Chapter 2
Project Description

2.1 Overview

This chapter of the DEIR describes project objectives, location, proposed actions, and agency approvals that may be required.

In 1988, the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust[4] began a formal planning process that produced the *San Joaquin River Parkway and Environs Conceptual Plan* (Conceptual Plan) (San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust 1989). Based on the findings in this plan, then-Assemblyman (now U.S. Representative) Jim Costa gained approval to form the San Joaquin River Parkway Task Force (Assembly Bill [AB] 3121). In 1992, the task force, composed of a group of 25 agencies and organizations, held numerous community workshops and crafted the *San Joaquin River Parkway Task Force Plan* (Task Force Plan). The Task Force Plan included the recommendation to form the San Joaquin River Conservancy.

In 1992, the California Legislature enacted the San Joaquin River Conservancy Act (Conservancy Act), PRC Section 32500 et seq. The Conservancy Act established the Conservancy as a State agency within the California Natural Resources Agency and granted it authority to acquire, develop, and manage public lands to create the San Joaquin River Parkway.[5] The Parkway is a planned 22-mile natural and recreational area that would provide a harmonious combination of low-impact recreational and educational uses and wildlife protection. The Parkway Master Plan was adopted by the Conservancy in 1997 following certification of the Final EIR. In July 2000, the San Joaquin River Conservancy approved and adopted the Recompiled San Joaquin River Master Plan. It was prepared to provide a more concise and understandable policy document for the benefit of affected local government agencies and the public. The preface of the Recompiled Master Plan states "…in preparing this recompilation, care has been taken to retain the specific wording from the above referenced source documents. No explicit or implied modifications to guiding goals, objectives, and policies or more specific measures are intended." In 2013,

[4] The San Joaquin River Parkway & Conservation Trust, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, public benefit corporation, created in 1988 to establish a continuous greenway along 33 miles of San Joaquin River in the rapidly urbanizing Fresno-Madera region.

[5] The planned Parkway consists of the River and approximately 5,900 acres of public land to be acquired on both sides of the River between Friant Dam and SR 99.

the Conservancy began preparing a Master Plan Update.[6] However, the planning process is not complete at this time. For the purpose of this analysis, this DEIR tiers to the Parkway Master Plan.

2.2 Project Objectives

The Parkway Master Plan presents goals, objectives, and policies and envisions future uses, improvements, features, facilities, and management measures for habitat conservation, enhancement, and restoration, and recreational and educational uses including: trails, bikeways, corridors, equestrian areas, and facilities for nonmotorized boating and fishing. In particular, a continuous, multipurpose trail of approximately 22 miles extending from Friant Dam to SR 99 would be established along both sides of the River, with an interconnected trail system and recreational and educational features. The Parkway Master Plan and 1997 Final EIR continue as the foundation for the phased implementation for future parkway projects. Appendix B summarizes the goals and policies of the Parkway Master Plan.

The key recreation objective, RO3, adopted by the Conservancy and presented in the Parkway Master Plan follows:

> *Link all recreational areas and natural reserves between Highway 99 and Friant Dam with a continuous, multipurpose trail on land with canoe put-in, take-out, and rest areas along the river to create a recreation system with a variety of recreational opportunities within the Parkway. Connect the multipurpose trail with other local and regional trails and bikeways, originating in surrounding areas.*

The project would accomplish an additional segment of the planned Parkway-wide multiuse trail.

2.3 Project Location

The study area is located along the San Joaquin River between SR 41 and Spano Park within the city limits of Fresno (Figure 2-1). The boundary extends from the River south to the San Joaquin River Bluffs and westward from SR 41 to Spano Park, located near the intersection of Palm Avenue and Nees Avenue. The project area is sited within Sections 21, 28, and 29 of Township 12S, Range 20E, Mount Diablo Baseline and Meridian, Fresno North 7.5-minute series USGS topographic quadrangle.

The study area analyzed in this DEIR is approximately 358 acres and is located on the south side of the River (Figure 2-2). A majority of the land is owned by the State of California under the management jurisdiction of the Conservancy (this land is hereinafter referred to as “Conservancy land”). Two parcels, owned by the City, are adjacent to Conservancy land. The project area also contains State sovereign

[6] The Conservancy is preparing a draft Master Plan Update and EIR. The NOP for the Master Plan Update EIR was issued on June 17, 2013.

lands riverward of the River's low-water mark, owned by the State of California and under the jurisdiction of the California State Lands Commission. Implementation of a portion of the project may occur on Fresno city parcels. Alternative 5, considered in Chapter 5 of this DEIR, also includes privately owned properties lying between the Conservancy land and the intersection of Palm Avenue and Nees Avenue.

Three other parcels in the study area are owned by others and would not be part of the project. One parcel, privately owned land located near the center of the project area, is occupied by two residences. Access to these residences is via a paved road within an access easement on Conservancy property from West Riverview Drive. The other two parcels, owned by FMFCD, contain stormwater detention basins. The proposed project would not affect these basins.

