

INITIAL STUDY

**FOR THE
CITY OF BIG BEAR LAKE
DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER
GARSTIN WATER OPERATIONS FACILITY
REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

Prepared for:

**City of Big Bear Lake,
Department of Water and Power**
41972 Garstin Drive
Big Bear Lake, California 92315

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACROYNMS

AAQS	Ambient Air Quality Standards
AB	Assembly Bill
amsl	above mean sea level
APE	Area of Potential Effect
APN	Assessor Parcel Number
AQMD	Air Quality Management District
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
AWWA	American Water Works Association
BBLDWP	Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power
bgs	below ground surface
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BRA	Biological Resources Assessment
BVES	Bear Valley Electric Service
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendment
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CalOSHA	California Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCAR	California Climate Action Registry
CDFW	California Department of Fish & Wildlife
CESA	California Endangered Species Act
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
C-G	Commercial space
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibel
DTSC	Department of Toxic and Substance Control
DWP	Department of Water and Power
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FGC	Fish & Game Code
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
GCC	Global Climate Change
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GSAs	Groundwater Sustainability Agencies
GSPs	Groundwater Sustainability Plans
IS/MND	Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration

JD	Jurisdictional Delineation
kips	kilo-pounds
LRA	Local Responsibility Area
LSTs	Localized Significance Thresholds
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tank
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MCLs	maximum contaminant levels
MM	Mitigation Measure
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
OS	Open Space
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PEIR	Program Environmental Impact Report
plf	per linear foot
P-R	Park spaces
R-PC	single-family residential
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SBBM	San Bernardino Base Meridian
SCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
TCR	Tribal Cultural Resource
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USBR	U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFWS	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VdB	velocity in decibels
VHFHSZ	Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VOC	Volatile Organic Compounds
WOTUS	Waters of the United States
WTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant
WQMP	Water Quality Management Plan

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

INTRODUCTION

1. Project Title: Garstin Water Operations Facility Replacement Project
2. Lead Agency Name: City of Big Bear Lake, Department of Water and Power
Address: 41972 Garstin Drive
Big Bear Lake, California 92315
3. Contact Person: Mr. Reginald A. Lamson, General Manager
Phone Number: (760) 559-8172
Email: RLamson@bbldwp.com
4. Background: The City of Big Bear Lake, Department of Water and Power (Department or DWP) owns and operates the water operations facilities at 41972 Garstin Drive in the City of Big Bear Lake. The Department proposes to develop a replacement of the existing operations and warehouse facility at the site. This Initial Study describes the proposed project and evaluates the potential environmental impacts from its implementation, construction and operation.
5. Project Location: The Garstin Water Operations Facility site is located at 41972 Garstin Drive in the City of Big Bear Lake. The project site encompasses approximately 1.47-acres. The site is located on the Big Bear Lake 7.5 Minute Series USGS Topographic Quadrangle Map in Section 21, Township 2 North, Range 1 East, SBBM. Specific geodetic location is Latitude 34°14'48.38" North, and Longitude 116°53'10.40" West. Figure 1 shows the regional location and Figure 2 shows the site location on the USGS topographic map.
6. Existing Conditions: The Garstin Water Operations Facility (Facility) site is located in the core urban area of the City of Big Bear Lake as shown on Figure 2. The project area encompasses several lots and the linear pipeline alignments that will be improved as part of the whole project. As the aerial in Figure 3 shows much of the Facility site is paved, while the pipeline alignments are a mix of paved area and graded and compacted areas with some vegetation adjacent to the pipeline alignments. An aerial view of the site (Figure 3) shows it is located near Garstin Road, Fox Farm Road and Big Bear Boulevard (State Highway 18, SR 18). The Facility site is surrounded by urban development and the pipeline to Lake Plant Well #6 will cross Rathbun Creek above an existing culvert crossing.
7. Project Sponsor Name: City of Big Bear Lake, Department of Water and Power
Address: 41972 Garstin Drive
P.O. Box 1929
Big Bear Lake, California 92315
8. General Plan Designation: Public Facility

9. Zoning: Public Facility

10. Project Description

The City of Big Bear Lake, Department of Water and Power (BBLDWP) proposes implementation of the Garstin Water Operations Facility Project (Project) to build a stronger and more resilient community through the construction of public water operation facilities and the promotion of energy efficiency. The Project includes design and construction of an approximate 13,600 square foot, concrete block, single story operations building with solar panels; a 10,000 square foot, metal, single story warehouse / warm storage building, and a 7,200 square foot, concrete block, single story, covered parking structure with solar panels, liquid chlorine storage, battery backup, generator backup and electrical equipment room; and a reconfiguration of the parking lots to accommodate the new buildings (Figure 3 –Site Location (Aerial)). Implementation of the Project is anticipated to occur in two phases as follows, but may be constructed in one single phase:

- Phase I – Design and construction of a new 13,600 square foot, concrete block, single story operations building; a new 10,000 square foot, warehouse / warm storage building and northerly site improvements to reconfigure the parking lots. Design of a new 7,200 square foot, concrete block, single story, covered parking structure with solar panels, liquid chlorine storage, battery backup, generator backup and electrical equipment room.
- Phase II – Demolition of the existing operations building and construction of the 7,200 square foot, concrete block, single story, covered parking structure with solar panels, liquid chlorine storage, battery backup, generator backup and electrical equipment room.

The Operations Building and the covered parking area, will be designed to have solar panels to minimize (offset) overall energy demand for the new complex. Refer to Figures 4 thru 9 which show the project site plan at two scales, and the details of the three structures. In addition to the main buildings, the project includes additional and reconfigured parking and material storage areas and a possible greenhouse facility and adjacent demonstration garden.

Construction

Construction is anticipated to begin Spring 2025 and is expected to be conducted over a 2-year construction period. Implementation of the project in two phases will allow operations at the existing water operations facility to continue without significant impacts (conflicts) during construction of Phase I. Upon completion of Phase I in Spring 2026 (estimated), BBLDWP will move operations into the new operations facility and will maintain uninterrupted services to the community. Demolition of the current operations facility in Spring 2026, will provide space for the new covered parking structure to be constructed in Phase II. The new covered parking structure will provide sufficient space to accommodate solar panels, battery backup, and generator backup to power the entire Garstin Water Operations Facility, as well as two nearby wells that provide potable water to the west side of the community. Approximately 400 solar panels will be installed, along with a 125kW/251kWh Energy Storage System, and 202kWdc solar system. BBLDWP's existing skid mount generator, enclosure, and fuel tank will remain in place during construction. A new skid mounted 130 kW generator and fuel tank will be incorporated into Phase II and will be enclosed within the east end of the new covered parking structure.

A backhoe will be used to dig the trench for 5-inch diameter conduits that will be installed to provide power from the solar panels to BBLDWP Lake Plant Well No. 5 and Lake Plant Well No. 6. The trench will be approximately two (2) feet wide, four (4) feet deep and 2,300 feet in total length. The buried conduit to Lake Plant Well No. 5 will be installed on BBLDWP owned vacant land

within a disturbed right-of-way and will run under Fox Farm Road to reach the well. Approximately 1,300 feet of conduit will be installed to Lake Plant Well No. 5. Conduit to Lake Plant Well No. 6 will be installed in the same trench on BBLDWP owned property but after running under Fox Farm Road, it will then run east along Fox Farm Road in the disturbed right-of-way until it crosses over Rathbun Creek box culvert. The conduit will then run adjacent to Rathbun Creek, within San Bernardino County Flood Control District disturbed right-of-way until it reaches BBLDWP's parcel and terminates at Lake Plant Well No. 6. Approximately 2,000 feet of conduit will be installed from the covered parking structure to Lake Plant Well No. 6 (Figure 3 – Site Location (Aerial)).

11. Other agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)

Based on an evaluation of the specific project location, the proposed project may require permits from other agencies to support development of the site as proposed. The amount of area to be disturbed by the whole project will be greater than one acre; therefore, the developer will be required to file a Notice of Intent (NOI) for a General Construction permit to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements. The NOI is filed with the State Water Resources Control Board and enforced by the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) must be implemented in conjunction with construction activities. Funding is being sought for the proposed project from the USDA Rural Development, a federal agency. Because State responsible or trustee agencies have been identified for this project, the Department will implement a 30-day review period for this Initial Study and proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration.

12. Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, has consultation begun?

In response to a letter from the Department initiating AB 52 consultation, the Yuhaaviatam of the San Manuel Nation (YSMN) provided an e-mail response on October 5, 2023. Please refer to Appendix 1. The YSMN indicated it did not "have any concerns with the project's implementation, as planned, at this time." However, the YSMN did request mitigation measures be incorporated and implemented by the Department. These measures have been integrated into this Initial Study.

Note: Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code section 21083.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology & Water Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the following finding is made:

<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed Project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed Project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed Project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Although the proposed Project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION , including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed Project, nothing further is required.

Tom Dodson & Associates
 Prepared by

January 2024
 Date

Lead Agency (signature)

1-10-24
 Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from "Earlier Analyses," as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
 - a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
I. AESTHETICS: Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the Site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Adverse impacts to scenic vistas can occur in one of two ways. First, an area itself may contain existing scenic vistas that would be altered by new development. The proposed Site currently contains existing Water Department offices and support facilities in a typical mountain urban environmental setting. See Site Photos in Figure I-1. Neither the current onsite structures nor the residual open space onsite includes any important scenic vistas within the Site itself, which is surrounded by urban features, including industrial uses and the local hospital. Replacing existing Water Department buildings with the proposed new building facilities at the project site will not adversely impact any important scenic vistas. Views to the site will have the same general appearance with implementation of the proposed project and a less than significant impact to onsite visual resources will occur.

A scenic vista impact can also occur when a scenic vista can be viewed from the project area or immediate vicinity and a proposed development may interfere with the view to a scenic vista. The proposed new Water Department office and warehouse will be located at the existing office/warehouse site where views are already limited by the onsite and adjacent structures and the residual pine trees on the property. There are no major scenic views in any direction across the project area. Therefore, given that the new offices and warehouse at this location would occupy the same site as the existing facilities, the installation of the replacement buildings at this location is not anticipated to substantially impact scenic vistas to residents or visitors within the project area. Thus, implementation of the proposed new Water Department support facilities is not expected to cause any substantial adverse effects on any important scenic vistas. This potential impact is considered a less than significant adverse aesthetic impact. No mitigation is required.

b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigated Incorporated* – The proposed Project Site currently hosts several existing Water Department facilities, and therefore the construction of replacement Water Department support offices and warehouse facilities at this location is consistent with that which already exists at the Site. There are several trees on the project site and the installation of the new structures may require removal of some trees in order to install the proposed facilities. Given that the proposed Project may require removal of some onsite trees, however, such removal of trees at this Site would result in an adverse impact to tree resources in the City. Mitigation is provided below to ensure that the Department provides replacement trees for all trees removed as part of the project.

AES-1 Where the removal of trees is required to install the new BBLDWP facilities, the Department shall replace all trees removed at a 1:1 ratio.

Rock outcroppings, historic buildings, or other scenic resources do not occur on Site, especially given that the Site is occupied by existing offices, shops and warehouse support facilities. Consequently, impacts to scenic resources on Site are considered less than significant with the implementation of mitigation measure (MM) **AES-1**.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed Project Site is located in the central urbanized area of the City of Big Bear Lake, surrounded by other urban buildings, such as the City’s Hospital. Refer to Figure 3. The Site has a limited range in elevation and consists of trees and vegetation, as well as the existing paved access roads that surround the current office and related facilities. The Site is located in an area that contains existing water facilities and the construction of the new BBLDWP facilities will be visually consistent with the existing landscape at the Site. Furthermore, the proposed Project supports the BBLDWP’s ability to serve potable water to its customers, and such projects are considered land use/zone independent. Therefore, the proposed installation of the new structures and support facilities would not have a significant potential to conflict with applicable zoning or other regulations governing scenic quality. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant, and no mitigation is required.
- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The existing BBLDWP office and warehouse complex utilizes lighting for security purposes. New lighting, intended for security and to enable night-time operations and maintenance activities as required in the future, can be installed to better control light and glare on adjacent businesses and buildings. The construction activities will be limited to daylight hours unless an emergency occurs, and the amount of security lighting needed during construction will be limited. Therefore, given that the proposed Project would not create a new permanent source of light and will shield the replacement lighting, the proposed Project is not anticipated to introduce a significant new source of light and glare into the project area relative to the existing Site. No significant new impacts are anticipated to occur under this issue and no mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
<p>II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:</p>				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

- a. *No Impact* – The proposed project will be developed within an area consisting of native Western pine forest habitat, and does not contain any agricultural uses. Neither the project footprint nor the surrounding area are designated for agricultural use; no agricultural activities exist in the project area; and there is no potential for impact to any agricultural uses or values as a result of project implementation. According to the maps prepared pursuant to the farmland mapping and monitoring program of the California Resources Agency, no prime farmland, unique farmland, or farmland of state importance exists within the vicinity of the proposed project (Figure II-1). No adverse impact to any agricultural resources would occur from implementing the proposed project. No mitigation is required.

- b. *No Impact* – There are no agricultural uses currently within the boundaries of the project site or adjacent to the project site. The project site is zoned for public institutional in the City of Big Bear Lake. Therefore, no potential exists for a conflict between the proposed project and agricultural zoning or Williamson Act contracts within the project area. No mitigation is required.
- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is located on a site that already functions as the BBLDWP offices and support facilities. The site does contain some trees, but due to the existing disturbance and use of the site, the proposed project will not “convert” the site from use as a timber harvest area. Further, the City has not designated the site for timberland resource use. Therefore, the continued use of this site for water infrastructure purposes is not forecast to have a significant adverse impact on timber/timberland resources. No mitigation is required.
- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Please refer to the discussion under issue II(c), above. The proposed project is located on a site that was historically removed from functioning as forest/timber land and although this water infrastructure site contains a few trees of varying sizes, its continued use for water infrastructure will not result in loss or conversion of forest/timber land. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant.
- e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project site and surrounding area are designated for public institutional use and do not support agricultural or forest uses that have been designated by the City. However, as stated above, while the City has not designated the site for timberland or forest resource uses and the land use at the site will not change, the proposed project would have a less than significant potential to involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information utilized in this section was obtained from the technical study “Air Quality and GHG Impact Analyses, Garstin Water Operations Facility Project, Big Bear Lake, California” prepared by Gerrick Environmental dated August 23, 2023, and provided as Appendix 2 to this document.

Background

Climate

The project area is in the San Bernardino Mountains. The area is characterized by an alpine climate, with substantial winter precipitation in the form of winter snow because of its high elevation. Snowfall, as measured at lake level, averages 61.8 inches each year (although upwards of 100 inches can accumulate on the forested ridges bordering the lake, above 8,000 feet). Snow has fallen in every month except July and August. There are normally 16.5 days each year with measurable snow (0.1 inch or more).

