

5.13 VISUAL RESOURCES

5.13.1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning Environmental Checklist Form, which has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), requires that aesthetic issues be evaluated as part of the environmental documentation process. The impacts of the Project are analyzed at a project-level of detail; direct and indirect impacts are addressed for each threshold criterion for both the on-site and off-site Project features. Growth-inducing impacts and cumulative impacts are described in Sections 6.0 and 7.0, respectively.

Summary

The Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to a change in visual character of the Project site, as experienced by viewers at public vantage points (primarily existing transportation thoroughfares including State Route [SR] 138 and 300th Street West). The Project proposes to preserve many existing features to minimize the visual alteration of the site, as listed in PDFs 13-1 through 13-6, as required for implementation through Mitigation Measures (MMs) 7-13 from Section 5.7, Biological Resources, and MMs 13-1 through 13-3. These include retention of rock outcroppings visible from off-site areas; use of landform/contour grading; use of landscaping designs that are similar to the natural topography; preservation of open space; use of native and regionally appropriate plant species in public landscape areas; provision of development setbacks from natural areas; and inclusion of aesthetically pleasing and consistent Project signing and monumentation both internally and externally. However, even with these features, the overall change to the site resulting from grading and development of the Project would be a substantial visual impact that may be perceived by some as an impact for which no additional feasible mitigation exists, and would therefore remain significant and unavoidable.

Views from existing public regional trails and bikeways would be limited due to both the distance and the intervening topography between these routes and the Project site, and would result in a less than significant impact. The United States Forest Service (USFS), Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA), Tejon Ranch Conservancy (Conservancy) and the Applicant have discussed the relocation of one segment of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) that is currently located approximately 1.75 miles to the east-southeast at the nearest point from the site, so that it is generally aligned along 300th Street West between SR-138 and the northeastern corner of the Project site. The USFS and PCTA's acceptance of the conceptual future alignment in concert with the Project indicates their concurrence that this is an acceptable and preferable location over the existing alignment. It is anticipated that any structures that are proposed along PCT would be screened by a wall along the rear of the residences (see MM 13-4); additionally, a wide, landscaped setback containing the conceptual PCT realignment would ensure that the urban uses in the foreground would have

limited visibility and would therefore result in a less than significant impact with implementation of MM 13-4.

There are no State-designated scenic highways within 20 miles of the Project boundaries; SR-138 is not a State scenic highway, nor is it eligible for listing (Caltrans 2011). Thus, while there are features on and around the Project site that would be considered scenic by many, because these components of the overall visual character are not within the viewshed of a State-designated scenic highway, the proposed changes to the Project site would not result in impacts related to damaging scenic resources along a scenic highway.

The *Los Angeles County General Plan* does not identify any scenic highway near the site (DRP 2015a); however, the Antelope Valley Area Plan (AVAP) identifies Scenic Drives. Interstate (I)5, Gorman Post Road, SR-138, Old Ridge Road (Highway N-2), and Three Points Road are designated in the AVAP as Scenic Drives on and near the site. However, the site is also within the West Economic Opportunity Area and a Future Rural Town Area (DRP 2015b). A listing of applicable AVAP goals and policies is listed below in Section 5.13.3.

As the area is a rural environment with few existing land uses that emit ambient light, the Project site and surrounding areas do not contain bright or uniquely noticeable lighting, with the exception of the National Cement Plant, which has lighting at the facility and along the access road (i.e., National Cement Plant Road). The Project would introduce new light sources as part of future development. The Project would include preparation of an Exterior Lighting (photometric) Plan, also referred to as “the Dark Sky Plan”, to require outdoor lighting that minimizes glare and prevents light spillover beyond the Project site boundaries by using various techniques—which may include hooded street lights, directing light downward, and timers or sensors on lights—while maintaining consistency with County lighting and safety standards (MM 13-6). However, due to the existing low nighttime ambient light levels in the area, implementation of the Project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact by contributing a substantial new source of nighttime light and glare. In addition, because the Project site is currently undeveloped, new sources of daytime glare would be introduced and potential glare impacts would be greater than existing conditions; this would be considered a significant and unavoidable impact.

Section Format

As described in Section 5.0, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation, and in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Article 9 (Contents of Environmental Impact Reports), each topical environmental analysis includes a description of the existing setting; identification of thresholds of significance; analysis of potential Project effects and identification of significant impacts; identification of mitigation measures, if required, to reduce significant impacts; and level of significance after mitigation, if any. This information is presented in the following format (please refer to Section 2.0, Introduction, and Section 5.0, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation, for descriptions of these topics):

- Introduction
 - Purpose
 - Summary

- Section Format
- References
- Viewsheds and Visual Distance Zones
- Relevant Plans, Policies, and Regulations
- Environmental Setting
- Project Design Features
- Threshold Criteria
- Environmental Impacts—A separate analysis is provided for each of the following categories of potential impacts:
 - On-Site Impacts
 - Off-Site Impacts
- Mitigation Measures
- Level of Significance After Mitigation
- References

References

All references cited for preparation of this analysis are listed in Section 5.13.10.

5.13.2 VIEWSHEDS AND VISUAL DISTANCE ZONES

This section describes the aesthetic character and landform features of the Project site and immediate vicinity and discusses potential visual impacts that could result from implementation of the Project by identifying (1) corridors from which the Project site can be seen; (2) “viewsheds” where the development area is most visible from public vantage points; (3) “prominent visual features”; and (4) typical examples of commercial and residential land uses that demonstrate potential changes in the visual character of the Project site.

A “viewpoint” is defined as a specific location from which a view perspective is taken. A “viewshed” is defined as a broader perspective of a geographic area and incorporates both close-range and long-range elements. “Prominent visual features”, as used in this section, are features that are unique to the west Antelope Valley and/or are prominent in relation to their relative surroundings. The “development area” is the portion of the Project site that will be developed.

To provide a standard frame of reference for the reader, the visual character within each of the viewsheds is described in terms of foreground, middleground, and background views. Each represents a portion of the total view, based on distance from the viewing location or “viewpoint”. The different view zones are described below.

- **Foreground Zone.** Visual elements in this zone can be seen at a close distance and typically dominate the entire view. View impacts on this zone are often considered to be substantial because they are visually prominent.

- **Middleground Zone.** Visual elements in this zone can be seen at a moderate distance and partially dominate the view.
- **Background Zone.** Visual elements in this zone can be seen at a long distance and typically do not dominate the view, but are part of the overall visual composition of the viewshed.

The delineation between one viewing range and the next is largely based on prominent transitions in landscape character and the reduction in visibility of the landscape features as distance increases; however, it should be noted that the judgments of such transitions are subjective.

5.13.3 RELEVANT PLANS, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS

Federal

No federal plans and policies have been identified related to visual resources.

State

California Department of Transportation State Scenic Highway Program

Through the California Scenic Highway Program, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) classifies highways meeting specific criteria as “scenic” throughout California. The purpose of the program is to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from changes that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. According to Caltrans, “a highway may be designated scenic depending upon how much of the natural landscape can be seen by travelers, the scenic quality of the landscape, and the extent to which development intrudes upon the traveler’s enjoyment of the view” (Caltrans 2015).

County

Los Angeles County General Plan and Antelope Valley Area Plan

The *Los Angeles County General Plan* and the *Antelope Valley Area Plan (AVAP)*, which is part of the County General Plan, include goals and policies that address aesthetic issues in the unincorporated County area. Goals and policies in the AVAP that are relevant to the Project’s visual resources include those listed below.

Land Use Element

Goal LU 1: A land use pattern that maintains and enhances the rural character of the unincorporated Antelope Valley.

- **Policy LU 1.1:** Direct the majority of the unincorporated Antelope Valley’s future growth to rural town center areas and identified economic opportunity areas, through appropriate land use designations, as indicated in the Land Use Policy Map (Map 2.1) of this Area Plan.

- **Policy LU 1.2:** Limit the amount of potential development in rural preserve areas, through appropriate land use designations with very low residential densities, as indicated in the Land Use Policy Map (Map 2.1) of this Area Plan.
- **Policy LU 2.2:** Limit the amount of potential development within Scenic Resource Areas, including water features, significant ridgelines, and Hillside Management Areas, through appropriate land use designations, as indicated in the Land Use Policy Map (Map 2.1) of this Area Plan.

Conservation and Open Space Element

Goal COS 5: The Antelope Valley's scenic resources, including scenic drives, water features, significant ridgelines, buttes, and Hillside Management Areas, are enjoyed by future generations.

- **Policy COS 5.2:** Except within economic opportunity areas, limit the amount of potential development in Scenic Resource Areas through appropriate land use designations with very low densities in order to minimize negative impacts from future development.
- **Policy COS 5.3:** Require new development in Hillside Management Areas to comply with applicable Zoning Code requirements, ensuring that development occurs on the most environmentally suitable portions of the land.
- **Policy COS 5.4:** Require appropriate development standards in Hillside Management Areas that minimize grading and alteration of the land's natural contours, ensure that development pads mimic natural contours, and ensure that individual structures are appropriately designed to minimize visual impacts.
- **Policy COS 5.7:** Ensure that incompatible development is discouraged in designated Scenic Drives by developing and implementing development standards and guidelines for development within identified viewsheds of these routes (Map 4.2: Antelope Valley Scenic Drives).