A residential subdivision is located on the bluffs adjacent to the southern project boundary (Figure 2-2). The subdivision is within the city limits of Fresno.

Conservancy land within the study area is currently closed to the public in accordance with PRC Section 32511.

2.4 Project Description

The Conservancy proposes to expand the Eaton Trail by constructing a multipurpose trail and providing ancillary recreation support features. The trail would be extended approximately 2.4 miles, from Perrin Avenue near SR 41 on the east to Spano Park on the west. The project would provide for low-impact recreational activities, such as hiking, bicycling, equestrian use, fishing, and nature observation consistent with the Parkway Master Plan.

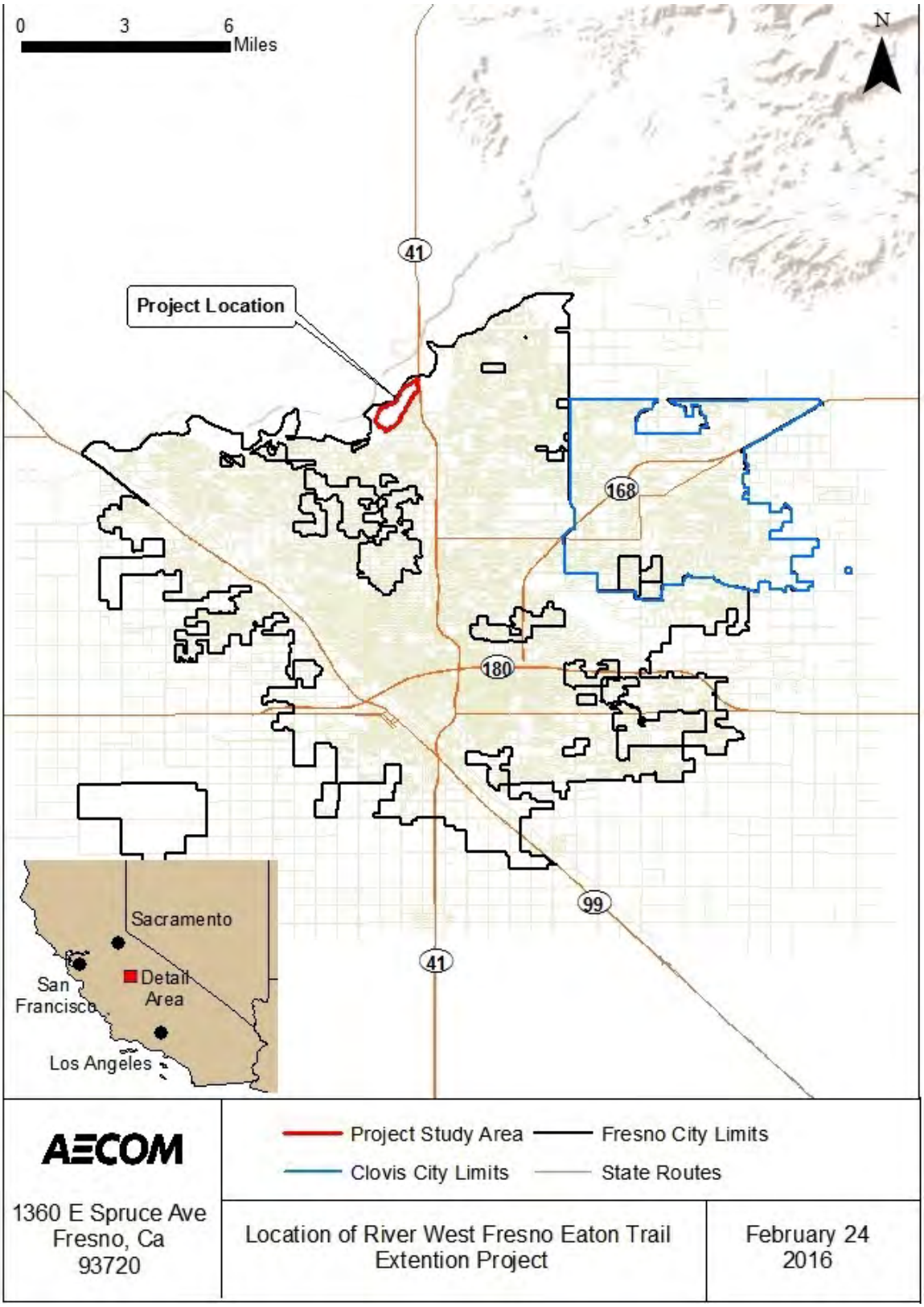

Figure 2-1 Location of River West Fresno, Eaton Trail Extension Project

Figure 2-2 River West Fresno, Eaton Trail Extension Study Area

2.4.1 Multipurpose Trail

The trail extension would be about 22 feet wide, with a 12-foot-wide paved surface, a parallel 8-foot-wide hard natural surface for equestrian use, and a 2-foot shoulder (opposite the natural surface area). The trail extension generally would follow the alignment as shown in the conceptual drawing in Figure 2-3, from SR 41 to Spano Park. The trail would provide accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Three fire hydrants would be added along the trail extension if feasible—at the Perrin Avenue parking lot, near the private property parcel, and near the toe of Spano Park (Figure 2-3).