On average, the Bear Valley area receives approximately 24 inches of precipitation per year, with a sharp transition between the western edge of the Valley at the dam and the eastern edge at Baldwin Lake. Historical precipitation consists of both rainfall and snowfall. Within the Big Bear watershed, the precipitation varies with location. At the dam, Big Bear Lake receives about 36 inches of precipitation per year, and about 14 inches at the east end of the Valley.

Daily minimum temperatures in the summer are from 60°F to 70°F. Temperatures in the winter average approximately 35°F to 40°F. According to the National Weather Service, the warmest month at Big Bear is July, when the average high is 80.7 F and the average low is 47.1F. The coolest month is January, with an average high of 47.1°F and an average low of 20.7°F. There is an average of 1.2 days each year with highs of 90°F or higher. The highest temperature recorded at Big Bear was 94°F last recorded on July 15, 1998. The record lowest temperature was -25°F on January 29, 1979.

Air Quality Standards

Existing air quality is measured at established South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) air quality monitoring stations. Monitored air quality is evaluated in the context of ambient air quality standards. These standards are the levels of air quality that are considered safe, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect the public health and welfare. National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) currently in effect are shown in Table III-1. Because the State of California had established Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS) several years before the federal action

and because of unique air quality problems introduced by the restrictive dispersion meteorology, there is considerable difference between state and national clean air standards. Those standards currently in effect in California are shown in Table III-1. Sources and health effects of various pollutants are shown in Table III-2.

**Table III-1
 AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS**

Pollutant	Average Time	California Standards ¹		National Standards ²		
		Concentration ³	Method ⁴	Primary ^{3,5}	Secondary ^{3,6}	Method ⁷
Ozone (O ₃) ⁸	1 Hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m ³)	Ultraviolet Photometry	–	Same as Primary Standard	Ultraviolet Photometry
	8 Hour	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m ³)		0.070 ppm (137 µg/m ³)		
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀) ⁹	24 Hour	50 µg/m ³	Gravimetric or Beta Attenuation	150 µg/m ³	Same as Primary Standard	Inertial Separation and Gravimetric Analysis
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m ³		–		
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5}) ⁹	24 Hour	–	–	35 µg/m ³	Same as Primary Standard	Inertial Separation and Gravimetric Analysis
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m ³	Gravimetric or Beta Attenuation	12.0 µg/m ³	15.0 µg/m ³	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1 Hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m ³)	Non-Dispersive Infrared Photometry (NDIR)	35 ppm (40 mg/m ³)	–	Non-Dispersive Infrared Photometry (NDIR)
	8 Hour	9 ppm (10 mg/m ³)		9 ppm (10 mg/m ³)	–	
	8 Hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm (7 mg/m ³)		–	–	
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂) ¹⁰	1 Hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m ³)	Gas Phase Chemiluminescence	100 ppb (188 µg/m ³)	–	Gas Phase Chemiluminescence
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm (57 µg/m ³)		0.053 ppm (100 µg/m ³)	Same as Primary Standard	
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂) ¹¹	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m ³)	Ultraviolet Fluorescence	75 ppb (196 µg/m ³)	–	Ultraviolet Flourescence; Spectrophotometry (Paraosaniline Method)
	3 Hour	–		–	0.5 ppm (1300 µg/m ³)	
	24 Hour	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m ³)		0.14 ppm (for certain areas) ¹¹	–	
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	–		0.030 ppm (for certain areas) ¹¹	–	
Lead ^{8,12,13}	30-Day Average	1.5 µg/m ³	Atomic Absorption	–	–	–
	Calendar Quarter	–		1.5 µg/m ³ (for certain areas) ¹²	Same as Primary Standard	High Volume Sampler and Atomic Absorption
	Rolling 3-Month Avg	–		0.15 µg/m ³		
Visibility Reducing Particles ¹⁴	8 Hour	See footnote 14	Beta Attenuation and Transmittance through Filter Tape	No Federal Standards		
Sulfates	24 Hour	25 µg/m ³	Ion Chromatography			
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m ³)	Ultraviolet Fluorescence			
Vinyl Chloride ¹²	24 Hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m ³)	Gas Chromatography			

Source: California Air Resources Board 5/4/16

Footnotes:

- 1 California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (except Lake Tahoe), sulfur dioxide (1 and 24 hour), nitrogen dioxide, suspended particulate matter – PM10, PM2.5, and visibility reducing particles, are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. California ambient air quality standards are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.
- 2 National standards (other than ozone, particulate matter, and those based on annual averages or annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest eight-hour concentration in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM10, the 24-hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year, with a 24-hour average concentration above $150 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, is equal to or less than one. For PM2.5, the 24-hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over 3 years, are equal to or less than the standard. Contact U.S. EPA for further clarification and current federal policies.
- 3 Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25C and a reference pressure of 760 torr. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25C and a reference pressure of 760 torr; ppm in this table refers to ppm by volume, or micromoles of pollutant per mole of gas.
- 4 Any equivalent procedure which can be shown to the satisfaction of the ARB to give equivalent results at or near the level of the air quality standard may be used.
- 5 National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety to protect the public health.
- 6 National Secondary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary to protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects of a pollutant.
- 7 Reference method as described by the EPA. An "equivalent method" of measurement may be used but must have a "consistent relationship to the reference method" and must be approved by the EPA.
- 8 On October 1, 2015, the national 8-hour ozone primary and secondary standards were lowered from 0.075 to 0.070 ppm.
- 9 On December 14, 2012, the national PM2.5 primary standard was lowered from $15 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ to $12.0 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The existing national 24-hour PM2.5 standards (primary and secondary) were retained at $35 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, as was the annual secondary standard of $15 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. The existing 24-hour PM10 standards (primary and secondary) of $150 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ also were retained. The form of the annual primary and secondary standards is the annual mean, averaged over 3 years.
- 10 To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 98th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 100 ppb. Note that the national 1-hour standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the national 1-hour standard to the California standards the units can be converted from ppb to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 100 ppb is identical to 0.100 ppm.
- 11 On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO₂ standard was established and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 99th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 75 ppb. The 1971 SO₂ national standards (24-hour and annual) remain in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2010 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1971 standards, the 1971 standards remain in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2010 standards are approved.

Note that the 1-hour national standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the 1-hour national standard to the California standard the units can be converted to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 75 ppb is identical to 0.075 ppm.
- 12 The ARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as 'toxic air contaminants' with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined. These actions allow for the implementation of control measures at levels below the ambient concentrations specified for these pollutants.
- 13 The national standard for lead was revised on October 15, 2008 to a rolling 3-month average. The 1978 lead standard ($1.5 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ as a quarterly average) remains in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2008 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1978 standard, the 1978 standard remains in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2008 standard are approved.
- 14 In 1989, the ARB converted both the general statewide 10-mile visibility standard and the Lake Tahoe 30-mile visibility standard to instrumental equivalents, which are "extinction of 0.23 per kilometer" and "extinction of 0.07 per kilometer" for the statewide and Lake Tahoe Air Basin standards, respectively.

**Table III-2
HEALTH EFFECTS OF MAJOR CRITERIA POLLUTANTS**

Pollutants	Sources	Primary Effects
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete combustion of fuels and other carbon-containing substances, such as motor exhaust. Natural events, such as decomposition of organic matter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced tolerance for exercise. Impairment of mental function. Impairment of fetal development. Death at high levels of exposure. Aggravation of some heart diseases (angina).
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motor vehicle exhaust. High temperature stationary combustion. Atmospheric reactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggravation of respiratory illness. Reduced visibility. Reduced plant growth. Formation of acid rain.
Ozone (O ₃)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atmospheric reaction of organic gases with nitrogen oxides in sunlight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggravation of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Irritation of eyes. Impairment of cardiopulmonary function. Plant leaf injury.
Lead (Pb)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contaminated soil. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impairment of blood function and nerve construction. Behavioral and hearing problems in children.
Fine Particulate Matter (PM-10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stationary combustion of solid fuels. Construction activities. Industrial processes. Atmospheric chemical reactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced lung function. Aggravation of the effects of gaseous pollutants. Aggravation of respiratory and cardio respiratory diseases. Increased cough and chest discomfort. Soiling. Reduced visibility.
Fine Particulate Matter (PM-2.5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel combustion in motor vehicles, equipment, and industrial sources. Residential and agricultural burning. Industrial processes. Also, formed from photochemical reactions of other pollutants, including NO_x, sulfur oxides, and organics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases respiratory disease. Lung damage. Cancer and premature death. Reduces visibility and results in surface soiling.
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combustion of sulfur-containing fossil fuels. Smelting of sulfur-bearing metal ores. Industrial processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggravation of respiratory diseases (asthma, emphysema). Reduced lung function. Irritation of eyes. Reduced visibility. Plant injury. Deterioration of metals, textiles, leather, finishes, coatings, etc.

Source: California Air Resources Board, 2002

Baseline Air Quality

Existing and probable future levels of air quality in the project area can be best inferred from ambient air quality measurements conducted by the SCAQMD. The data source in closest proximity to the project site is the Big Bear City Monitoring Station. However, this station only monitors small particulates (PM-2.5). The closest available data for ozone and large particulates (PM-10) is the Crestline Monitoring Station. Data for carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide were obtained from the San Bernardino 4th Street Monitoring Station. Summary data compiled from these resources is provided in Table 3. Findings are summarized below:

Photochemical smog (ozone) levels frequently exceed standards at Crestline. The 8-hour state ozone standard has been exceeded an average of 30 percent of all days in the past four years near the project

site while the 1-hour state standard has been violated an average of 17 percent of all days. While ozone levels are still high, they are much lower than 10 to 20 years ago.

Measurements of carbon monoxide have shown very low baseline levels in comparison to the most stringent one- and eight-hour standards.

Respirable dust (PM-10) levels very rarely exceed the state or federal standard PM-10 standard. There have only been two violations in the last four years of measurement days for state PM-10 and no violations of the federal standard for PM-2.5 on any measurement day.

A substantial fraction of PM-10 is comprised of small diameter particulates capable of being inhaled into deep lung tissue (PM-2.5). However, PM-2.5 readings rarely exceed the federal 24-hour PM-2.5 ambient standard and there have been no violations within the previous four years.

Although complete attainment of every clean air standard is not yet imminent, extrapolation of the steady improvement trend suggests that such attainment could occur within the reasonably near future.

Table III-3
AIR QUALITY MONITORING SUMMARY (2018-2021)
(Number of Days Standards Were Exceeded, and
Maximum Levels During Such Violations)
(Entries shown as ratios = samples exceeding standard/samples taken)

Pollutant/Standard	2018	2019	2020	2021
Ozone				
1-Hour > 0.09 ppm (S)	57	53	69	65
8-Hour > 0.07 ppm (S)	113	99	118	110
8- Hour > 0.075 ppm (F)	91	79	97	91
Max. 1-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.142	0.129	0.159	0.148
Max. 8-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.125	0.112	0.139	0.120
Carbon Monoxide				
8- Hour > 9. ppm (S,F)	0	0	0	0
Max 8-hour Conc. (ppm)	2.0	1.2	1.4	1.6
Nitrogen Dioxide				
1-Hour > 0.18 ppm (S)	0	0	0	0
Max. 1-Hour Conc. (ppm)	0.055	0.056	0.054	0.050
Respirable Particulates (PM-10)				
24-hour > 50 µg/m ³ (S)	1/59	0/54	1/40	0/59
24-hour > 150 µg/m ³ (F)	0/59	0/54	0/40	0/59
Max. 24-Hr. Conc. (µg/m ³)	78.	38.	51.	33.
Fine Particulates (PM-2.5)				
24-Hour > 35 µg/m ³ (F)	0/54	0/46	0/58	0/59
Max. 24-Hr. Conc. (µg/m ³)	17.3	31.0	24.3	24.5

Source: South Coast Air Quality Management District.
 Crestline Monitoring Station for Ozone and PM-10.
 San Bernardino 4th Street Monitoring Station for CO and NO₂.
 Big Bear City Monitoring Station for PM-2.5.
 data: WWW.ARB.CA.GOV/ADAM/

Air Quality Planning

The Federal Clean Air Act (1977 Amendments) required that designated agencies in any area of the nation not meeting national clean air standards must prepare a plan demonstrating the steps that would bring the area into compliance with all national standards. The SCAB could not meet the deadlines for ozone, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, or PM-10. In the SCAB, the agencies designated by the governor to develop regional air quality plans are the SCAQMD and the Southern California Association of Govern-

ments (SCAG). The two agencies first adopted an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) in 1979 and revised it several times as earlier attainment forecasts were shown to be overly optimistic.

The 1990 Federal Clean Air Act Amendment (CAAA) required that all states with air-sheds with “serious” or worse ozone problems submit a revision to the State Implementation Plan (SIP). Substantial reductions in emissions of ROG, NO_x and CO are forecast to continue throughout the next several decades. Unless new particulate control programs are implemented, PM-10 and PM-2.5 are forecast to slightly increase.

The Air Quality Management District (AQMD) adopted an updated clean air “blueprint” in August 2003. The 2003 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) was approved by the EPA in 2004. The AQMP outlined the air pollution measures needed to meet federal health-based standards for ozone by 2010 and for particulates (PM-10) by 2006. The 2003 AQMP was based upon the federal one-hour ozone standard which was revoked late in 2005 and replaced by an 8-hour federal standard. Because of the revocation of the hourly standard, a new air quality planning cycle was initiated.

With re-designation of the air basin as non-attainment for the 8-hour ozone standard, a new attainment plan was developed. This plan shifted most of the one-hour ozone standard attainment strategies to the 8-hour standard. As previously noted, the attainment date was to “slip” from 2010 to 2021. The updated attainment plan also includes strategies for ultimately meeting the federal PM-2.5 standard.

Because projected attainment by 2021 required control technologies that did not exist yet, the SCAQMD requested a voluntary “bump-up” from a “severe non-attainment” area to an “extreme non-attainment” designation for ozone. The extreme designation was to allow a longer time period for these technologies to develop. If attainment cannot be demonstrated within the specified deadline without relying on “black-box” measures, EPA would have been required to impose sanctions on the region had the bump-up request not been approved. In April 2010, the EPA approved the change in the non-attainment designation from “severe-17” to “extreme.” This reclassification set a later attainment deadline (2024), but also required the air basin to adopt even more stringent emissions controls.

In other air quality attainment plan reviews, EPA had disapproved part of the SCAB PM-2.5 attainment plan included in the AQMP. EPA stated that the current attainment plan relied on PM-2.5 control regulations that had not yet been approved or implemented. It was expected that several rules that were pending approval would remove the identified deficiencies. If these issues were not resolved within the next several years, federal funding sanctions for transportation projects could result. The 2012 AQMP included in the current California State Implementation Plan (SIP) was expected to remedy identified PM-2.5 planning deficiencies.

