

## 4 Environmental Impact Analysis

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This section discusses the environmental effects of the 2040 MTP/SCS for the specific issue areas that were identified through the scoping process as having the potential to experience significant effects. “Significant effect” is defined by the *CEQA Guidelines* §15382 as:

“...a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment, but may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.”

The assessment of each issue includes a discussion of the setting for that issue and an analysis of the project’s impact. Within the impact analysis, the first subsection identifies the methodologies used and the “significance thresholds,” which are those criteria that are utilized by AMBAG, its member agencies, or other agencies, are universally recognized, or have been developed specifically for this analysis to determine whether effects are significant. The next subsection describes each impact of the proposed project, mitigation measures for significant impacts and the level of significance after mitigation. Each effect under consideration for an issue area is separately listed in bold text, with the discussion of the effect and its significance following. Each bolded impact listing also contains a statement of the significance determination for the environmental impact as follows:

**Significant and Unavoidable.** An impact that cannot be reduced to below the threshold level given feasible mitigation measures.

**Significant but Mitigable.** An impact that can be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures.

**Less than Significant.** An impact that may be adverse, but does not exceed the threshold levels and does not require mitigation measures. However, mitigation measures that could further lessen the environmental effect may be suggested if readily available and easily achievable.

**No Impact.** The proposed project would have no effect on environmental conditions or would reduce existing environmental problems or hazards.

Following each environmental effect discussion are recommended mitigation measures and the residual effects or level of significance remaining after the implementation of the measures. While AMBAG and the RTPAs cannot mandate that sponsoring agencies implement the mitigation measures, ongoing interagency consultation during project specific environmental review process would ensure that mitigation contained herein is considered and implemented where applicable. Project-specific environmental documents may adjust these mitigation measures as necessary to respond to site-specific conditions. Many section concludes with a screening-level discussion of specific MTP/SCS transportation projects that may result in identified impacts.

The Executive Summary of this EIR summarizes all impacts and mitigation measures that apply to the 2040 MTP/SCS.

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