2.4.2 Parking Lot

A parking lot for 50 vehicles with a controlled vehicle entrance would be constructed adjacent to SR 41 (Figure 2-4). Vehicle access to the parking lot would be from the Perrin Avenue undercrossing of SR 41. A gate and an unmanned parking pay station would be included to manage vehicle access. The parking lot would accommodate up to three horse trailer stalls and would have a fire hydrant (if feasible), a drinking fountain, a public information bulletin board, a small pet station, and a two-vault restroom. The restroom and parking lot would be ADA accessible. Smart lighting with LED light sets with rechargeable batteries and a solar panel would be mounted on light poles, providing sufficient illumination for security and maintenance. The area surrounding the parking lot would be landscaped with native vegetation. An emergency/service gate or removable bollards would provide access to the trail extension for emergency first responders and maintenance staff.

2.4.3 Recreation Access

Pedestrian and bicycle access would be provided at three locations: Perrin Avenue, Spano Park, and the West Riverview Drive and Churchill Avenue entrances to the Bluff Trail. The Bluff Trail is an existing neighborhood trail, located on a land owned by the City. A 12-foot-wide paved trail would be constructed to provide access from the Bluff Trail to the trail extension near West Riverview Drive. A wide staircase with bicycle guides may be constructed from Spano Park to the trail extension The Spano Park access and Bluff Trail access would be constructed on the steep slope of the bluffs. A pet station would be provided at each trailhead.

Figure 2-3 Conceptual Design of Proposed Project

Figure 2-4 Conceptual Design Proposed Perrin Avenue Parking Lot

2.4.4 Recreation Amenities and Landscaping

The proposed trail extension would be landscaped at intervals with native vegetation for habitat enhancement, visual screening, and shade. The landscaping would be irrigated until the vegetation is permanently established. Picnic areas, tables, benches, public safety and information signs, and wildlife observation areas would be provided along the trail at various locations. Unimproved hiking paths to the riverbank would be connected to the trail. These hiking paths may be widened up to 6 feet and overlaid with a permeable surface such as decomposed gravel. These paths would not be landscaped. On completion, the project would provide low-impact recreational activities along the River, such as hiking, bicycling, horse riding, fishing, and nature observation, consistent with the Parkway Master Plan.

In total, project components described above would cover approximately 7.5 miles of paved and unpaved trails or 10.4 acres. Table 2.4-1 summarizes project components by length and area.

Table 2.4-1 Summary of Project Components by Length and Area

Project Component	Proposed Project	
	Length (miles)	**Area (acres)**
Multiuse Trail (paved—12 feet wide)	2.4	3.5
Multiuse Trail (unpaved—10 feet wide)	3.1	3.6
Perrin Avenue Parking (paved) (unpaved)	0	 0.8 0.9
Bluff Trail (paved—12 feet wide)	0.3	0.4
Hiking Trails	1.8	1.3
Total	**7.6**	**10.5**

Note:

[a] Includes the 12-foot-wide paved trail from the Bluff Trail to the proposed trail extension near West Riverview Drive.

Source: Compiled by AECOM in 2016

2.5 Project Management, Operations, and Maintenance

Project management including operations, maintenance, and implementing best management practices (BMPs) may affect the physical environment and is important to consider the DEIR. Project management considerations include human use patterns and their potential for impacts on natural systems, maintenance of facilities to protect or restore natural systems, potential for harm to humans from natural conditions influenced by management activities, and potential for conflicts between user groups.

2.5.1 Project Management

The Conservancy manages its projects and lands under its jurisdiction in the Parkway through policies in the Parkway Master Plan. The Parkway Master Plan (Appendix B) contains goals, objectives, and policies that apply to land management in the Parkway.

Long-term management and maintenance is required to assure that project features continue to provide recreation benefits and protect natural resources. The Conservancy conducts outreach to educate visitors regarding the importance of resource protection and to discourage incompatible uses. The Conservancy's land management and recreation programs address stewardship responsibilities related to protection of natural and cultural resources.

Trails are managed to protect the public's investment in capital assets and to provide broad access to users to ensure that facilities meet safety needs of all age groups and abilities. The trail design incorporates features to keep through-travelers on the trail surfaces to reduce hazards and protect sensitive resources. Project management also recognizes the high desire for access to vistas and observation points, the River, and other recreational amenities, and provides ways to accommodate that desire.

Rules are developed for project operation, including prohibitions on camping, open fires, smoking, dogs off-leash, and other measures to protect public health and safety. In general, the trails are available for use from dusk until dawn; however, special evening uses may be permitted by the Conservancy on a case-by-case basis.

