

4.9 ONSHORE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

4.9.1 Impact Criteria and Methodology

Under CEQA, a significant effect is defined as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment (Pub. Res. Code § 21068). The guidelines implementing CEQA direct that this determination be based on scientific and factual data. Marin County's significant criteria for traffic and circulation are as follows:

- Does the project traffic significantly affect intersection level of service (LOS), resulting in an unacceptable service level (i.e., below LOS D)?
- Does the project have adequate parking and internal circulation capacity to accommodate projected traffic so that off-site areas are not adversely affected?
- Does the project include provisions for pedestrian and bicycle circulation and bicycle and motorcycle parking and security?

Given the special characteristics of this project, the above criteria do not appear to be appropriate for this EIS/EIR. The truck traffic generated by the project is not significant enough to cause intersections to degrade below LOS D. However, the truck activity would exacerbate any substandard condition that may exist along the disposal route. Therefore, the project would affect traffic within the Tamalpais Valley, along Highway 101, between Corte Madera and northern Novato. Should the trucks travel north of Highway 1, through Point Reyes Station to Nicasio and eastward to Novato, the effects of the traffic would be less severe because this route is not subject to the same substandard peak hour or peak period congestion. However, given the low volumes of traffic on the northern route, the presence of trucks may be more noticeable.

To address the environmental impacts of this project, several issues should be addressed in the EIS/EIR. The impacts associated with these issues may not be quantifiable, but they present the types of effects that the project would produce within the local environmental and along the disposal routes. These issues include the following:

- Does the project's traffic adversely affect the roadway pavement near the site and along the disposal routes, between the site and Redwood Landfill?
- Does the project have an adequate staging area?
- How will the project's construction staff and management team access the project area and evacuation locations?
- Will the project produce the need to provide traffic control and other roadway construction management techniques during construction?

Traffic along the Highway 1/Tamalpais Valley/Highway 101 route is very congested during the morning and evening peak hours. The congestion periods occur between 6:30 AM and 9:00 AM in the southbound direction and from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM in the northbound direction. The congestion areas include the following:

- Morning peak period—Highway 101 southbound, from the Rowland Boulevard interchange in Novato, south to central San Rafael, and sometime south of San Rafael near Richardson Bay;
- Evening peak period—Highway 101 northbound, from Corte Madera through San Rafael, and again near the Rowland Boulevard interchange north of Novato, past the Redwood Landfill (the so-called 101 Narrows); and
- Local roadways near Stinson Beach, Mt. Tamalpais, Muir Woods, and other recreational destinations during the summer. While travel to west Marin occurs throughout the entire west Marin area (south near the site and north within the Point Reyes National Seashore), the congestion occurs along Panoramic Highway and near Stinson Beach.

Because of these conditions, truck traffic between Bolinas and the Redwood Landfill should be limited to the non-peak congestion periods from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM on Highway 101, between Tamalpais Valley (Mill Valley area) and Novato. Alternatively, a modified program for truck routing could be used; for example, loaded trucks could travel from Bolinas to the Redwood Landfill using Highway 101 in the morning off-peak period and then return to Bolinas using San Marin Drive to reach Highway 1 in Point Reyes Station. During the evening peak period, trucks could use Highway 1 and San Marin Drive to reach Highway 101 at the north end of Novato and return to Bolinas via Highway 101 southbound through San Rafael and the Tamalpais Valley. In other words, trucks should be routed in the uncongested directions between Bolinas and the Redwood Landfill.

As part of the environmental setting information, two routes between Bolinas and Highway 101 were examined. One route uses Highway 1 through Tamalpais Valley to Highway 101 near Richardson Bay, while the other uses Highway 1, Point Reyes-Petaluma Road, Novato Boulevard, and San Marin Drive to reach Highway 101 at the north end of Novato. The route through Tamalpais Valley has many switchbacks and a Caltrans restriction limiting truck length to 35 feet. The changes in elevation are severe and frequent. The route through west Marin is less difficult to manage. This route would proceed north along Highway 1, through Point Reyes Station into Hicks Valley, and then east, using Novato Boulevard to Novato near San Marin High School, where Novato Boulevard and San Marin Drive intersect. San Marin Drive from this point east to Highway 101 is a designated truck route and provides direct access to Highway 101. The Redwood Landfill is a few miles north of the Highway 101/San Marin Drive interchange.

