of significant impact to be "scoped out" and not analyzed further in the EIR. However, this Draft EIR analyzes all environmental issues and topics as set forth in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and, therefore, there were no environmental issues "scoped out" in this EIR.

7.2 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR discuss the ways in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Typical growth inducing factors might be the extension of urban services or transportation infrastructure to a previously unserved or under-served area, or the removal of major barriers to development. This section evaluates the proposed Project's potential to create such growth inducements. Not all growth inducement is negative. Negative impacts associated with growth inducement occur only when the project growth would cause adverse environmental impacts.

7.2.1.1 POPULATION GENERATION

The proposed Project would enhance the existing Parkway through the acquisition of property for Parkway purposes, habitat conservation and enhancement, and construction of additional facilities which support low-impact recreational activities. Such facilities and development could include, but not be limited to, additional trails, bicycle paths, bridge crossings, kayak and canoe launches, campsites, and concessionaire facilities. Although the construction of these facilities are expected to increase visitors to the planned Parkway, most of the increased population within the Parkway Plan Area would be limited to day use/visitation of the Parkway and/or temporary use of tent and RV campsites, not resulting in permanent population growth. Additionally, there is no housing proposed by the Project.

Some Parkway development could result in job growth as a result of the staffing of concession stands and/or other facilities that would require staffing, such as a visitor center, campsite location, and entrance stations; however, the limited number of jobs is not expected to generate population at a level which would result in adverse environmental effects.

7.2.1.2 IMPROVEMENTS TO TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in the construction of transportation infrastructure through the development of hiking and biking trails, trail bridges, parking lots, and connections to planned regional trail systems all of which improve the overall infrastructure related to transportation. The proposed Project contains several policies and goals that would site these improvements to the extent feasible in areas that have been previously disturbed, and would provide increased connectivity among existing trails and the regional trail system.

Although the increase and improvements to trails and access points would increase the overall transportation infrastructure, the improvements are not expected to induce population growth other than an increase to daily visitors as a result of providing more opportunities for recreation. Such growth would be temporary and is not expected to result in an adverse environmental effect.

7.2.1.3 EMPLOYMENT GENERATION

As discussed above, the proposed Project would result in new structures and facilities to support low-impact recreational activities which could generate employment opportunities. Although staffing at facilities, concession stands, campsites, and/or visitor centers could increase, the overall employment generation would be nominal. Restoration projects as a result of the proposed Project would result in employment for three to five years per project, on an extremely small scale. Therefore the proposed Project would not induce population growth at a level that would result in an adverse environmental effect.

7.2.2 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe any significant impacts that cannot be avoided, even with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures. Significant and unavoidable impacts are listed in Chapter 5 of this Draft EIR, and they include significant and unavoidable impacts related to air quality, biological resources, greenhouse gas emissions, and hydrology and water quality. The impacts are discussed in detail in Chapter of 4 of this Draft EIR.

7.2.3 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES

Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to discuss the extent to which a proposed project would commit nonrenewable resources to uses that future generations would probably be unable to reverse. The three CEQA-required categories of irreversible changes are discussed below.

7.2.3.1 CHANGES IN LAND USE THAT COMMIT FUTURE GENERATIONS

The lands to be acquired for the proposed Project, ultimately 5,900 acres, are intended to be conserved in perpetuity for habitat, low-intensity recreation, river access and other purposes within the statutory mission of the Conservancy. The proposed Project would introduce new structures, facilities (including parking lots), and increase the network of hiking and biking trails. As such, any land use changes resulting from implementation of the proposed Plan are considered permanent and could not be returned to their existing (pre-project) condition. Therefore, future generations would be committed to the proposed change in land use for the foreseeable future.

7.2.3.2 IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE FROM ENVIRONMENTAL ACCIDENTS

Potential environmental accidents of concern include those that would have adverse effects on the environment or public health due to the nature or quantity of material released during an accident and the receptors exposed to that release.

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in habitat restoration activities and the construction of additional facilities, such as restrooms, parking lots, concession stands, hiking and biking trails, and campsites. The construction activities could involve some risk of environmental accidents. However, construction activity would comply with all applicable local, State, and federal laws which would minimize or eliminate such risks, to the extent feasible. Additionally, the proposed Project includes policies which would require construction to follow best management practices to further reduce the risk of environmental accidents.

Although additional restrooms and campsites would be constructed, such facilities would operate per local, State, and federal laws, thereby, minimizing the risk of irreversible damage from environmental accidents. As a result, the proposed Project would not pose a substantial risk of environmental accidents.

7.2.3.3 LARGE COMMITMENT OF NONRENEWABLE RESOURCES

Construction, operation, and ongoing maintenance of facilities or structures constructed under the proposed Project would result in a commitment of nonrenewable resources. Nonrenewable materials and resources used would include, but are not limited to, oil, gasoline, sand and gravel, asphalt, and steel. These materials and energy resources would be used to construct and operate infrastructure and facilities such as campsites, canoe and kayak launches, restrooms, concession stands, bridges, and trails.

Although construction of the proposed Project would utilize nonrenewable resources, operations would require a lesser commitment of nonrenewable resources, primarily fuels for service and management vehicles. Overall, implementation of the proposed Project would not require a large commitment of nonrenewable resources.

CEQA MANDATED SECTIONS