The federal Clean Air Act requires that non-attainment air basins have EPA approved attainment plans in place. This requirement includes the federal one-hour ozone standard even though that standard was revoked almost ten years ago. There was no approved attainment plan for the one-hour federal standard at the time of revocation. Through a legal quirk, the SCAQMD is now required to develop an AQMP for the long since revoked one-hour federal ozone standard. Because the current SIP for the basin contains a number of control measures for the 8-hour ozone standard that are equally effective for one-hour levels, the 2012 AQMP was believed to satisfy hourly attainment planning requirements.

AQMPs are required to be updated at regular intervals. The 2012 AQMP was adopted in early 2013. An updated 2016 AQMP was adopted by the SCAQMD Board in March 2017. The 2016 AQMD demonstrated the emissions reductions shown in Table III-4 compared to the 2012 AQMP.

**Table III-4
 COMPARISON OF EMISSIONS BY MAJOR SOURCE CATEGORY FROM 2012 AQMP**

Pollutant	Stationary Sources	Mobile Sources
VOC	-12%	-3%
NOx	-13%	-1%
Sox	-34%	-23%
PM2.5	-9%	-7%

Source: 2016 AQMP

SCAQMD has initiated the development of the 2022 AQMP to address the attainment of the 2015 8-hour ozone standard (70 ppb) for South Coast Air Basin and Coachella Valley which will focus on attaining the 70 ppb 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) by 2037. On-road vehicles and off-road mobile sources represent the largest categories of NOx emissions. Accomplishment of attainment goals requires an approximate 70% reduction in NOx emissions. Large scale transition to zero emission technologies is a key strategy. To this end, Governor Executive Order N-79-20 requires 100 percent EV sales by 2035 for automobiles and short-haul drayage trucks. A full transition to EV buses and heavy-duty long-haul trucks is required by 2045.

The proposed project does not directly relate to the AQMP in that there are no specific air quality programs or regulations governing water infrastructure projects. Conformity with adopted plans, forecasts and programs relative to population, housing, employment and land use is the primary yardstick by which impact significance of planned growth is determined. The SCAQMD, however, while acknowledging that the AQMP is a growth-accommodating document, does not favor designating regional impacts as less-than-significant just because the proposed development is consistent with regional growth projections. Air quality impact significance for the proposed project has therefore been analyzed on a project-specific basis.

Standards of Significance

Appendix G of the California CEQA Guidelines offers the following four tests of air quality impact significance. A project would have a potentially significant impact if it:

- a. Conflicts with or obstructs implementation of the applicable air quality plan.
- b. Results in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutants for which the Project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors).
- c. Exposes sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- d. Results in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people

Primary Pollutants

Air quality impacts generally occur on two scales of motion. Near an individual source of emissions or a collection of sources such as a crowded intersection or parking lot, levels of those pollutants that are emitted in their already unhealthful form will be highest. Carbon monoxide (CO) is an example of such a pollutant. Primary pollutant impacts can generally be evaluated directly in comparison to appropriate clean air standards. Violations of these standards where they are currently met, or a measurable worsening of an existing or future violation, would be considered a significant impact. Many particulates, especially fugitive dust emissions, are also primary pollutants. Because of the non-attainment status of the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) for PM-10, an aggressive dust control program is required to control fugitive dust during project construction.

Secondary Pollutants

Many pollutants, however, require time to transform from a more benign form to a more unhealthful contaminant. Their impact occurs regionally far from the source. Their incremental regional impact is minute on an individual basis and cannot be quantified except through complex photochemical computer

models. Analysis of significance of such emissions is based upon a specified amount of emissions (pounds, tons, etc.) even though there is no way to translate those emissions directly into a corresponding ambient air quality impact.

Because of the chemical complexity of primary versus secondary pollutants, the SCAQMD has designated significant emissions levels as surrogates for evaluating regional air quality impact significance independent of chemical transformation processes. Projects with daily emissions that exceed any emission thresholds in Table III-5 are recommended by the SCAQMD to be considered significant under CEQA guidelines.

**Table III-5
 DAILY EMISSIONS THRESHOLDS**

Pollutant	Construction	Operations
ROG	75	55
NOx	100	55
CO	550	550
PM-10	150	150
PM-2.5	55	55
Sox	150	150
Lead	3	3

Source: SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook, November, 1993 Rev.

Additional Indicators

The SCAQMD CEQA Handbook identifies various secondary significance criteria related to toxic, hazardous or odorous air contaminants. Such pollutants may be associated with demolition of existing structures if they contain asbestos, lead-based paint, or other hazardous building materials. Prior to demolition detailed surveys will be conducted to ascertain the possible presence of asbestos, lead-based paint, etc. If any such materials are present, they will be remediated using mandatory procedures specified by Rule 1403-Asbestos Emissions from Demolition and Renovation Activities SCAQMD and state air toxics agencies. The surveys for asbestos and lead will be required by the Department, therefore no mitigation is needed to address this issue.

Impact Analysis

- a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Projects such as the proposed development of BBLDWP’s office and warehouse complex do not directly relate to the AQMP in that there are no specific air quality programs or regulations governing general agency infrastructure development. However, there are rules and regulations governing the construction of new buildings, such as architectural coating limits on volatile organic compounds/reactive organic gases. Conformity with adopted plans, forecasts and programs relative to population, housing, employment and land use are the primary yardsticks by which impact significance of planned growth is determined. Based on the analysis of the City of Big Bear Lake General Plan, the proposed Project is consistent with the adopted General Plan. Thus, the proposed Project is consistent with regional planning forecasts maintained by SCAG regional plans. The SCAQMD, however, while acknowledging that the AQMP is a growth-accommodating document, does not favor designating regional impacts as less than significant only because of consistency with regional growth projections. Air quality impact significance for the proposed Project has therefore been analyzed on a project-specific basis for the proposed project. As the analysis of project-related emissions provided below indicates, the proposed Project will not cause or be exposed to significant air pollution, and is, therefore, consistent with the applicable air quality planning documents. Also consistent with the AQMP, mitigation measures will be implemented to minimize fugitive dust and ozone precursor emissions.

- b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – Air pollution emissions associated with the proposed Project would occur over both a short and long-term time period. Short-term emissions include fugitive dust from construction activities (i.e., site prep, demolition, grading and exhaust emissions, and building installation emissions) at the site. Long-term emissions, generated by future operation of the proposed facilities, are negligible as minimal additional energy is forecast to be required, because of the current building energy standards, onsite solar electricity generation, and the increasing proportion of energy from regional supplies, electricity, being generated by non-polluting energy sources.

Construction Emissions

CalEEMod was developed by the SCAQMD to provide a model by which to calculate both construction emissions and operational emissions from a variety of land use projects. It calculates both the daily maximum and annual average emissions for criteria pollutants as well as total or annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The project includes design and construction of a 13,600 square foot operations building and a 10,000 square foot warehouse building with solar panels. Demolition of the existing operations and warehouse structures will be required. Construction is anticipated to begin Spring 2024 and will be conducted over a two (2) year construction period. Approximately 375 solar panels will be installed, along with a 250kW/502kWh Energy Storage System.

Conduit will be installed in below ground trenches to provide power from the solar panels to BBLDWP Lake Plant Well No. 5 and Lake Plant Well No. 6. The trenches will be approximately 2,300 feet in total length. Individual conduit to both wells will share much of the trench, though the conduit to Well No. 6 will continue for an additional approximate 700 feet beyond Well No. 5.

Construction was modeled in CalEEMod2020.4.0 using the following construction equipment and schedule shown in Table III-6.

**Table III-6
 BUILDING CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT FLEET**

Phase Name and Duration	Equipment
Demolition 20 days	1 Concrete Saw
	1 Dozer
	2 Loader/Backhoes
Grading 2 days	1 Grader
	1 Dozer
	1 Loader/Backhoe
Construction 100 days	1 Crane
	2 Loader/Backhoes
	2 Forklifts
Paving 5 days	1 Paver
	4 Mixers
	1 Loader/Backhoe
	1 Roller

TRENCH CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT FLEET

Phase Name and Duration	Equipment
Excavation/Demo 30 days	2 Trenchers
	4 Signal Boards
	1 Masonry Saw
	2 Loader/Backhoes
Install Conduit 30 days	2 Loader/Backhoes
	2 Forklifts
	4 Signal Boards
Backfill 30 days	2 Loader/Backhoes
	1 Forklift
	2 Rollers
	2 Compactors
	4 Signal Boards

Utilizing this indicated equipment fleet and durations shown in Table III-6 the following worst-case daily construction emissions are calculated by CalEEMod and are listed in Table III-7.

**Table III-7
 CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY EMISSIONS
 MAXIMUM DAILY EMISSIONS (pounds/day)**

Maximal Construction Emissions	ROG	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM-10	PM-2.5
Buildings	37.3	9.7	7.9	0.0	2.8	1.5
Trenching	1.2	9.3	10.1	0.0	0.8	0.6
Total 2024	38.5	19.0	18.0	0.0	3.6	2.1
SCAQMD Thresholds	75	100	550	150	150	55

*Assumes SCAQMD Rule 403 Fugitive Dust applied.

As shown in Table III-7, even in the unlikely event both activities overlapped, peak daily emissions would be substantially less than their respective significance thresholds.

Construction equipment exhaust contains carcinogenic compounds within the diesel exhaust particulates. The toxicity of diesel exhaust is evaluated relative to a 24-hour per day, 365 days per year, 70-year lifetime exposure. The SCAQMD does not generally require the analysis of construction-related diesel emissions relative to health risk due to the short period for which the majority of diesel exhaust would occur. Health risk analyses are typically assessed over a 9-, 30-, or 70-year timeframe and not over a relatively brief construction period due to the lack of health risk associated with such a brief exposure. If asbestos or lead paint are discovered at the site, removal and disposal must follow existing SCAQMD regulations.

Construction activities are not anticipated to cause dust emissions to exceed SCAQMD CEQA thresholds. Nevertheless, emissions minimization through enhanced dust control measures is recommended for use because of the non-attainment status of the air basin. Recommended measures include:

AQ-1 Fugitive Dust Construction

- **Apply soil stabilizers or moisten inactive areas.**
- **Water exposed surfaces as needed to avoid visible dust leaving the construction site (typically 2-3 times/day).**
- **Cover all stock piles with tarps at the end of each day or as needed.**
- **Provide water spray during loading and unloading of earthen materials.**

- **Minimize in-out traffic from construction zone**
- **Cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand, or loose material and require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard**
- **Sweep streets daily if visible soil material is carried out from the construction site**

Similarly, ozone precursor emissions (ROG and NOx) are calculated to be below SCAQMD CEQA thresholds. However, because of the regional non-attainment for photochemical smog, the use of reasonably available control measures for diesel exhaust is recommended. Combustion emissions control options include:

AQ-2 Exhaust Emissions Control

- **Utilize well-tuned off-road construction equipment.**
- **Establish a preference for contractors using Tier 3 or better rated heavy equipment.**
- **Enforce 5-minute idling limits for both on-road trucks and off-road equipment.**

With implementation of these two measures, project-related construction emissions will be minimized consistent with AQMD requirements.

Operational Emissions

Operational air pollution emissions will be minor. Electrical generation of power will be used to meet demands by the new structures. Electricity consumption has no single uniquely related air pollution emissions source because power is supplied to and drawn from a regional grid. Electrical power is generated regionally by a combination of non-combustion (nuclear, hydroelectric, solar, wind, geothermal, etc.) and fossil fuel combustion sources. The project is not anticipated to create any additional trips. It is growth accommodating and therefore, no mobile emissions were calculated. Even without accounting for the solar panels, electrical energy use was minimal. Operational emissions were calculated using CalEEMod2020.4.0 for completion year of 2025 and are shown in Table III-8. As shown, operational emissions will not exceed applicable SCAQMD operational emissions CEQA thresholds of significance.

**Table III-8
 PROPOSED USES DAILY OPERATIONAL IMPACTS (2025)**

Source	Operational Emissions (lbs/day)					
	ROG	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM-10	PM-2.5
Area	0.4	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Mobile	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Total	0.4	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
SCAQMD Threshold	55	55	550	150	150	55
Exceeds Threshold?	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: CalEEMod Output in Appendix

NEPA Conformity

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published “Determining Conformity of General Federal Actions to State or Federal Implementation Plans; Final Rule,” in the November 30, 1995, Federal Register (40 CFR Parts 6, 51, and 93). The 40 CFR Part 1 51.850(a) states that no department, agency, or instrumentality of the Federal Government shall engage in, support in any way, or provide financial assistance for, license to permit, or approve any activity which does not conform to an applicable state implementation plan (SIP). It is the responsibility of the Federal agency to determine whether a federal action conforms to the applicable implementation plan, before the action is taken.

If the proposed project includes any federal funding, or if the project requires any federal permits, federal participation is not allowed unless a conformity determination has been made.

Conformity analysis under EPA guidelines can be undertaken to demonstrate that the combined emissions from direct and indirect (transportation, etc.) project-related emissions have been accurately incorporated into the applicable SIP. A simpler test, as outlined in 40CFR Part 93.153, is to demonstrate that these emissions are less than the *de minimis* thresholds which depend upon the seriousness of the current level of non-attainment for federal clean air standards.

The SCAB is designated as an “extreme” non-attainment area for the federal 8-hour ozone standard. The basin is a “serious” non-attainment area for PM-2.5, and a maintenance area for PM-10. Sulfur Dioxide and Carbon Monoxide are maintenance areas. Based upon these designations, the following emissions levels are presumed evidence of SIP conformity:

VOC/ROG	-	10 tons/year
NOx	-	10 tons/year
PM-2.5	-	70 tons/year
PM-10	-	100 tons/year
CO	-	100 tons/year
SO ₂	-	100 tons/year
Lead	-	25 tons/year

If the project-related emissions from construction and operations are less than the specified “*de minimis*” levels, the project is considered to be in conformance with the applicable SIP.

NEPA Analysis

Annual emissions were run with the same assumptions as used for daily emissions. The calculated maximum annual emissions were then compared to the EPA *de minimis* emission thresholds that would allow for a federal conformity finding with Section 176c of the Clean Air Act.

**Table III-9
 2025 ANNUAL EMISSIONS (tons/year)**

	ROG	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM-10	PM-2.5
2025						
Construction Buildings	0.13	0.36	0.43	0.01	0.03	0.02
Construction Trenching	0.04	0.33	0.41	0.01	0.03	0.02
Operational Buildings	0.08	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Operational Trenches	na	na	na	na	na	na
Total 2025	0.25	0.69	0.84	0.02	0.06	0.04
NEPA Threshold	10	10	100	100	100	70

As shown in Table III-9, and summarized below, maximum annual emissions are much less than their associated *de minimis* thresholds. A formal SIP consistency analysis is not required.