Goal COS 14: Energy infrastructure that is sensitive to the scenic qualities of the Antelope Valley and minimizes potential environmental impacts.

- **Policy COS 14.1:** Require that new transmission lines be placed underground whenever physically feasible.
- **Policy COS 14.2:** If new transmission lines cannot feasibly be placed underground due to physical constraints, require that they be collocated with existing transmission lines, or along existing transmission corridors, whenever physically feasible.
- **Policy COS 14.3:** If new transmission lines cannot feasibly be placed underground or feasibly collocated with existing transmission lines or along existing transmission corridors due to physical constraints, direct new transmission lines to locations where environmental and visual impacts will be minimized.
- **Policy COS 14.5:** Discourage the placement of new transmission lines through existing communities or through properties with existing residential uses.

- **Policy COS 14.7:** Require that electrical power lines in new residential developments be placed underground.

Goal COS 15: Humans and wildlife enjoy beautiful dark Antelope Valley skies unimpeded by light pollution.

- **Policy COS 15.1:** Ensure that outdoor lighting, including street lighting, is provided at the lowest possible level while maintaining safety.
- **Policy COS 15.2:** Prohibit continuous all-night outdoor lighting in rural areas, unless required for land uses with unique security concerns, such as fire stations, hospitals, and prisons.
- **Policy COS 15.4:** Require compliance with the provisions of the Rural Outdoor Lighting District throughout the unincorporated Antelope Valley.

Goal COS 18: Permanently preserved open space areas throughout the Antelope Valley.

- **Policy COS 18.3:** Maintain permanently preserved open space areas to ensure attractiveness and safety.

Goal COS 19: New development meets open space objectives while maintaining rural character.

- **Policy COS 19.1:** When new development is required to preserve open space, require designs with large contiguous open space areas that maximize protection of environmental and scenic resources.
- **Policy COS 19.3:** Pursue innovative strategies for open space acquisition and preservation through the land development process, such as Transfers of Development Rights, Land Banking, and Mitigation Banking, provided that such strategies preserve rural character.

Economic Development Element

- **Policy ED 1.16:** Preserve the scenic resources of the Antelope Valley, including Scenic Drives, Significant Ridgelines and Significant Ecological Areas, in such a way that can contribute to the economic activities in the area.

A consistency analysis of the Project with specific goals and policies in the County's relevant plans, policies, and regulations is provided in the Land Use, Entitlements, and Planning section (Section 5.8) of this document.

Rural Outdoor Lighting District Ordinance

As adopted into Title 22 of the Los Angeles County Code, the County of Los Angeles created the Rural Outdoor Lighting District that includes the unincorporated areas of the Antelope Valley, the Santa Monica Mountains, Santa Catalina Island, the Angeles National Forest, Oat Mountain, and the portion of the Los Padres National Forest in Los Angeles County. This district is subject to guidelines for outdoor lighting that save energy; prevent light spillover;

and reduce sky glow from private developments, street lighting, outdoor recreation facilities, and signs.

5.13.4 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Scenic Highways and Drives

There are no Officially Designated/Adopted or Eligible Scenic Highways pursuant to the State Scenic Highway Program in the Project vicinity. The nearest Officially Designated/Adopted Scenic Highway is SR-2, which is located approximately 50 miles to the southeast of the Project site. The nearest Eligible Scenic Highway, a portion of SR-126, is located approximately 25 miles to the south (Caltrans 2011).

The County of Los Angeles, as part of its General Plan, has created a Scenic Highway Plan that conforms to the State Scenic Highway Program and does not identify any scenic highway near the site (DRP2015a). The AVAP, part of the General Plan, identifies Scenic Drives in the Antelope Valley, several of which are located on or near the site, including the following:

- I-5 from Castaic to the Kern County Line (west of the site).
- Gorman Post Road from SR-138 to Gorman (southwest and west of the site).
- SR-138 from Gorman Post Road to 245th Street West (south of and through the site).
- Old Ridge Road (Highway N-2) from SR-138 to Pine Canyon Road (south of the site).
- Pine Canyon Road from Old Ridge Road (Highway N-2) to Three Points Road (south of the site).
- Three Points Road from SR-138 to Pine Canyon Road (southeast of the site).

Existing Visual Characteristics

Topography and Aesthetic Characteristics

The approximate 12,323-acre Project site is largely undeveloped and uninhabited. The vast majority of the Project site consists of open grasslands that are used for cattle grazing. Sizeable areas of oak woodland are located in the southern and western portions of the Project site that will be preserved as open space. Approximately 1,000 acres in the eastern portion of the Project site are under crop cultivation by the Tejon Ranch Company. Several unpaved and paved roads exist on the Project site, including the National Cement Plant Road that travels from the SR-138 to the off-site National Cement Plant; a portion of 300th Street West; and dirt roads that traverse the Project site. One residential home is located in the northern portion of the Project site adjacent to the eastern side of the West Branch of the California Aqueduct. An aerial depiction of the Project site and surrounding features are illustrated on Exhibits 3-3, Aerial Photograph and Project Boundary.

The rolling hills and varied topography on the Project site provide an aesthetically interesting backdrop. Unique natural aesthetic features on the Project site include seasonal wildflower fields throughout the grassland areas; oak woodlands in the western portion of

the site; and rock outcroppings and visually interesting boulders that occur throughout the site. The foothills of the Tehachapi Mountains make up the middleground and background views, with local hillsides dominating the foreground views throughout the valley floor. The Tehachapi Mountains that border the northern and western perimeter of the Project site, the San Gabriel Mountains to the south of the Project site, and Quail Lake to the south of the southwestern portion of the Project site constitute the most defining aesthetic features in the immediate area.

The Tehachapi Mountains reach an elevation of 4,800 feet above mean sea level (msl) to the northwest of the Project site. Moving southeast towards the Project site, the elevation of the Tehachapi Mountains gradually diminishes over a distance of 3 to 5 miles before reaching the valley floor, where elevations are approximately 3,000 feet above msl but rise again south of the Project site as the San Gabriel foothills are approached.

According to the United States Geological Survey's La Liebre Ranch 7.5-minute quadrangle map, the Project site is located in the northwestern portion of the Antelope Valley, with elevations that range from 3,000 to 4,250 feet above msl. The lowest portions of the Project site are located at the northeastern corner with an elevation of approximately 3,000 feet above msl, and along the eastern perimeter of the Project site with elevations ranging from approximately 2,980 to 3,025 feet above msl.

Project Site Views

The Project site is primarily visible from public roadways along the southern (SR-138) and eastern (300th Street West, 290th Street West, and Malinda Avenue) Project perimeters. Various locations along SR-138 provide the most publicly accessible views, and several adjacent off-site residences have observation points along SR-138, 300th Street West, 290th Street West, and Malinda Avenue. There are also intermittent views from the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT), which are discussed further below. Because public access to the Project site is presently restricted, the Project site cannot be observed by the public from on-site locations.

SR-138 bisects the southern portion of the Project site in an east-west direction, reaching its lowest point at its intersection with 290th Street West. At this intersection, which is at the eastern boundary of the Project site, the elevation is approximately 3,025 feet above msl. As the SR-138 runs westerly toward its connection with Interstate 5 (I-5), the elevation gradually increases to approximately 3,360 feet above msl just past the western side of Quail Lake. Views from east of Quail Lake include the majority of the western Antelope Valley floor, including portions of the Project site, which are partially obscured by local hillsides. Views of the Project site from west of Quail Lake, are less visible and largely obscured by hillsides and topography.

The nearest local communities include Neenach and Three Points. Neenach is located approximately 2.5 miles east of the eastern boundary of the Project site, while Three Points is located approximately 4.0 miles southeast of the intersection of SR-138 and 290th Street West. Due to distance, views of the Project site are limited from residences in the Neenach community, except for residential properties directly adjacent to the eastern edge of the

Project site. Due to distance and intervening topography, views of the Project site are extremely limited from the residences in the Three Points community.

Representative Public Views (Visual Simulation Views)

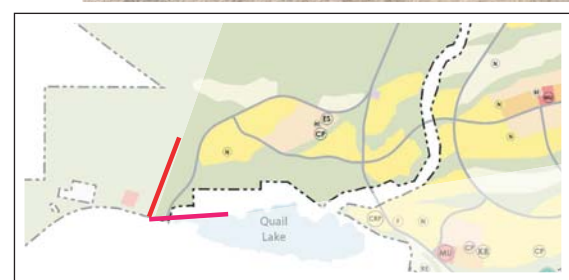
Photographs of the existing conditions at each of the five representative public viewpoints, described below, are included alongside the visual simulations, which are discussed in the impact analysis later in this section. For ease of reference, these exhibits are first referenced in the discussion below and referenced again in the impact analysis. The “before” photograph associated with each simulation provides documentation of the baseline conditions and extent of Project site’s visibility from key public vantage points.