The Conservancy Act requires that the Conservancy close to the public any of its lands or facilities that it is unable to maintain in a clean and safe manner, and adequately protect wildlife and rights of adjacent property owners from the public (PRC Section 32511). The Conservancy must secure adequate long-term resources to operate and maintain the project.

Internal trails would be designed to provide for management and emergency vehicles. Authorized personnel in motorized vehicles, such as maintenance crews, would occasionally require access on trails and occasionally off-road. To minimize safety concerns caused by mixing nonmotorized and motorized users on the same trails, these vehicles would operate under heightened safety conditions. This could include slow speeds, temporary trail closures, flashing lights, or warning flags or signs. Emergency medical or police/fire personnel requiring vehicle access, and using emergency lights and/or sirens, would use the protected trail surface as the law allows.

The design of the trail system would incorporate BMPs as needed to reduce impacts through ongoing management practices.

Directional and interpretive signing would be provided, and physical barriers (i.e., fencing) would be placed in critical areas to more direct users onto trails and away from protected areas. Targeted plantings may also be used to discourage access.

Other actions include (but may not be limited to) posting of signs educating users regarding trail etiquette and trespass issues; monitoring to reduce litter, trespass, or other problems associated with trail access and parking; and increased use of fencing to better direct users to access points.

2.5.2 Best Management Practices

The following BMPs are drawn from State and local ordinances, Parkway Master Plan mitigation measures, and from other statutory authorities or guidelines. They are incorporated into the project description and would be implemented during project implementation, construction, and operation and maintenance.

2.5.2.1 Air Quality

BMP AIR-1. Construction plans and specifications will comply with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's (SJVAPCD's) current air quality plans, and with all SJVAPCD rules and regulations as deemed relevant through consultation with SJVAPCD. The following dust control practices will be followed during the construction phase of the project, to mitigate potential impacts from particulate matter (PM) and construction equipment**.**

Construction of the project will be consistent with the SJVAPCD *Guide for Assessing and Mitigating Air Quality Impacts* (SJVAPCD 2002).[7] Also, the Conservancy will implement the following measures, as required by Regulation VIII, Rule 4102, and Rule 4641 (SJVAPCD 2014):

- Prewater sites sufficiently to limit visible dust emissions to 20% opacity.
- Phase work to reduce the amount of disturbed area at any one time.
- During active operations, apply water or chemical/organic stabilizers/suppressants sufficient to limit visible dust emissions to 20% opacity.
- Construct and maintain wind barriers sufficient to limit visible dust emissions to 20% opacity.
- Apply water or chemical/organic stabilizers/suppressants to unpaved haul/access roads and unpaved vehicle/equipment traffic areas sufficient to limit visible dust emissions to 20% opacity.
- During periods of inactivity, restrict vehicular access to the area.

[7] If any identified rule, regulation, or guidance referenced herein is updated, compliance with the current requirements will be achieved.

- Post 15 miles per hour (mph) speed limit signs at a minimum every 500 feet along unpaved access/haul roads.
- Materials used for chemical/organic stabilization of soils, including petroleum resins, asphaltic emulsions, acrylics, and adhesives will not violate State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) standard for use as a soil stabilizer. Materials accepted by the California Air Resources Board (ARB) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and which meet State water quality standards.
- Use of hygroscopic materials may be prohibited by the Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO) in areas in lacking sufficient atmospheric moisture of soils for such materials to efficiently reduce fugitive dust emissions. The atmospheric moisture of soils is considered to be sufficient if it meets the application specifications of the hygroscopic product manufacturer. Use of such materials may be approved in conjunction with sufficient wetting of the controlled area.
- Any use of dust suppressants or gravel pads, and paving materials such as asphalt or concrete for paving, will comply with other applicable District Rules.
- Water or cover stockpiles of debris, soil, sand, or other materials that can be blown by the wind.
- Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or require all trucks to maintain at least 2 feet of freeboard.
- Sweep daily (with water sweepers) any paved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas at the site.
- Sweep streets on construction routes (with water sweepers) if visible soil material is carried onto them.
- Use alternative-fueled construction equipment when feasible.
- Minimize idling time (e.g., 5-minute maximum).
- Maintain properly tuned equipment.
- Limit the hours of operation of heavy duty equipment and/or the amount of equipment in use.
- Replant vegetation and/or hydroseed disturbed areas as quickly as possible.

BMP AIR-2. Construction plans and specifications will include measures to ensure compliance with SJVAPCD Rules and Regulations, including Rule 9510 and Regulation VIII (Fugitive PM10 Prohibitions). Rule 9510 requires that an air impact assessment be prepared and submitted to the District.

2.5.2.2 Biological Resources

BMP BIO-1. A qualified biologist will conduct preconstruction protocol surveys to determine the presence or absence of listed or special-status species before construction. If present, and in coordination with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), as needed additional appropriate development or construction-related restrictions to meet the requirements necessary to protect species found within the project area will be developed.

