

V. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The following impact analysis was developed based on the information provided in Sections I, Introduction, through IV, Environmental Setting. All impacts in the EIR have been classified according to the following criteria:

- **Class I – Significant, unavoidable, adverse impacts:** Significant impacts that cannot be effectively mitigated. No measures could be taken to avoid or reduce these adverse effects to insignificant or negligible levels.
- **Class II – Significant, but mitigable impacts:** These impacts are potentially similar in significance to those of Class I, but can be reduced to a level of insignificance or avoided by the implementation of mitigation measures.
- **Class III – Less than significant impacts:** Mitigation measures may still be required for these impacts as long as there is rough proportionality between the environmental impacts caused by the project and the mitigation measures imposed on the project.
- **Class IV – Beneficial impacts:** Effects that are beneficial to the environment.

The term “significance” is used throughout the EIR to characterize the magnitude of the projected impact. For the purpose of this EIR, a significant impact is a substantial or potentially substantial change to resources in the local proposed project area or the area adjacent to the proposed project. In the discussions of each issue area, thresholds are identified that are used to distinguish between significant and insignificant impacts. To the extent feasible, distinctions are also made between local and regional significance and short- versus long-term duration.

Where applicable, mitigation measures have been identified to reduce project impacts to less than significant levels. CEQA requires that public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen the environmental effects of such projects (CEQA Statute §21002). Included with each mitigation measure are the plan requirements needed to ensure that the mitigation is included in the plans and construction of the project and the required timing of the action (e.g., prior to recordation of final map, prior to occupancy clearance, prior to issuance of building permits).

The impact analysis sections within this chapter of the EIR are structured based on the type of resource affected relative to the physical changes resulting from the project. Impacts that would occur over a project-wide basis are discussed as such. Impacts specific to phases (i.e., Phase One, Phase Two, Phase Three, and Future Development), and elements within each phase (i.e., residential development, ranch headquarters, wastewater treatment facility, and dude ranch) are assessed in sub-headings following the project-wide impact discussion, as applicable.

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