- **Viewpoint 1 – View from SR-138, approximately 1 mile east of the westernmost Project boundary, looking northeast.** Viewpoint 1, illustrated in Exhibit 5.13-1, Viewpoint 1 – Cement Plant Road Realignment Simulation, is the view from SR-138 looking northeast at the southern portion of the site to the west of the California Aqueduct. The most common observers from this vantage point would be passing motorists travelling east on SR-138. Foreground views show gently sloping, vacant land on the Project site (which is characteristic of the surrounding valley) and SR-138 with wire ranch fencing along the north side of the road. Middleground views show the local foothills, also typical of the immediate area. These foothills are approximately 150 to 200 feet above the valley floor as viewed from SR-138. The prominent visual features of this viewshed are the local foothills and the vegetation.
- **Viewpoint 2 –View from SR-138, approximately 3½ miles east of the westernmost Project boundary, looking northwest.** Viewpoint 2, illustrated in Exhibit 5.13-2, Viewpoint 2 – Project Entrance Simulation, is the view from SR-138 looking northwest at the National Cement Road as it travels through the site. The most common observers from this vantage point would be passing motorists on SR-138 and nearby residences along SR-138. Foreground views show National Cement Road and adjacent flat, vacant land on the Project site, which is characteristic of the surrounding valley. Middleground views show a line of power poles with transmission lines within the local foothills. The Tehachapi Mountains are visible in the background view. The local foothills and the Tehachapi Mountains constitute the prominent visual features in this viewshed.
- **Viewpoint 3 – View from SR-138, approximately 5½ miles east of the westernmost Project boundary, looking north-northwest.** Viewpoint 3, illustrated in Exhibit 5.13-3, Viewpoint 3 – Town Center Entrance Simulation, is the view from SR-138 looking north-northwest at the southern portion of the site to the east of the California Aqueduct. The most common observers from this vantage point would be passing motorists traveling along SR-138. Foreground views show gently sloping, vacant land on the Project site and SR-138 and a line of wire fencing along the north side of the road. Middleground views show the local foothills on the Project site, and the Tehachapi Mountains are visible in the background view. The local foothills and the Tehachapi Mountains constitute the prominent visual features in this viewshed.

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Source: Placeworks 2015

Viewpoint 1 – Cement Plant Road Realignment Simulation

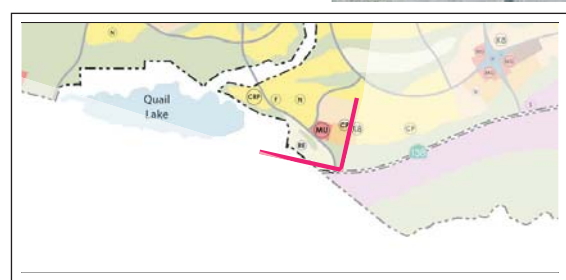
Exhibit 5.13-1

Centennial Project

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Source: Placeworks 2015

Viewpoint 2 – Project Entrance Simulation

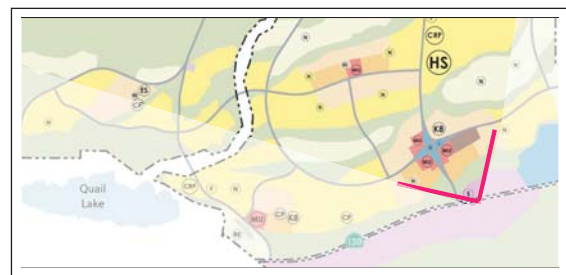
Centennial Project

Exhibit 5.13-2

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Source: Placeworks 2015

Viewpoint 3 – Town Center Entrance Simulation

Exhibit 5.13-3

Centennial Project

- **Viewpoint 4–View from SR-138, approximately 5¾ miles east of the westernmost Project boundary, looking south.** Viewpoint 4, illustrated in Exhibit 5.13-4, Viewpoint 4 – Business Park Simulation, is the view from SR-138 looking generally south from the southern end of proposed business park land uses. The most common observers from this vantage point would be passing motorists along SR-138. Foreground views show flat, vacant land on the Project site and SR-138 with wire ranch fencing along the south side of the road. Middleground views show the local foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, covered with trees and other vegetation. These foothills are approximately 100 feet above the valley floor as viewed from SR-138. The prominent visual features of this viewshed are the local foothills.
- **Viewpoint 5– View from the intersection of SR-138 and 300th Street West, located near the eastern Project boundary, looking northwest.** Viewpoint 5, illustrated in Exhibit 5.13-5, Viewpoint 5 – 300th Street West Simulation, is the view from the intersection of SR-138 and 300th Street West looking northwest at the southeast portion Project site. The most common observer from this vantage point would be passing motorists traveling along either SR-138 or 300th Street West, and residences in the vicinity of this intersection. This viewpoint provides a broad view of the Project site situated east of the California Aqueduct. Foreground views show that SR-138 and 300th Street West are both lined by power poles and wire ranch fencing that extend into the middleground. Middleground views show the flat, vacant land on the Project site transitioning to foothills. The land in the northeast corner of the intersection is not part of the Project site. The Tehachapi Mountains are visible in the background. The prominent visual features of this viewshed are the local foothills and the Tehachapi Mountains.

Views from the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail

The PCT is the most notable trail in the western United States, extending from Mexico to Canada. Locally, the PCT extends through the Angeles National Forest (ANF) and provides views of the Antelope Valley, including rural/agricultural and suburban land development, varied terrain, vegetation, wilderness, and both the Tehachapi and San Gabriel Mountains, depending on location. The existing alignment of the portion of the PCT which is nearest the Project site travels due north where it emerges from the ANF and aligns with 270th Street West and turns due east at the California Aqueduct for approximately one mile to the bridge at Three Points Road. From there, the PCT continues generally moving in a northeasterly direction into the Tehachapi Mountains.¹ Exhibit 5.14-2, Trails and Bikeways in the Project Vicinity, depicts the existing alignment of the PCT. Distant views of portions of the Project site are intermittently visible from segments of an approximate two-mile stretch of the trail that passes through the Three Points area. However, due to distance and/or intervening topography, views of the Project site from the existing PCT alignment are very limited and do not substantially contribute to the visual experience of users of the existing PCT alignment.

The PCT has an existing alternative alignment referred to as the “1973 Permanent Alignment”. The 1973 Permanent Alignment begins where the trail intersects SR-138 and

¹ The existing alignment described is based on the Google Earth .kmz layer provided by the USDA Forest Service.

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Source: Placeworks 2015

Viewpoint 4 – Business Park Simulation

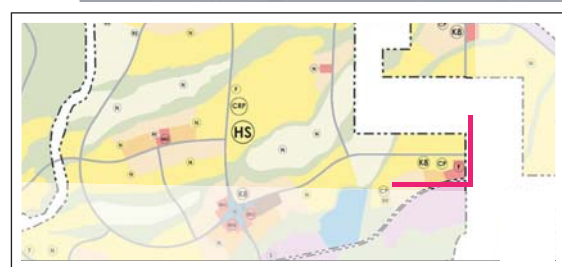
Centennial Project

Exhibit 5.13-4

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Source: Placeworks 2015

Viewpoint #5 - 300th Street West Simulation

Exhibit 5.13-5

Centennial Project

Pine Canyon Road. Across from this alignment of the trail is Oso Canyon, which is parallel to the West Branch of the California Aqueduct, which runs through the center of the Project site. However, approving the relocation of a public access trail near a major water facility in a “post-September 11, 2001”, era is unlikely.

The USFS, PCTA, Conservancy, and Tejon Ranch Company are in ongoing discussions regarding an alternative realignment for the PCT. Specifically, the USFS, PCTA, Conservancy, and Tejon Ranch Company are discussing the relocation of one segment of the PCT that currently crosses Lancaster Road at 270th Street West approximately 1.75 miles east-southeast of the Project site so that it is generally aligned along 300th Street West between SR-138 and the northeastern corner of the Project site. Where this conceptual realignment would cross the Project site, a portion of 300th Street West’s right-of-way has been reserved for the PCT alignment. At this time, the 300th Street West alignment described above is assumed to be the conceptual future realignment for PCT in this EIR. Views from the conceptual PCT future realignment along 300th Street West would also have direct views of portions of the Project site, the foothills, and the Tehachapi Mountains, as depicted in Exhibit 5.13-5 (Viewpoint 5). The existing alignment of this segment of the PCT has broad views of flat-lying areas developed with rural/agricultural and older suburban land uses. The conceptual realignment also has views of flat-lying areas of agricultural land and scattered rural residences. Refer to Section 5.14, Parks and Recreation, for additional information on the PCT.

Light and Glare

The Project site is currently undeveloped, uninhabited, and located in a rural area. In the surrounding area, the predominant land uses include scattered, large lot homes and agricultural uses. These existing land uses and their associated activities, most notably vehicular traffic, generate very little light and glare in the surrounding area. Current lighting on the Project site is sporadic and is generated from (1) residences located to the east and south of the Project site and (2) security lighting at land uses located on and off the site (which include the National Cement Plant, the High Desert Hunt Club, existing residences along 300th Street West and 290th Street West, the Quail Lake Skypark Airport, and the Southern California Edison Bailey Substation facility). Existing light and glare sources (with the exception of the National Cement Plant) are considered to be typical of rural areas in the western Antelope Valley.

5.13.5 PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

- PDF 13-1** The Project provides a plant palette that requires the use of native, drought-tolerant, and adopted species of trees, grasses, and flowers tailored to the unique environmental conditions of the Project site and prohibits use of invasive species. Native, drought-tolerant, and adopted plant species that can adapt to site conditions (dry summers) to reduce irrigation needs will be used.
- PDF 13-2** The Project’s Design Guidelines include a lighting design that responds to the requirements of a variety of land uses and environmental conditions created by the Project. Street, parking lot, and structural lighting fixtures shall provide

adequate illumination for safety and comfort of vehicular and pedestrian traffic while minimizing light spillover.