BMP BIO-2. If federally protected waters of the United States or wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) are present and the project may result in fill of those waters or wetlands:

- Coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will occur and a wetland delineation of the area will be prepared. USACE mitigation protocol will be followed regarding jurisdictional waters and wetlands affected by the project.
- Appropriate USACE permits will be obtained before implementation of the project.

Cumulatively, Parkway projects should result in beneficial management and protection of waters and wetlands.

BMP BIO-3. A qualified biologist will prepare a worker environmental awareness program to be presented to all construction personnel and employees before any ground-disturbing activities commence at a project site. Special-status species determined to be present will be explained to construction personnel and methods on how best to avoid the accidental take of those species during construction will be described. The program will include a description of special-status species potentially on the project site and their habitat needs; an explanation of the status of the species and their protection under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), the California Endangered Species Act (CESA), the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), and the California Fish and Game Code; specific mitigation measures applicable to special-status species; and the penalties for take.

The biologist will explain to construction personnel how to avoid impacts on USACE and CDFW jurisdictional areas. The program will include a description of these respective jurisdictional areas on the site, specifically permitted impacts, avoidance measures to protect jurisdictional areas, and maps or field markers showing the location of jurisdictional areas and permitted impacts.

The worker environmental awareness program will be implemented before the start of ground disturbance and will continue through the construction phase for all construction personnel.

BMP BIO-4. A qualified biologist will determine the presence/absence of sensitive resources in areas where the use of herbicides for invasive species management or habitat restoration is planned. A certified pest control advisor will then prepare a written recommendation including site-specific control methods

(including the use of approved herbicides and surfactants), which will include but not be limited to the following:

- All applications of herbicides and adjuvants will occur in accordance with federal and State regulations.
- Herbicide application will not occur when wind conditions may result in drift.

BMP BIO-5. A habitat restoration and revegetation plan (HRRP) will be developed for the project. When feasible vegetation should be reestablished within one growing season of the impacts may be temporarily affected by the proposed project.

Areas over 0.5 acre in size where temporary, construction-related impacts have taken place will be restored in accordance with the HRRP. The plan will prescribe restoration actions needed to treat disturbed soils and vegetation. The HRRP will be developed by a qualified restoration ecologist, knowledgeable in in restoration of habitats dominated by herbaceous vegetation. The HRRP will detail the process or processes to be implemented to restore the target habitats and will include the following project-specific information, at a minimum:

- summary of habitat impacts and proposed habitat restoration actions;
- location of the restoration sites and existing site conditions;
- restoration design, including a proposed restoration site schedule and descriptions of existing and proposed soils and hydrology;
- site preparation requirements (including soil amendments, if required);
- invasive species eradication plan if applicable, planting plan, and maintenance plan;
- monitoring measures, with performance and success criteria;
- monitoring methods, duration, and schedule; and
- contingency measures and remedial actions.

2.5.2.3 Cultural Resources

BMP CULT-1. Construction specifications will include a stop-work order in the event that prehistoric or historic-period cultural materials are unearthed during ground-disturbing activities. All work within 100 feet of the find will be stopped until a qualified archaeologist and Native American representative can assess the significance of the find. Prehistoric materials might include obsidian and chert flaked-stone tools (e.g., projectile points, knives, scrapers) or toolmaking debris; culturally darkened soil (“midden”) containing heat-affected rocks and artifacts; stone milling equipment (e.g., mortars, pestles, handstones, or milling slabs); and battered-stone tools, such as hammerstones and pitted stones. Historic-period materials

might include stone, concrete, or adobe footings and walls; filled wells or privies; and deposits of metal, glass, and/or ceramic refuse. If the prehistoric cultural material is determined to be potentially significant, the archaeologist, in consultation with the Native American representative, will develop a treatment plan that could include site avoidance, capping, or data recovery.

BMP CULT-2. PRC Section 5097.98, California Government Code Section 27491, and Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 cover the accidental discovery of archaeological resources during construction. These regulations mandate the processes to follow in the event of an accidental discovery of any human remains in a project location other than a dedicated cemetery.

In the event of an accidental discovery or disturbance of the remains during ground-disturbing activities, there will be no further excavation or disturbance of the site within a 50-foot radius of the location of such discovery, or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains. The County of Fresno Coroner will be notified and will make a determination as to whether the remains are Native American. If the Coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority, he or she will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which will attempt to identify descendants of the deceased Native American. If no satisfactory agreement can be reached as to the disposition of the remains pursuant to State law, then the human remains and items associated with Native American burials on the property will be reinterred in a location not subject to further subsurface disturbance.

