

3.2.6 Utilities and Service Systems

This section assesses utilities and service systems including wastewater treatment, imported water supply, and solid waste within the County of San Diego (County), and identifies potential impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed project.

3.2.6.1 *Wastewater Treatment*

Within the unincorporated communities of the County, wastewater treatment services are provided by the County's Department of Public Works, as well as other wastewater agencies as described in the County General Plan. Typically, these agencies are also responsible for maintaining sewer lines, pump stations, force mains, and several treatment plants for the unincorporated areas. From the time wastewater enters any of the treatment facilities, it (influent) undergoes physical, biological, and chemical treatment for many hours before the treatment process is complete. Treated water is discharged via controlled irrigation or percolation processes or conveyed to wastewater treatment systems of other agencies.

A significant impact to wastewater services would occur if (1) the project would exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB); (2) require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects; (3) require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects; or (4) result in a determination by the wastewater provider that serves or may serve the project that it does not have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

3.2.6.2 *Imported Water and Groundwater Supply*

The San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) is the public agency responsible for the administration of the region's Colorado River rights. The SDCWA sells water to 24 municipal water departments and water districts (member agencies), which in turn deliver the water to individual homes and businesses mostly throughout the coastal zone of the County. The County's 2.7 million residents typically rely on imported water for 90% of their total supply in a typical year (SDCWA 2013). The remaining portion of the County, east of the SDCWA jurisdictional boundary line, encompasses approximately 65% of the total area of the County and is totally dependent on groundwater resources. Groundwater provides the only source of water for approximately 41,000 residents within the County (County of San Diego 2010).

The SDCWA maintains five large pipelines that extend in a north-south direction through the County and carry water to the region from the Colorado River and the State Water Project in Northern California. Pipelines 1 and 2 are also known as the First Aqueduct, while Pipelines 3, 4,

and 5 are known as the Second Aqueduct. Four additional, shorter pipelines run east and west connecting the two aqueducts. The east–west pipelines also deliver water to member agencies. Twenty-four surface reservoirs are maintained by member agencies within the SDCWA service area to ensure that the County has sufficient water supplies to endure a prolonged interruption of its imported water supply.

In the late 1970s, Groundwater Policy I-77 was adopted by the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors. Groundwater Policy I-77 was replaced by the San Diego County Groundwater Ordinance adopted in 1991 and last amended in October 2011. The San Diego County Groundwater Ordinance establishes regulations for the protection, preservation, and maintenance of groundwater resources. The purpose of the ordinance is to ensure that development will not occur in groundwater-dependent areas of the County unless adequate supplies are available to serve both existing and proposed uses (County of San Diego 2011). While some community water systems reliant on groundwater resources keep records of well production, there are very few wells metered to quantify production. Therefore, it is difficult to estimate the overall quantity of the groundwater being used. The County’s General Plan Update Groundwater Study, dated April 2010, provides the first County-wide assessment of impacts to groundwater resources within groundwater-dependent portions of the County.

A significant impact would result if (1) sufficient water supplies are not available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources or (2) if new or expanded entitlements are needed.

3.2.6.3 Solid Waste and Recycling

All solid waste facilities, including landfills, require solid waste facility permits to operate. In San Diego County, the San Diego Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency issues solid waste facility permits with concurrence from the California Integrated Waste Management Board under the authority of the California Public Resources Code (Sections 44001–44018) and 27 CCR 21440 et seq. There are five permitted active landfills in the County with remaining capacity.