PDF 13-3 The Project's Green Development Program requires the following measures:

- Site the highest density residential uses in areas adjacent to commercial centers and permit residential uses in commercial centers through the Mixed Use Overlay to place larger populations within key centers, encouraging pedestrian activity and a reduction in vehicle trips.
- Preserve oak woodlands, savannahs, and other sensitive habitat areas near Oso Canyon and at the foot of the San Gabriel Mountains southerly of SR-138.
- Exterior lighting shall not cause unacceptable light trespass and shall be fully shielded.
- Outdoor lighting shall be turned off using automatic control devices or systems between the hours of 10:00 PM and sunrise of the following day in commercial, business park, and mixed use areas, unless required by the County Building Code. If the property operates beyond 10:00 PM, then outdoor lighting shall be turned off one hour after the operation ends for the day.
- Outdoor lighting for safety and security reasons is allowed after 10:00 PM only if fully shielded motion sensors are used to turn on lighting after 10:00 PM and the sensors turn the lighting off automatically no more than 10 minutes after the area is vacated, or if at least 50 percent of the total lumen levels are reduced or 50 percent of the total outdoor light fixtures are turned off between 10:00 PM and sunrise.
- Outdoor lighting in residential and open space areas that are over 15 feet in height shall have an output no greater than 400 lumens.
- The maximum height of outdoor lighting fixtures shall be:
 - 20 feet in Residential and Open Space areas.
 - 30 feet in Commercial, Mixed Use, and Public areas.
 - 35 feet in Business Park areas.
- Prohibit the use of outdoor lighting that includes drop-down lenses; mercury vapor lights; ultraviolet lights; search lights; laser lights; and any outdoor lighting that flashes, blinks, alternates, or moves unless mandated for health and safety reasons by a public agency.
- Outdoor light fixtures in outdoor recreational areas shall be mounted, aimed, and fully shielded so that light beams fall onto activity areas and no unacceptable light trespass occurs on surrounding areas or properties. Outdoor lighting shall only provide the minimum necessary to illuminate recreational activity areas and shall be no more than 75 feet high.

Preferably, these fixtures shall also use high pressure sodium or metal halide lamps.

- Outdoor advertising signs, business signs, and roof and freestanding signs that are lighted shall be fully shielded. Externally mounted light fixtures shall be mounted on the top of the sign and shall be oriented downward. Externally mounted bulbs or lighting tubes for signs shall not be visible from adjoining properties or public rights-of-way, unless such bulbs or tubes are filled with neon, argon, krypton or other self-illuminating substance.

PDF 13-4 Of the 12,323 acres on the Project site, approximately 5,624 acres would be included in the Open Space land use designation. Of the 5,624 acres of designated Open Space, approximately 5,116 acres (42 percent of the total Project site) are intended to (1) remain in their original natural condition; (2) be restored; and/or (3) be enhanced by weed abatement, fencing, and native species planting, among other means. Of this amount, approximately 3,866 acres are designated as Significant Ecological Area (SEA) 17 to be preserved within the Project site boundaries.

PDF 13-5 Approximately 3,866 on-site acres and the 23,547 off-site acres would comprise the 27,413-acre Open Space Preserve to be protected in perpetuity. When considering the amount of on-site and off-site lands compared to the total disturbed/developed areas within the Project boundaries based on the Grading Plan, almost four times as much land would be conserved within Tejon-owned property as would be developed.

PDF 13-6 A new on-site dry utility backbone system consisting of joint and sole electric, natural gas, telephone, and cable television facilities would be installed underground within the roadway rights-of-way. The existing off-site 66-kilovolt (kV) electric lines that extend along State Route (SR)138, which passes adjacent to Quail Lake, would be relocated south of the Business Park area and may be placed underground, if feasible.

5.13.6 THRESHOLD CRITERIA

The following significance threshold criteria are derived from the County of Los Angeles Environmental Checklist. The Project would result in a significant impact if it would:

Threshold 13-1 Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

Threshold 13-2 Be visible from or will obstruct views from a regional riding or hiking trail.

Threshold 13-3 Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

- Threshold 13-4** Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings because of height, bulk, pattern, scale, character, or other features.
- Threshold 13-5** Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

5.13.7 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

In this impact analysis, the thresholds are taken out of order to better group issues for analysis.

- Threshold 13-1** **Would the proposed project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?**
- Threshold 13-4** **Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings because of height, bulk, pattern, scale, character, or other features?**

Typically, viewsheds are those areas most visible to three types of viewing audiences: (1) persons in vehicles, (2) permanent residents, and (3) public recreational audiences. However, the Project site is currently uninhabited and provides no public access onto the site. Consequently, SR-138 provides the primary Project viewshed corridor. 300th Street West, 290th Street West, and Malinda Avenue are also Project viewshed corridors, primarily used by the local population. The analysis of the change in the Project site's visual character focuses on views along SR-138 and 300th Street West.

On-Site Impacts

Construction Phases

Project construction would occur in phases over an approximate 20-year period. Areas where the natural open space is proposed to be preserved would either remain untouched or, if disturbance is required, the open space would be restored to its pre-development condition. Roadways and utilities (such as water, wastewater, gas, electric, and cable) would be constructed prior to the development of the structures. The transition from open space to graded lots to framed structures to finished buildings with landscaping would occur in phases over each area, and would occur in a consistent sequence over time. As the structures are constructed and finished, the scale of the Project and changes to the visual character of the Project site would become more evident. Changes to the visual character of the Project site and surrounding areas would occur gradually over the course of the 20-year construction timeframe. Although views of construction activity and incremental development would be periodic and temporary, the resulting change in topography due to grading and development of land uses would be permanent. Construction of the Project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact to visual character and quality of the site and its surroundings as the Project site transitions from open space to developed land uses.

Project Buildout and Occupation

Views of the Site

Project implementation would change the overall aesthetic nature of the Project site from an undeveloped, rural landscape to a developed urban community. The analysis of these thresholds focuses largely on what is and would be visible from the location of publicly accessible viewpoints, rather than a subjective determination (of what is or is not an impact) based on the inherent character and quality of the land uses proposed on the site; this is discussed further below.

To capture the existing visual characteristics of the site currently available to the public, photographs were taken from representative public vantage points surrounding the Project site, as discussed above. Five views were selected which, collectively, best represent public observation points along SR-138 and 300th Street West to document the existing visual characteristics of the area. To assess the visual impact of the Project, these five viewpoints (Viewpoints 1 through 5) were selected to compare the current visual characteristics of the Project site and surrounding area from public vantage points (i.e., the site's major transportation connection, SR-138, and the residences located east of the Project site) with those that would occur in the developed condition via visual simulations. These five viewpoints were selected to provide representative viewsheds of the Project site.

Computer-modeling techniques were employed to simulate post-development conditions on the Project site and to illustrate the possible placement of future development. This was done for the five representative public viewpoints in Exhibits 5.13-1 through 5.13-5. To simulate post-buildout views of the site, a three-step process was involved: (1) viewsheds were chosen on the basis of field surveys; (2) photographs were then taken of the chosen viewsheds; and (3) typical building heights, massing, setbacks, and open space areas were plotted based on the Project's Conceptual Land Use Plan (see Exhibit 4-1). In Exhibits 5.13-1 through 5.13-5, the "before" view is provided beside the simulation in order to allow the reader to compare the Project site's "before" to the "after" view that would result with Project implementation.

The building setbacks for the Project would be highly varied based on several intersecting factors, including the land use designation, where the setback would be provided (i.e., front yard, side yard, rear yard), and between what two land uses the setback would extend (i.e., front entry garage, covered porch, corner lot on public street). At buildout of the Project, it is anticipated that the full range of building architecture, colors, and roofing materials would be represented on the Project site. The ultimate building sizes and types of building materials and colors would be determined at the time individual elements of the Project are submitted for building permits. These buildings must be consistent with the Design Principles as outlined in Appendix 2-A of the Specific Plan. The following discussion evaluates the Project's impact on the "before" views from each of the five representative public viewpoints illustrated in Exhibits 5.13-1 through 5.13-5.

Viewpoint 1

Exhibit 5.13-1, Viewpoint 1 – Cement Plant Road Realignment Simulation, shows the before and after views that a motorist traveling on SR-138 would have of the southwestern portion of the Project site. As shown in the “after” view, foreground views to the north of SR-138 would include large truck traffic traveling along the realigned road to and from the National Cement Plant. The majority of the foreground, middleground, and background views would not substantively change from their existing setting, with the exception of the hillside cut to accommodate of National Cement Plant Road realignment. Some new trees and vegetation would be planted near the intersection of the newly realigned Cement Plant Road and SR-138. The proposed very low, low, and medium density residential, parks, school, and small utility area would be located beyond the high point of the low hill in the middleground and just beyond the truck in the “after” view. Therefore, these lands uses would not be visible from SR-138 when traveling from the west. The low hills in this view and on-site lands to the west would remain undeveloped and would be designated as Open Space.