2.5.2.4 Paleontological Resources

BMP PALEO-1. In the event that paleontological resources are discovered, the Conservancy will be notified. A qualified paleontologist will document the discovery. The paleontologist will evaluate the potential resource and assess the significance of the find under the criteria set forth in Section 21083.09 of CEQA. If fossil or fossil-bearing depositions are discovered during construction, evacuations within 50 feet of the find will be temporarily halted or diverted until the discovery is examined by a qualified paleontologist in accordance with the *Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources* (SVP 2010). The paleontologist will notify the appropriate agencies to determine the procedures that will be followed before construction is allowed to resume. If the Conservancy determines that avoidance is not feasible, the paleontologist will prepare an excavation plan for mitigating the effects of the project. The plan will be submitted to the Conservancy for review and approval before implementation.

2.5.2.5 Geology and Soils

BMP GEO-1. Project construction will comply with all Phase II National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit requirements for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity. A notice of intent will be submitted to the SWRCB Division of Water Quality. The contractor will also be required to prepare and implement a site-specific storm water pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) for the

project. The SWPPP will identify the timing of construction activities, as well as preconstruction and postconstruction BMPs to limit the discharge of pollutants in stormwater runoff. BMPs will include scheduling excavation and earthmoving so that areas unprotected during construction activities will be as small as possible. The plan also will describe BMP inspection, monitoring, and maintenance procedures. These BMPs must consider erosion, sedimentation, and pollutant controls during and after construction. These BMPs will include but not be limited to the following:

- requiring standard erosion control and slope stabilization measures in any area where erosion could lead to sedimentation of a water body;
- controlling mud and gravel tracking on roadways;
- managing borrow material and stockpiles;
- reusing salvageable topsoil;
- performing major vehicle maintenance, repair jobs, and equipment washing at appropriate off-site locations;
- designating an area of the construction site, well away from streams, for auto and equipment parking and routine vehicle and equipment maintenance;
- regularly maintaining equipment to prevent fluid leaks, with any leaks captured in containers until the equipment is moved to a repair location:
- preparing a spill prevention and response plan before construction and implementing the plan immediately for cleanup of fluid or hazardous materials spills;
- cleaning up spilled dry materials immediately, and not “washing away” spills with water or burying them;
- using the minimum amount of water necessary for dust control;
- cleaning up liquid spills on paved or impermeable surfaces using “dry” cleanup methods (e.g., absorbent materials such as cat litter, and/or rags);
- cleaning up spills on dirt areas by removing and properly disposing of the contaminated soil;
- storing stockpiled materials, wastes, containers, and dumpsters under a temporary roof or secured plastic sheeting where they cannot enter into or be washed by rainfall or runoff into waters of the United States/State or aquatic habitat;
- properly storing containers of paints, chemicals, solvents, and other hazardous materials in garages or sheds with double containment during rainy periods;

- applying concrete, asphalt, and seal coat during dry weather, and keeping contaminants from fresh concrete and asphalt out of the storm drains and streams by scheduling paving jobs during periods of dry weather and allowing new pavement to cure before stormwater flows across it;
- covering catch basins and manholes when applying seal coat, slurry seal, and fog seal;
- operating no equipment in a live stream channel, unless unavoidable and proper approvals are obtained; and
- completing revegetation in accordance with the HRRP, described in BMP BIO-5.

After construction, runoff from new improvements will be retained on-site to the extent practicable. Engineered grading and drainage plans will be prepared to manage how stormwater through operations of the project. BMPs for treating, detaining, and percolating stormwater runoff, such as bioswales, bioretention areas, and seasonal wetlands, will be implemented.

The BMPs will be implemented in accordance with the Parkway Master Plan goals, objectives, and policies as described in Appendix B.

BMP GEO-2. Geotechnical investigations will be performed by qualified personnel before approval of final design for each feature to identify geologic or soil characteristics that could result in adverse effects on water quality, for example, highly erodible soils or slope conditions. Siting of project features will avoid areas where potential adverse impacts on water quality could occur through erosion. Control of slope instability will occur in accordance with the Parkway Master Plan goals, objectives, and policies as described in Appendix B.

For activities that last more than 1 day, materials or equipment left on the site overnight will be stored in a manner that avoids erosion, leaks, or other potential impacts on water quality.

All trash that is generated at the project site (e.g., plastic water bottles, plastic lunch bags, cigarettes) will be properly contained and disposed of.

2.5.2.6 Hazardous Materials

BMP Hazards-1. The worksite manager will maintain an inventory of all hazardous materials used (and/or expected to be used) at the worksite and the end products that are produced (and/or expected to be produced) after their use. In addition, the following measures will be implemented during construction:

- As appropriate, containers will be properly labeled with a “Hazardous Waste” label and hazardous waste will be properly recycled or disposed of off-site.
- Contact of chemicals with precipitation will be minimized by storing chemicals in watertight containers with appropriate secondary containment to prevent any spillage or leakage.

