

4.17 LESS than SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

This section discusses those factors determined to be less than significant that do not require a full environmental impact analysis. Section 15128 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires an EIR to briefly describe any possible significant effects that were determined not to be significant. The environmental factors discussed below represent the remainder of checklist questions as listed in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines that were not discussed in the other impact sections of the EIR (sections 4.1 through 4.16). Environmental Factors discussed in this section include Hydrology and Water Quality (impacts related to changes to the drainage pattern of the area, flooding due to the alteration of a stream or river, and risk from tsunamis, seiches, mudflows or flooding as a result of levee failure), and Mineral Resources.

4.17.1 Geology and Soils

Septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems. Development that would occur as a result of the proposed General Plan Update would mostly occur within urban areas or within the urban fringe of existing urban areas. Thus it is anticipated that the majority of new development would occur within existing areas served by an existing sewer system. However, there may be some new development that requires the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems. Chapter 13.08 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code describes requirements for septic tanks that would ensure soil conditions would adequately support such facilities. As part of the code requirements, any new disposal systems or modifications to an existing system require a permit from the County's Environmental Health Division which would review the site and location of such systems ensuring that soil conditions and the installation of such a system at that location is feasible and would not result in significant impacts.

4.17.2 Hydrology and Water Quality

Drainage and Flooding due to alteration of a stream or river. Development that would occur as a result of the proposed General Plan Update would mostly occur within urban areas or within the urban fringe of existing urban areas. Approximately 77.14 percent of the County's total land area is government controlled, including Yosemite National Park and Stanislaus National Forest. These types of public uses do not generally facilitate the development of substantial impervious surfaces. As such, development under the General Plan Update would not result in substantial amounts of impervious surface such that groundwater recharge is severely hindered. In addition, the proposed General Plan Update would not facilitate development that would change the drainage pattern of an area or result in flooding due to the alteration of a stream or river, as the General Plan Update does not propose such actions.

Tsunamis, seiches, mudflows or flooding as a result of levee failure. As an inland region separated from the Pacific Ocean by approximately 150 miles, Tuolumne County is at no risk from tsunamis. According to the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, earthquake-induced seiches also do not pose a risk to Tuolumne County. There are no levees located within the County. Therefore, flooding as a result of a levee failure would not occur. As the proposed General Plan Update would facilitate development in urban areas or within the urban fringe, inundation by a mudflow would not occur.



No impacts would occur in these issue areas.

4.17.3 Mineral Resources

Tuolumne County has extensive mining history and resources. Current operating mines in Tuolumne County gather limestone and dolomite, and various forms of crushed rock, gravel, and sand products. A number of properties have been classified as State Mineral Resource Zones, including the Southern Half of the Bald Mountain/ Browns Flat Gold Mining District (MRZ-2b), the Jamestown Mine (MRZ-2a, MRZ-2b, and MRZ-3a), and portions of the Rough and Ready Creek site (MRZ-2a and MRZ-2b). Further, various properties with precious metals, carbonate rock, and concrete-grade aggregate resources have been classified as State Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ-2a, and MRZ-2b) as identified by the Division of Mines and Geology Open-File Report 97-09, 1997. In addition, the California Department of Conservation, Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources (DOGGR) maintains records of the location and details of construction and abandonment of all oil and gas wells. Oil wells were not identified within Tuolumne County using the Division of Oil, Gas & Geothermal Resources Well Finder. The General Plan Land Use Element designates lands as Mineral Preserve (-MPZ) overlay throughout the County including those lands identified above. The existing General Plan has a Conservation and Open Space Element describing the County's policies for the conservation and development of mineral resources. The proposed General Plan Update would not remove or replace the programs and policies that protect mineral resources in the area. The only change would be the name of the element from "Conservation and Open Space" to "Natural Resources". Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the direct loss of availability of known mineral resources that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state or a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. There would be no impact.