Pollutant	Threshold	Project Emissions
VOC/ROG	10 tons/year	0.25 tons/year
NOx	10 tons/year	0.69 tons/year
PM-2.5	70 tons/year	0.04 tons/year
PM-10	100 tons/year	0.06 tons/year
CO	100 tons/year	0.84 tons/year
SO ₂	100 tons/year	0.02 tons/year

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The SCAQMD has developed analysis parameters to evaluate ambient air quality on a local level in addition to the more regional emissions-based thresholds of significance discussed above. These analysis elements are called Localized Significance Thresholds

(LSTs). LSTs were developed in response to Governing Board’s Environmental Justice Enhancement Initiative 1-4 and the LST methodology was provisionally adopted in October 2003 and formally approved by SCAQMD’s Mobile Source Committee in February 2005.

Use of an LST analysis for a project is optional. For the proposed Project, the primary source of possible LST impact would be during construction. LSTs are applicable for a sensitive receptor where it is possible that an individual could remain for 24 hours such as a residence, hospital or convalescent facility.

LSTs are only applicable to the following criteria pollutants: oxides of nitrogen (NOx), carbon monoxide (CO), and particulate matter (PM-10 and PM-2.5). LSTs represent the maximum emissions from a project that are not expected to cause or contribute to an exceedance of the most stringent applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard, and are developed based on the ambient concentrations of that pollutant for each source receptor area and distance to the nearest sensitive receptor.

LST screening tables are available for 25, 50, 100, 200 and 500-meter source-receptor distances. Major land use surrounding the site is: single-family residential.

The SCAQMD has issued guidance on applying CalEEMod to LSTs. LST pollutant screening level concentration data is currently published for 1, 2 and 5-acre sites for varying distances. For this project, the most stringent thresholds for a 1-acre site were applied.

The following thresholds and emissions in Table III-10 are therefore determined (pounds per day):

**Table III-10
 LST AND PROJECT EMISSIONS (pounds/day)**

LST 1 acre/200 meters E San Bernardino Mountains	CO	NOx	PM-10	PM-2.5
LST Threshold	5,351	334	82	10
Max On-Site Emissions				
Buildings	8	10	3	2
Trenching	10	9	1	1

LSTs were compared to the maximum daily construction activities. As seen in Table 8, emissions meet the LST for construction thresholds. LST impacts are less-than-significant.

- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Substantial odor-generating sources include land uses such as agricultural activities, feedlots, wastewater treatment facilities, landfills or various heavy industrial uses. The proposed Project does not propose any such uses or activities that would result in potentially significant operational-source odor impacts. The proposed Project’s operations will consist of office occupancy, warehouse operations and electricity conveyance, with negligible odor potential. Odors will be briefly detectable during application of the indoor and outdoor paint application to the buildings and paving of the parking areas. Good painting practice (low wind speeds, high efficiency sprayers, and full plastic containment) will minimize odor or overspray and paint transport. Furthermore, the proposed Project would be required to comply with SCAQMD Rule 1113, which requires the use of only “Low-Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)” paints. Thus, through the required compliance with SCAQMD Rule 1113, impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information utilized in this section was obtained from the technical study “City of Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Project Biological Resources Assessment & Jurisdictional Delineation Report” prepared by Jacobs dated September 2023, and provided as Appendix 3 to this document.

- a. *No Impact* – A Biological Resources Assessment (BRA) & Jurisdictional Delineation survey was conducted by Jacobs in September 2023 to identify potential habitat for special status plant and wildlife species within the Project Area of potential effect. No special status species, including any state and/or federally listed threatened or endangered species, were observed within the Project Area during the reconnaissance-level assessment survey, which included 100% visual coverage of the Project site during the season when plant species would have been present. The Project Area does not contain any sensitive habitats, including any USFWS designated Critical Habitat for federally listed species, and the Project will not result in any loss or adverse modification of Critical Habitat. Thus, based on the findings of the BRA and the highly disturbed character of the project area, no potential to adversely impact special status species or sensitive habitat exists at the project site.
- b. *No Impact* – Based on the site survey, the project area of potential effect does not contain riparian habitat or any other sensitive natural community/habitat. Therefore, the proposed project has no potential to adversely impact such habitat. No mitigation is required.

- c. *No Impact* – Based on the site survey, the project area of potential effect does not contain wetlands, including protected wetlands. Therefore, the proposed project has no potential to adversely impact such habitat. No mitigation is required.
- d. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project site is located within the core commercial and industrial area of the City (urban core) and is not identified as a wildlife movement corridor. However, the project site has vegetation that may support nesting birds during nesting season and a potentially significant impact to such nests can occur from project implementation. Therefore, the following mitigation measures shall be implemented to reduce potential significant impacts to nests functioning as bird nurseries.

BIO-1 *Vegetation removal, including any tree removal or pruning, and structure demolitions should be conducted outside of the typical bird nesting season (between September 1st and March 1st. Otherwise, to avoid impacts to nesting birds (common and special status) during the nesting season, a qualified Avian Biologist should conduct pre construction nesting bird surveys prior to Project related disturbance to suitable nesting areas to identify any active nests. The nesting bird surveys should consist of a minimum of five (5) consecutive survey days.*

BIO-2 *If no active nests are found, no further action would be required. If an active nest is found, the biologist should set appropriate “no work” buffers around the nest which would be based upon the nesting species, its sensitivity to disturbance, nesting stage and expected types, intensity, and duration of disturbance. The nest(s) and buffer zones should be field checked weekly by a qualified biological monitor. The approved no work buffer zone should be clearly marked in the field, within which no disturbance activity should commence until the qualified biologist has determined the young birds have successfully fledged and the nest is inactive.*

There is also a possibility that night security lighting at the facility could adversely impact nesting bird species in the future during operations. To minimize this potentially significant impact, the following mitigation measure shall be implemented.

BIO-3 *To minimize potential impacts to nocturnal species due to light pollution, project-related night lighting (both temporary and permanent) shall be directed away from adjacent habitat areas to protect these species from direct night lighting. Shielding shall be incorporated in Project design to ensure ambient lighting in adjacent habitat areas is minimized.*

With implementation of these measures potentially significant impacts to the nesting bird species of concern can be reduced to a less than significant impact.

- e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The Garstin headquarters project site does contain a few trees that may either be removed or pruned. The number of trees on the site that may be affected is limited and no significant conflict with local policies or ordinances is forecast to occur. No mitigation is required.
- f. *No Impact* – Based on the BRA for the proposed project, there are no conservation plans that affect the project site. Therefore, the proposed project has no potential to adversely conflict with such plans. No mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: The information provided below is abstracted from a cultural resources technical study: “Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report Project, Garstin Water Operations Facility Improvement Project, City of Big Bear Lake, San Bernardino County, California” prepared by CRM TECH dated September 28, 2023. This report is provided as Appendix 4 of this document. Much of the following text is abstracted from this document.

Background

Between July and September 2023, at the request of Tom Dodson & Associates, CRM TECH performed a cultural resources study on the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the proposed Garstin Water Operations Facility improvement project in the City of Big Bear Lake, San Bernardino County, California. The APE consists of an approximately 4.26 acres of mostly developed land, including the existing Garstin Water Operations Facility of the City of Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power, located at 41972 Garstin Drive, a linear conduit alignment from the facility to two water wells located across Fox Farm Road, and adjacent land to the alignment for construction access. It encompasses Assessor’s Parcel Numbers 2328-091-17, 2328-102-11, -16 to -18, -20, and -21, partially overlain by the approximately 2,300-foot conduit right-of-way. The entire APE lies in the northwest quarter of Section 21, T2N R1E, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian.

The conduit trenching will be approximately two feet wide and four feet deep. The study is required by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the City of Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power (BBLDWP), as the federal and local lead agencies for the undertaking, in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of the study is to provide the USDA and the BBLDWP with the necessary information and analysis to determine whether the undertaking would have an effect on any historic properties, as defined by 36 CFR 800.16(l), or historical resources as defined by Calif. PRC §5020.1(j), that may exist in or near the APE. In order to identify such resources, CRM TECH conducted a historical/archaeological resources records search, pursued historical and geoarchaeological research, contacted Native American representatives, and carried out an intensive-level field survey.

Throughout the course of the study, the only feature of prehistoric or historical origin found in the APE was the existing operation and office building, which was originally constructed in 1968-1969 but underwent extensive exterior remodeling in 1999-2000. As it meets the generally established 50-years old age threshold for consideration as a potential “historic property”/“historical resource,” the property as a whole was recorded into the California Historical Resources Inventory and designated temporarily as Site 4041-1H, pending assignment of a permanent identification number. It does not, however, appear to meet any of the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. Therefore, it does not qualify as a “historic property” under Section 106 provisions or a “historical resource” under CEQA.

No other cultural resources were encountered within the APE during this study, and the subsurface sediments in the APE appear to be relatively low in sensitivity for potentially significant archaeological deposits of prehistoric origin. Based on these findings, CRM TECH recommends to the USDA and the BBLDWP a conclusion that no "historic properties" or "historical resources" will be affected by the undertaking. No further cultural resources investigation is recommended for the project unless construction plans undergo such changes as to include areas not covered by this study. However, if buried cultural materials are encountered during any earth-moving operations associated with the undertaking, all work within 50 feet of the discovery should be halted or diverted until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the finds.

a&b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – CEQA establishes that "a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment" (PRC §21084.1). "Substantial adverse change," according to PRC §5020.1(q), "means demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration such that the significance of a historical resource would be impaired."

Per the above discussion and definition, no archaeological sites or isolates were recorded within the project boundaries; thus, none of them requires further consideration during this study. In light of this information and pursuant to PRC §21084.1, the following conclusions have been reached for the project:

- No historical resources or archaeological resources within or adjacent to the project area have any potential to be disturbed as they are not within the proposed area in which the facilities will be constructed and developed, and thus, the project as it is currently proposed will not cause a substantial adverse change to any known historical resources.
- No further cultural resources investigation is necessary for the proposed project unless construction plans undergo such changes as to include areas not covered by this study.

However, since demolition and earth moving activities are required, the following mitigation measure will ensure that impacts to any buried cultural materials that may be discovered during earth moving activities is less than significant:

CUL-1 In the event that cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and an archaeologist meeting the Secretary of Interior's professional qualification standards in archaeology shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the other portions of the project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed within measure TCR-1, regarding any pre-contact and/or historic-era finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.

CUL-2 If significant pre-contact and/or historic era cultural resources, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to YSMN for review and comment, as detailed within measure TCR-1. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the project and implement the Plan accordingly.

CUL-3 If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.

With the above mitigation incorporation, the potential for impacts to cultural resources will be reduced to a less than significant level. No additional mitigation is required.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – As noted in the discussion above, no available information suggests that human remains may occur within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and the potential for such an occurrence is considered very low. Human remains discovered during the project will need to be treated in accordance with the provisions of HSC §7050.5 and PRC §5097.98, which is mandatory. State law (Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code) as well as local laws requires that the Police Department, County Sheriff and Coroner's Office receive notification if human remains are encountered. Compliance with these laws is considered adequate mitigation for potential impacts, and as such the potential for impact to discovery and treatment of human remains would be less than significant level. Refer to mitigation measure CUL-3.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
VI. ENERGY: Would the project:				
a) Result in a potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

a&b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – During construction, the proposed project will utilize construction equipment that is CARB approved, minimizing emissions generated and electricity required to the extent feasible (as outlined under Section III, Air Quality, above). As stated in Section III, Air Quality, the construction of the proposed Garstin Water Operations Facility Replacement Project would require mitigation measures to minimize air emissions impacts from construction equipment use (refer to MM **AIR-1** and **AIR-2**). These mitigation measures also apply to energy resources as they require equipment not in use for 5 minutes to be turned off, and for electrical construction equipment to be used where available. Also, the project will implement recycling of solid waste to the maximum extent feasible to minimize energy consumption. These measures would prevent a significant impact during construction due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, and would also conform to the CARB regulations regarding energy efficiency.

The proposed project consists of the installation of a new office and warehouse facilities for the BBLDWP in the City of Big Bear Lake. Energy consumption encompasses many different activities. For example, construction can include the following activities: delivery of equipment and material to a site from some location (note it also requires energy to manufacture the equipment and material); employee trips to work, possibly offsite for lunch (or a visit by a catering truck); travel home, and occasionally leaving a site for an appointment or checking another job; use of equipment onsite (electric or fuel); and as in this case demolition and disposal of construction waste. To minimize energy costs of construction debris management, mitigation has been established to require diversion of all material capable of being recycled from the landfill. Energy consumption by equipment will be reduced by requiring shutdowns when equipment is not in use after five minutes and ensuring equipment is being operated within proper operating parameters (tune-ups) to minimize emissions and fuel consumption. These requirements are consistent with State and regional rules and regulations. Under the construction scenario outlined above, the proposed project will not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy consumption during construction.

The proposed project site is supplied power by Bear Valley Electric Service (BVES) through the power distribution system that extends onto the existing BBLDWP office compound. The project also includes the installation of about 2 MW of solar panels at the project site. BVES will be able to supply sufficient electricity to meet demand with the solar panels in operation. The project site will not require natural gas to operate. Compliance with regulatory requirements for operational energy use and construction energy use would not be a wasteful or unnecessary use of energy. Under both the operational and construction scenarios for the proposed project, with implementation of MM **AQ-1** and **AQ-2**, the proposed project will not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary energy consumption that could result in a significant adverse impact to energy issues based on compliance with the State laws, regulations and guidelines.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS: Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
(i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in onsite or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

a. i. Ground Rupture

Less Than Significant Impact – The project site is located within the City of Big Bear Lake in the Mountain Region of the County of San Bernardino, about one-half mile south of Big Bear Lake. California as a whole is a seismically active state, though the proposed project site is not located on a fault or within a designated fault zone. According to the recently updated Fault Activity Map of California prepared for the County’s updated General Plan (Figure VII-1), the proposed project is not located within a delineated Alquist-Priolo fault zone or other active fault zone. The project site is located in general proximity to several regional fault zones, as delineated on Figure VII-2, which depicts the Fault Activity Map of California prepared by the California Geologic Survey; however, the proposed project is located outside of the boundaries of the delineated fault zones, and as such is not anticipated to be within a site that would experience ground rupture as a result of seismic activity. Furthermore, based on the project site’s location outside of a delineated fault zone, the risk for ground

rupture at the site location is low; therefore, it is not likely that future visitors to the new facilities will be subject to seismic hazards from rupture of a known earthquake fault. Therefore, any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant; no mitigation is required.

ii. Strong Seismic Ground Shaking

Less Than Significant Impact – As stated in the discussion above, several faults run through the area in the vicinity proposed project (the North Frontal Fault and San Andreas Fault), and as with much of southern California, the proposed BBLDWP Garstin office facilities will be subject to strong seismic ground shaking impacts should any major earthquakes occur in the future. Due to the proximity of the active faults located in the vicinity of the project site, the project site and area can be exposed to significant ground shaking during major earthquakes on nearby regional faults. However, in this instance the facilities are being designed with ground shaking at the site taken into consideration. This is because the facilities will support human occupancy. The structures onsite will be required to comply with all applicable seismic design standards contained in the 2022 California Building Code (CBC), including Section 1613 Earthquake Loads. Compliance with the CBC will ensure that structural integrity of these structures will be maintained in the event of a regional earthquake. Therefore, impacts associated with strong ground shaking will be less than significant without mitigation.

iii. Seismic-Related Ground Failure Including Liquefaction

Less Than Significant Impact – According to the San Bernardino Countywide Plan Liquefaction and Landslides map provided as Figure VII-3, the project site consists of land that has not been identified as being subject to liquefaction susceptibility. The project site contains shallow alluvial soils and underlying sediment that could support a high potential for liquefaction. However, it is anticipated that the proposed project will have a less than significant potential to be susceptible to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, based on the depth to the water table being greater than 50 feet.

iv. Landslides

Less Than Significant Impact – According to the City of Big Bear Lake Environmental Hazards Element, Landslide Map, Exhibit EH-2, the project site consists of land that has a low susceptibility to landslide hazards. The proposed project site would be graded and compacted to establish a proper foundation for the proposed project, and no potential events have been identified that would result in adverse effects from landslides or that would cause landslides that could expose people or structures to such an event as a result of project implementation. Therefore, no significant impacts under this issue are anticipated, and no mitigation is required.