Significant impacts would result if the proposed project would not be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project’s solid waste disposal needs or would not comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

3.2.6.4 Analysis of Project Effects

Tier One and Tier Two

Wastewater

Some future Tier One and Tier Two equine facilities are expected to discharge waste from associated bathrooms, corrals, paddocks, stables, stalls equipment and horse washdown areas to on-site wastewater systems. Discharged wastewater must conform to the San Diego RWQCB

applicable standards, including the Regional Basin Plan and the California Water Code. The County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health (DEH) is authorized to issue certain on-site wastewater system permits on behalf of the RWQCB. Through the issuance of these permits for any new or existing on-site wastewater systems, DEH would ensure that the systems are adequately designed, located, sized, spaced, constructed, and maintained in accordance with the all applicable RWQCB regulations. Therefore, equine facilities that utilize on-site wastewater systems would be consistent with the wastewater treatment requirements of the RWQCB as determined by DEH.

Other future Tier One and Tier Two equine facilities may discharge wastewater to municipal sewer systems for wastewater treatment. Existing sewer systems are permitted to operate by the RWQCB. Equine facilities that would have to connect to a community sewer system would have to obtain sewer district approval prior to connection. This approval process would require compliance with the applicable RWQCB regulations and standards. Therefore, equine facilities that discharge wastewater into existing sewer systems permitted by the RWQCB would be consistent with the wastewater treatment requirements of the RWQCB.

Tier One and Tier Two equine uses are not expected to substantially increase the amount of impermeable surface and subsequent runoff on a future project site. However, it is possible that any increase in impermeable surfaces and stormwater runoff could have negative effects if adequate stormwater infrastructure is not in place. If a future equine development involves the construction of new buildings, or substantial landform modification and grading, the adequacy of storm water drainage facilities would be evaluated during review of the building or grading permit and expansion required by the County if determined to be necessary. Any expansion would be reviewed for environmental impacts. Therefore, the proposed project would not require any construction of new or expanded facilities, which could cause significant environmental effects. Additionally, the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment contains language that specifically requires equine uses to maintain compliance with standard best management practices, including those for managing stormwater and contaminated runoff. It is also explicitly stated that dust and drainage from the equine uses must be managed to avoid nuisances or hazards.

Imported Water and Groundwater Supply

Tier One and Tier Two equine uses are not expected to consume substantial amounts of water that meaningfully affect water supplies. Some future equine projects would require water service from a water district, while others may need to make a new connection. Before a future equine facility can connect to a district water system, water district approval must be obtained and the district must assure that there are adequate water resources and entitlements available to serve the requested water resources before any permit approval is granted. Therefore, the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment would have sufficient water supplies available to serve future equine uses allowed under Tier One and Tier Two.

As described in Section 3.1.2, Hydrology and Water Quality, future Tier One and Tier Two facilities are not expected to use substantial amounts of groundwater for purposes of irrigation or commercial demands. Equine uses are generally developed in a manner that large areas remain available on a property for groundwater recharge and use significantly less water than agricultural operations found in the same areas. Equine uses are anticipated to have water usage similar to levels that are allowed by right in these areas, the same as a residential property would use for cleaning or watering a typical property. Therefore, future Tier One and Tier Two equine facilities would not involve operations that would interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, including but not limited to regional diversion of water to another groundwater basin, or diversion or channelization of a stream course or waterway with impervious layers, such as concrete lining or culverts, for substantial distances (e.g., 0.25 mile). Some projects may use small amounts of groundwater for cleaning the horses, stables, animal enclosures, and equipment on the site. The amount of water usage would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level.

Solid Waste and Recycling

Future Tier One and Tier Two equine facilities would generate solid waste. An average 1,000-pound horse will produce about 50 pounds of manure per day, for a total of about 8–10 tons of manure per year per horse. Some is composted on site by some operators; however, the majority of waste is picked up to be disposed of off-site. The proposed project would require regular waste pickup, either weekly or biweekly depending on the facility. All solid waste facilities, including landfills, require solid waste facility permits to operate. In San Diego County, the County DEH, Local Enforcement Agency issues solid waste facility permits that comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations. The project would deposit all solid waste at a permitted solid waste facility and therefore, would comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. There are currently five permitted active landfills in San Diego County with remaining capacity available to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.