Viewpoint 2

Exhibit 5.13-2, Viewpoint 2 – Project Entrance Simulation, shows the before and after views that a motorist traveling on SR-138 would have of the Project site’s primary Project entrance, which is situated at the existing National Cement Plant Road’s intersection with SR-138. As shown in the “after” view, foreground views to the northeast of SR-138 would consist of a widened and split roadway in the same general configuration as the existing roadway. The proposed Recreation/Entertainment overlay to the left of the entrance would be visible, here visualized as a vineyard, in the foreground. In the middleground, the proposed Residential (Low, Medium, and High Density), Mixed-Use Commercial, and Kindergarten (K) through 8th grade school land uses would be partially visible beyond the landscaped slopes transitioning from the roadway to developed areas. New landscaping would also be visible along the entrance roadway. As per PDF 13-1 (as implemented by MM 7-13 in Section 5.7, Biological Resources), the Project’s plant palette would be incorporated into the Project’s Landscaping Plan and would require use of non-invasive species that are adapted to the conditions found on the Project site and do not require high irrigation rates. The Landscaping Plan would also include a list of invasive plant species prohibited from being planted on the Project site. In addition, retail sales of these invasive plant species would be prohibited at any businesses (nurseries) located within the Project site.

The foothills would be graded to accommodate the proposed development. As shown, background views of the Tehachapi Mountains would be more visible with grading of the local foothills. However, the middleground views of the local foothills would be replaced with views of the proposed landscaping and development.

Viewpoint 3

Exhibit 5.13-3, Viewpoint 3 – Town Center Entrance Simulation, shows the before and after views that a motorist traveling on SR-138 would have immediately east of the Town Center entrance, one of the main community entrances to the Project site. As shown in the “after” view, changes to the foreground views would involve replacing the wire ranch fencing with horizontal slat wooden fencing and installing landscaping along the SR-138 and the

proposed on-site roadway. As shown, preserved Open Space would transition to a landscaped slope and then to proposed High Density and Very High Density Residential land uses in the middleground view. As with Viewpoint 2, the foothills would be graded to accommodate the proposed development. As shown, background views of the Tehachapi Mountains would be more visible with the grading of the local foothills. However, the middleground views of the local foothills would be replaced with views of the proposed landscaping and development.

Viewpoint 4

Exhibit 5.13-4, Viewpoint 4 – Business Park Simulation, shows the before and after views that a motorist traveling on SR-138 would have of the proposed Business Park land uses situated on the south side of SR-138. As shown in the “after” view, changes to the foreground views would involve replacing the wire ranch fencing with horizontal slat wooden fencing and installation of landscaping along the SR-138. As shown, a slope would be built up and landscaped between the fence and the proposed Business Park land uses in the middleground view. Although screened by the mature landscaping in the foreground, the multi-story buildings associated with the Business Park land use designation would be partially visible. Views of the local foothills in the background view would be partly obstructed by the proposed structures.

Viewpoint 5

Exhibit 5.13-5, Viewpoint 5 – 300th Street West Simulation, shows the before and after views that a motorist traveling on SR-138 would have of the southeast portion of the Project site. As shown in the “after” view, foreground views would include the landscaped rights-of-way along SR-138 and 300th Street West and the Commercial land uses proposed at this corner. Beyond the commercial development, primarily Low and Medium Density Residential land uses and associated landscaping would be visible in the middleground. In the after view, a widened landscape setback is present along the west side of 300th Street West to accommodate the anticipated realignment of the PCT adjacent to the Project site. Views of the local foothills and/or the Tehachapi Mountains in the background view would be partly obstructed by proposed structures.

Visual Character Analysis

The level of impact to the visual character from each of the five view locations is subjective and largely depends on the observer’s location and individual perception of his/her surroundings. In contrast, the analysis above has largely focused on the viewpoint’s location. This method is more impartial when compared to one that requires a subjective determination of what is or is not an impact based on the character and quality of the land uses proposed on site. The visual simulations illustrate that Project implementation would result in an impact that is largely dependent on (1) the location of the observer and (2) the existing rural nature of the western Antelope Valley. These two factors are discussed below.

Location of the Observer

The closer the observer is to the land uses proposed on the Project site, the greater the potential that the middleground and background views of distant ridgelines (scenic vistas) would be obstructed. This effect is apparent in each of the visual simulation viewpoints (Viewpoints 1 through 5). As SR-138 is the main observational corridor under existing and proposed conditions, observers along this corridor would generally see only the structures that are proposed adjacent to the highway in the foreground, thus screening portions of the middleground and background views of the local foothills on and near the Project site and the distant mountains from view.

It is the Applicant's intent to minimize such impacts to the extent possible by having setback requirements and other development standards (such as building height, signage, and parking standards) for proposed land uses along the main public thoroughfares so that development is removed farther from the road where feasible. Certain grading and planting design requirements would be used to ensure that manufactured slopes transition smoothly to natural grades. There are existing rock outcroppings located within the hillsides on the Project site that could be significantly changed by Project development. However, MM 13-1 would require that, during grading and development of the Project, rock outcroppings that are visible from SR-138 would be preserved to the extent feasible. Rock outcroppings in the northwestern corner of the Project site in Oso Canyon are contained within designated Open Space areas and would be preserved.

As an observer moves farther away from the Project site, the middleground and background views of distant foothills and ridgelines would become more visible. For observers from off-site residences (along SR-138, 300th Street West, 290th Street West, Malinda Avenue, and from the Neenach and Three Points communities), views of the Project site's developed areas would depend on their distance to the site and the presence of intervening landforms, vegetation, and structures. However, views of the most prominent and dramatic visual feature in the area, the Tehachapi Mountains, would not be obstructed from these locations. From the Quail Lake area, the foreground and background views would remain unchanged, with only a small portion of the land uses associated with the Project area visible in the middleground.

Overall, Project implementation would result in a significant change to the visual character of the Project site and its surrounding area by obstructing some views of the local foothills and the Tehachapi Mountains and by changing the Project site's condition from rural to urban. Because the overall change is in significant contrast to the existing rural and open qualities of the pre-Project conditions, the impact from the perspective of local observers is considered to be significant and unavoidable.

Rural Nature of Western Antelope Valley

Currently, the western Antelope Valley is mostly vacant, relatively undeveloped, and rural in character. The development of 19,333 dwelling units and approximately 10.0 million square feet of non-residential land uses throughout the Project site would represent a significant change to the character of the surrounding western Antelope Valley. The visual simulations prepared for Viewpoint 1 (see Exhibit 5.13-1) and Viewpoint 5 (see Exhibit 5.13-5) together

best represent the overall size and context of the Project within the surrounding area, as these views encompass the majority of the site on the east side of the California Aqueduct. Development of the Project would change the character within the majority of the Project site from rural to urban. Approximately 56 percent of the Project site would be mass-graded and developed, which would result in recontouring natural slopes; introducing new residential, commercial, and industrial structures; and adding streets and other appurtenant development associated with a new urban community. Although the landform changes proposed to accommodate the Project would alter the existing condition, views of the background ridgelines located off site (which surround the Project site) would largely remain. Grading for the creation of building pads and manufactured slopes would preserve existing rock outcroppings that are visible from off-site locations (see MM 13-1). Curvilinear street design and other improvements have been incorporated into Project design to emulate the natural contours of the existing topography.

As previously indicated, the Project site consists of gently rolling hills and flatlands, much of which has been used for cattle grazing for many decades. The Project has been designed to cluster development on the flattest areas of the site. The proposed development pattern would be clustered to minimize impacts to dense stands of oak trees, steep slopes, and existing natural drainages (see MM 13-2). Of the 12,323 acres on the Project site, approximately 5,624 acres would be included in the Open Space land use designation (PDF 13-4). Of this amount, approximately 3,866 acres are designated as SEA 17 to be preserved within the Project site boundaries, in addition to 23,547 off-site acres, which would comprise the Open Space Preserve to be protected in perpetuity (PDF 13-5). Graded slope faces would be revegetated with native or naturalized plants and grasses that will blend with the surrounding terrain, where appropriate.

Implementation of the Project would convert the Project site from a rural to an urban condition and would partially to wholly obstruct existing views across the site; views of the local foothills; and/or distant views of the Tehachapi and San Gabriel Mountains. As there is no additional, feasible mitigation for these changes to visual character, this is considered a significant and unavoidable impact to the visual character of the Project site and the surrounding area.

Off-Site Impacts

Off-site Project features are individually small in scale and most would be located underground or at grade (i.e., wet utility pipelines, dry utility extensions, and acceleration and deceleration lanes along the SR-138). Proposed improvements located in Caltrans' right-of-way are limited both in scale and geographic extent, and would not result in above-ground structures that could substantially affect the visual character of the area. In the context of the Project as a whole, these features would not be noticeable as a substantial change to the viewshed. The utility lines along SR-138 would require relocation within the immediate area (i.e., movement of poles and lines to a nearby position); however, in the context of the Project development, these features would not be a substantial change to the viewshed because overhead utility lines already exist along SR-138 and they would not, therefore, be a new visual element as a result of the Project. Additionally, per PDF 13-6, as implemented by MM 13-3, off-site electrical lines may be placed underground in the vicinity

of Quail Lake. However, because these features are necessary to fully implement the Project and because the undergrounding of utilities near SR-138 is not certain, they would contribute to the significant and unavoidable impact to the visual character of the Project area.