- b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The potential for soil erosion or loss of topsoil is anticipated to be marginally possible at the site during ground disturbance associated with construction. The project site contains two existing large structures and existing support facilities, with a few trees. City grading standards, best management practices; a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), and Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) are required to control the potential significant erosion hazards which could degrade downstream water quality through transport of sediment off the site. The topography of the site slopes gently from the site towards Lake. During project construction when soils are exposed, temporary soil erosion may occur, which could be exacerbated by rainfall or snow melt. Project construction and grading would be managed through the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP, and will be required to implement best management practices to achieve concurrent water quality controls after construction is completed and the office and warehouse activities are in operation. The following mitigation measures or equivalent best management practices (BMPs) shall be implemented to address these issues:

GEO-1 *Stored backfill material shall be covered with water resistant material during periods of heavy precipitation to reduce the potential for rainfall erosion of stored backfill material. Where covering is not possible, measures such as the use of straw bales or sand bags shall be used to capture and hold eroded material on the project site for future cleanup such that erosion does not occur.*

GEO-2 All exposed, disturbed soil (trenches, stored backfill, etc.) shall be sprayed with water or soil binders twice a day, or more frequently if fugitive dust is observed migrating from the site within which the project is being constructed.

With implementation of the above mitigation measures, implementation of the SWPPP and associated BMPs, any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project site is underlain by shallow soils and alluvial sediment. The proposed development will include grading and removal or trimming of trees. There is limited potential for subsidence at the site. Also, with habitable structures on the site, the potential that any unstable soil or geology could have a significant adverse impact is considered less than significant.
- d. *No Impact* – The proposed project is located on an alluvial fan with coarse soils that evolved from these coarse fan deposits. The soils are not expansive, thus there is no potential to create a substantial direct or indirect risk to human life or property from expansive soil.
- e. *No Impact* – The proposed project will install new restrooms. However, no adverse impact can occur at the site due to any soil constraints associated with installation of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems because the new facilities will be connected to the wastewater collection and treatment system. No impacts are anticipated. No mitigation is required.
- f. *No Impact* – The San Bernardino Countywide Plan indicates that the proposed project area is located in a low sensitivity area for paleontological resources because it is located on young alluvial deposits. Previously unknown and unrecorded paleontological resources have a very low potential to be exposed during ground disturbing activities. No mitigation is required at this site for this issue.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: The following information utilized in this section was obtained from the technical study “Air Quality and GHG Impact Analyses, Garstin Water Operations Facility Project, Big Bear Lake, California” prepared by Gerrick Environmental dated August 23, 2023, and provided as Appendix 2 to this document.

Background

“Greenhouse gases” (so called because of their role in trapping heat near the surface of the earth) emitted by human activity are implicated in global climate change, commonly referred to as “global warming.” These greenhouse gases contribute to an increase in the temperature of the earth’s atmosphere by transparency to short wavelength visible sunlight, but near opacity to outgoing terrestrial long wavelength heat radiation in some parts of the infrared spectrum. The principal greenhouse gases (GHGs) are carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, ozone, and water vapor. For purposes of planning and regulation, Section 15364.5 of the California Code of Regulations defines GHGs to include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulfur hexafluoride. Fossil fuel consumption in the transportation sector (on-road motor vehicles, off-highway mobile sources, and aircraft) is the single largest source of GHG emissions, accounting for approximately half of GHG emissions globally. Industrial and commercial sources are the second largest contributors of GHG emissions with about one-fourth of total emissions.

California has passed several bills and the Governor has signed at least three executive orders regarding greenhouse gases. GHG statutes and executive orders (EO) include AB 32, SB 1368, EO S-03-05, EO S-20-06 and EO S-01-07.

AB 32 is one of the most significant pieces of environmental legislation that California has adopted. Among other things, it is designed to maintain California’s reputation as a “national and international leader on energy conservation and environmental stewardship.” It will have wide-ranging effects on California businesses and lifestyles as well as far reaching effects on other states and countries. A unique aspect of AB 32, beyond its broad and wide-ranging mandatory provisions and dramatic GHG reductions are the short time frames within which it must be implemented. Major components of the AB 32 include:

- Require the monitoring and reporting of GHG emissions beginning with sources or categories of sources that contribute the most to statewide emissions.
- Requires immediate “early action” control programs on the most readily controlled GHG sources.
- Mandates that by 2020, California’s GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels.
- Forces an overall reduction of GHG gases in California by 25-40%, from business as usual, to be achieved by 2020.
- Must complement efforts to achieve and maintain federal and state ambient air quality standards and to reduce toxic air contaminants.

Statewide, the framework for developing the implementing regulations for AB 32 is under way. Maximum GHG reductions are expected to derive from increased vehicle fuel efficiency, from greater use of renewable energy and from increased structural energy efficiency. Additionally, through the California Climate Action Registry (CCAR now called the Climate Action Reserve), general and industry-specific protocols for assessing and reporting GHG emissions have been developed. GHG sources are categorized into direct sources (i.e., company owned) and indirect sources (i.e., not company owned). Direct sources include combustion emissions from on-and off-road mobile sources, and fugitive emissions. Indirect sources include off-site electricity generation and non-company owned mobile sources.

Thresholds of Significance

In response to the requirements of SB97, the State Resources Agency developed guidelines for the treatment of GHG emissions under CEQA. These new guidelines became state laws as part of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations in March, 2010. The CEQA Appendix G guidelines were modified to include GHG as a required analysis element. A project would have a potentially significant impact if it:

- Generates GHG emissions, directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment, or,
- Conflicts with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted to reduce GHG emissions.

Section 15064.4 of the Code specifies how significance of GHG emissions is to be evaluated. The process is broken down into quantification of project-related GHG emissions, making a determination of significance, and specification of any appropriate mitigation if impacts are found to be potentially significant. At each of these steps, the new GHG guidelines afford the lead agency with substantial flexibility.

Emissions identification may be quantitative, qualitative, or based on performance standards. CEQA guidelines allow the lead agency to “select the model or methodology it considers most appropriate.” The most common practice for transportation/combustion GHG emissions quantification is to use a computer model such as CalEEMod, as was used in the ensuing analysis.

The significance of those emissions then must be evaluated; the selection of a threshold of significance must take into consideration what level of GHG emissions would be cumulatively considerable. The guidelines are clear that they do not support a zero net emissions threshold. If the lead agency does not have sufficient expertise in evaluating GHG impacts, it may rely on thresholds adopted by an agency with greater expertise.

On December 5, 2008 the SCAQMD Governing Board adopted an Interim quantitative GHG Significance Threshold for industrial projects where the SCAQMD is the lead agency (e.g., stationary source permit projects, rules, plans, etc.) of 10,000 Metric Tons (MT) CO₂ equivalent/year. In September 2010, the SCAQMD CEQA Significance Thresholds GHG Working Group released revisions which recommended a threshold of 3,000 MT CO₂e for all land use projects. This 3,000 MT/year recommendation has been used as a guideline for this analysis. In the absence of an adopted numerical threshold of significance, project related GHG emissions in excess of the guideline level are presumed to trigger a requirement for enhanced GHG reduction at the project level.

a&b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – During project construction, the CalEEMod2020.4.0 computer model predicts that the construction activities will generate the annual CO₂e emissions identified in Table VIII-1.

Project construction is assumed to occur over a two-year period. During project construction, the CalEEMod2020.4.0 computer model predicts that the construction activities will generate the annual CO₂e emissions identified in Table VIII-1.

**Table VIII-1
 CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS (Metric Tons CO₂e)**

2024	CO₂e
Buildings	67.6
Trenching	56.5
Total	124.1
Amortized	4.1

CalEEMod Output provided in appendix

SCAQMD GHG emissions policy from construction activities is to amortize emissions over a 30-year lifetime. The amortized level is also provided. GHG impacts from construction are considered individually less-than-significant.

The input assumptions for operational GHG emissions calculations, and the GHG conversion from consumption to annual regional CO₂e emissions are summarized in the CalEEMod2020.4.0 output files found in the appendix of this report. Operational emissions are only applicable to the new structures as the trenches/conduit will not utilize resources. The emissions do not account for the solar arrays, nor do they give credit for the existing 110,000 sf structure that is being replaced. It treats all buildings as new. As such, the modeling below provides a conservative condition.

The total operational and annualized construction emissions for the proposed project are identified in Table VIII-2. Even without credit for the solar panels and existing operations the project GHG emissions are less-than-significant.

**Table VIII-2
 OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS (Metric Tons CO₂e)**

Consumption Source	MT CO₂e
Area Sources	<0.1
Energy Utilization	25.2
Mobile Source	0
Solid Waste Generation	9.3
Water Consumption	17.2
Construction	4.1
Total	55.8
Guideline Threshold	3,000

In March 2014, the San Bernardino Associated Governments and Participating San Bernardino County Cities Partnership (Partnership) created a final draft of the San Bernardino County Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan (Reduction Plan) for each of the 25 jurisdictional Partner Cities in the County. The plan was recently updated in March of 2021. The Reduction Plan was created in accordance with AB 32, which established a greenhouse gas limit for the state of California. The Reduction Plan seeks to create an inventory of GHG gases and develop jurisdiction specific GHG reduction measures and baseline information that could be used by the Partnership Cities of San Bernardino County, including the County itself.

Projects that demonstrate consistency with the strategies, actions, and emission reduction targets contained in the Reduction Plan would have a less than significant impact on climate change. The project will generate little GHG emissions as shown in Tables VIII-1 and VIII-2. There are really no measures directly applicable to these water facility improvements to reduce GHG emissions. The primary GHG emissions will be during construction and these emissions are minimal. Therefore,

consistency with the Reduction Plan would result in a less than significant impact with respect to GHG emissions.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

- a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project includes onsite activities that will need the routine transport of hazardous materials, such as vehicle and emergency generator fuel, and other chemicals used for managing water supply and delivery of potable water to customers. This will be a continuation of existing operations, and does not constitute “new” activities. However, during these continued operations there is a potential for accidental release of petroleum products in sufficient quantity to pose a significant hazard to people and the environment. Mitigation measure **HAZ-1** (below) will be incorporated into the BBLDWP’s onsite hazardous materials spill response countermeasures plan. Implementation of this measure can reduce the potential hazard under this issue to a less than significant level.
- b. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project may create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment during construction. The

proposed project will replace existing office and warehouse facilities that will require some use of heavy equipment during construction. Thus, during construction there is a potential for accidental release of petroleum products in sufficient quantity to pose a significant hazard to people and the environment. The following mitigation measure will be incorporated into the Storm Water Pollution Prevent Plan (SWPPP) or erosion control plan prepared for the project and implementation of this measure can reduce this potential hazard to a less than significant level.

HAZ-1 All accidental spills or discharge of hazardous material during construction and future operating activities greater than a few gallons shall be reported to the Certified Unified Program Agency and shall be remediated in compliance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations regarding cleanup and disposal of the contaminant released. The contaminated waste shall be collected and disposed of at a licensed disposal or treatment facility. This measure shall be incorporated into the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP or Erosion Control Plan) prepared for this project. Prior to accepting the site as remediated, the area contaminated shall be tested to verify that any residual concentrations meet the standard for future residential or public use of the site.

By complying with mandatory regulations, and preparation and implementation of MM HAZ-1, identified above, hazardous material impacts related to construction activities would be less than significant.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project site is not located within one-quarter mile of any public school. The project is adjacent to forested open land and other commercial and industrial activities. The proposed project is not anticipated to emit hazardous emissions, but it is highly likely that hazardous materials used in support of potable water delivery will be stored and used onsite. No handling of acutely hazardous materials is anticipated. Based on this information, implementation of the project will not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No mitigation is required.
- d. *No Impact* – The project site has been previously developed and contains existing structures and operations that currently support water production and delivery to the Department’s customers. The proposed development will include mass grading of the building sites to provide level surfaces upon which to install the new structures. The project will not be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites that are currently under remediation. According to the California State Water Board’s GeoTracker website (consistent with Government Code Section 65962.5), which provides information regarding Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) and Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) cleanup sites (refer to Figure IX-1)), there are no open LUST, DTSC, or other clean-up locations at the project site. However, there are several open cases in the surrounding vicinity. Therefore, there is a low potential for the project to encounter contaminated locations at the project site. Project construction and operation of the site to continue functioning as the Department’s office and operations facility will have a less than significant potential to create a significant hazard to the area population, onsite employees, or to the environment from its implementation under this issue. No mitigation is required.
- e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project site is located over a mile southwest of the Big Bear Airport (Airport). According to the Big Bear City Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan¹, the project is located totally outside of the any overlay hazard area associated with the Airport. Given that the proposed project is located outside of any Airport influence area, the potential for the project to result in a safety hazard for people working in the project area is negligible. Therefore, construction and operation of the project at this location would result in less than significant potential safety hazard for

¹ San Bernardino County Planning Department, Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Big Bear City Airport. <http://www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/lus/Airports/BigBear.pdf> (accessed 4-12-23)

people residing or working in the project area as a result of proximity to a public airport or private airstrip. No mitigation is required.

- f. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project has a minimal potential to interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The nearest emergency evacuation route project site is State Highway 18/Big Bear Boulevard which has been delineated as such on the San Bernardino County Mountain Area Emergency Route: Area 2 map provided as Figure IX-2. The proposed project will be constructed entirely within the boundaries of the project site, with minimal improvements to the site frontage and the existing road entrance to the site.