4.9.2 Riparian Alternative

The route through west Marin is about 28 miles long but terminates in Novato, about 2.7 miles west of the Highway 101/San Marin Drive interchange. The distance along Highway 101, between the Tamalpais Valley and the Highway 101/San Marin Drive interchange, is 17.8 miles. Therefore, the west Marin route and Highway 101 route between Bolinas and the Highway 101/San Marin Drive interchange would be almost exactly the same length, at 31 miles. Because of traffic conditions through Tamalpais Valley, the preferred disposal route is the west Marin route.

Less Than Significant Impacts

Impact on Traffic Volumes

Estimates of truck-related traffic were made for each of the project alternatives. A total of 4,714 truckloads were calculated for the Riparian Alternative. These truckloads convert into 9,428 one-way trips. On average, the daily number of truck trips is estimated at 116 (58 average truck loads per day times two one-way trips between Bolinas Lagoon and the Redwood Landfill and the return trip). Based on the peak hour traffic volumes cited in Section 3.1.3, the project could contribute up to a one percent increase in daily traffic near Fairfax Bolinas Road and a 2.1 percent increase near Bolinas Road. Along the Highway 101 corridor, the project would generate a very small increase in peak hour traffic; however, the introduction of trucks into the existing congestion during peak hours along Highway 101 would result in greater impacts than the same contribution of traffic along the Highway 1 corridor.

Mitigation: The project sponsor should include truck routes that include the Highway 1/San Marin Drive route for travel between Bolinas Lagoon and the Redwood Landfill. This would keep the trucks from getting caught in the heavy traffic on the Highway 101 route. Alternatively, routing that takes advantage of non-peak traffic flows could be adopted.

Mitigation: With the final determination of the travel routes between the various extraction points, Winnebago Point and the Redwood Landfill, the sponsor would develop a traffic control plan for each route to define the hours of operation, numbers of trucks accessing each route, the exact travel path between the site and the landfill (including the return route), and any other details concerning the overall operation. The project would be directed to limit travel times to off-peak hour periods and to off-peak recreation travel times. Given these constraints, the adopted travel routes between the local extraction sites and the Redwood Landfill may vary, based on the time of year and time of day.

Impact on Local Conditions

There are two major issues for local impacts: First, construction vehicle staging, encroachment, and roadway disruptions, and second, employee parking and site access. During each construction period, trucks would be moved from the staging area at Winnebago Point to the actual extraction points, disposal debris would be loaded, and

then the trucks would proceed to the Redwood Landfill. Potential environmental impacts would occur between Winnebago Point and the extraction points and along the travel route to the Redwood Landfill. These impacts could be reduced to less than significant levels if measures are taken to ensure minor impacts are mitigated back to pre-project conditions.

Mitigation: Before any construction, the project sponsor should retain an independent firm to survey the roadway conditions between Winnebago Point and the various extraction points and along the selected route for travel to and from the Redwood Landfill. Once the project or specific extraction phase has been completed, the project proponents would be responsible for reconstructing all roadways, pullouts, and other roadway facilities that might have been damaged during the course of the extraction to pre-construction conditions.

Mitigation: The project sponsor should develop a management program to address employee parking and travel to and from the various work sites. The program should include candidate locations for employee parking, staging, and other short-term travel disruptions.

Mitigation: Once the final locations for actual material extraction locations are identified, the sponsor should develop a traffic control plan, which should include details on potential roadway disruptions for normal traffic operations. This plan should keep traffic control devices, flag persons, traffic diversions, and other disruptions in normal traffic patterns to as low a level of disruption as possible.

4.9.3 Estuarine Alternative

Traffic impacts from the Estuarine Alternative would be nearly identical to those from the Riparian Alternative, but there would be a greater volume of traffic generated by the greater excavation in the PGC Delta. The Estuarine Alternative would create about 7,684 truckloads of material for disposal. These truckloads convert into 15,368 one-way trips. These volumes would not exceed the level of service, and therefore the impacts from the Estuarine Alternative would be less than significant, as described above under the Riparian Alternative.

4.9.4 No Action Alternative

There would be no traffic impacts from the No Action Alternative.