

## 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

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### 3.0.1 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section of the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) evaluates the potential of the Plan to result in significant impacts to the environment. This section provides a full scope of environmental analysis in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (*State CEQA Guidelines*).

As a result of the detailed evaluation contained in this PEIR, it has been determined that the Plan would result in potentially significant impacts to Aesthetics; Agriculture and Forestry Resources; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use and Planning; Mineral Resources; Noise; Population and Housing, Public Services; Recreation; Transportation, Traffic, and Safety; Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities and Service Systems and Wildfire. Although mitigation measures have been proposed for all of the above issue areas that would reduce the potentially significant impacts to the maximum extent practicable, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable, even with the implementation of mitigation measures.

Each section provides the regulatory framework, existing conditions, thresholds of significance, impact analysis, mitigation measures for significant impacts, and level of significance after mitigation. The applicable federal, state, regional, county, and local statutes and regulations that govern individual environmental resources that must be considered by SCAG in the decision-making process are included in the regulatory framework described for each environmental resource. The existing conditions portion of the analysis has been prepared in accordance with the *State CEQA Guidelines* and includes a description of the environment in the Plan area. The existing conditions are described based on literature review, archived resources, and agency coordination. Significance thresholds were established in accordance with Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines*. The level of significance after mitigation was evaluated in accordance with the thresholds of significance and the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant impacts to below the significance threshold. The impact analysis contained in this environmental document is based on the implementation of Connect SoCal as described in **Chapter 2.0, Project Description**.

### 3.0.2 MITIGATION MEASURES

The PEIR addresses a large-scale region with a variety of projects spread over more than 20 years. As such, this PEIR identifies regional-level mitigation measures to be implemented by SCAG over the lifetime of the Plan as well as project-level mitigation measures for lead agencies to consider, as applicable and feasible, in subsequent project-specific design, CEQA review, and decision-making processes. As described in more detail in **Chapter 1.0, Introduction**, it is ultimately up to the lead agency to determine the appropriateness of the mitigation measures based on project-specific circumstances. As appropriate and authorized by the *CEQA Guidelines* and case law, the mitigation measures to be implemented by SCAG in this PEIR are less detailed than those that would be part of a project EIR and the more detailed project-level, performance standards-based mitigation measures are properly deferred to future project-specific CEQA reviews.

Since SCAG has no authority to require specific mitigation measures at the project level, and lead or responsible agencies have the discretion to determine which mitigation measures are applicable and feasible based on the location-specific circumstances, identification of programmatic mitigation measures fulfill SCAG's responsibility, that may be considered (among others) for implementation by lead, responsible, or trustee agencies in the region as applicable and feasible.

The mitigation measures presented in this PEIR recognize the limits of SCAG's authority; distinguish between SCAG commitments and project-level responsibilities and authorities; optimize flexibility for project implementation; and facilitate CEQA streamlining and tiering where appropriate on a project-by-project basis determined by each lead agency.