As such, the proposed project should not experience substantial conflicts with surrounding traffic. However, with the implementation of MMs **TRAN-1** and **TRAN-2** identified in the Transportation Section of this document, there is a less than significant potential for the development of the project to physically interfere with any adopted emergency response plans, or evacuation plans.

- g. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project could not expose people or vehicles to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands. The proposed project area is in an area susceptible to wildland fires, and is located within a delineated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) in a Local Responsibility Area (LRA); the majority of the area surrounding Big Bear Lake and Baldwin Lake are located within a VHFHSZ, as shown on Figure IX-3, the Countywide Plan Policy Map of Fire Hazard Severity Zones. The project is also located within the County Fire Safety Overlay. The proposed project is required to, and will incorporate the most current fire protection designs to support the Department's headquarter facilities, including an adequate water supply for fire flow and fighting purposes. Given the type of project proposed and ready access to emergency evacuation routes, exposure to wildfire would have a limited potential to substantially damage human or man-made equipment (vehicles) as they could be removed from the area prior to or during a wildfire. As a result, the potential for loss of life and structures is considered to be a less than significant impact without mitigation.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
(i) result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding onsite or offsite?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?; or,	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project is located within the planning area of the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The project site contains features similar to much of the Big Bear area, including the western pine plant community. The new project site would be supplied with water by the City of Big Bear Lake, Department of Water and Power (BBLDWP). Water is supplied to customers by pumping groundwater from local aquifers and a few natural springs to meet customer demand and transporting it to reservoirs for storage and distribution. A sewer connection will be retained at the office/warehouse complex, as the project will include restrooms at the project site.

For a developed area, the only three sources of potential violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements are from generation of municipal wastewater, stormwater runoff, and potential discharges of pollutants, such as fertilizers and accidental spills. The project will generate municipal wastewater that will be collected and then treated at the Big Bear Area Regional Wastewater Agency WWTP. The County and the City implement National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements for surface water discharge for all qualified projects. The project site is approximately one and one-half acres in size; therefore, it will be required to obtain

coverage under the General Construction NPDES permit. Regardless, a SWPPP with specific best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented for the project during construction. See mitigation below. To address stormwater runoff and accidental spills within this environment both during construction and during future operations, this new project must ensure that site development implements the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to control potential sources of water pollution that could violate any standards or discharge requirements during construction. Also, a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) must be prepared and implemented to ensure that project-related surface runoff meets discharge requirements over the long term. This includes proper use of fertilizers and pesticides in landscaped areas of the site. The project design includes onsite stormwater capture and treatment facilities. The SWPPP would specify the BMPs that the project would be required to implement during construction activities to ensure that all potential pollutants of concern, primarily sediment and trash, are controlled, minimized, and/or otherwise appropriately treated or disposed of prior to any surface runoff being discharged from the subject property as stormwater runoff. Compliance with the terms and conditions of the SWPPP and WQMP are mandatory and is judged adequate mitigation by the regulatory agencies for potential impacts to stormwater during construction activities. Implementation of the following mitigation measure will also contribute to reducing potential impacts to stormwater runoff to a less than significant level.

HYD-1 *The District shall require that the construction contractor prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (Plan) which specifies Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will prevent all construction pollutants from degrading stormwater runoff and with the intent of keeping all products of erosion from moving offsite into receiving waters. The Plan shall include a Spill Prevention and Cleanup Plan that identifies the methods of containing, cleanup, transport and proper disposal of hazardous chemicals or materials released during construction activities that are compatible with applicable laws and regulations. BMPs to be implemented in the Plan may include but not be limited to:*

- *The use of silt fences;*
- *The use of temporary stormwater desilting or retention basins;*
- *The use of water bars to reduce the velocity of stormwater runoff;*
- *The use of wheel washers on construction equipment leaving the site;*
- *The washing of silt from public roads at the access point to the site to prevent the tracking of silt and other pollutants from the site onto public roads;*
- *The storage of excavated material shall be kept to the minimum necessary to efficiently perform the construction activities required. Excavated or stockpiled material shall not be stored in water courses or other areas subject to the flow of surface water; and*
- *Where feasible, stockpiled material shall be covered with waterproof material during rain events to control erosion of soil from the stockpiles.*

With implementation of the mandatory stormwater management plans and their BMPs, as well as MMs **HAZ-1** and **HYD-1** above, the development of the proposed project is not forecast to cause a violation of any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project does not propose the installation of any water wells that would directly extract groundwater and the change in pervious surfaces to impervious surfaces will be offset by installation of onsite Low Impact Design (LID) features to detain increased incremental runoff for treatment prior to discharge from the site, including landscaped areas and surface water treatment chambers. The project is located within Bear Valley, which lies in the northeastern portion of the Santa Ana River Watershed, and the underlying groundwater basin is the Bear Valley groundwater basin. According to the Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power (BBLDWP) 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), the total demand for water was about 2,332 acre-feet per

year (AFY) in 2020². BBLDWP anticipates that the total demand for water within its service area will remain about the same at 2,283 AFY by 2045 AFY. The proposed project would require minimal use of water to support site landscaping within the project site, perhaps less than at present. As such, the City estimates that the proposed project would require nominal water, estimated at 2 AFY. BBLDWP obtains about 3,100 AFY of groundwater from the Bear Valley groundwater basin as a base supply within its service area. Therefore, though the proposed project might require slight increase in water supply from BBLDWP, the increase of an anticipated 2 AFY is well within the planned demand for water for in 2025 (2,147) and in 2040 (2,283 AFY), given the surplus of supply (anticipated at 3,100 AFY for every year between 2025 and 2045). The anticipated water supply within BBLDWP's retail service area will be greater than the demand for water in the future, which indicates that BBLDWP has available capacity to serve the proposed project. Thus, based on the availability of water within the area—the maximum perennial yield for the Bear Valley groundwater basin has been estimated at 4,800 AFY, with approximately 3,100 AFY of that volume being available to the BBLDWP—the development of the office headquarters complex within the approximate 1.5-acre site is not forecast to cause a significant demand for new groundwater supplies. The potential impact under this proposed project is considered less than significant; no mitigation measures are required.

- c. (i) *Less Than Significant Impact* – The project site is currently a wholly disturbed site that is bound on all sides by adjacent roadways. The proposed project is not anticipated to significantly change the volume of flows downstream of the project site due to onsite capture and treatment facilities installed under the WQMP. The project would not be anticipated to change the amount of surface water in any water body in an amount that could initiate a new cycle of erosion or sedimentation downstream of the project site. As noted, this is based on the project design that captures most of the new (incremental) surface runoff within the project site. The proposed project will be developed to be relatively flat in support of the foundations for the new facilities. The proposed improvements include parking space, landscaping, and support facilities. The proposed project will include drainage structures to convey the future onsite runoff to natural flowlines, or to flow dissipation structures in order to discharge non-erosive flows offsite. Regardless, given that the proposed development would include drainage improvements to accommodate the facilities proposed as part of the proposed project, on site flows within the project site will be collected and conveyed in a controlled manner such that some percentage of runoff will be collected and allowed to infiltrate on site. This system will be designed to capture any increase in flows delivered in runoff from the project site or otherwise be detained on site and discharged in conformance with City requirements. The downstream drainage system will not be substantially altered and given the control of future surface runoff from the project site, the potential for downstream erosion or sedimentation will be managed to a less than significant impact level.

(ii) *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project will alter the existing drainage pattern onsite but will maintain the existing offsite downstream drainage system through control of future discharges from the approximate 1.5-acre site. The onsite drainage system will capture any incremental increase in runoff from the project site associated with project development. Onsite flows within the new development will be collected and conveyed in a controlled manner such that excess runoff will be collected and stored onsite and allowed to infiltrate onsite through the provision of subsurface storm drains and new proposed stormwater chambers. The development of these drainage improvements would conform to County and City requirements and would prevent flooding onsite or offsite from occurring. Furthermore, the proposed project is required to prepare and implement a WQMP, which would incorporate the specific measures to manage long-term runoff and stormwater onsite. Thus, the implementation of onsite drainage improvements and compliance with the measures developed in the site WQMP, stormwater runoff will not substantially increase the rate or volume of runoff in a manner that would result in substantial flooding on- or off-site. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant with no mitigation required.

² City of Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, March 2022. <https://www.bblwdp.com/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/249> (accessed 4/12/23)

(iii) *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project will alter the site such that stormwater runoff within the site may be increased, but will maintain the existing off-site downstream drainage system through control of future discharges from the site to be equivalent to the current conditions. Refer to issues c (i) and c (ii) for more detailed information. Varying amounts of urban pollutants, such as motor oil, antifreeze, gasoline, pesticides, detergents, trash, animal wastes, and fertilizers, could be introduced into downstream stormwater within the watershed. However, the proposed project is not anticipated to generate discharges that would require pollution controls beyond those already incorporated into the project WQMP design as a standard operating procedure to meet water quality management requirements from the RWQCB. As such, the project is not anticipated to result in a significant adverse impact to water quality or flow volumes downstream of the project with implementation of mitigation outlined below.

Although BMPs are mandatory for the project to comply with established pollutant discharge requirements, the following mitigation measure is designed to establish a performance standard to ensure that the degree of water quality control is adequate to ensure the project does not contribute significantly to downstream water quality degradation.

HYD-2 *The District will select best management practices and reduce future non-point source pollution in surface water runoff discharges from the site to the maximum extent practicable, both during construction and following development. The identified BMPs shall be installed in accordance with schedules contained in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (Plan) and Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP).*

Compliance will also be ensured through fulfilling the requirements of a WQMP monitored by the City, and through the implementation of mitigation measure **HAZ-1**, which will ensure that discharge of polluted material does not occur or is remediated in the event of an accidental spill. The Plan must incorporate the BMPs that meet the performance standard established in **HYD-1** and **HYD-2** for both construction and operation stages of the project. Thus, the implementation of onsite drainage improvements and applicable requirements will ensure that that drainage and stormwater will not create or contribute runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned offsite stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. Impacts under this issue are considered less than significant with mitigation required.

(iv) *Less Than Significant Impact* – According to the Countywide Plan Policy Map showing Flood Hazards (Figure X-1), the proposed project is not located within a flood hazard zone. As such, development of this site is not anticipated to redirect or impede flood flow at the project site, particularly given that surface flows will be conveyed and captured by subsurface storm drains and new proposed stormwater chambers to prevent increased runoff from leaving the project site or otherwise pretreat the runoff before leaving the site to meet City requirements, which would prevent flooding onsite or offsite from occurring. Therefore, impacts under this issue are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – As stated under issue X(c[iv]), the proposed project is located in an area with no known flood hazard, as mapped by the City or County. Furthermore, the proposed project is mapped outside of any dam inundation area delineated by the San Bernardino Countywide Plan (Figure X-2). The proposed project is located on a ridge south of Big Bear Lake, about one mile to the south of the Lake. The proposed project is also located at an elevation that is about a hundred feet higher than Big Bear Lake. Big Bear Lake is formed by a dam. As such, any dam inundation would occur west of the dam flowing down in elevation to the Santa Ana River watershed several thousand feet below the elevation of the project site. The proposed project is not located within the seiche zone for the Lake, and is removed from the ocean by both elevation and a distance of 60 miles. Therefore, given that the proposed project is not located within a flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone, there is a less than significant potential for release of pollutants due to project inundation. No mitigation is required.

- e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is located within the Bear Valley Groundwater Basin, which has been designated very low priority by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The SGMA empowers local agencies to form Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to manage basins and requires GSAs to adopt Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) for crucial groundwater basins in California.³ The SGMA “requires governments and water agencies of high and medium priority basins to halt overdraft and bring groundwater basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge. Under SGMA, these basins should reach sustainability within 20 years of implementing their sustainability plans. For critically over-drafted basins, that will be 2040. For the remaining high and medium priority basins, 2042 is the deadline.”⁴ Given that the project is located within a basin that is considered very low priority, no conflict or obstruction of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan is anticipated. As such, the project would not conflict with a sustainable groundwater management plan. Water consumption and effects in the basin indicates that the proposed project’s water demand is considered to be minimal. By controlling water quality during construction and operations through implementation of both short-term and long-term (WQMP) best management practices at the site, no potential for conflict or obstruction of the Regional Board’s water quality control plan has been identified.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING: Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a. *No Impact* -The BBLDWP project site is designated as “Public Facilities” and the project site is an existing part of the local community/neighborhood. Continued use of this approximately 1.5-acre site as the Department’s office/warehouse headquarters site has no potential to create a new physical division in the established neighborhood.
- b. *No Impact* - The Department’s office/warehouse headquarters site is an existing part of the local community/neighborhood. No conflict with any land use plan, policy or regulation related to mitigation will result from continuing to use the existing site to function as an existing public facility serving the City.

³ Big Bear Area Regional Wastewater Agency, Bear Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainable Agency, 2023. <https://www.bbarwa.org/bear-valley-basin-groundwater-sustainability-agency/> (accessed 4/12/23)

⁴ California Department of Water Resources, Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management> (accessed 4/12/23)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XII. MINERAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a. *No Impact* – The San Bernardino County Countywide Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) map depicting Mineral Resource Zones indicates that the proposed project is not located within an area containing delineated mineral resources (Figure XII-1). Therefore, the development of the site is not anticipated to result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. No impacts are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

- b. *No Impact* – As stated above, the proposed project site does not contain any known mineral resources delineated by the County in its Countywide Plan (Figure XII-1), and is currently occupied by the existing Department’s office/warehouse headquarters site facilities. The project site is designated as Public Facilities on the City General Plan. As such, the re-development of the proposed project site for the same use would not result in the loss of any available locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan, as no such delineations of this site have occurred. No impacts under this issue are anticipated and no mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XIII. NOISE: Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of a project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

Background

The existing background noise at the site reflects the current operation of the Department’s office/warehouse headquarters site activities and surrounding roadway noise, primarily from Garstin Drive. Traffic noise in this area will be fairly consistent due to the project area being an employment node in the City of Big Bear Lake. Because community receptors are more sensitive to unwanted noise intrusion during more sensitive evening and nighttime hours, state law requires that an artificial dBA (A-weighted decibel) increment be added to quiet time noise levels. The State of California has established guidelines for acceptable community noise levels that are based on the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) rating scale (a 24-hour integrated noise measurement scale). The guidelines rank noise land use compatibility in terms of "normally acceptable," "conditionally acceptable," and "clearly unacceptable" noise levels for various land use types. The State Guidelines, Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Exposure, Public Facilities, which in this case the closest land use to the Department’s office/warehouse headquarters site is a mix of commercial (office use) and industrial (Department warehouse and operations headquarters). Such uses are "normally acceptable" in exterior noise environments up to 70 dBA CNEL and "conditionally acceptable" up to 70 dBA CNEL based on this scale. The nearest sensitive receptor is the hospital, located west of the headquarters.

a. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated –*

Short Term Construction Noise

Short-term construction noise impacts associated with the proposed project will occur during grading and building construction activities at the project site. The earth-moving sources are the noisiest type of equipment typically ranging from 82 to 85 dB at 50 feet from the source. Temporary construction noise is exempt from the City Noise Performance Standards between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., except Sundays and Federal holidays. The proposed project would be constructed within the confines of these hours, and therefore would be in compliance with the City’s Noise Performance Standard. Thus, construction of the project would result in less than significant noise impact. However, to minimize the noise generated on the site to the extent feasible, the following mitigation measures shall be implemented:

NOI-1 All construction vehicles and fixed or mobile equipment shall be equipped with operating and maintained noise control devices. Enforcement will be accomplished by random field inspections by Department personnel.