The existing off-site Tejon Water Bank and proposed well locations are currently comprised of open space at the edge of the low, rolling foothills of the Tehachapi Mountains, identified as a dominant aesthetic feature of the area. The well locations at the Water Bank would have a very low profile and would only be intermittently visible by motorists along 300th Street West and trail users on the PCT. The off-site wells and the portion of the pipeline traversing the East Branch of the Aqueduct, by themselves, would not substantially affect a scenic vista or degrade the visual quality of the sites or the surrounding areas due to (1) the small scale of the aboveground structures at the well locations; (2) pipeline alignment over the Aqueduct via an existing bridge structure; and (3) the scattered location of the proposed improvements.

The potential widening expansion of the existing bridge of the West Branch of the Aqueduct would have minimal visual impact because the incremental expansion would not be a visually prominent change to the existing condition. The newly proposed bridge crossing over the West Branch of the Aqueduct would be visible by viewers in the immediate area and would alter the visual character of the portion of the Aqueduct that bisects the Project site. Because these roadway and bridge improvements, off-site wells, and utility improvements are part of the larger development Project, they would contribute to the significant and unavoidable impact to the visual character of the Project area.

Impact Summary: The Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to a change in visual character experienced from public vantage points (primarily transportation thoroughfares including SR-138, 300th Street West, 290th Street West, and Malinda Avenue). Visual character impacts related to grading and development of the Project would be reduced through implementation of PDF 13-4, PDF 13-5, MM 7-13, MM 13-1, MM 13-2, and MM 13-3; however, the change of the Project site from a rural to urban condition and the varying degrees of obstruction of existing views of local foothills and the Tehachapi Mountains would be considered a significant unavoidable impact, for which no additional feasible mitigation exists.

Threshold 13-2 **Would the project be visible from or obstruct views from a regional riding or hiking trail?**

On-Site Impacts

As discussed above, the majority of Project site observers are either passing motorists and travelers on SR-138 or other surrounding roadways or residents and visitors of immediately adjacent, off-site properties. As discussed fully in Section 5.14, Parks and Recreation, there are a variety of federal, State, and County trails in the Project area; however, due to distance

and/or topography, there are limited views of the Project site from these trails. The following discussion describes views of the Project from trails and bikeways in the Project area, if any.

From the existing alignment of the PCT, the Tehachapi and San Gabriel Mountains are the prominent visual features in the background. Distant views of the Project site are available in some locations along the PCT, but are often blocked by the foothills. Project development would not block any views from the PCT's current alignment. Additionally, views from the PCT of the Project site's visual character changes would be infrequent due to intervening topography. Therefore, impacts to the current alignment of the PCT would be less than significant.

As a result of ongoing coordination, the USFS, PCTA, Conservancy, and Tejon Ranch Company are discussing the relocation of one segment of the PCT that currently crosses Lancaster Road at 270th Street West approximately 1.75 miles east of the Project site so that it is generally aligned along 300th Street West between SR-138 and the northeastern corner of the Project site. The USFS and PCTA's agreement on the conceptual future realignment in concert with the Project indicates their concurrence that this is an acceptable and preferable location over the existing alignment. Views from the conceptual realignment of the PCT, if approved, would be of development on the Project site, the adjacent foothills, and the distant Tehachapi Mountains. The conceptual realignment of this segment of the PCT has broad views of flat-lying areas developed with rural/agricultural and older suburban land uses. Development on the eastern section of the site would present trail users with views of residential, commercial, and business park structures along 300th Street West for a distance of approximately 1½ miles. MM 13-4 requires that structures proposed along the PCT alignment be screened by a block wall along the rear of the structures and a wide, landscaped setback that would contain the conceptual PCT realignment. These features would ensure that the on-site urban uses in the foreground of views from the trail, as it passes through the site, would have limited visibility. The location and design of the conceptual PCT realignment is intended to be a similar (i.e., some rural/agricultural uses and some land development) to comparatively better than views from the existing alignment. Therefore, views from the conceptual future realignment of the portion of the PCT along 300th Street West would be reduced to a less than significant level.

County of Los Angeles Trail Number 113 is a historic California Riding and Hiking Trail and is located approximately ten miles east of the Project site. Because of the distance and intervening topography, it would not have views of the Project site. Other County trails exist in the ANF, but are situated near Castaic Lake, approximately 15 miles to the south of the Project site. These trails include Cliffie Stone Trail, North Park Trail, and Hasley Canyon Trail. The ANF offers 557 miles of hiking and equestrian trails south of the site. Some local trails include Cienega Loop, Warm Springs Necktie Trail, Fish Canyon Trail, and Castaic Lake Trail in Castaic and Gillette Mine Trail in Lake Hughes. Views of the Project site from these trails are not available due to distance and intervening topography and vegetation.

In addition, it is noted that the Tejon Ranch property (where the Project site is located) extends northward into Kern County. Official Los Angeles County trails are non-existent in this area. Additionally, there is little-to-no trail connectivity between the Kern County trail

system and the Los Angeles County trail system, other than the PCT, which extends from Mexico to Canada.

As the views of the Project site from existing trails are currently blocked or infrequent due to distance and intervening topography and vegetation and because development associated with the Project would not block major views from these trails, less than significant visual impacts are expected.

There is no existing regional bikeway near the site, but the Los Angeles County Bicycle Master Plan shows a proposed Class 3 bike route on Old Ridge Road (Highway N-2), just south of SR-138. The Project site is visible from Old Ridge Road (Highway N-2) and views would change as the low hills on the site are replaced with urban development. This change in view would be confined to the developed portions of the site, but open space areas would remain around the site and views of the Tehachapi Mountains that dominate this view would not be obstructed. This site would also be visible only from the northern section of this bike route. This impact is considered less than significant.

Off-Site Impacts

As discussed above, the proposed PCT alignment would have views of development on the Project site, the adjacent foothills, and the distant Tehachapi Mountains. Off-site Project features are individually small in scale and most would be located underground or at grade (i.e., wet utility pipelines, dry utility extensions, acceleration and deceleration lanes along the SR-138), and would not obstruct views from the PCT. The proposed wells and utility lines at the Water Bank would be visible to trail users on the PCT but would have a very low profile. The potential widening and expansion of the existing bridge on the West Branch of the Aqueduct would also have minimal visual impact because the incremental expansion would not be a visually prominent change to the existing condition. The newly proposed bridge crossing over the West Branch of the Aqueduct would be visible by viewers in the immediate area and would alter the visual character of the portion of the Aqueduct that bisects the Project site, but would be too distant to affect views from hikers along the PCT. In the context of the Project as a whole, these features would not be noticeable as a substantial change to the viewshed and would be less than significant.

Impact Summary: Existing views from public regional trails and bikeways would have less than significant impacts due to both the distance and the intervening topography between these trails and the Project site.

The relocation of one segment of the PCT that currently crosses Lancaster Road at 270th Street West would potentially move approximately 1.75 miles east so that it is generally aligned along 300th Street West between SR-138 and the northeastern corner of the Project site. Views from the conceptual alignment of the PCT, if constructed, would be of the Project site, nearby foothills, and the distant Tehachapi Mountains. MM 13-4 requires that structures proposed along 300th Street West be screened by a block wall along the rear of the structures and a wide, landscaped setback containing the

conceptual PCT realignment. This would ensure that the urban uses on the site would have limited visibility from the trail, and would therefore result in a less than significant impact.

Threshold 13-3 **Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?**

On-Site Impacts

Construction/Buildout and Occupation

There are no State-designated scenic highways within 20 miles of the Project boundaries. SR-138 is not an officially designated State scenic highway, nor is it eligible for designation (Caltrans 2011). As discussed above, the *County of Los Angeles General Plan* has a Scenic Highways Plan that conforms to the State Scenic Highway Program, but it does not identify any scenic highways near the site. Therefore, no impact on a scenic highway would occur with the Project. However, the AVAP designates several Scenic Drives on and near the site. These Scenic Drives currently offer views of the expansive valley floor and low hills, surrounded by the Tehachapi and San Gabriel Mountains, as well as views of tree-covered areas on winding mountain roads.

There are features on and around the Project site that would be considered scenic by many; these include the surrounding mountain ranges in the background, existing rock outcroppings located within hillsides on the Project site, views of the low hills and largely undeveloped and expansive valley area, Quail Lake, and some existing structures on the Project site that have been evaluated as historical resources, although not determined to be historically significant (please refer to Section 5.6, Cultural Resources). These components of the overall visual character of the area are not within the viewshed of a designated scenic highway but are visible from the County's Scenic Drives.

The Project would not change views from I-5 since the majority of the western portion of the site would be preserved as open space and development north of Quail Lake would not be visible in the distance. Since mountain slopes line both sides of I-5 near its intersection with SR-138, development on the Project site will not be a component of the scenic quality of the views from I-5.

Although areas on both sides of Gorman Post Road would remain as open space, views from this road would slightly change where on-site development north of Quail Lake would be visible from the eastern end of this road. There are intervening low hills and vegetation that block views of the site from this road. Thus, changes in views from this road would be considered less than significant.

