

## 8.0 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Section 15128 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires an EIR to contain a brief statement indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and therefore not discussed in detail in the EIR. The proposed Project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts to the resources discussed below.

### 8.1 Aesthetics

The current monofill site is bounded by open land on three (3) sides and is adjacent to Highway 86 on the North side. However, the facility is sufficiently distanced from Highway 86 such that it is not easily viewed by vehicles traveling along the highway. In addition, the tan color of the waste disposed of at the site blends into the treeless sandy desert landscape, with rock outcropping, such that the monofill blends with the background and does not present a negative visual impact.

The project would be considered to have a significant impact if it would:

- 1) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- 2) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
- 3) 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 and other regulations governing scenic quality.
- 4) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

#### *Analysis*

##### **Impact 8.1-1: Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.**

The Project site, which is surrounded by open desert to the north, south and west, and by the existing DVC monofill on the east, is not considered to be a scenic vista nor is it an area designated as a scenic route in Imperial County (County of Imperial, 2008). There are no designated scenic vistas or viewpoints on or near the Project site that would include views of the proposed expansion area. No adverse impacts on a scenic vista would occur and impacts would be less than significant.

**Impact 8.1-2: Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.**

The project area does not have scenic resources, trees, rock outcroppings, historic buildings, or state scenic highways; therefore, there are no impacts on these features.

**Impact 8.1-3: Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.**

State Route (Highway) 86, the highway nearest the Project site, is located more than 1 ¼ miles from the northern and western boundary of the existing DVC Monofill. State Route (Highway) 86 is not designated, nor is it eligible for designation, as a State scenic highway per Caltrans State Scenic Highway Program (Caltrans, 2017). The Project site does not contain scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, or state scenic highways. No impacts would occur.

**Impact 8.1-4: Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.**

The DVC Monofill is an existing facility in operation since 1991 and has become an established and accepted part of the landscape. The Project includes the addition of a new solid waste disposal cell (Cell 4) immediately west of, and adjacent to the existing monofill. Similar to the existing monofill, the final heights of the perimeter dikes and the waste disposal cells would be approximately 20 feet and 30 feet above existing grades, respectively (Veizades & Associates, 2019). Given the distance between the Project site and the nearest public viewers (motorists on State Route [Highway] 86) and the similarity in the height of existing and proposed features, the visual character and quality of public views of the Project site and its surroundings would not be substantially degraded. Impacts would be less than significant.

## **8.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources**

The project would be considered to have a significant impact if it would:

- 1) 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.
- 2) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.
- 3) 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)).

- 4) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.
- 5) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use.

### *Analysis*

The Project site is raw desert and has not been used for farming. The land has been owned by CalEnergy for many years and is not included in the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program database. No impacts to agricultural resources would occur.

**Impact 8.2-1: 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.**

According to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Map for Imperial County (2018), the Project site does not contain Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance (California Dept. of Conservation, 2018). No impacts related to the conversion of FMMP farmlands to non-agricultural use would occur.

**Impact 8.2-2: Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.**

The Project site is located within the "S-2 Zone", which is considered to be the Open Space Preservation Zone. While the storage of agricultural products is an allowable use within the S-2 Zone, agricultural operations or other agricultural uses are not allowed (County of Imperial, 2017). Additionally, the Project site is not covered under a Williamson Act contract (California Dept. of Conservation, 2016). For these reasons, the Project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur under this threshold.

**Impact 8.2-3: 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)).**

Neither the Project site nor surrounding areas are used for timber production or are defined as forest lands. The project would not conflict with any zoning designations designed to preserve timber or agricultural resources. No impact would occur under this threshold.

**Impact 8.2-4: Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.**

There are no existing forest lands either on-site or in the immediate vicinity of the Project site. The Project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; therefore, no impacts would occur.

**Impact 8.2-5: Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use.**

The Project does not include changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature would result in the conversion of neighboring farmland to non-agricultural use. The Project site is surrounded by open desert and the nearest agricultural lands occur approximately one mile to the north, across State Route 86/Highway 86. The Project would not result in the conversion of farmlands off-site to non-agricultural uses and no impact would occur.

### **8.3. Energy**

The project would generally be considered to have a significant effect if it would:

- 1) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation.
- 2) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

#### *Analysis*

**Impact 8.3-1 Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation.**

During construction, energy usage will primarily be diesel engines, and during operations energy use will not change significantly from current consumption levels. No wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation would occur, therefore the project would have a less than significant impact.

**Impact 8.3-2 Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.**

Approval of the Project would allow the continued operations of CalEnergy's geothermal facilities; which contribute positively to California's renewal energy goal. The Project would support California's Renewable Portfolio Standard goal of increasing the percentage of electricity procured from renewable sources to 50 percent. The Project would comply with fuel and energy efficiency regulations, it would not conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and no impact would occur.

## 8.4 Mineral Resources

The project would generally be considered to have a significant effect if it would:

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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.