For the reasons described above, Tier One and Tier Two equine facilities **would not result in significant impacts** to utilities such as wastewater treatment, imported water and groundwater supply, or solid waste and recycling.

Tier Three and Tier Four

As part of the County's discretionary review process, all future Tier Three and Four projects would be evaluated under CEQA and would be required to implement measures to minimize impacts related to wastewater treatment, imported water supply, groundwater supply, and solid waste generation, as necessary. Similar to Tier One and Tier Two equine uses, future Tier Three and Tier Four equine uses would not require substantial amounts of water and would not generate

substantial amounts of wastewater and solid waste. Before a future equine facility can connect to a district water system, water district approval must be obtained and the district must assure that there are adequate water resources and entitlements available to serve the requested water resources before any permit approval is granted. The generation of solid waste is not expected to be substantial since some would be composted on site and the majority of waste would be picked up weekly or biweekly to be disposed of off-site. The construction of new buildings or landform modification would require environmental review through the building or grading permit process, which would require adequate stormwater facilities. Additionally the proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment contains specific provisions regarding the use of best management practices as well as drainage control that would reduce any potential stormwater impacts. Therefore, due to the discretionary review process required for all Tier Three and Tier Four equine uses, the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment would result in **less-than-significant impacts** to utilities.

3.2.6.5 *Cumulative Impact Analysis*

Cumulative impacts may result from an increase in wastewater treatment or water demand that exceeds existing requirements, entitlements and resources, substantial depletion of groundwater resources, or insufficient capacity to accommodate solid waste disposal needs. The geographic scope for this cumulative analysis is the San Diego region, which encompasses the entire County, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas, as well as surrounding counties, and tribal and public agency lands.

Cumulative projects within the region would result in an increase in residential, commercial, and industrial development that would require water and wastewater treatment and solid waste services. Compliance with regulations such as the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, California Water Code, Porter–Cologne Water Quality Control Act, Water Conservation Projects Act, DEH regulations, specific jurisdictional ordinances, and CEQA would reduce cumulative impacts related to water and wastewater treatment to below a significant level.

Cumulative projects would result in an increase in impervious surfaces that would increase stormwater runoff volumes. The construction or expansion of stormwater drainage facilities may be required. However, most future stormwater drainage facilities would be required to conduct environmental review pursuant to CEQA or the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In addition, regulations previously listed such as the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, California Water Code, and Porter–Cologne Water Quality would reduce the potential for a significant cumulative impact to occur relative to stormwater drainage facilities.

Cumulative projects would also have the potential to increase the demand for potable water. Although regulations such as the California Water Code, Senate Bill (SB) 610, SB 221, the Urban Water Management Planning Act, the Water Conservation Projects Act, and the San Diego

Groundwater Ordinance are intended to reduce impacts to water supply, cutbacks in water imports and multiple dry years in the Colorado River Basin may contribute to cumulative impacts.

As discussed in Section 3.2.6.4, the proposed project would not impact utilities and service systems including wastewater treatment, imported water supply, and solid waste within the County. Therefore, the proposed project **would not contribute to a cumulative impact** that would adversely affect utilities and service systems.

3.2.6.6 *Mitigation Measures*

The proposed project would not result in any significant impacts to utilities and service systems, and no mitigation measures are required.

3.2.6.7 *Conclusion*

The proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment is not anticipated to require the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities because future facilities are not anticipated to use a substantial amount of water nor generate substantial amounts of wastewater. Additionally, future equine uses may require new or expanded stormwater drainage facilities in conjunction with a building or grading permit, or an Administrative Permit or Major Use Permit. Adequate on-site stormwater drainage facilities would be ensured during the review of these permits. Future equine uses are not anticipated to generate substantial amounts of solid waste nor place any burden on the existing permitted capacity of any landfill or transfer station within the County since some would be composted on site and the majority of waste would be picked up weekly or biweekly to be disposed of off site in permitted facilities. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in significant adverse impacts to utilities and service systems.