- Quantities of toxic materials, such as equipment fuels and lubricants, will be stored with secondary containment that is capable of containing 110% of the primary container(s).
- Petroleum products, chemicals, cement, fuels, lubricants, and non–storm drainage water or water contaminated with the aforementioned materials will not contact soil and will not be allowed to enter surface waters or a storm drainage system.
- All toxic materials, including waste disposal containers, will be covered when they are not in use, and will be located as far away as possible from a direct connection to the storm drainage system or surface water.
- Petroleum products, pesticides or hazardous chemicals will not be stored within the 100-year floodplain.
- Sanitation facilities (e.g., portable toilets) will be placed on stable ground at least 100 feet away from the bank of a river, water channel, or pond.
- Sanitation facilities will be regularly cleaned and/or replaced, and inspected daily for leaks and spills.

2.5.2.7 Hydrology/Water Quality

BMP HYDRO-1. Trails will be inspected periodically for erosion and damage to adjacent vegetation will be addressed through ongoing maintenance, as needed. A maintenance and repair plan will be implemented in accordance with the Parkway Master Plan policies described in Appendix B.

BMP HYDRO-2. During construction, dewatering will be completed in accordance with local and Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requirements, to minimize the potential for adverse water quality–related impacts on surface water and groundwater. Provisions may include preparing a dewatering plan that details procedures for removing groundwater, methods of temporary water treatment/retention, and water disposal procedures.

BMP HYDRO-3. Whenever feasible, any work within designated flood zones will conform to provisions established in local ordinances. Any development sited in a designated 100-year floodplain will comply with the regulatory requirements at a minimum and with the FMFCD Riverine Floodplain Policy criteria, where applicable.

BMP HYDRO-4. New water fixtures (e.g., for irrigation) will be designed for low flow and high efficiency. Parkway landscaped areas will be designed to minimize water demand by using native and/or climate-appropriate plants where possible; limiting turf areas to areas that will be used as multiple-use meadows; and installing smart irrigation systems to avoid excessive water use.

2.5.2.8 Noise

BMP NOISE-1. All construction equipment and vehicles used on-site will be maintained and equipped with mufflers and or sound-dampening apparatuses.

BMP NOISE-2. Construction activities potentially affecting noise-sensitive land uses will comply with the most stringent of the applicable provisions from the City of Fresno's noise ordinances. Specifically, any construction activities occurring outside of the hours between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m., Monday through Saturday, shall comply with the noise exposure limits for the most noise-sensitive land uses established in Fresno County's Noise Control Ordinance (see Table 5.8-3 [of the Final EIR for the Parkway Master Plan]), and with the exposure limits for other (commercial and industrial) land users established in the City of Fresno's Noise Regulations (see Table 5.8-4 [of the Final EIR for the Parkway Master Plan]).

BMP NOISE-3. The Conservancy shall develop and implement Parkway guidelines to include elements addressing public education regarding appropriate behavior while on Parkway property.

BMP NOISE-4. To the extent feasible, any new access roadways associated with specific projects under the Plan should be located to reduce disturbances from intermittent vehicle passbys at the nearest noise-sensitive land uses. (Master Plan Policy RPS2.)

BMP NOISE-5. Any use of recreational areas within the Planning Area, aside from camping, shall be limited to the hours between sunrise and sunset. Access to these areas shall be limited to these hours.

BMP NOISE-6. A minimum buffer of 300 feet shall be required between any existing, occupied residential property or residential structure and any turf area, picnic areas, dog play area, or permanent outdoor or education area where large groups of people and/or pets may gather.

BMP NOISE-7. At a minimum, the Conservancy will avoid sitting any recreational or educational facilities in any areas exposed to existing or projected future noise levels exceeding applicable noise guidelines (Master Plan Policy RPS3):

a) 75 dBA L_{dn}/CNEL [community noise equivalent level] for golf courses, equestrian facilities, canoe put-out and take-in facilities and swimming areas

b) 70 dBA L_{dn}/CNEL for picnic areas, turf and other play areas, and any other daytime gathering areas.

c) 60 dBA L_{dn}/CNEL for camping areas or indoor educational facilities, although noise exposure up to 70 dBA L_{dn} may be acceptable for the latter if adequate insulation can be demonstrated.

2.5.2.9 Other Best Management Practices

BMP OTHER-1. All work performed by outside contractors or consultants must possess the required licenses or permits to perform services including but not limited to solid waste disposal, General Construction Permit, and qualified SWPPP developer.

2.6 Background

This section of the DEIR presents a brief historical background of the formation of the Conservancy, CEQA scoping process, areas of controversy, and intended uses of this EIR.

The Conservancy oversees 2,575 acres of State-owned land within the San Joaquin River Parkway for habitat conservation and restoration, public access, recreation, and cultural and historical resource preservation. The Conservancy was established in 1992 to develop, operate, and maintain the Parkway, which is planned to encompass a total of 5,900 acres along both sides of the River from Friant Dam to SR 99 in Madera and Fresno counties.

In 1993, local citizens raised funds for the first mile of a trail, the Lewis S. Eaton Trail; the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust[8] and the City secured additional funds to complete 3 more miles. Today, the Eaton Trail begins at the northwest corner of Woodward Park at SR 41 and runs parallel to Friant Road. The trail terminates on the north at the Hallowell River Center. The trail is 4 miles long and provides a convenient location for walking, running, cycling, horseback riding, wheelchair access (some segments), and nature viewing along the bluffs above the San Joaquin River (City of Fresno 2014a).