- NOI-2** *All employees that will be exposed to noise levels greater than 75 dB over an 8-hour period shall be provided adequate hearing protection devices to ensure no hearing damage will result from construction activities.*
- NOI-3** *No construction activities shall occur during the hours of 6 PM through 7 AM, Monday through Saturday; at no time shall construction activities occur on Sundays or holidays, unless a declared emergency exists.*
- NOI-4** *Equipment not in use for five minutes shall be shut off.*
- NOI-5** *Equipment shall be maintained and operated such that loads are secured from rattling or banging.*
- NOI-6** *Construction employees shall be trained in the proper operation and use of equipment consistent with these mitigation measures, including no unnecessary revving of equipment.*
- NOI-7** *The Department shall post a readily visible sign identifying a phone number to contact a person responsible for responding to noise complaints from nearby occupied properties. The goal shall be to respond to any noise complaint within 24-hours and to initiate noise controls to reduce noise originating from the site during construction.*

Operational noise is generally associated with the standard headquarter operations that already exist at the site. These operations are not forecast to increase once the new facilities have been constructed and placed into operation. The Department has the opportunity to install noise attenuation features for the onsite emergency generator and shall attenuate generator noise to 50 dBA at the property line. This measure shall be incorporated into the Department's design requirements for the generator. Please note that this will result in a lower noise operational environment than currently exists at the project site.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Vibration is the periodic oscillation of a medium or object. The rumbling sound caused by vibration of room surfaces is called structure borne noises. Sources of groundborne vibrations include natural phenomena (e.g., earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides) or human-made causes (e.g., explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment). Vibration sources may be continuous or transient. Vibration is often described in units of velocity (inches per second), and discussed in decibel (VdB) units in order to compress the range of numbers required to describe vibration. Vibration impacts related to human development are generally associated with activities such as train operations, construction, and heavy truck movements.

The background vibration-velocity level in residential areas (from ongoing activities in a residential area such as cars driving by, etc.) is generally about 50 VdB, while the groundborne vibration directly adjacent to an industrial facility requiring movement of heavy machinery may be greater. Groundborne vibration is normally perceptible to humans at approximately 65 VdB, while 75 VdB is the approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible. Construction activity can result in varying degrees of groundborne vibration, but is generally higher when associated with pile driving and rock blasting (activities that are not anticipated to be required for the proposed project). Other construction equipment—such as air compressors, light trucks, hydraulic loaders, etc.—generate little or no significant ground vibration. The City Development Code offers minimal guidance on Vibration.

Vibration related to construction activities will be less than significant because the project will limit construction to daylight hours and will not include activities that generate high levels of vibration, such as pile driving or rock blasting. Operational vibration is anticipated to be less than significant given that the headquarters activities already occur on the site and will remain relatively the same.

Therefore, any vibration generated within the site is not anticipated to substantially exceed the perceptible threshold. Thus, any impacts under this issue are considered less than significant. No other mitigation is required.

- c. *No Impact* – There nearest public airport is the Big Bear City Airport, which is located approximately one mile to the northeast of the project site. According to the Big Bear City Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan⁵, the project is not located within a safety zone requiring an avigation easement as this project is not located beneath the flight path for the airport. Additionally, the proposed project is located outside of the delineated noise contours for the Airport, as shown on Figure XIII-1. Given that the proposed project is located outside of the 65 CNEL dBA airport noise contour, the project area has a less than significant potential to expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels as a result of the site’s proximity to the airport. No mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING: Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

- a&b. *No Impact* – The proposed project is the replacement of the Department’s office/warehouse headquarters site. The project site is already developed with the same general facilities that are no longer meeting the Department’s needs. The headquarters operations will simply continue with comparable activities and no increase in permanent employment due to the site modifications. There will be no loss of housing or displacement of existing residences. Because the project does not propose any residential structures and the Department’s work force will remain relatively the same, the proposed project has no potential to induce substantial population growth within the City. The new Department’s office/warehouse headquarters site is not forecast to increase the rate of growth within the City which is forecast to remain within the supply capability of the Valley’s water supply capacity. No adverse population or housing impacts will occur and no mitigation is required.

⁵ San Bernardino County Planning Department, Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Big Bear City Airport. <http://www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/lus/Airports/BigBear.pdf> (accessed 4-12-23)

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XV. PUBLIC SERVICES: Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

a-e. *Less Than Significant and No Impact* – The proposed project is the replacement of the existing Department’s office/warehouse headquarters site in the City of Big Bear Lake. Demand for the public services summarized above has been low during existing operations is anticipated to continue to be very low for the new Department office/warehouse headquarters facilities. There would be no adverse effect on schools, parks or other public facilities. In fact, the construction of the new structures that meet the 2022 California Building Code and current fire protection regulations, should reduce the potential demand for public services. The new headquarters facilities can also enhance protection from trespass, but this should be minimal within the existing neighborhood. The impact analysis indicates that the proposed project’s construction and operation will not result in new significant adverse impacts to the public service environment. Therefore, the potential impacts to these public services from implementing the proposed project are considered less than significant or nonexistent on the public services environment.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XVI. RECREATION:				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

a&b. The proposed project is the replacement of the Department’s office/warehouse headquarters facilities at the existing headquarters’ site in the City of Big Bear Lake. The propose project will not adversely impact any recreation facilities. There would be no foreseeable adverse effect on recreation. The impact analysis indicates that the project’s construction and operation will not result in new significant adverse impacts to the City’s recreational environment. Therefore, the potential impacts to local recreational facilities are considered to result in no impact on the recreation environment of the Valley.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XVII. TRANSPORTATION: Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

CEQA Section 15064.3, subdivision (b):

(1) Land Use Projects. Vehicle miles traveled exceeding an applicable threshold of significance may indicate a significant impact. Generally, projects within one-half mile of either an existing major transit stop or a stop along an existing high-quality transit corridor should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. Projects that decrease vehicle miles traveled in the project area compared to existing conditions should be presumed to have a less than significant transportation impact.

(2) Transportation Projects. Transportation projects that reduce, or have no impact on, vehicle miles traveled should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact. For roadway capacity projects, agencies have discretion to determine the appropriate measure of transportation impact consistent with CEQA and other applicable requirements. To the extent that such impacts have already been adequately addressed at a programmatic level, such as in a regional transportation plan EIR, a lead agency may tier from that analysis as provided in Section 15152.

(3) Qualitative Analysis. If existing models or methods are not available to estimate the vehicle miles traveled for the particular project being considered, a lead agency may analyze the project's vehicle miles traveled qualitatively. Such a qualitative analysis would evaluate factors such as the availability of transit, proximity to other destinations, etc. For many projects, a qualitative analysis of construction traffic may be appropriate.

(4) Methodology. A lead agency has discretion to choose the most appropriate methodology to evaluate a project's vehicle miles traveled, including whether to express the change in absolute terms, per capita, per household or in any other measure. A lead agency may use models to estimate a project's vehicle miles traveled, and may revise those estimates to reflect professional judgment based on substantial evidence. Any assumptions used to estimate vehicle miles traveled and any revisions to model outputs should be documented and explained in the environmental document prepared for the project. The standard of adequacy in Section 15151 shall apply to the analysis described in this section.

- a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is the construction of the Department's new office/warehouse headquarters facilities at the existing headquarters site. Once completed, the new headquarters facilities will be occupied daily with continuing Department operations with no forecast increase in daily trip generation to or from the site. Construction traffic is forecast to range between a maximum of 25 and 50 trips per day, including truck deliveries. Although the local roadway system consists of two-lane local roadways, adequate access exists for the estimated number of construction-related vehicles to access the site during daylight hours with minimal conflicts. A combined traffic and parking management plan (**TRAN-1**) will be prepared by the contractor and approved by the Department and local law enforcement prior to initiating construction activities at the

site. Thus, implementation of the proposed project will not conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system. No mitigation is required.

- b. *No Impact* – As described above, the proposed project is designed to continue trip generation during future operations with no forecast increase in VMT. All new trips during construction will be temporary and will be conducted to support the implementation of the proposed project. The proposed project is not forecast to increase VMT through creation of a permanent source of traffic. No impact to VMT is expected to result from implementing this proposed project.
- c. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project will occur entirely within the Department's existing office/warehouse headquarters site and immediately adjacent street boundaries. Large trucks delivering equipment or removing excavated dirt or debris should be able to enter the site without major conflicts with the flow of traffic on the adjacent roadways used to existing access the site (as they currently do). Primary access to the site will be provided along existing roadways, including Big Bear Boulevard and Garstin Drive. Additionally, the proposed project would be required to comply with all applicable fire code and ordinance requirements for construction, parking and access to the project site. Emergency response and evacuation procedures would be coordinated with the City and County, as well as the local fire department. As such, to mitigate the potential impacts to traffic flow at the access road during construction, the following mitigation measure shall be implemented:

TRAN-1 *The Department shall require its contractors prepare a construction and parking traffic control plan. Elements of the plan should include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:*

- *Develop circulation and detour plans, if necessary, to minimize impacts to local street and State Highway circulation. Use haul routes minimizing truck traffic on local roadways to the extent possible.*
- *To the extent feasible, and as needed to avoid adverse impacts on traffic flow, schedule truck trips outside of peak morning and evening commute hours.*
- *Install traffic control devices as specified in Caltrans' Manual of Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Zones where needed to maintain safe driving conditions. Use flaggers and/or signage to safely direct traffic through construction work zones.*
- *For roadways requiring lane closures that would result in a single open lane, maintain alternate one-way traffic flow and utilize flagger-controls.*
- *Coordinate with owners or administrators of sensitive land uses such as police and fire stations, hospitals, and schools. Provide advance notification to the facility owners or operators of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities.*

TRAN-2 *The Department shall require that all disturbances to public roadways be repaired in a manner that complies with the Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction (green book) or other applicable City of Big Bear Lake and Caltrans standard design requirements.*

Upon implementation of a construction traffic management plan, any potential increase in hazards due to design features or incompatible use will be considered less than significant in the short term. In the long term, no impacts to any hazards or incompatible uses in existing or planned roadways are anticipated. The implementation of the project would not create any additional hazards to surrounding roadways. Thus, any impacts are considered less than significant with implementation of mitigation.

- d. *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The proposed project consists of construction and operational activities that will take place using the local circulation system. Access to the site is adequate for emergency vehicles. There is an emergency evacuation route located near the site, as

State Highway 18/Big Bear Boulevard the San Bernardino County Mountain Area Emergency Route: Area 2 map provided as Figure IX-2. With implementation of MMs **TRAN-1** and **TRAN-2**, adequate emergency access along local roadways will be maintained. Thus, because of the lack of substantial adverse impact on local circulation, significant impacts to emergency access are avoided. No further mitigation is required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project cause a substantial change in the significance of tribal cultural resources, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to the California Native American tribe, and that is:				
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION Remains to be resolved.

a&b. In response to a letter from the Department initiating AB 52 consultation, the Yuhaaviatam of the San Manuel Nation (YSMN) provided an e-mail response on October 5, 2023. Please refer to Appendix 1. The YSMN indicated it did not “have any concerns with the project’s implementation, as planned, at this time.” However, the YSMN did request mitigation measures be incorporated and implemented by the Department. These measures have been integrated into this Initial Study below.

TCR-1 *The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed in CUL-1, of any pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources discovered during project implementation, and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be significant, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), a cultural-resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with YSMN, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents YSMN for the remainder of the project, should YSMN elect to place a monitor in-site.*

TCR-2 *Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be supplied to the applicant and Lead Agency for dissemination to YSMN. The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with YSMN throughout the life of the project.*

The preceding measure were recommended by the YSMN and the Department concurs with their implementation to reduce potentially significant TCR impacts to a less than significant level.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS: Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

- a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is the construction of a replacement office/warehouse headquarters for the BBLDWP at the existing headquarters site. All of the required utilities required to support this replacement project are already located on-site. The primary utilities that will be needed at the site for future operation are water, wastewater, stormwater, electricity, and telecommunications. No substantial relocations or expansions of required infrastructure will be required to support the proposed project. Impacts are considered less than significant

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Please refer to Section X.b.) for a discussion of available water supply for the City. Adequate water is available to meet the estimated water demand of the proposed facility. The project itself will not result in a substantial increase in overall demand for water supply since it is a replacement facility. Thus, no significant adverse impact is forecast and no mitigation, other than use of standard low consumption water hardware at the facilities, is required.

- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The City delivers wastewater to the Big Bear Area Regional Wastewater Agency facility at the south end of Baldwin Lake. As a replacement project, the proposed project will not directly or indirectly increase wastewater flows. No mitigation is required.
- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The replacement Department office/warehouse headquarters facilities will continue to generate solid waste in the future. Since the facility will not be substantially expanded, the amount of solid waste generated is not anticipated to increase substantially. Historically, regulations have required recycling up to 50 percent of the construction waste generated at the site. The Department will require the contractor to meet the current regulatory requirements of 75% reduction for disposal of construction waste. Little or no increase in solid waste is forecast to be generated during operations and if any is generated it will be hauled away staff for proper disposal. No mitigation is required.
- e. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project does not involve any unusual or difficult solid waste generation activities that have a potential to conflict with federal, state and local management and reduction statutes. The contractor will be required to recycle and dispose of construction waste and future operations are not forecast to generate substantial solid waste under the 75% reduction in waste generation, if feasible. The proposed project construction and operational solid waste management will be integrated into the Department’s existing waste management program and will comply with solid waste management and reduction statutes and regulations. Potential impacts under this issue are considered less than significant with no mitigation.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XX. WILDFIRE: If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

- a. *Less Than Significant Impact* – Please refer to the evaluation of emergency response in the Traffic Section, Section XVII.). As indicated in that discussion, the proposed project will be constructed within the confines of the project site, but certain construction activities could result in limited interference with emergency evacuation along proximate access roads. Since activities within the local access roads are controllable, implementation of mitigation measure **TRAN-1** can ensure that any conflicts with an evacuation plan or emergency access will not rise to a level of a significant impact. No additional mitigation is required.

