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## 3. Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

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Chapter 3 presents the environmental impact evaluation for each environmental topic identified as potentially significant during the scoping process. Each environmental issue is addressed in a separate subsection of Chapter 3 of this EIR and is organized under the headings listed below. It was determined that the proposed project would have no impact, less-than-significant impacts, or less-than-significant impacts with mitigation on certain resource areas and those areas are addressed in Section 5.3, “Effects Not Found to be Significant” of this DEIR.

**Existing Conditions** presents information describing the existing setting on or surrounding the project site that may be subject to change as a result of the implementation of the project. This setting describes the conditions that existed when the notice of preparation was sent to responsible agencies and the State Clearinghouse.

**Regulatory Setting** summarizes federal, state, and local regulations, plans, policies, and laws that are relevant to each environmental impact area. *Town of Loomis General Plan* (General Plan) policies and relevant sections of municipal ordinances are identified and described in the individual technical sections.

**Impact Analysis** includes the following subsections:

- *Methodology*: Identifies the steps taken to conduct the impact analysis for the particular environmental issue in question.
- *Thresholds of Significance*: Lists the criteria for determining the significance of project impacts for each environmental issue.
- *Topics Not Addressed Further*: Where applicable, identifies the significance thresholds that are not applicable to the proposed project and briefly explains why they are not considered further in the environmental impact analysis.
- *Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures*: Identifies the project impacts, the potential changes to the existing physical environment that could occur if the proposed project were to be implemented. Evidence based on factual and scientific data is presented to show the cause-and-effect relationship between the proposed project and the potential changes in the environment. The exact magnitude, duration, extent, frequency, range, or other parameters of a potential impact are ascertained, to the extent possible, to determine whether impacts could be significant.

The level of significance identifies the impact’s significance level with implementation of the proposed project. Impacts are classified as follows:

- *No Impact*—This determination is made when no impact would occur because of either the nature or the scope of the project.
- *Less-than-Significant Impact*—This determination is made when the impact would not exceed the defined threshold(s) of significance or can be eliminated or reduced to a less-than-significant level through compliance with existing local, state, and/or federal laws and regulations and/or through project design features.
- *Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation*—This determination is made when a potentially significant impact can be reduced, avoided, or offset to a less-than-significant level by incorporating mitigation measures.
- *Significant Unavoidable Impact*—As required by Section 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines, this determination is used when a residual impact that would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level through any feasible mitigation measures. This determination requires a statement of overriding considerations (pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15093), which would be adopted by the Town before project approval. In adopting a statement of

overriding considerations, the lead agency is required to balance the benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental impacts in determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits of a project are found to outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, then the project may be approved (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15093[a]).

Following the impact's significance level, the impact analysis identifies project-specific measures that would be required of the project to avoid a significant adverse impact, minimize a significant adverse impact, rectify a significant adverse impact by restoration, reduce or eliminate a significant adverse impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations, or compensate for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environment.

- *Significance after Mitigation:* Discusses any significant adverse environmental impacts that cannot be feasibly mitigated or avoided, significant adverse environmental impacts that can be feasibly mitigated or avoided, and adverse environmental impacts that would not be significant.

Chapter 4, "Cumulative Impacts," describes potential environmental changes to the existing physical conditions that may result from implementation of the proposed project and any other reasonably foreseeable, planned, and approved future projects.