Scenic views on Old Ridge Road (Highway N-2) consist mainly of a tree-lined road as it rises into the ANF. However, Old Ridge Road (Highway N-2), south of SR-138 provides northerly views of the Project site through trees that line the northern segment of this road. This view would change as the site is developed and the view of low hills is replaced with urban

development. This change in view would be confined to the developed portions of the site, with open space areas remaining around the site. This view would also be visible only from select points on the northern section of this road. This impact is considered less than significant.

The site is not readily visible from Pine Canyon Road between Old Ridge Road (Highway N-2) and Three Points Road due to intervening mountain slopes, trees, and distance. Thus, development on the site would not affect the scenic views on this road. This impact is considered less than significant.

Three Points Road south of SR-138 has views of a relatively flat agricultural area and scattered rural residences as the road rises up into the mountains. Distant views to the northwest include the eastern portion of the site. Future development on the site would be visible in the distance from Three Points Road. There are intervening low hills, vegetation, and existing residences north of SR-138 that block views of the site from this road. Thus, changes in views from this road would be considered less than significant.

The greatest change in scenic views would occur on SR-138 as development occurs on both sides of this road, as it passes through the site. Existing views of undeveloped land and agricultural land would be replaced with business parks and commercial structures, as well as residential development that would be constructed onsite. While distant views of the mountains will remain, the view of passing motorists will consist of urban structures that would be different than the existing rural environment.

While the AVAP has designated SR-138 as a Scenic Drive, it has also designated the Project site as the West Economic Opportunity Area and Future Rural Town Area, where future development is planned and expected. Also, the Project site is not located in Rural Preserve Areas or Scenic Resource Areas, where the preservation of existing visual and scenic qualities is called for. Since the Project is consistent with the AVAP for development as a Rural Town Area and Economic Opportunity Area, the Project would represent the overall scenic qualities that the County anticipates for the site and along SR-138. This would be ensured through compliance with Policy COS 5.7, which requires implementing standards and guidelines for development within identified viewsheds of Scenic Drive routes. As such, the Design Principles as outlined in Appendix 2-A of the Specific Plan would ensure the overall aesthetics and compatibility of the Project with the surrounding Scenic Drives.

Because Policy COS 5.2 exempts EOAs from limits on development in scenic resource areas, and Policy COS 5.7 ensures that development standards and guidelines are established for development within the viewsheds of Scenic Drives, impacts on SR-138 as a Scenic Drive would be less than significant.

The proposed changes to the Project site would result in less than significant impacts under this threshold. The analysis of Thresholds 13-1 and 13-4 above discuss the changes to visual character and the scenic qualities of the site, regardless of highway designation.

Off-Site Impacts

There are no scenic highways within 20 miles of the Project boundaries. Further, there are no features that would generally be considered scenic in the immediate area of proposed off-site features that are located within roadway rights-of-way. Also, view from designated County Scenic Drives would not change due to these roadway and bridge improvements, water wells, and utility connections. The Gorman Substation, located approximately 3.6 miles northwest of the site, would require the addition of one or more additional transformers and the reconstruction of existing overhead power lines along Gorman Post Road from the substation to the Project site. The reconstructed overhead lines along Gorman Post Road would be a temporary construction impact within the right-of-way/utility easement and would not impact the nearby scenic resources associated with the adjacent open space. Because of the slim profile of the poles and the fact that they would be replacing existing utility poles along the same alignment, the newer and potentially taller utility lines would not significantly affect views of the nearby or distant open spaces. The utility poles would not substantially degrade any scenic resources. Therefore, there would be less than significant impacts from implementation of off-site project features related to scenic resources along a scenic highway.

While there are features in the vicinity of the Tejon Water Bank well locations that would be considered scenic by many—in particular the surrounding mountain ranges in the background—because these components of the overall visual character are not within the viewshed of a designated scenic highway, the proposed off-site wells would not result in impacts under this threshold. Also, the designated County Scenic Drives are located on the southern portion and south of the site and do not have direct views of the well locations. Therefore, there would be less than significant impacts from implementation of off-site wells related to damaging scenic resources along a scenic highway.

Impact Summary: There are no scenic highways in the Project site vicinity. Therefore, the Project would not result in significant impacts related to damaging scenic resources along a scenic highway. While the AVAP has designated Scenic Drives on and near the site, the Project site is not located in Rural Preserve Areas or Scenic Resource Areas, where the preservation of existing visual and scenic qualities is called for. The Design Principles as outlined in Appendix 2-A of the Specific Plan would ensure the overall aesthetics and compatibility of the Project with the surrounding Scenic Drives. Thus, no adverse impact on designated Scenic Drives would occur. The analysis of Thresholds 13-1 and 13-4 above discuss the changes to visual character and the scenic qualities of the site from public vantage points, regardless of highway designation.

Threshold 13-5 **Would the project create a new source of substantial light and/or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

To determine if light and glare would result in a significant impact with implementation of the Project, basic information regarding light and glare is first provided below.

Definition of Light and Glare Terms

Light Scales

Illuminance is the amount of total light received from a source by a unit of surface area. Illumination is measured in foot-candles of light. One candlepower is approximately equal to the light emitted from one candle, and a foot-candle is the amount of light produced by this candle on one-square-foot of a spherical surface one foot from the light source.

Glare

Glare is defined as the sensation produced when the brightness of an object is greater than the brightness to which the eyes can adapt. Glare, a function of candlepower, may be caused directly by a lamp or indirectly from the reflection of surrounding surfaces within the field of view. The presence of glare is frequently a subjective issue. In such cases, the magnitude of glare may prove to be less important than its very presence. When glare is excessive, it can cause discomfort, reduction of visibility, and even momentary loss of vision.

On-Site Impacts

Construction Light and Glare

Project development would create new sources of light and glare during construction activities due to security lighting in the construction equipment and building material staging areas. Motorists on SR-138 could be affected by light and glare from construction of the new structures adjacent to it, which would be a potential significant impact. However, compliance with MM 13-5 requires that security lighting at the construction equipment and building material staging areas be directed away from SR-138, 300th Street West, 290th Street West, Malinda Avenue and existing residences east of 300th Street West and 290th Street West, and south of Malinda Avenue. Security lighting at construction staging areas shall be screened and directed away from adjacent on-site residences that are occupied, as each development phase is built. Any security lighting associated with construction equipment and building material staging areas along SR-138 and other on-site areas would be limited and temporary in nature. Therefore, with compliance with MM 13-5, impacts due to construction-generated light and glare would be considered less than significant.

Long-Term Light and Glare

The Project would introduce new light and glare sources into the Project site that would result in daytime glare, nighttime lighting and glare, and nighttime sky glow. These are described below. New light sources are anticipated to occur from the illumination of on-site structures, such as residential structures, industrial lots, and commercial uses; recreational uses (i.e., signage, interior and exterior lighting); and street and vehicle lights. New permanent light sources would be introduced with the Project where none currently exist. Lighting associated with the commercial, industrial, and other business uses would include

security lighting, exterior lighting, parking lot lighting, and lighted signs. Light “spills” occur when light shines beyond the intended area and illuminates an unintended area. Lighting associated with the Project would be confined to the Project boundaries and the proposed lighting would be shielded or directed downward to minimize light spillover (PDF 13-2 and PDF 13-3, as implemented by MM 13-2 and MM 13-6). The impacts of potential light and glare sources from operation of the Project are described below.

Daytime Glare

Project development would increase the amount of glare (indirect reflected light) generated on the Project site during the day. Daytime sources of glare would primarily be generated by human activities and from the sun’s reflection off glass windows and other reflective materials on structures, automobiles, and trucks. From observation points located along SR-138 and other local streets, daytime sources of glare generated by the Project would be partially screened through the use of landscaping along the perimeter of the highway and throughout the Project site. Since the Project site is currently undeveloped, sources of daytime glare that would be generated would be greater than existing conditions and would be considered a significant and unavoidable impact.

Nighttime Light and Glare

Implementation of the Project would create new sources of light and glare that are presently not found in the area. Nighttime sources of light would include streetlights, vehicle headlights, and lights used within and around buildings, parking lots, parks, and walking paths located throughout the Project site. Streetlights along the roadways throughout the Project site would be most visible to off-site viewers traveling along SR-138. Sources of light that would be generated on the Project site would also be partially obstructed from observation points along SR-138 and other local streets through the use of landscaping along parkways and setback areas and throughout the Project site. Lighting will be required to meet applicable County standards and would be required to be directed downward (see Section 2.2.8[P] of the Centennial Specific Plan in Appendix 4.0-A). MM 13-2 and MM 13-6 are proposed to reduce nighttime light and glare to the greatest degree possible. However, because the Project would introduce new light and glare into a largely undeveloped rural area, increases in lighting levels would be experienced by existing residents near the site and by passing motorists for which there is no additional, feasible mitigation. Therefore, this is considered a significant and unavoidable impact.

Light Pollution (Sky Glow)

Light pollution, also known as “sky glow”, is an adverse effect of manmade light. It is often used to denote urban sky glow (brightening of the night sky due to man-made lighting) but also includes glare (intense and blinding light), light trespass (light falling where it is not wanted or needed; spill light), visual clutter, and other adverse effects of lighting (IDA 2005). In many cases, sky glow is visible from great distances, particularly in the evenings when there is moisture in the air. Minute water droplets in the evening air also reflect and scatter light into the atmosphere. As discussed above, outdoor lighting sources would be used along roadways, parking lots, parks, walkways, and for security throughout the Project site. Because of the proposed 19,333 dwelling units and approximately 10.0 million square feet

of non-residential floor area, these new sources of lighting would contribute to increased sky glow in the area.