- b. *Less Than Significant Impact* – BBLDWP is located on the floor of the Big Bear Valley. Due to the urban nature of the proposed project site, some of the trees on the project site may be removed, which has the effect of reducing the onsite fire hazard. Although this site is within a Very High fire hazard area, it is under local fire department protection (City of Big Bear Lake). With the new structures that will meet current fire code designs, and that will incorporate the most current building materials and design to reduce the onsite structural fire hazard, the proposed project will reduce the fire hazards at the project site. Regardless, due to slope and prevailing winds within the Valley, the wildfire risk will remain significant. Due to the type of proposed use and the site preparation, the proposed project's potential to exacerbate wildfire risk is considered a less than significant impact relative to the existing situation. Further, with the excellent access to emergency evacuation routes in the Valley, the employees at the project site will not have their access to these routes reduced and the ability to avoid exposure to the significant hazards in the Valley will be maintained.
- c. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project site is already connected to water, drainage and electricity infrastructure at the project site. These connections will require minimal alterations to the existing systems from project implementation, and will have a very low potential to exacerbate fire risk at the project site. Further, due to proximity to this infrastructure, there should be minimal temporary and no ongoing impacts to the environment at the project site once new facilities are installed and operational. Impacts under this category are forecast to be less than significant.
- d. *Less Than Significant Impact* – The proposed project is the replacement of the existing Department's office/warehouse headquarters facilities on the existing site. A minimal potential exists to expose humans to significant risks post fire as the new development at the site will actually enhance fire resistance of the facilities at the site. Due to the project site's location on the Valley floor, the potential exposure of the site to hazards such as flooding or post fire instability onsite is low. As a result, the proposed project is considered to have a less than significant impact under this issue.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact or Does Not Apply
XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:				
a) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION

The analysis in this Initial Study and the findings reached indicate that the proposed project can be implemented without causing any new project specific or cumulatively considerable unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts. Mitigation is required to control potential environmental impacts of the proposed project to a less than significant impact level. The following findings are based on the detailed analysis of the Initial Study of all environmental topics and the implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the previous text and summarized in this section.

- a) *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project has no potential to cause a significant impact to any biological or cultural resources. The project has been identified as having no potential to degrade the quality of the natural environment, substantially reduce habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal. The project requires contingency mitigation to prevent significant impacts from occurring as a result of implementation of the project. Based on the data contained in the Cultural Resources Report (Appendix 4), the potential for impacting cultural resources is low, particularly with the extensive mitigation measures that shall be implemented at the request of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians to minimize impacts to Native American cultural resources or Tribal Cultural Resources. The Cultural Resources Report determined that no cultural resources of importance were found at the project site upon field review and a review of previous reports performed for this area, so it is not anticipated that any resources could be affected by the project because no cultural resources exist. However, because it is not known what could be unearthed upon any excavation activities, contingency mitigation measures are provided to ensure that, in the unlikely event that any resources are found, they are protected from any potential impacts. Please see biological and cultural sections of this Initial Study.
- b) *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project has sixteen (16) potential impacts that are individually limited, but may be cumulatively considerable. The issues of Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy,

Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use, Noise, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level and ensure that cumulative effects are not cumulatively considerable. The project is not considered growth-inducing, as defined by *State CEQA Guidelines*, as it would develop new headquarters facilities to support the existing and future DWP operations water supply operations that are intended to serve the City and some unincorporated communities in the Big Bear Valley. These issues require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level and ensure that cumulative effects are not cumulatively considerable. All other environmental issues were found to have no significant project specific and cumulative impacts without implementation of mitigation. The potential cumulative environmental effects of implementing the proposed project have been determined to be less than considerable and thus, would have a less than significant cumulative impact.

- c) *Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated* – The project will achieve long-term community goals by providing adequate facilities to support water supply operations in the City and certain communities within Big Bear Valley. The short-term impacts associated with the project, which are mainly construction-related impacts, are less than significant with mitigation, and the proposed project is compatible with long-term environmental protection and management of the City's potable water resources. The issues of Air Quality, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Noise require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce human impacts to a less than significant level. All other environmental issues were found to have no significant impacts on humans without implementation of mitigation. The potential for direct human effects from implementing the proposed project have been determined to be less than significant.

Conclusion

This document evaluated all CEQA issues contained in the latest Initial Study Checklist form. The evaluation determined that either no impact or less than significant impacts would be associated with the issues of Land Use and Housing, Mineral Resources, Population/Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems. The issues of Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Transportation, and Tribal Cultural Resources, require the implementation of mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The required mitigation has been proposed in this Initial Study to reduce impacts for these issues to a less than significant impact.

Based on the findings in this Initial Study, the City of Big Bear Lake, Department of Water and Power proposes to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Garstin Water Operations Facility Replacement Project. A Notice of Availability/Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (NOA/NOI) will be issued for this project by the Department. The Initial Study and NOI will be circulated for 30 days of public comment because this project involves the State as either a responsible or trustee agency. At the end of the 30-day review period, a final MND package will be prepared and it will be reviewed by the BBLDWP for possible adoption at a future BBLDWP Board hearing, the date for which has not yet been determined. If you or your agency comments on the MND/NOA/NOI for this project, you will be notified about the meeting date in accordance with the requirements in Section 21092.5 of CEQA.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21083.05, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 65088.4, Gov. Code; Sections 21080(c), 21080.1, 21080.3, 21083, 21083.05, 21083.3, 21093, 21094, 21095, and 21151, Public Resources Code; *Sundstrom v. County of Mendocino*, (1988) 202 Cal.App.3d 296; *Leonoff v. Monterey Board of Supervisors*, (1990) 222 Cal.App.3d 1337; *Eureka Citizens for Responsible Govt. v. City of Eureka* (2007) 147 Cal.App.4th 357; *Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th at 1109; *San Franciscans Upholding the Downtown Plan v. City and County of San Francisco* (2002) 102 Cal.App.4th 656.

Revised 2019

Authority: Public Resources Code sections 21083 and 21083.09

Reference: Public Resources Code sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3/ 21084.2 and 21084.3

SUMMARY OF MITIGATION MEASURES

Aesthetics

AES-1 Where the removal of trees is required to install the new BBLDWP facilities, the Department shall replace all trees removed at a 1:1 ratio.

Air Quality

AQ-1 Fugitive Dust Construction

- Apply soil stabilizers or moisten inactive areas.
- Water exposed surfaces as needed to avoid visible dust leaving the construction site (typically 2-3 times/day).
- Cover all stock piles with tarps at the end of each day or as needed.
- Provide water spray during loading and unloading of earthen materials.
- Minimize in-out traffic from construction zone
- Cover all trucks hauling dirt, sand, or loose material and require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard
- Sweep streets daily if visible soil material is carried out from the construction site

AQ-2 Exhaust Emissions Control

- Utilize well-tuned off-road construction equipment.
- Establish a preference for contractors using Tier 3 or better rated heavy equipment.
- Enforce 5-minute idling limits for both on-road trucks and off-road equipment.

Biological Resources

BIO-1 Vegetation removal, including any tree removal or pruning, and structure demolitions should be conducted outside of the typical bird nesting season (between September 1st and March 1st. Otherwise, to avoid impacts to nesting birds (common and special status) during the nesting season, a qualified Avian Biologist should conduct pre construction nesting bird surveys prior to Project related disturbance to suitable nesting areas to identify any active nests. The nesting bird surveys should consist of a minimum of five (5) consecutive survey days.

BIO-2 If no active nests are found, no further action would be required. If an active nest is found, the biologist should set appropriate “no work” buffers around the nest which would be based upon the nesting species, its sensitivity to disturbance, nesting stage and expected types, intensity, and duration of disturbance. The nest(s) and buffer zones should be field checked weekly by a qualified biological monitor. The approved no work buffer zone should be clearly marked in the field, within which no disturbance activity should commence until the qualified biologist has determined the young birds have successfully fledged and the nest is inactive.

BIO-3 To minimize potential impacts to nocturnal species due to light pollution, project-related night lighting (both temporary and permanent) shall be directed away from adjacent habitat areas to protect these species from direct night lighting. Shielding shall be incorporated in Project design to ensure ambient lighting in adjacent habitat areas is minimized.

Cultural Resources

CUL-1 In the event that cultural resources are discovered during project activities, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and an archaeologist meeting the Secretary of Interior’s professional qualification standards in archaeology shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the other portions of the project outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed within measure TCR-1,

regarding any pre-contact and/or historic-era finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.

- CUL-2 If significant pre-contact and/or historic era cultural resources, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to YSMN for review and comment, as detailed within measure TCR-1. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the project and implement the Plan accordingly.
- CUL-3 If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with the project, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.

Geology and Soils

- GEO-1 Stored backfill material shall be covered with water resistant material during periods of heavy precipitation to reduce the potential for rainfall erosion of stored backfill material. Where covering is not possible, measures such as the use of straw bales or sand bags shall be used to capture and hold eroded material on the project site for future cleanup such that erosion does not occur.
- GEO-2 All exposed, disturbed soil (trenches, stored backfill, etc.) shall be sprayed with water or soil binders twice a day, or more frequently if fugitive dust is observed migrating from the site within which the project is being constructed.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

- HAZ-1 All accidental spills or discharge of hazardous material during construction and future operating activities greater than a few gallons shall be reported to the Certified Unified Program Agency and shall be remediated in compliance with applicable federal, State, and local regulations regarding cleanup and disposal of the contaminant released. The contaminated waste shall be collected and disposed of at a licensed disposal or treatment facility. This measure shall be incorporated into the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP or Erosion Control Plan) prepared for this project. Prior to accepting the site as remediated, the area contaminated shall be tested to verify that any residual concentrations meet the standard for future residential or public use of the site.

Hydrology and Water Quality

- HYD-1 The District shall require that the construction contractor prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (Plan) which specifies Best Management Practices (BMPs) that will prevent all construction pollutants from degrading stormwater runoff and with the intent of keeping all products of erosion from moving offsite into receiving waters. The Plan shall include a Spill Prevention and Cleanup Plan that identifies the methods of containing, cleanup, transport and proper disposal of hazardous chemicals or materials released during construction activities that are compatible with applicable laws and regulations. BMPs to be implemented in the Plan may include but not be limited to:
- The use of silt fences;
 - The use of temporary stormwater desilting or retention basins;
 - The use of water bars to reduce the velocity of stormwater runoff;
 - The use of wheel washers on construction equipment leaving the site;
 - The washing of silt from public roads at the access point to the site to prevent the tracking of silt and other pollutants from the site onto public roads;

- The storage of excavated material shall be kept to the minimum necessary to efficiently perform the construction activities required. Excavated or stockpiled material shall not be stored in water courses or other areas subject to the flow of surface water; and
- Where feasible, stockpiled material shall be covered with waterproof material during rain events to control erosion of soil from the stockpiles.

HYD-2 The District will select best management practices and reduce future non-point source pollution in surface water runoff discharges from the site to the maximum extent practicable, both during construction and following development. The identified BMPs shall be installed in accordance with schedules contained in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (Plan) and Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP).

Noise

NOI-1 All construction vehicles and fixed or mobile equipment shall be equipped with operating and maintained noise control devices. Enforcement will be accomplished by random field inspections by Department personnel.

NOI-2 All employees that will be exposed to noise levels greater than 75 dB over an 8-hour period shall be provided adequate hearing protection devices to ensure no hearing damage will result from construction activities.

NOI-3 No construction activities shall occur during the hours of 6 PM through 7 AM, Monday through Saturday; at no time shall construction activities occur on Sundays or holidays, unless a declared emergency exists.

NOI-4 Equipment not in use for five minutes shall be shut off.

NOI-5 Equipment shall be maintained and operated such that loads are secured from rattling or banging.

NOI-6 Construction employees shall be trained in the proper operation and use of equipment consistent with these mitigation measures, including no unnecessary revving of equipment.

NOI-7 The Department shall post a readily visible sign identifying a phone number to contact a person responsible for responding to noise complaints from nearby occupied properties. The goal shall be to respond to any noise complaint within 24-hours and to initiate noise controls to reduce noise originating from the site during construction.

Transportation

TRAN-1 The Department shall require its contractors prepare a construction and parking traffic control plan. Elements of the plan should include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Develop circulation and detour plans, if necessary, to minimize impacts to local street and State Highway circulation. Use haul routes minimizing truck traffic on local roadways to the extent possible.
- To the extent feasible, and as needed to avoid adverse impacts on traffic flow, schedule truck trips outside of peak morning and evening commute hours.
- Install traffic control devices as specified in Caltrans' Manual of Traffic Controls for Construction and Maintenance Work Zones where needed to maintain safe driving conditions. Use flaggers and/or signage to safely direct traffic through construction work zones.
- For roadways requiring lane closures that would result in a single open lane, maintain alternate one-way traffic flow and utilize flagger-controls.

- Coordinate with owners or administrators of sensitive land uses such as police and fire stations, hospitals, and schools. Provide advance notification to the facility owners or operators of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities.

TRAN-2 The Department shall require that all disturbances to public roadways be repaired in a manner that complies with the Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction (green book) or other applicable City of Big Bear Lake and Caltrans standard design requirements.

Tribal Cultural Resources

TCR-1 The Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation Cultural Resources Department (YSMN) shall be contacted, as detailed in CUL-1, of any pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources discovered during project implementation, and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide Tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be significant, as defined by CEQA (as amended, 2015), a cultural-resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with YSMN, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for a monitor to be present that represents YSMN for the remainder of the project, should YSMN elect to place a monitor in-site.

TCR-2 Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the project (isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be supplied to the applicant and Lead Agency for dissemination to YSMN. The Lead Agency and/or applicant shall, in good faith, consult with YSMN throughout the life of the project.

REFERENCES

- City of Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, March 2022. <https://www.bbldwp.com/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/249> (accessed 4/12/23)
- Big Bear Area Regional Wastewater Agency, Bear Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainable Agency, 2023. <https://www.bbarwa.org/bear-valley-basin-groundwater-sustainability-agency/> (accessed 4/12/23)
- California Department of Water Resources, Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/SGMA-Groundwater-Management> (accessed 4/12/23)
- CRM TECH, "Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report Project, Garstin Water Operations Facility Improvement Project, City of Big Bear Lake, San Bernardino County, California" dated September 28, 2023
- Gerrick Environmental, "*Air Quality and GHG Impact Analyses, Garstin Water Operations Facility, Big Bear Lake, California*" dated August 23, 2023
- Jacobs, "*City of Big Bear Lake Department of Water and Power Garstin Water Operations Facility Project, Biological Resources Assessment and Jurisdictional Delineation Report*" dated September 2023
- San Bernardino County Planning Department, Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Big Bear City Airport. <http://www.sbcounty.gov/Uploads/lus/Airports/BigBear.pdf> (accessed 4-12-23)

FIGURES

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 2

APPENDIX 3

APPENDIX 4