2.7 Scoping

As lead agency, the Conservancy has determined that an EIR must be prepared for the project in accordance with CEQA requirements. On June 9, 2014, pursuant to Section 15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Conservancy circulated an NOP for the River West Fresno, Eaton Trail Extension Project EIR to local and State agencies and other interested parties. A public review period was set from June 9 to July 8, 2014. An open house public scoping meeting was held on June 17, 2014, at the Pinedale Community Center, located at 7170 N. San Pablo Avenue in Fresno, California. The purpose of the NOP and scoping meeting was to solicit guidance from agencies and the public to the scope and content of environmental information to be included in the EIR in accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines. The NOP provided a description of the project, location, and identified potential environmental effects. The NOP, agency, and public comments received during the scoping period are found in Appendix A.

[8] The San Joaquin River Parkway & Conservation Trust, Inc. (River Parkway Trust), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, public benefit corporation, was created in 1988 to establish a continuous greenway along 33 miles of river in the rapidly urbanizing Fresno-Madera region.

The following two agencies provided comments:

- City of Fresno—City Manager
- County of Madera—Planning Department

2.8 Areas of Controversy and Issues to be Resolved

The State CEQA Guidelines require that each EIR provide a list of issues that are likely to raise controversy and are of particular interest to the public. The following issues are most likely to produce controversy in reviewing and considering the project:

- access to the study area from the Fresno side of the River;
- access to the study area via West Riverview Drive;
- access to the study area from the vicinity of Palm Avenue and Nees Avenue;
- public access and ADA compliance;
- trail access to the River;
- parking to support access to the project;
- location of the trail extension alignment;
- consistency with the *Fresno General Plan* (2014)[9];
- risk of wildland fire extending to the Bluff's residential area;
- public safety (e.g., public nuisances, crime);
- air quality effects associated with the Perrin Avenue vehicular access;
- recreational amenities;
- support for specific alternatives; and
- wildlife conservation and viewing.

2.9 Intended Uses of the EIR

The Conservancy is proposing to approve and carry out a discretionary project subject to Section 15378 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This EIR evaluates the potential impacts of implementing the project and proposes mitigation measures to reduce impacts to less than significant where possible. Public agencies

[9] During preparation of this EIR, the City of Fresno released the draft *Fresno General Plan* on July 2, 2014. The Fresno City Council approved the general plan on December 18, 2014 (City of Fresno 2014a).

other than the Conservancy, including responsible and trustee agencies (as defined under CEQA), may use this EIR during their review of various permits and other discretionary actions. The following agencies might use this EIR for such purposes:

- California Department of Conservation
- CDFW
- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR)
- California Natural Resources Agency
- California State Lands Commission
- California Wildlife Conservation Board
- Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB)
- Central Valley RWQCB and SWRCB
- City of Fresno
- County of Fresno
- County of Madera
- FMFCD
- Native American Heritage Commission
- SJVAPCD

Discretionary approval may include applications for permit approvals, consultation requirements, or other required actions. Table 2.9-1 lists the regulatory agencies, permits, and purposes of the regulatory approvals that may apply to the project.

Table 2.9-1 Applicable Permit and Regulatory Requirements

Regulatory Agency	Law/Regulation	Purpose	Permit/Authorization Type
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Section 404 of the Clean Water Act	Regulates placement of dredged and fill materials into waters of the United States.	Section 404 Permit for Discharge of Dredged or Fill Materials into Waters of the United States
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board	Section 401 of the Clean Water Act	Requires water quality certification for placement of dredged and fill materials into waters of the United States.	Section 401 Water Quality Certification
	Section 402 of the Clean Water Act	Regulates discharges and pollutants.	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Construction Permit
	Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act	Regulates discharges of materials to land and protection of beneficial uses of waters of the State.	Waste Discharge Requirements
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code	Applies to activities that would substantially modify a river, stream, or lake. The agreement includes reasonable conditions necessary to protect those resources.	Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement Application
California State Lands Commission	Public Trust Easement	Reviews projects that encroach or construct improvements on State Sovereign Lands.	Encroachment Easement Application or Lease
Central Valley Flood Protection Board	Article 3, Title 23 of the Water Code	Requires encroachment permit for any project that may encroach upon, improve, alter, or affect adopted plans of flood control (including federal/State flood control systems, regulated streams, and designated floodways under the board's jurisdiction).	Encroachment Permit Application
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District	Rules 2010 and 9510 of the Rules and Regulations of the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District; Permit to Construct	Requires permit for construction that emits air pollutants. Requires permit for a project's emissions that may affect regional air quality.	2010 Permit to Construct 9510 Indirect Source Review

Source: Compiled by AECOM in 2016

This page intentionally left blank