Mount Piños, located approximately 15 miles to the west of the Project site at an elevation of approximately 8,831 feet above msl, is a well-known location for stargazing and astronomy. In order to minimize the effects of light pollution, the Project would include preparation of an Exterior Lighting (photometric) Plan, also referred to as “the Dark Sky Plan”, to define proposed outdoor lighting that minimizes glare and light spillover beyond the Project site boundaries by using various techniques that include hooded street lights that would direct light downward and timers or sensors on lights; these would also be consistent with County lighting and safety standards. Although these light sources are not expected to extend beyond the physical limits of the Project site, they have the potential to create sky glow in an area that has few light sources, except for the existing lighting at the National Cement Plant. Measures outlined in the MM 13-2 and MM 13-6 would minimize the effects of night lighting and associated sky glow to the extent feasible. However, because the Project would introduce new sources of nighttime light and glare into a largely undeveloped rural area, increases in sky glow may occur for which there is no additional, feasible mitigation. Therefore, this is considered a significant and unavoidable impact.

Off-Site Impacts

Off-site Project features would introduce minimal light and glare sources, if present at all. In some instances, aboveground utility structures may have nighttime security lighting. However, these Project components would not appreciably contribute to the light and glare anticipated from Project implementation and there would be less than significant impacts.

The well locations may include nighttime security lighting, but any light fixtures installed at the well locations would be consistent with County lighting and safety standards to reduce light spillover and glare (see MM 13-2 and MM 13-6). The off-site wells would not require nighttime vehicle trips to the well locations, except in the rare event of an emergency visit. Therefore, these off-site wells would not appreciably contribute to the light and glare anticipated from Project implementation. There would be less than significant impacts and no mitigation is required.

The aboveground structures, including bridges and roadway improvements, would be constructed of non-reflective materials, such as concrete, asphalt, or similar materials. Bridge crossings of the Aqueduct would contain street lighting or other lighting, as required by the County for vehicular safety and visibility. These light sources are not expected to extend beyond the physical limits of the bridge structures; however, they have the potential to contribute to sky glow in an area that has few light sources, except for the existing lighting at the National Cement Plant. This increased lighting would contribute to the overall Project-generated lighting and is considered a significant and unavoidable impact. Measures outlined in the MM 13-2 and MM 13-6 would minimize night lighting to the extent feasible. However, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable after mitigation.

Impact Summary: Since the Project site is in an undeveloped area with few existing light sources, implementation of the Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts by introducing new sources of daytime and nighttime light and glare into the area. Project implementation would also cause a significant and unavoidable impact regarding a new source of sky glow, even with implementation of MM13-2 and MM 13-6. However, compliance with MM 13-5 would reduce construction-generated light and glare impacts to less than significant.

5.13.8 MITIGATION MEASURES

MM 13-1 The Project's plans and specifications shall demonstrate the implementation of measures to preserve existing rock outcroppings that are visible from off-site locations. In addition, the County of Los Angeles shall review all final development plans (e.g., landscape, lighting, architectural plans)—as provided by the Project Applicant/Developer—to ensure that the development standards for each land use have been implemented to minimize the visual alteration of the site and to create an aesthetically pleasing development.

MM 13-2 The Project shall implement the following components of the Green Development Program to minimize potentially adverse visual impacts:

- Site the highest density residential uses in areas adjacent to commercial centers and permit residential uses in commercial centers through the Mixed Use Overlay to place larger populations within key centers, encouraging pedestrian activity and a reduction in vehicle trips.
- Preserve oak woodlands, savannahs, and other sensitive habitat areas near Oso Canyon and at the foot of the San Gabriel Mountains southerly of SR-138.
- Exterior lighting shall not cause unacceptable light trespass and shall be fully shielded.
- Outdoor lighting shall be turned off using automatic control devices or systems between the hours of 10:00 PM and sunrise of the following day in commercial, business park, and mixed use areas, unless required by the County Building Code. If the property operates beyond 10:00 PM, then outdoor lighting shall be turned off 1 hour after the operation ends for the day.
- Outdoor lighting for safety and security reasons is allowed after 10:00 PM only if fully shielded motion sensors are used to turn off lighting after 10:00 PM and the sensors turn the lighting off automatically no more than 10 minutes after the area is vacated or at least 50 percent of the total lumen levels are reduced or 50 percent of the total outdoor light fixtures are turned off between 10:00 PM and sunrise.

- Outdoor lighting in residential and open space areas that are over 15 feet in height shall have an output no greater than 400 lumens.
- The maximum height of outdoor lighting fixtures shall be:
 - 20 feet in Residential and Open Space areas
 - 30 feet in Commercial, Mixed Use, and Public areas
 - 35 feet in Business Park areas
- Prohibit the use of outdoor lighting that includes drop-down lenses, mercury vapor lights, ultraviolet lights, search lights, laser lights and any outdoor lighting that flashes, blinks, alternates or moves unless mandated for health and safety reasons by a public agency.
- Outdoor light fixtures in outdoor recreational areas shall be mounted, aimed, and fully shielded so that light beams fall onto activity areas and no unacceptable light trespass occurs on surrounding areas or properties. Outdoor lighting shall only provide the minimum necessary to illuminate recreational activities areas and shall be no more than 75 feet high. Preferably, these fixtures shall also use high pressure sodium or metal halide lamps.
- Outdoor advertising signs, business signs and roof and freestanding signs that are lighted shall be fully shielded. Externally mounted light fixtures shall be mounted on the top of the sign and shall be oriented downward. Externally mounted bulbs or lighting tubes for signs shall not be visible from adjoining properties or public rights-of-way, unless such bulbs or tubes are filled with neon, argon, krypton or other self-illuminating substance.

MM 13-3 The existing off-site 66 kV electric lines that extend from SR-138 beginning at approximately the Old Ridge Route to 290th Street West, shall be relocated south of the Business Park area or may be placed underground.

MM 13-4 Structures proposed along the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT) shall be screened by a block wall along the rear of the structures abutting the trail and a 34-foot-wide landscaped setback shall be provided that would contain the conceptual PCT realignment.

MM 13-5 Security lighting used for construction areas, equipment, and building materials staging areas shall be directed away from SR-138, 300th Street West, 290th Street West, and existing residences east of 300th Street West and east of 290th Street West and Malinda Avenue. Screening of construction security lighting at construction staging areas shall be implemented as feasible. Construction equipment and materials staging areas shall be located as far as feasible from surrounding adjacent residences and lights shall be directed away from adjacent on-site residences that are occupied, as each development phase is built.

MM 13-6 An Exterior Lighting Plan shall be prepared in coordination with a qualified Biologist, be reviewed by an Electrical Engineer who is registered in the State of California, and then approved by the County prior to the submittal of each building permit. The Lighting Plan shall apply to all proposed structures and for development areas that border natural open space resources.

The Lighting Plan, also referred to as the Dark Sky Plan, shall be consistent with County lighting and safety standards and shall provide guidelines for the outdoor lighting to be used throughout the Project site. Final lighting orientation and design shall be approved by the County.

The Lighting Plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. All lighting within 300 feet of natural open space areas shall only be implemented where needed for safety and shall be directed away from these areas and shielded so that light is not directed into open space and riparian areas. Where possible, these safety lights shall be motion sensor activated with infrared light sensors to prevent daytime lighting.
- b. Mercury vapor and halide lighting shall not be used on the perimeter of the developed areas or adjacent to designated open space.
- c. Illumination levels should be compatible with the character and use of surrounding development as determined by national lighting organizations. The Illuminating Engineering Society of North America publishes recommendations for the lighting industry that include illumination levels for outdoor lighting.
- d. Low-pressure sodium lighting fixtures or flashing lights shall not be used except in emergency situations.
- e. Exterior lighting standards and fixtures shall be located and designed to minimize direct glare beyond the site boundaries. Lighting shall be fully shielded and directed downwards to confine light spread solely within necessary locations. Illumination or glare from the exterior lighting system onto adjacent properties or streets should be minimized.
- f. Security lighting fixtures shall not project above the roof line of the building on which they are mounted.
- g. Where applicable, time-control devices shall be utilized on exterior lighting sources.
- h. Street, parking lot, and structural lighting fixtures shall provide adequate illumination for safety and comfort of vehicular and pedestrian traffic while minimizing light spillover.

Also, MM 7-13 from Section 5.7, Biological Resources, which calls for a plant palette, would reduce visual resource impacts.

5.13.9 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

As discussed above, impacts to state scenic highways are less than significant and no mitigation is needed.

Despite the implementation of PDFs 13-4 and 13-5, and implementation of MMs 13-1, 13-2, MM 13-3, and MM 7-13 from Section 5.7, Biological Resources, the Project would result in significant and unavoidable direct impacts to visual character.

With implementation of MM 13-4, the Project would result in less than significant impacts to views from regional riding or hiking trails.

Despite the implementation of MM 13-2, MM 13-5 and MM 13-6, the Project would result in significant and unavoidable direct impacts to nighttime light and glare/light pollution.

5.13.10 REFERENCES

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