### *Analysis*

**Impacts 8.4-1 & 8.4.2 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; 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.**

A number of mineral resources are currently being extracted in Imperial County including gold, gypsum, sand, gravel, lime, clay, stone, kyanite, limestone, sericite, mica, tuff, salt, potash, and manganese. According to the Existing Mineral Resources Map (Figure 8) in the Conservation and Open Space Element of the County of Imperial General Plan (2016), no known mineral resources occur within the Project vicinity nor are there any mapped mineral resources within the boundary of the Project site (County of Imperial, 2016). Thus, no impacts related to the loss of availability of a known or locally important mineral resource would occur.

## 8.5 Population and Housing

The Project would generally be considered to have a significant effect if it would:

- 1) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of road or other infrastructure).
- 2) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

### *Analysis*

**Impact 8.5-1: Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly.**

The Project is an expansion of an existing CalEnergy solid waste disposal facility and does not include the demolition of existing housing, nor the construction of new housing or public infrastructure that would directly or indirectly induce unplanned population growth. Operations of

proposed Cell 4 would be similar to current operations at Cell 3. Increases in personnel would only be required during construction which would not result in population growth in the area. No impacts are expected.

**Impact 8.5-2: Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.**

The Project does not involve any housing and is not expected to displace substantial number of people; therefore, no impacts are expected.

## **8.6 Public Services**

The project would generally be considered to have a significant effect if it would 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 public services including:

- 1) Fire protection
- 2) Police protection
- 3) Schools
- 4) Parks
- 5) Other public facilities

### ***Analysis***

**Impacts 8.6-1 through 8.6-5: Fire Protection, Police Protection, Schools, Parks, Other Public Facilities.**

#### **Fire Protection**

Fire protection in the project area is provided by the Westmorland Volunteer Fire Department under contract with the County of Imperial. The Westmorland Fire Station is located at 230 W Main St, Westmorland, CA 92281, approximately 15 miles from the Project site. The projected emergency response time to the Project site is 20 minutes (ERC Environmental and Energy Services Co., 1990). Secondary response for a major fire would come from the Salton City station, located north of the Project site at 1520 Nile Dr, Salton City, CA 92275. The Project could result in continued demand for fire protection associated with the extended life of the landfill. However, it is anticipated that existing personnel and equipment would be adequate to provide fire protection services to the DVM under the proposed Project. Therefore, impacts related to fire protection would be considered less than significant.

### Police Protection

Police services are provided by the Imperial County Sheriff's Department. Staff includes 56 sworn officers, including the Sheriff, resulting in a level of service ratio of 1 sworn officer to 532 residents (ERC Environmental and Energy Services Co., 1990). The nearest substations are located in Salton City, 2101 S Marina Dr, Salton City, CA 92274, and in Brawley, 220 Main St, #207 Brawley, CA 92227, approximately 25 and 27 miles from the Project site, respectively. The projected emergency response time to the Project area is approximately 20 minutes from both stations. Existing law enforcement service in the area would be adequate to meet the demand for police protection services for Project because extending the life of the landfill would not require additional services beyond those currently provided. Therefore, no impacts related to police protection would occur.

### Schools

The Project would not adversely impact schools because no population increase or shifts in population would occur as a result of Project implementation. Therefore, no impacts related to schools would occur.

### Parks

The Project would not entail the construction of residential or commercial uses that would result in an increase in park usage or the need for new/altered parks. Therefore, no impacts related to parks would occur.

### Other Public Facilities

The Project is not anticipated to adversely affect the County's overall ability to provide services countywide. The need for new or altered government facilities or services is not anticipated. Therefore, no impacts related to other public facilities would occur.

The expansion of the monofill would not affect access to public services in any areas of the county. The project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area which would result in the need for new or expanded facilities. The expansion of the monofill would not increase police or fire protection needs at the site. No impacts would occur.

## **8.7 Recreation**

The project would generally be considered to have a significant effect if it would:

- 1) 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?
- 2) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

### *Analysis*

**Impact 8.7-1: 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.**

The proposed expansion of the DVCM does not generate users of park or other recreational facilities except for a small number of employees who may utilize these facilities during off-duty hours. No impact would occur.

**Impact 8.7-2: Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which have an adverse physical effect on the environment.**

No recreational facilities are included in the Project nor would it require the need to construct or expand existing recreational facilities; therefore, no impacts are expected.

## **8.8 Wildfires**

The project would generally be considered to have a significant effect if it is located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones and would:

- 1) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan
- 2) Exacerbate wildfire risks and expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors.
- 3) 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.
- 4) 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.

### *Analysis*

**Impact 8.8-1: Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.**

According to the Draft Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map for Imperial County prepared by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the Project site is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2007). The Project site is not located in or near a state responsibility area and is not classified as a very high severity zone in the Draft Local Responsibility Area for



Imperial County. As noted in Section 4.6 Hazards and Hazardous Materials, the proposed Project would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No impact would occur.

**Impact 8.8-2: Exacerbate wildfire risks and expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors.**

The Project site is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2007). Therefore, the proposed Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks. No impact would occur.

**Impact 8.3-3: 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.**

The Project site is not located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2007). The proposed Project would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. No impact would occur.

**Impact 8.4-4: 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.**

The Project site is not located in or near a state responsibility area or within lands classified as very high hazard severity zones (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2007). The Project would not 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. No impact would occur.

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